

ST PAUL'S NEWS

December 2024
January 2025



St Paul's Rusthall 1850-2025



ONE POUND

DECEMBER

SERVICES

Sunday 1st December

1st Sunday of Advent

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President and Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Eucharist with Baptisms (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
Lead: Liz Goddard, Link: Karen Miller
- 6.30 pm Service of Readings and Music for Advent
Minister: The Vicar

Thursday 5th December

- 1.00 pm Funeral of Maureen Turley
at the Church Centre

Sunday 8th December

2nd Sunday of Advent

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President and Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Joint Christingle Service at the Parish Church
Ministers: The Vicar & Daphne Pilcher
Speaker: Daphne Pilcher
- 6.30 pm Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: Rev Nicholas Burton

Sunday 15th December

3rd Sunday of Advent

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
Lead: Rev Nicholas Burton,
Link: Rosemary Romano
- 6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister & Preacher: The Vicar

Thursday 19th December

- 11.30 am Funeral of Christopher Everett at the
Parish Church - The Vicar

Sunday 22nd December

4th Sunday of Advent

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
- 10.00 am Joint Crib Service
Followed by Shortened Eucharist (CW)
President : The Vicar
- 6.30 pm Nine Lessons and Carols by Candlelight
Minister: The Vicar

Tuesday 24th December

- 11.30 pm Midnight Mass for Christmas
President & Preacher: The Vicar
Ministers: Daphne Pilcher & Tim Harrold

Wednesday 25th December

Christmas Day

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President and Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Joint Family Carol Service
Followed by shortened Holy Communion (CW)
President and Preacher: The Vicar

Sunday 29th December

1st Sunday of Christmas

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President and Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Family Carol Service at the Church Centre +
Zoom
Lead: Jean Kerr, Link: Karen Miller

DIARY

Thursday 5th December

- 11.30 am Communion to Mount Ephraim House
– The Vicar
- 6.00 pm Youth Council meet in the Lodge
– Board Game fun

Monday 9th December

- 9.00 am Staging in for Holmewood services

Tuesday 10th December

- 4.00 pm Holmewood Senior Carol Service
– The Vicar

Wednesday 11th December

- 10.30 am Julian Group at Chancellor House
- 11.00 am Holmewood Junior Carol Service
- 11.00 am Julian Meeting at Chancellor House – The Vicar
- 3.00 pm Communion to Chamberlain Court – The Vicar

Thursday 12th December

- 11.30 am Communion to Rusthall Lodge – John Bazley
- 12 noon Lunch Club Christmas Lunch

Monday 16th December

- 2.30 pm Choir sing carols at Rusthall Lodge

Wednesday 18th December

- 9 – 11 am Playtime Christmas Party

Thursday 19th December

- 11.30 am Communion to Mount Ephraim House
– John Bazley
- 4.30 pm Choir sing carols at Mount Ephraim House

Saturday 21st December

- 10.00 am Choir sing carols in the village

Monday 23rd December

- 10.00 am Choir sing carols at Munro House

JANUARY

SERVICES

Sunday 5th January

2nd Sunday of Christmas

- 10.00 am Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: Rev. Nicholas Burton
- 10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
- 6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister : Tim Harrold

Sunday 12th January

1st Sunday after Epiphany

The Baptism of Christ

- 10.00 am Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher:
Rev. Anthony Hammill
- 10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
- 6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister and Preacher: Rev. Nicholas Burton

Sunday 19th January

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

- 10.00 am Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: Rev. Nicholas Burton
- 10.00 am Family Service at the Church Centre + Zoom
- 6.30 pm Evensong (BCP)
Minister and Preacher: Rev. Anthony Hammill

Sunday 26th January

3rd Sunday after Epiphany

PATRONAL FESTIVAL

- 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
President and Preacher: The Vicar
- 10.00 am Joint Eucharist (CW)
President & Preacher: The Vicar
Ministers: Rev Nicholas Burton,
Daphne Pilcher, Tim Harrold
- 6.30 pm Excerpts from Mendelssohn's St Paul
Minister: The Vicar

Monday 27th January

Holocaust Memorial Day

- 8.00pm Service at the Parish Church
Ministers: The Vicar, Tim Harrold

DIARY

Saturday 4th January

- 6.30 pm Quiz and Supper Evening at the Church Centre

Wednesday 8th January

- 3.00 pm Communion to Chamberlain Court
– Lois Woodhouse

Thursday 9th January

- 11.30 am Communion to Mount Ephraim House
– John Bazley
- 6.00pm Youth Council
– Daniel talking about Tanzania and life after school

Thursday 16th January

- 11.00 am Communion to Rusthall Lodge
– May Graves

Thursday 23rd January

- 11.30 am Communion to Mount Ephraim House
– Elaine Bruce

Saturday 25th January

Burns Night Function – Church Centre

Wednesdays throughout the month

9am-11am Playtime at the Church Centre

Thursdays throughout the month

12 for 12.30 Rusthall Lunch Club
at the Church Centre



Fridays throughout the month

12.30 pm Community Larder at the Church Centre

Magazine Deadlines

Please submit articles for the 2025 magazines in accordance with the following deadlines.

February by Sunday 12th January

March by Sunday 9th February

April by Sunday 16th March

May by Sunday 13th April

June by Sunday 18th May

The time between the deadline and magazine issue is to allow for typing, formatting, proofreading, and compiling the magazine. These all take time and have to be fitted around the volunteer editorial team's other commitments. We would therefore be very grateful if you would keep to the deadlines set. Please send items for publication to magazine@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk or to the Parish Office.

Magazines are posted on the Parish website by the 1st of the month. Photocopies of the magazine will also be made available in our churches for those who cannot access the magazine online. Please contact Ginette di Palma at the Church Office (TW 521447) if you are finding it difficult to access a copy.

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or a
cup of delicious coffee/tea and homemade cakes*

We look forward to seeing you!!

From the Vicarage

December 2024

Dear Friends

Thank you very much for your continued support and hard work. Special thanks to Jean Kerr and her team for organising the Parish Autumn Fayre in aid of Church Funds. A big thank you to stallholders, including the Scouts, the Parish Youth Council and to everyone who supported it in various ways, such as donating items, helping with setting and clearing up, attending, purchasing goods/items on sale, and/or praying for its success. The 2025 Calendar that we printed as part of our 175th anniversary celebrations are still on sale at both churches and at the Parish Office at the cost of £6 each or £20 for 4.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the work and ministry of St Paul's over the past year either financially or in other ways. Your contributions and support have helped to sustain the ministry of the parish and enabled us to enrich the lives and work of others. I am aware, though, that the cost of living continues to rise, and that many are therefore looking for ways to cut spending. Some of you might be thinking of reducing your financial giving to St Paul's. This is understandable, but may I encourage you to ensure that whatever amount you give goes even farther by joining the Planned Giving Scheme. This is an efficient way to give, especially if you pay tax. Another way to 'stretch the pennies' is through online shopping. If you shop online, please do so via www.easyfundraising.org.uk because each time you shop using this site a percentage of what you spend will be donated to St Paul's – or another charity of your choice. You can access the easyfundraising website via our Parish website. I trust that we can count on your unrelenting support in the year ahead in whatever way you feel able, as we live out the good news in our communities and appropriately share God's grace in its various forms.

You would have all heard about the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury and know what brought it about. In a letter to Clergy, Lay Ministers, Diocesan Staff, Parish Safeguarding Officers, Children & Young People Workers, Churchwardens and PCC Secretaries, Bishop Jonathan noted that the Makin report 'has brought into the light the full extent of the horrendous abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, as well as the failure by so many to stop his abhorrent crimes, allowing further abuse to take place, particularly in Africa.' The lead Bishop for Safeguarding in the Church of England, Bishop Joanne Woolway Grenfell also wrote a pastoral letter expressing her 'profound sense of sorrow for the pain and suffering caused to those who are victims and survivors of Smyth, and of all other abuse'. She also stated that 'holding to account those who are implicated by the Report's conclusions ... lies in the hands of colleagues in the national safeguarding team, in the Church's legal team, and in dioceses'. We are all saddened by these abuses and that those in authority were complicit. We all have a role in ensuring that everyone that worships and enjoys fellowship with us is safe and feels safe. The task of keeping everyone safe is not just the responsibility of our Safeguarding Officer but of all of us. As Christians and as a church, we are called to look out for the safety and mutual flourishing of one another.

Advent is the time of expectation as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' incarnation, and look forward to 'his final advent as judge at the end of time.' Advent gives us the opportunity to patiently wait on God and his activities in our lives. The angel Gabriel described Mary as 'favoured one'. We are all favoured by God – Jews, Gentiles, Palestinians, Arabs, Russians, Ukrainians, males, females, transgender, etc. etc. (Act 10:34, Romans 2:11) and I hope that we all know and believe this. I pray that no matter how 'perplexed' you are, you will experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the overshadowing of God's powerful presence just as Mary did and, like her, be able to allow God to work in, with and through you for the benefit of humanity and for God's glory.

In this season of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, may we allow the Christ child to be born in us afresh and may the God of all encouragement and comfort embrace and strengthen all those who have been betrayed and let down by the church and all those who should have protected them and enhance their safety and sense of wellbeing.

I wish you all a peace-filled Christmas and a New Year full of goodwill for and from everyone.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Ronnie". The script is cursive and fluid, with a large, stylized 'R' at the beginning.

Potting Shed News by Scary

November 2024

(- it is tuff being a jurnelist – Jean sed “Scary, pleze rite a nartikel by tonite becos we have our final cmittee meeting of the year and I can give Angela the memory stick so she can send it to absolutely evrywun.”) So here goes:

Hallo to all Walled Gardeners, volunteers and friends of SNWG.

I am riting this in November and you may not be reeding it til the New Year so I hope you are not confewsd?

Christmas Tree Choosing Day was tricky, becos of a storm called Bert. Our gazebo, produce stall and paperwork all took a bit of a battering. Mine joo – that night a tree toppled over, almost where the gazebo had been – so we were ackchally v lucky – I spose? We only sold 10 trees that day but I hope many more find good homes to go to over the weeks before 25th December.



Back in July evrywun who came enjoyed our traditional Open Day which was, of course, Olympic-themed. Here's a photo of me practising, but J sed I woz too skilled to join in on the day becos I had to give others a chance. The Walled Gardeners threw balls through Olympic rings – then we put them on the ground (the rings, not the gardeners) and threw wellies into them – and finally they had to pick up the rings and hurl them over rabbit, squirrel, fox, chicken and crow (no, these were not reel!).



Alex had made a fantastic podium which the winners (evrywun!) climbed onto, to receive their medals.

Now, before I finish, I have a speshal request from Jean and the SNWG cmittee: Pleze get in touch if you like the sound of wot we do – or if you haven't a cloo after reeding this and would like J to ecksplane more. We could do with one or two new volunteers, who might become “befrienders” with a gardening group – give Jean a call.

Hope your winter goes well.

Luv Scary the scarecrow. 26.11.2024

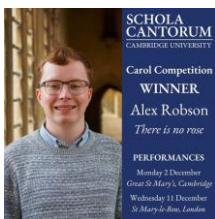
(J won't have time to edit this, so pleze scuse the odd spelling mistake)
Phone Jean Burgess 01892 740305 or 07889 731949 before 8pm please.



Editorial for December 2024 and January 2025

My first task is to wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and thank everyone who has contributed to the magazine during the past year, whether it is a regular contribution or just an occasional piece. All are much appreciated. My Christmas season is not getting off to a good start – I have a hacking cough and will not be up to singing Advent Carols, with or without descants! I suspect the cough is a gift from my littlest grandson, Bertie, who I had to rush to look after when he was too ill for nursery. Storm Bert has also brought problems by blowing down about 5 garden fence panels so there's work in the garden to look forward to in the New Year.

Christmas is a joyful but busy time of the Church Year. It was lovely to see David Peacock's painting of St Paul's at Christmas on the cover of my December Town Crier, with comments about the Choir in an article inside. Perhaps you have picked up this magazine as you attend the Eucharist on 1st December, if so, I urge you to return for the Advent Carol Service, which always sets the mood for Christmas. You will find details of all the Christmas Services at the front of the magazine. However, the New Year sees the start of an even busier year as St Paul's celebrates the 175th anniversary of its founding. Spot the specially designed logo in the magazine to read about the first events, there is something special planned for every month of 2025.



Too late for Fiona Johnson's article, we have just heard that chorister and organist at St Paul's, Alex Robson, has won Cambridge University Schola Cantorum's inaugural Carol composition competition with a setting of 'There is no rose', which will be performed at services in Cambridge and London during December. I'm sure it will also be heard at St Paul's in some future Christmas. Alex continues a steadily growing list of composers emanating from St Paul's.

Sadly we have also recently learned of the death of Christopher Everett, diplomat and ex-headmaster of Tonbridge School. He used his business experience and wisdom to the benefit of St Paul's, serving on the PCC. His funeral will be held at the church at 11.30am on 19th December.

Best wishes for a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Sue and I, as we take our annual winter break. If you have an article for the February magazine, please get it to us by Sunday 12th January.

Deborah Bruce and Sue Hare

From the Registers

At rest – the sympathy of the Parish is extended to the family and friends of:

Christopher Harris Doyle Everett
Maureen Anne Turley

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Churchwardens' Notes



At last we have some good news regarding the repairs to the Choir and Vicar's Vestry roofs. Rochester have at last given us a faculty to proceed with the work. Hopefully this will be done early in the New Year.

We would like to find some volunteers to help marshal car parking on busy occasions. The next will of course be the Nine Lessons and Carols Service on the 22nd December. Please speak to us if you are prepared to help.

We would like to thank Ginette for putting together the calendar for next year and for all those who provided the wonderful photographs. A special mention for David Peacock who painted the cover, a version of the Charles Tattershall Dodd painting of the Church as it was in its original state, before being extended.

The choir concert was a wonderful occasion, our thanks to Fiona and the choir for all the hard work preparing the music. It was lovely seeing the church so full.

The Remembrance services went very smoothly. It is always a very moving service. Our thanks to the young people from the choir and uniformed services who played an active part in the service by placing memorial crosses in the garden of remembrance. The fall of poppies from the tower during the 2 minute silence is always so poignant and it is such a relief that we don't have to get our timing perfect to the last second now that Hannah Hughes can play the Last Post and Reveille so beautifully.

Next year will be a really busy one, celebrating 175 years since the founding of St Paul's Church. There are special events taking place throughout the year.

We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you at the special services over the Christmas period.

Advent Carols on 1st December
Christingle Service on 8th December
Nine Lessons and Carols on 22nd December
Midnight Mass on 24th December

May Graves and Rod Garcia-Fermer



Anniversary Launch

2025 is a special year for St Paul's Church but in case you haven't heard

IT IS OUR 175th ANNIVERSARY!

Some of you will be aware of St Paul's history within the community but for those of you who would like to know more about the beginnings of St Paul's in Rusthall then do read 'Our Brief History in Time' in this issue!

We are lucky to have a thriving village with its own identity and I hope you will agree that our Church plays an important role in the community. People worship at both the Parish Church and the Church Centre and both sites are used for a huge range of other non-religious activities which are valuable to many people of all ages. Youth organisations, Toddler groups, lunch club, community larder, keep fit, the list goes on!

I grew up in Rusthall and returned to the Parish seven years ago but am constantly discovering new things and learning more about the place in which I was born and am proud to now live. I am not blind to the problems that exist so truly hope that 2025 can be the year when we reach out and make even more new friends and further strengthen our connections.

Over the past months we have been asking for your ideas on how best to celebrate; we have received some wonderful responses and are enjoying working out how to best organise events which everyone can join in and enjoy. I am pleased, indeed excited, to announce that there will be concerts from our brilliant choir, a poetry evening, free flower festivals, an art competition, free exhibitions and much more! We are kicking off the new year with a quiz and supper evening and also the search for favourite recipes from the Rusthall community in order to create an anniversary cookbook as a long-lasting memory of our anniversary year.

So, watch out for updates!

With thanksgiving for the past, with joy in the present, and with hope for the future - let's celebrate!

Chris Dobson

175th Anniversary Group



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Holidays are on a weekly basis only in high season, but short breaks may be possible at other times.

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Magazine Easy Payment Methods

Income from magazine sales is important to us at St Paul's. If everyone paid the £1 cover charge we would raise over £900 a year, which would not only cover the cost of producing the magazine but also contribute to other costs such as leasing the photocopier.

If you often find yourself fumbling for the right change, perhaps you might like to pay in advance for a year's "subscription", 10 issues for the sum of £10, (you might even feel tempted to be more generous!) Please make cheques payable to St Paul's Church, Rusthall and send them to the Parish Office.

Alternatively you can use the card payment machines – just choose the £1 donation option.

Your contributions are much appreciated.

Our Down To Earth God

There is so much going on in the world I want to help readers to understand that God in the birth of Jesus identifies with the powerless, including in some cases, ourselves. There is so much beyond our control which seemingly we cannot influence but let us go back 2,000 years or so because there are great similarities with the situation then and now.

Caesar Augustus issued a decree for a census of the whole world to be taken. Imagine the scene: Caesar dressed in his white toga, strolling through the marble corridors of power, nibbling grapes and thinking what a clever idea this is, unaware or at least unconcerned what effect his edict might have on ordinary people hundreds of miles away. Maybe he wants to increase his tax revenues, maybe he wants to solidify his control over his vast and sprawling empire, or maybe he is just doing it 'because he can'.

Meanwhile, on a cold hillside in Palestine, a group of shepherds are guarding their sheep. Here, Caesar's rod doesn't stretch. They will probably never hear of the census, let alone participate in it, because like many essential workers, to the powers that be they don't even exist.

And then, caught up in the middle of all this are Mary and Joseph, forced to make an arduous journey during Mary's pregnancy, just so they can be little more than statistics on Caesar's spreadsheet.

Yet ultimately Caesar is not in charge – and for all his trappings of office and his machinery of government, something else is going on, something that even this powerful man cannot control – and that is God's purpose and action – and here the difference is like between night and day.

For God, however, this is no power game, this is no exercise of control, this is no whim. Jesus's birth in Bethlehem was the centrepiece of God's careful, patient, loving plan to save his people, delivered so respectfully, to a young woman through the visit of an angel, with such regard at every step to her dignity, to her free choice, to her fears and anxieties.

We're so used to powerful people having their own way, to money talking, to the loudest getting centre stage, that the idea that God would bypass all of that seems hard to imagine. It's as if at Christmas, God is coming to visit us through the side door, while making sure to ring the doorbell first.

I am not going to come over all political because Christmas is a time when we should look at what God ordained for us through the birth of Jesus Christ. However, over the last year, power and the lack of it seem to have become quite a theme.

Despite it being a year of elections across Europe, the UK and the USA with perhaps some surprising results, a significant portion of the world's population remains powerless. Whether it's in the current conflict zones in Europe and the Middle East, in homes where there's poverty and deprivation in our own country, or in those who face the butt of our prejudice and intolerance, there are plenty of people whose lives are apparently and seemingly of no consequence. To the powers that be, it seems, they are just statistics on a spreadsheet, or maybe they simply don't exist.

To God, however, it's not like that at all. Everything about what we celebrate at Christmas time is about God coming down to earth. We sometimes use the phrase 'down to earth' to describe someone who identifies with us on our own level, without pretence, without airs and graces. Some people pretend to be down to earth, putting on a great show of being a 'man (or woman) of the people' – but this is not God's way. God not only cares about the powerless, but God identifies with the powerless – and God not only identifies with the powerless but becomes one with them.

So, if this Christmas for whatever reason you and I are feeling powerless, or are feeling that so much is out of our control, that other people seem to make all the decisions; and you or I are struggling, like Mary and Joseph, just to make it to this point; or if one way or another, like those shepherds, you or I are feeling out in the cold – know that to God, you and I really, truly matter.

Or perhaps, hearing of this or that event happening in the world outside, we wonder what on earth we can do to help, wondering what difference our compassion or concern could possibly make, then know it is through the apparently insignificant and inconsequential that God has always done his greatest deeds.

God is not some Caesar, strutting in vast marble corridors, handing down edicts 'just because he can', but the one who, choosing to be born in a stable, leaves all power and glory behind, leaves all advantage and privilege behind, and ever so gently knocks on our door.

This is the love we celebrate at Christmas, even in the darkness. The powerful, life-sustaining, creative love of God flows into the Son, giving him everything needed for life in this world. This same love flows from the Son into you and me as we follow in the life-giving, creative love of the Way of Jesus.

The poet Jane Hirshfield writes that in good poetry 'there is always something startling and absolutely unexpected, some undertow, some magnetic pole of a fuller truth. 'This Christmas, let us celebrate the fuller truth of the life-sustaining Love of God

coming into being. Augustine* in a Christmas Eve Sermon said “Let us then joyfully celebrate the coming of our salvation and redemption. Let us celebrate the hallowed day on which he who is the great and eternal day came from the great and endless day of eternity into our own short span of time. ‘he has become our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption, and so, as it is written: Let those who glory, glory in the Lord.’”

With that thought of love and hope to all readers, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas with a healthy and peaceful New Year and may all your wishes come true.

Recommended Readings:-

Isaiah 9:1-7; Psalm 95, Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

* St Augustine (born November 13, 354, Tagaste, Numidia [now Souk Ahras, Algeria]—died August 28, 430, Hippo Regius [now Annaba, Algeria]; feast day August 28) was the bishop of Hippo from 396 to 430, one of the Latin Fathers of the Church and perhaps the most significant Christian thinker after St Paul. Augustine's adaptation of classical thought to Christian teaching created a theological system of great power and lasting influence. His numerous written works, the most important of which are Confessions (c. 400) and The City of God (c. 413–426), shaped the practice of biblical exegesis and helped lay the foundation for much of medieval and modern Christian thought.

Tim Cripps

I make absolutely no comment on the departure of Archbishop Welby but at least he had a sense of humour.



He recalled the time of an ecclesiastical conference in Norwich Cathedral. At lunch he and a number of priests, all in cassocks and dog collars, headed to the nearest Public House for a swift libation only to be greeted by a cheerful Landlord who said ‘Stag do is it lads?’

Tim Cripps

Autumn Fayre November 16th 2024

A very enjoyable day was had by many people at the church's annual Autumn Fayre. There were cars to race, treasure to find, prizes of all sorts to be won, delicious cakes, amazing crafts, calendars, bric-a-brac and many toys to be purchased. You could even have your face painted..... I saw a couple of beautiful butterflies around the hall. Or you could purchase a present for a family member and have it wrapped to ready to hide away for Christmas Eve. After that, you could enjoy the relative tranquillity of the church (with its new chairs) where you could enjoy refreshments, a superb homemade lasagne and crumble with custard whilst also browsing the book stall.



The Autumn Fayre has, so far, raised just over £3000 pounds. A wonderful team effort by the parish! Thanks to everyone who helped in so many ways from making or donating items to sell, helping with the setup and clearing away, helping on the day with catering and running the various stalls and activities. Last but not least, a huge thank you to everyone who came along and supported the church by spending money at the Fayre.

Jean Kerr

The Importance of Nature in the Bible

Part 3

The gnarled and straggling olive-tree was, and is, one of the most characteristic features of the Palestinian countryside. Once established it yields a profitable crop of fruit eve on parched and stony ground. It takes time to settle down and develop its full yield. This may take up to fifteen years, but once established little cultivation is needed beyond pruning.



The olive harvest came last in the season – usually October to November after the grape-gathering had finished. Virtually the whole crop was processed for its invaluable oil. The best quality was the ‘beaten-oil’ which was used in the Temple. This was obtained from berries picked before they were fully ripe and then gently pounded in an ordinary stone mortar. It was meticulously decanted to remove every trace of impurity.

For general purposes the ripe olives were beaten from the trees with a long pole, collected in reed or wicker baskets and carried (by asses if necessary) to the place where they were to be processed. The simplest method was to express the oil by treading the fruit with the bare feet in the same way, and probably in the same press as the grapes had been. By the end of the Old Testament period oil-mills had, to some extent, superseded this primitive foot-work.



The mill probably consisted of a circular stone basin some eight feet in diameter, in which was fitted a vertical mill-stone so that it could revolve round a central pivot. The mill-stone was turned

by two people pushing a long beam as they walked round and round the basin and in this way the olives were bruised and some of their oil squeezed out and drawn off into vats or jars.

The pulp which was left in the basin still contained a quantity of oil and this was packed into baskets and taken to the presses. In those days they did not know the meaning of waste. As the oil dripped down under the pressure of the beam it was carefully collected.

Great care was taken to purify the oil by allowing it to settle in vats. After it had been properly refined it was stored in the usual large jars and skins until it was needed for cooking, for toilet and medicinal purposes, or as fuel for lamps.

Fig-trees were to be found in every corner of Palestine, in small groups at the edge of vineyards, or tucked away singly in isolated crannies. They needed little looking after and possessed the great advantage of bearing two or even three crops a year. As soon as the winter rains were over the fruit began to appear, even before the leaves came out.



Much of this crop soon fell to the ground, but such fruit as did survive ripened into the delicacy which the Old Testament writers call the ‘firstripe fig’. The second and biggest crop was ready for eating by August or September and, in exceptional cases, more fruit appeared in the autumn.



Most of the figs were plucked for immediate eating and were a regular part of everyday diet in summer. However some of the season’s crop was preserved in pressed cakes, which became very hard and were useful for packed meals. Perhaps the most curious use made out of figs was medicinal, as when Isaiah prescribed them as a poultice for Hezekiah’s boil.

Daphne Pilcher

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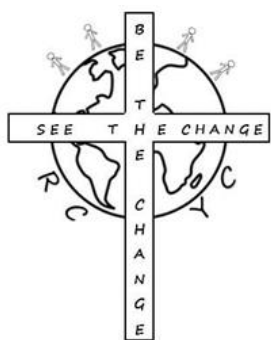


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Church Youth Council



We were delighted to welcome Charlie of 'Charlie's Angels' to our November meeting together with two new members. Hot on her well deserved but incredible win on 'Ready, Steady, Cook', Charlie arrived with a mystery box of surplus food which the CYC transformed into the most delicious vegetable curry with rice followed by apple cake and custard.



Charlie explained her vision behind Charlie's Angels and her passion to cut food waste. Members had arrived with sealed envelopes containing a secret donation for Charlie, in line with her payment policy of paying what you can afford. Charlie told the group the story of a young, local lad who is undergoing a life changing trauma and it was unanimously agreed that the money should in fact go to supporting him and his family. A total of £87 was raised. A terrific evening.



We were also delighted to support St Paul's Autumn Fayre by running the Secret's Room. So many of the group turned up to help and they were truly wonderful. Jean, Mark and myself are extremely proud of every one of them!



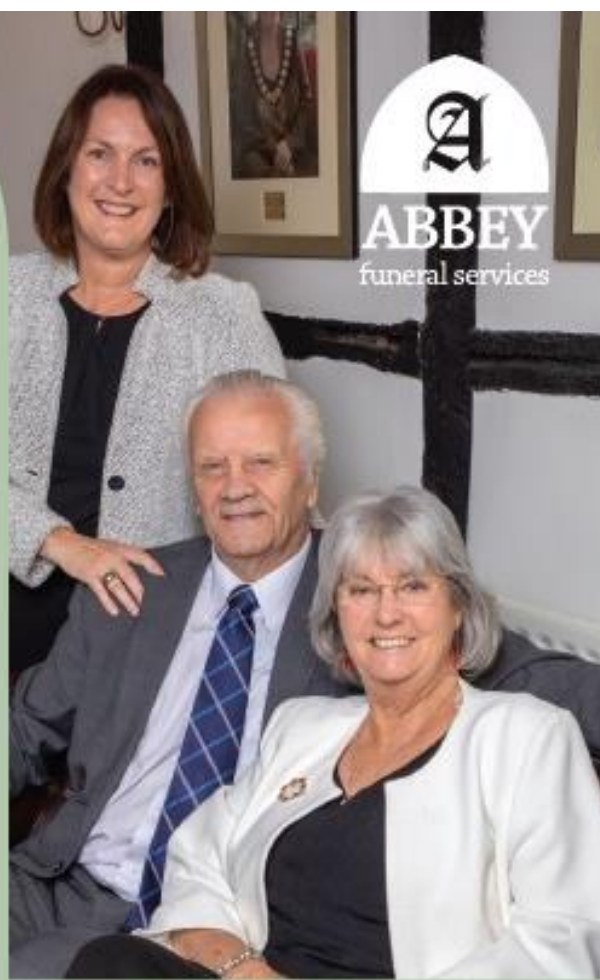
It was agreed that the next meeting to be held on Thursday 5th December would see us all playing Board Games! New members (Secondary age children) are always welcome 6 - 7.30 pm in The Lodge.

Angela Culley

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A Musical Note



It was lovely to see the church so full for our Autumn Concert on Saturday 19th October. The choir had worked incredibly hard in the weeks leading up to the concert, learning a lot of new repertoire in a very short rehearsal period. There was no theme to the concert, but it did feature anthems by composers whose anniversaries we are celebrating in 2024, namely, Edward Bairstow, Anton Bruckner, Gustav Holst and Charles Villiers Stanford.

We opened the concert with Bairstow's amazing anthem, 'Blessed City, Heavenly Salem' which sets beautifully poetic biblical text with hugely contrasting musical ideas. My thanks to our excellent quartet of sopranos, Jess Biggerstaff, Hannah Hughes, Eleanor Toombs and Stella Winter for their singing in this piece. We followed this amazing anthem with a short unaccompanied piece by Lucy Walker who, at only 26 years old, has already had many anthems published and has been composer in residence at St Martin in the Fields and worked with the BBC singers. Her compositional style is really interesting and she certainly doesn't make it easy for the singers, but the effect is stunning. We then let the tenors and basses have a rest and sang an 8-part upper voices setting of 'Ave Maria' by Holst. My thanks to Roland Millar for conducting and rehearsing this piece which gave me the chance to sing with the choir. The junior choir (and a couple of very kind ex junior choristers) then sang two pieces, the first by Nancy Hill Cobb and the second by Kristina Arakelyan. Although we were without a few of the junior choir due to other commitments the sound was lovely. A few of the upper voices from the adult choir then joined with the children to sing the rousing 'Let all the world in every corner sing' by David Bednall. This has a lot of changes of time signature and is a very tricky piece especially for the organist! Alasdair played it unbelievably well, and rightly the audience gave him a huge round of applause at the end of the piece.

The adult choir then sang the familiar 'Beati quorum via' by Stanford, a particular favourite of many members of the choir and we followed this by the incredible 'O clap your hands' by Orlando Gibbons. We had a very special reason for learning this piece as Gibbons is the favourite choral composer of Robert Middlewick who was Director of Music at Rusthall before I was. For his 80th birthday celebration this year the choir

were asked to sing something but unfortunately the party clashed with an Oriana Singers away weekend meaning that a number of us were not able to be there. So we recorded our performance of the Gibbons at the concert to be played at his party which I hear he absolutely loved.

After the interval we sang 'Locus Iste' by Bruckner and then an arrangement of a Spiritual 'We shall walk through the valley' by Undine Smith Moore. The children then sang a lovely setting of 'Hear my words' by Stephen Paulus with an outstanding solo from Lucia Haslam. Some of the upper voices then joined together with Anthony Hughes at the piano, Jennifer Farman on the cello and Marcy Winter on the djembe (a goblet shaped drum played with bare hands, originating in West Africa) for a fabulous piece by the Canadian composer, Sarah Quartel. This starts off lyrically and gently and then halfway through picks up the pace dramatically and it becomes almost 'gospel' in style. It is an exciting new addition to our repertoire and I am sure we will sing it again before too long.

We were then treated to an amazing 'Pie Jesu' from the Rutter Requiem with the solo treble part being taken by Tom Hughes. His voice is stunning at the moment and I am so pleased that we were able to hear him singing this wonderful piece. The conclusion to our concert was the wonderful 'Hear my words, ye people' by Parry. We had brilliant solos from Roland Millar and Caroline Johnson and the full choir sound at the end was incredible.

My thanks to the whole choir for their commitment whilst preparing for this concert and in particular to our amazing accompanists, Alasdair Friend, Paul Jeffery and Anthony Hughes. Thanks also to our outgoing Head Chorister Lucia Haslam for whom the concert marked the end of her time in the junior choir. She has been an unbelievably brilliant Head Chorister this year and the children adore her. She has now moved into the adult choir and we have appointed two Head Choristers for this next year, Tom Hughes and Marcy Winter. I know they are going to do an amazing job.

Please do come along to our Service of Readings and Music for Advent on 1st December at 6.30pm and to the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on 22nd December also at 6.30pm. On 26th January at 6.30pm we will be singing a selection of movements from Mendelssohn's Oratorio, St Paul as we celebrate our Patronal Festival. Also, the choir will be having a sponsored Sing-a-thon on Saturday 22nd February where we will be singing 100 anthems in one day to raise funds for our choir tour to France next year. Do put these dates in your diary and come along to support us if you can.

Fiona Johnson

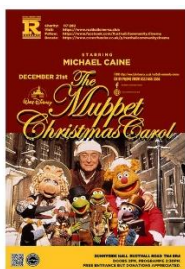


Rusthall Community Cinema



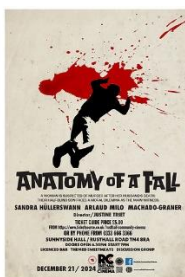
Thelma (2024) Cert 12

Doors open: 6.30pm Saturday 7th December 2024
Director: Josh Margolin
Genre: Action, Comedy
Runtime: 1h 38 mins
Starring: June Squibb, Fred Hechinger, Richard Roundtree



The Muppet Christmas Carol Cert U

Doors open: 2pm Saturday 21st December 2024
Director: Brian Henson
Genre: Musical, Family, Comedy
Runtime: 1h 25 mins
Starring: Michael Caine, Dave Goelz, Steve Whitmire



Anatomy of a Fall (2024) Cert 15

Doors open: 6.30pm Saturday 21st December 2024
Director: Justine Triet
Genre: Crime, Drama, Thriller
Runtime: 2h 30 mins
Starring: Sandra Hüller, Swann Arlaud



Back to Black (2024) Cert 15

Doors open: 6.30pm Saturday 4th January 2025
Director: Sam Taylor-Johnson
Genre: Biography, Drama, Music
Runtime: 2h 2min
Starring: Marisa Abela, Eddie Marsan, Jack O'Connell



The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie Cert12

Doors open: 6.30pm Saturday 18th January 2025
Director: Ronald Neame
Genre: Drama, Comedy, Romance
Runtime: 1h 56min
Starring: Maggie Smith, Robert Stephens, Pamela Franklin



The Story of Gilbert and Sullivan Cert PG

Doors open: 2pm Sunday 19th January 2025
Director: Sir Malcolm Sargent
Genre: Biographical, Musical
Runtime: 1h 45min
Starring: Robert Morley, Maurice Evans, Eileen Herlie



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Email Chris Dobson at dgsrusthall@gmail.com or catch up with him in person.

Reserve your tickets now!

The hunt is on for the most delicious recipes!

Also in the New Year, we'll be launching the search for the best Rusthall home styled recipes for a **St Paul's and Village Cookbook** – yes, we can get endless recipes from the Internet but let's have the joy of sharing our most delicious favourites.

For more info take a look at the article in this edition of our magazine.

Sponsored Anthem Sing-A-Thon By Our Amazing Choir

Saturday 22nd February 10am – 9pm at the Parish Church, off Langton Road, Rusthall

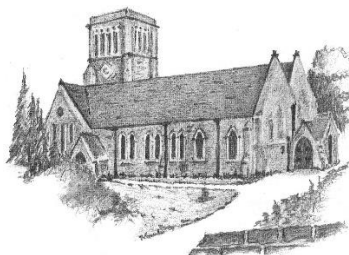
We know they're good but this is a huge challenge. They are singing their way through the OUP New Church Anthem Book. There are 100 anthems to get through – culminating with Handel's Zadok the Priest!

Come along and support St Paul's Choir in this sponsored sing-a-thon and make a donation to aid their tour in our Anniversary Year. You are welcome to join the choir as a singer for all or part of the day or just to sit and listen.

Refreshments will be available too!

Watch out for details of our upcoming events from Art competitions for all ages and free open days with local artists, to Poetry and Music evenings, flower festivals and cream teas! There will be something for everyone!

JOIN IN CELEBRATING 175 YEARS OF ST PAUL'S.



Jesus wasn't born in a stable—and that makes all the difference

Some years ago I stumbled across a blog written by Rev Dr Ian Paul, theologian, academic, writer and member of the General Synod. I have included it for you to read. I find it thought provoking, but I'm not worried that we will cancel the crib service or stop singing 'Away in a manger' anytime soon!

Deborah Bruce

I am sorry to spoil your preparations for Christmas before the Christmas lights have even gone up—though perhaps it is better to do this now than the week before Christmas, when everything has been carefully prepared. But Jesus wasn't born in a stable, and, curiously, the New Testament hardly even hints that this might have been the case.

So where has the idea come from?

I would track the source to three things: traditional elaboration; issues of grammar and meaning; and ignorance of first-century Palestinian culture.

The **traditional elaboration** has come about from reading the story through a 'messianic' understanding of Isaiah 1.3:

The ox knows its master, the donkey its owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.

The mention of a 'manger' in Luke's nativity story, suggesting animals, led mediaeval illustrators to depict the ox and the ass recognising the baby Jesus, so the natural setting was a stable—after all, isn't that where animals are kept? (Answer: not necessarily!)

The **issue of grammar and meaning**, and perhaps the heart of the matter, is the translation of the Greek word *kataluma* in Luke 2.7. Older versions translate this as 'inn':

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the **inn**. (Authorised Version).

There is *some* reason for doing this; the word is used in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, LXX) to translate a term for a public place of hospitality (eg in Exodus 4.24 and 1 Samuel 9.22). And the etymology of the word is quite general. It comes from *kataluo* meaning to unloose or untie, that is, to unsaddle one's horses and untie one's pack. But some fairly decisive evidence in the opposite direction comes from its use elsewhere. It is the term for the private 'upper' room where Jesus and the disciples eat the 'last supper' (Mark 14.14 and Luke 22.11; Matthew does not mention

the room). This is clearly a reception room in a private home. And when Luke does mention an 'inn', in the parable of the man who fell among thieves (Luke 10.34), he uses the more general term *pandocheion*, meaning a place in which all (travellers) are received, a caravanserai.

The difference is made clear in this pair of definitions:

Kataluma (Greek) – “the spare or upper room in a private house or in a village [...] where travellers received hospitality and where no payment was expected” (ISBE 2004). A private lodging which is distinct from that in a public inn, i.e. caravanserai, or khan.

Pandocheion, pandokeion, pandokian (Greek) – (i) In 5th BC. Greece an inn used for the shelter of strangers (pandokian='all receiving'). The pandokeion had a common refectory and dormitory, with no separate rooms allotted to individual travellers (Firebaugh 1928).

The **third issue** relates to our understanding, or rather ignorance, of (you guessed it) the **historical and social context** of the story. In the first place, it would be unthinkable that Joseph, returning to his place of ancestral origins, would not have been received by family members, even if they were not close relatives. Kenneth Bailey, who is renowned for his studies of first-century Palestinian culture, comments:

“Even if he has never been there before he can appear suddenly at the home of a distant cousin, recite his genealogy, and he is among friends. Joseph had only to say, “I am Joseph, son of Jacob, son of Matthan, son of Eleazar, the son of Eliud,” and the immediate response must have been, “You are welcome. What can we do for you?” If Joseph did have some member of the extended family resident in the village, he was honour-bound to seek them out. Furthermore, if he did not have family or friends in the village, as a member of the famous house of David, for the “sake of David,” he would still be welcomed into almost any village home.”

Moreover, the actual design of Palestinian homes (even to the present day) makes sense of the whole story. As Bailey explores in his book *Jesus Through Middle-Eastern Eyes*, most families would live in a single-room house, with a lower compartment for animals to be brought in at night, and either a room at the back for visitors, or space on the roof. The family living area would usually have hollows in the ground, filled with hay, in the living area, where the animals would feed.

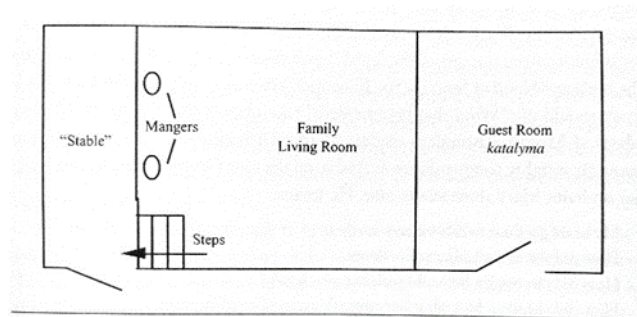


Figure 1.3. Typical village home in Palestine with attached guest room

This kind of one-room living with animals in the house at night is evident in a couple of places in the gospels. In Matthew 5.15, Jesus comments:

Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. This makes no sense unless everyone lives in the one room! And in Luke's account of Jesus healing a woman on the sabbath (Luke 13.10–17), Jesus comments:

Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie your ox or donkey from the manger [same word as Luke 2.7] and lead it out to give it water?

Interestingly, none of Jesus' critics respond, 'No I don't touch animals on the Sabbath' because they all would have had to lead their animals from the house. In fact, one late manuscript variant reads 'lead it out *from the house* and give it water.'

What, then, does it mean for the *katalyma* to have 'no space'? It means that many, like Joseph and Mary, have travelled to Bethlehem, and the family guest room is already full, probably with other relatives who arrived earlier. So Joseph and Mary must stay with the family itself, in the main room of the house, and there Mary gives birth. The most natural place to lay the baby is in the hay-filled depressions at the lower end of the house where the animals are fed. The idea that they were in a stable, away from others, alone and outcast, is grammatically and culturally implausible. In fact, it is hard to be alone at all in such contexts. Bailey amusingly cites an early researcher:

"Anyone who has lodged with Palestinian peasants knows that notwithstanding their hospitality the lack of privacy is unspeakably painful. One cannot have a room to oneself, and one is never alone by day or by night. I myself often fled into the open country simply in order to be able to think."

This should fundamentally change our approach to enacting and preaching on the nativity.

But one last question remains. This informed and persuasive understanding of the story has been around, even in Western scholarship, for a long, long time. Bailey cites William Thomson, a

Presbyterian missionary to Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, who wrote in 1857:

"It is my impression that the birth actually took place in an ordinary house of some common peasant, and that the baby was laid in one of the mangers, such as are still found in the dwellings of farmers in this region."

And Bailey notes that Alfred Plummer, in his influential ICC commentary, originally published in the late nineteenth century, agreed with this. So why has the wrong, traditional interpretation persisted for so long?

I think there are two main causes. In the first place, we find it very difficult to read the story in its own cultural terms, and constantly impose our own assumptions about life. Where do you keep animals? Well, if you live in the West, especially in an urban context, away from the family of course! So that is where Jesus must have been—despite the experience of many who live in rural settings. I remember noticing the place for cattle underneath the family home in houses in Switzerland.

Secondly, it is easy to underestimate how powerful a hold tradition has on our reading of Scripture. Dick France explores this issue alongside other aspects of preaching on the infancy narratives in his excellent chapter in *We Proclaim the Word of Life*. He relates his own experience of the effect of this:

"To advocate this understanding is to pull the rug from under not only many familiar carols ('a lowly cattle shed'; 'a draughty stable with an open door') but also a favourite theme of Christmas preachers: the ostracism of the Son of God from human society, Jesus the refugee. This is subversive stuff."

So is it worth challenging people's assumptions? Yes, it is, if you think that what people need to hear is the actual story of Scripture, rather than the tradition of a children's play. France continues:

"The problem with the stable is that it distances Jesus from the rest of us. It puts even his birth in a unique setting, in some ways as remote from life as if he had been born in Caesar's Palace. But the message of the incarnation is that Jesus is one of us. He came to be what we are, and it fits well with that theology that his birth in fact took place in a normal, crowded, warm, welcoming Palestinian home, just like many another Jewish boy of his time."

And who knows? People might even start asking questions about how we read the Bible and understand it for ourselves!

From the blog

<https://www.psephizo.com/biblical-studies/jesus-wasnt-born-in-a-stable/> © Ian Paul

A Brief History of St Paul's

On 14th August 1850, John Bird Sumner, the Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated St Paul's Church, Rusthall. Now, in 2025 we are celebrating its 175th anniversary!

The church was built in 1849 to serve the expanding local population. The idea was driven forward by the then Rector of Speldhurst, the Rev J.J. Saint who was also the Lord of the Manor at Groombridge Place. It was built on land purchased from William Nevill, the 4th Earl of Abergavenny, who also provided a sizable contribution the finance and building costs.

St Paul's was designed in the Gothic Revival style of the 13th century by the Derbyshire based architect Henry Isaac Stevens. It's thought Stevens had been chosen as he had designed the nearby church at Fordcombe only a couple of years earlier. His brother, Nehemiah Edward Stevens, was living in Tunbridge Wells working as an architect and played a small part in the project.

It is constructed of local sandstone at the cost of £5,200 which was a considerable sum for the period. That included £190 paid to Lord Abergavenny for the two-acre site. The building society which was also involved in the finance originally withheld some of the funds as they considered there were not enough seats provided for "free use of the poor" and even though new plans corrected this, the church soon needed to be expanded.

By 1864 there was an appeal for further funds as, "since the Church was built in 1850 it was computed that upwards of 45 mansions had been built.....and 133 cottages". So, St Paul's was extended in 1865 with the addition of a north aisle and that was followed by further work in 1875 when an organ chamber and vestry were added to the northeast and again in 1913 with a large western porch, with both a west and north entrance.

Church Centre

The site of St Paul's at the edge of Rusthall Common, although picturesque, was difficult to access on foot in bad weather or darkness and was a way from the main village area. The Rev Benjamin Smith, who was the first Vicar, was concerned about the problems many of his parishioners had getting to services and so from 1860 a small room was opened for worship in Rusthall High Street, then known as Workhouse Lane.

From small beginnings evolved the Mission Room, built and dedicated on 25th November 1887. For the previous 27 years Sunday evening services had been held in the Infant School, now the library.

Many activities were associated with the Mission Church: for example, Sunday School, Band of Hope, Boys' Brigade, Mother's Union, Scouts and Guides. Coal and Clothing Clubs were well supported. The church was extended in 1908; the join in the brickwork can be seen clearly. At the same time the Parish Hall was added.

During the Great War (1914-1918) the building was used as the girls' school while theirs was used as a VAD Hospital.

Now the Church Centre, it fulfils a vital role in parochial life. It houses our Family Service, two halls with kitchens and modern facilities, also the Parish Office. It welcomes many and varied activities as part of modern Rusthall community life.

St Paul's Parish Church has been given a Grade II listing by Historic England as

- it is a good example of an Early English Gothic Revival church showing a good understanding of medieval architecture and its application to the design of an early Victorian Anglican church.
- It has a fine extension of the 1860s to meet increasing accommodation needs.
- It retains a largely complete ensemble of 19th Century fixtures.

Here are some of those in brief

Windows

The stained-glass originates from a number of sources: the main east window coming from the workshops of Ward and Hughes. By 1935 when every window was filled with stained glass and include designs by Edward Burne-Jones and Martin Travers.

In 1999 a stained-glass window was discovered on a dusty shelf high up in the tower. It originated from a small east window in the south transept (now behind the organ pipes) which had been replaced by clear glass. It was re-sited in a former blocked window in the east wall of the north aisle which now adjoins the 1875 vestry. It is effectively a false window illuminated by a strip light.

Sculpture

The sculptured reredos, that is an ornamental screen covering the wall at the back of an altar, was designed in 1869 by John Norton and carved by William Farmer (later part of the Farmer Brindley partnership) and was controversial. Some thought it too Roman Catholic with its lifelike imagery and petitioned for its removal. The central portion depicts the Supper at Emmaus with the side panels showing the Road to Calvary and the Entombment.



The Ten Commandments had been removed from behind the altar to make way for the reredos. They stayed in storage for over a century, when in 1999 they were cleaned up and added to the west end of the north aisle in what has become a dedicated chapel to the memory of Canon Norman Mantle, a much-loved 20th century vicar of St Paul's.

Also hanging in the chapel is a modern piece of glass work designed by Jenny Clarke.

Font

The font is from 1850 and has a foliated octagonal bowl with angle shafts and a moulded circular base. It has had several sites in the church over the years and originally had a cover suspended from a chain.

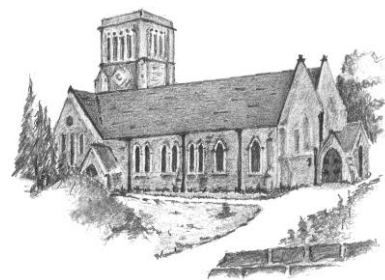
War Memorial

Just outside to the North of the church, on the boundary between the churchyard and the road is a magnificently stern, tall war memorial cross by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott bearing the names of the fallen in the First World War and constructed of Hollington stone.

Sources: Geoffrey Copus, St Paul's Parish Church Rusthall 1850-2000. Roger Homan, The Victorian Churches of Kent, 1984, John Newman, The Buildings of England: West Kent and the Weald, 1980. Additional material from Len Evans and Rob Baker.

Elaine Bruce

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Happy anniversary! What's for dinner?

Do you have a family favourite when it comes to mealtimes? A tried and tested dish that you know will hit the spot. Like many people I have a well-used notebook with recipes that I have got from friends and family, or half remembered from a newspaper or magazine, long before you could take a photo of the recipe on your mobile.

My notebook has been splattered and stained over years of being by my side as I cook. Some of the recipes remind me of lovely friends and the time when their food impressed me so much, I insisted I wanted the details before leaving. My homemade recipe book brings back very happy memories of making and sharing food, it's a little trigger to remember fun times.

St. Paul's 175th Anniversary is a great opportunity for us to dig out our favourite recipes and create our very own cookbook with stories to accompany home styled gems. It could be Dad's homemade chutney, Granny's Treacle Scones or Auntie's hotpot, let's dig out those well-love favourites and get ready to share. We are not asking for famous cooks' recipes that you enjoy; we won't be ripping-off someone's hard work by blatantly reprinting their recipes, and we don't need to when there are always the family gems to plunder. So, whether it's an old family secret, a fail-safe recipe or of a great way to cheat, we'd like to hear about them. Go on! You can tell us.

Some of the recipes in my little homemade book have been crossed out as they have never worked for me. I hope they are the half-remembered ones, but perhaps those who have shared a recipe left out an ingredient so it wouldn't be a good if someone else made it (cunning eh!). Some of you may be Mapp & Lucia fans and will know the story of the two women's battle over the recipe for Lobster a la Riseholme. If you haven't read the fabulous E. F. Benson books let me, give you the gist...

In her continual battle for social supremacy Lucia serves the dish, named after her former village, at a luncheon party to impress those in her new community. The delicious treat becomes the talk of the town, but no one can work out all the ingredients and Lucia refuses to disclose the recipe. This sends Miss Mapp into overdrive to discover the secret.

"Lobster a la Riseholme had long been an agonizing problem to Elizabeth. She had made an attempt at it herself, but the result was not encouraging. She had told Diva and the Padre that she felt sure she had 'guessed it',

and, when bidden to come to lunch and partake of it, they had both anticipated a great treat. But Elizabeth had clearly guessed wrong, for lobster à la Riseholme à la Mapp had been found to consist of something resembling lumps of india-rubber (so tough that the teeth positively bounced away from them on contact) swimming in a dubious pink gruel, and both of them left a great deal on their plates, concealed as far as possible under their knives and forks, though their hostess continued manfully to chew, till her jaw-muscles gave out".

Miss Mapp goes to greater lengths to get the recipe (read the book, no spoilers!).

But do we need another cookbook? Yes, I think there's room for another, especially one made by friends for such a special occasion. I'm always game to add another to my collection. I have lots of cookbooks to cover all kinds of cuisines, I like writing notes on the pages to remind me if they were enjoyed also when, and who I fed them to. Some are fancy with a lot of prep and effort. One Raymond Blanc recipe which I like very much tells me to "rinse the green peppercorns under running water for 30 minutes". Ah! Non! Je t'aime you lots Raymond, but I'm not doing that....and I didn't use kidney, just pork – oh and the wine was not the expensive one suggested, it was what I had leftover in the fridge. OK, they are little amendments but bigger ones I've made are recorded in my little book – like taking garlic and onions out of a recipe totally as otherwise a good friend has to take antihistamine tablets, and no one wants to provide an antidote to their cooking as a side dish. (I used celery and mild peppers if you're interested).

Coming together and sharing food can create a sense of connection and community. We've had many occasions where sharing has brought us closer, our Harvest meals, parish breakfasts, BBQs, all enjoyable times.

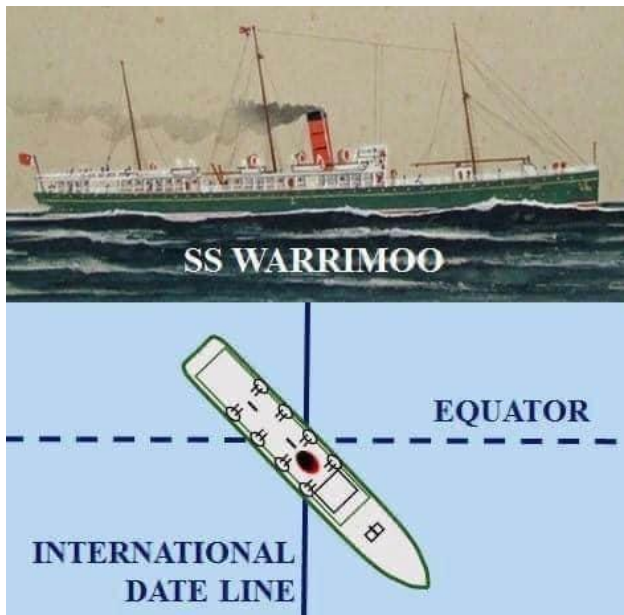
So please dig out your old family favourite, or an impressively easy recipe which is worth sharing. Perhaps you have a knockout tip for impressing your guests or a recipe which gets youngsters involved in cooking - we'd love to hear about them.

Email ebjournol1000@gmail.com or leave a hard copy at the Parish Church or Church Centre for my attention. We'd like to have your recipes by 31st March 2025

We'll have some professional cooks to help us to choose the best to publish in our St Paul's 175th Anniversary Cookbook later in 2025 – it'll make a fabulous Christmas Present – never hurts to think ahead!

Elaine Bruce

Time and Space



The passenger steamer SS Warrimoo was quietly knifing its way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on its way from Vancouver to Australia. The navigator had just finished working out a star fix and brought Captain John DS. Phillips, the result. The Warrimoo's position was LAT 0° 31' N and LONG 179 30' W. The date was 31 December 1899. "Know what this means?" First Mate Payton broke in, "We're only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line". Captain Phillips was prankish enough to take full advantage of the opportunity for achieving the navigational freak of a lifetime.

He called his navigators to the bridge to check and double check the ship's position. He changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he adjusted the engine speed.

The calm weather and clear night worked in his favour. At midnight the SS Warrimoo lay on the Equator at exactly the point where it crossed the International Date Line! The consequences of this bizarre position were many:

The forward part (bow) of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere and in the middle of summer. The rear (stern) was in the Northern Hemisphere and in the middle of winter. The date in the stern of the ship was 31 December 1899. In the bow it was 1 January 1900.

This ship was therefore not only in:

Two different days,
Two different months,
Two different years,
Two different seasons

But in two different centuries - all at the same time!



Flowers Needed!

As 2025 is rapidly approaching, so too is the 175th anniversary of the consecration of St Paul's Church, Rusthall. It has been agreed that one of the ways to mark this milestone event is to make a large banner to display on the outside of the Church Centre. This will incorporate elements from the 175 logo, shown above, but with a floral theme. To do this, several hundred flowers will be required, and this is where help will be needed from the congregation and the whole village.

These flowers can be knitted or crocheted and will be attached to a backing material and hoisted into position using the same mechanism as used for the large Remembrance Poppy. The plan is for this to go on display after Easter next year so there are a few months to get busy making flowers. These can be made from any colour or thickness of yarn but must not exceed 4 inches or 10 cm in diameter.



I would love as many people as possible, from the parish and village, to get involved with this project. All you have to do is start knitting and crocheting! There will be a large, labelled, pink collecting box in the Church Centre and another in the Parish church where you can drop off your creations. Any style, shape or colour of flower would be great. The bigger the mix of colours the better. If anyone needs a pattern or some yarn to get started, please get in touch with me on email jeak4000@gmail.com.

Jean Kerr



COMMUNITY LARDER

What is it?

A community larder receives surplus short date food from supermarkets to offer to people in our community.

When and where is it?

Our community larder will be in the St Paul's Church Centre every Friday between 12:30pm and 2:00pm

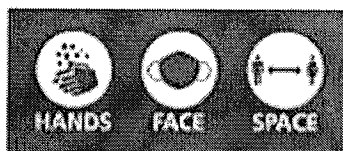
Who can use it?

Anyone can come and visit the community larder. There are no restrictions, no booking necessary, just turn up with a carrier bag to fill.

How much does it cost?

We suggest a small cash donation of £2, or as much as you can afford. For this, you can take away a bag full of quality food.

Please help us all stay safe by wearing a face mask, respecting social distancing and using the hand sanitiser provided.



WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU!

For more information, please email contact@rusthallvillage.org
or telephone 07805 475397

On Retreat At Bonnevaux, France

In early October I journeyed to Bonnevaux in France to attend a retreat organized by the World Community of Christian Meditation. I had been associated with the WCCM for many years and have been practising meditation on and off since my first encounter with it in the 1980's. The title of the retreat was 'And the Song remains beautiful'. Maybe, it was because of my recent bereavement that I felt drawn to apply and make the journey. My resolve to go was at times sorely tested by anxiety about venturing out on my own. Thankfully, I didn't succumb, and so off I went early one Monday morning, violin strapped to my back, to catch the train from Tonbridge to St Pancras International, on my way to Paris and from there to Poitiers.



The mission of Bonnevaux is the teaching of meditation from within the Christian tradition and universal wisdom, as a way of personal and social transformation. Since 2019 a community lives at Bonnevaux in the spirit of St Benedict, together with volunteers from many parts of the world. Daily life is centered in the spirit of silence within a rhythm of prayer, work and study. People of all ages, nationalities and faith traditions are welcome.

Bonnevaux means 'beautiful valley' and on arrival there, I was immediately struck by the beauty and peacefulness of the place. The 25 participants who had signed up for the retreat, had travelled from all over the world to attend. The buildings, including 160 acres of woodland and grassland, were purchased by WCCM in 2017 and in a recent renovation of the monastic buildings, some dating back to 1119, the old stables were converted into a refectory, reception area and bedroom accommodation. The beautiful old barn is now a welcoming space for worship, meditation and all kinds of gatherings.

We quickly settled into the rhythm of the silence and the daily pattern of worship, joining the resident community.

07.00 Optional Meditation

07.45 Morning Prayer and Meditation

12.15 Midday Prayer and Meditation

18.00 Evening Prayer and Meditation

Silence is encouraged during the day but comes to an end after evening prayer. So, supper was always a lively occasion with people enjoying conversations with each other.

What drew me to Bonnevaux was primarily the chance to deepen my meditation practice and to have a period of quiet reflection, much needed after Tony's death only a few months ago. What came as a surprise and a real gift was the encounter with the writers and poets, presented to us by the retreat leader Mark S. Burrows, an American scholar, poet and translator. It was especially the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke which touched me deeply, accessible for me in both the original German and in Mark's excellent English translations. There was a richness and diversity in the texts chosen by Mark for our study – Hildegard of Bingen, Meister Eckhart, Julian of Norwich, Hilde Domin, John O'Donohue and others.



I have returned enriched and encouraged in my own daily practice of meditation and remain grateful for the support of members of the congregation at St Paul's as I go forward, especially the Julian group which meets on a monthly basis.

For further information about Bonnevaux see www.bonnevauxwccm.org/fr

Vreni Gould

Poems for December and January

The hope and promise of Christmas are reflected in these poems, and carried deep into the New Year. Though not strictly a poem, Martin Luther King's lyrical words from 1963 embrace our present-day longing for peace, justice and freedom for *all* of humanity.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Susan Barber

You Do Not Need a Chimney for Santa Claus to Come

You do not need a chimney
for Santa Claus to come
You do not need a fireplace
to hang your stocking from

That stuff is just from telly
Do not believe the films
You do not need a great big house
for Santa to come in.

He's got a sleigh, for goodness sake
and loads of elves at hand:
Mrs Claus behind the scenes
computing all the plans;

Flying, glowing reindeer
galloping the Christmas air
Of course he can manage
a few quick flights of stairs –

the top flat of a tower block;
a barge on a canal;
a spare room in a friend's house;
a hostel; a hotel

So snuggle into sleep now
and don't listen to anyone
who says you need a chimney
for Santa Claus to come.

*Hollie McNish – written for the charity Home-Start,
which supports families with young children in difficult
circumstances.*



Christmas Eve on the Number 4

An unlikely collection this, shuffling
on to the bus at Waterloo, two
with overloaded rucksacks, dangerous
only because they are clumsy and unaware
of old ladies toppling behind their backs,
one with a suitcase of tumbled clothes,
all black. No chance that anyone has packed
the frankincense, no myrrh here.

On the bridge a flock of skateboarders
comes on board with talk of Max and Weasel,
their butterfly or boardslide and the hope
of a calfwrap. At the next stop
shoppers arrive bearing gifts
in plastic bags with famous names in varied
fonts but no spice or gold for a king,
more likely bedroom slippers

for a wife, or scented candles for the bath.
On a mobile phone, someone is asking
about a child. This bus has no ambition,
it is not following any star, only
the route laid down from A to B,
this far, no further. So passing St. Paul's
no one expects a choir of angels
and the bells are silent, saving themselves

for midnight. If there is a virgin
among us, it is hard to tell. But delivered
home, worrying perhaps how we spent
our money or our time, we take off our shoes
to free our pulpy feet and kiss the one we love.
We were not wise. We did not fall down
and kneel in adoration and yet
we have been saved for this, we have been saved.

Imtiaz Dharker



From New Year's Morning

Each morn is New Year's morn come true,
Morn of a festival to keep.

All nights are sacred nights to make
Confession and resolve and prayer;
All days are sacred days to wake
New gladness in the sunny air.
Only a night from old to new;
Only a sleep from night to morn.
The new is but the old come true;
Each sunrise sees a new year born.

Helen Hunt Jackson



From I Have a Dream

I say to you today, my friends...
I still have a dream. It is a dream
deeply rooted in the American dream.
I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up
and live out the true meaning of its creed.
We hold these truths to be self-evident
that all men are created equal.

I have a dream
that one day on the red hills of Georgia
the sons of former slaves and the sons
of former slave-owners will be able
to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream
that my four little children will one day
live in a nation where they will not
be judged by the colour of their skin
but by the content of their character.
I have a dream today!

Let freedom ring!
Allow freedom to ring!
from every mountainside...
from every peak....
from every village and hamlet...
we will be able to join hands and sing...
'Free at last, free at last;
Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.'

Martin Luther King Jnr.



Happy New Year

Obituary:

The Very Revd Robert Willis



Charming, witty, wonderful with words — just some of the ways in which Robert Willis, successively Dean of Hereford and Canterbury, will be remembered. But, above all, he will be remembered for his warmth, instinctive spirituality, pastoral sensitivity, apparently unscripted preaching, and consummate musicality.

His sudden death from heart failure on 22 October, in the United States, just two years since his retirement, has prompted tributes from around the world after his daily devotional webcasts from his garden during and since the Covid pandemic went viral on the internet, supported by his feline friends' unscripted interventions.

But long before the wonders of modern IT gave him an international profile, his warm personality and infectious faith left an indelible mark on all to whom and with whom he ministered.

Born in Bristol in 1947, he attended Kingswood Grammar School, and graduated from Warwick University. He trained at Cuddesdon and was awarded a diploma in theology from Oxford, as preparation for ordination in 1972.

The seeds of his decanal ministry were sown between 1975 and 1978 in Salisbury, where, as Vicar Choral, his liturgical gifts were nurtured, and his rapport with students at the Cathedral School was very much in evidence.

He was appointed Team Rector of Tisbury, in Wiltshire, in 1978. There he is remembered for once moving in with two elderly parishioners to provide support through a difficult illness.

He went to Sudan as part of a partnership-in-mission initiative, and this was the beginning of an enduring commitment to learning from churches that were worshipping and witnessing in

challenging and precarious environments overseas. When debating ministry and mission strategies back home, he would often present the opinions of this wider Anglican membership.

In 1987, he was appointed Vicar of Sherborne Abbey, where one of the curates he trained was the current Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Stephen Lake. Robert's leadership across the town and deanery led to his appointment as Dean of Hereford in 1993. There he inherited a significant building project to add a library to house the Mappa Mundi, the largest extant medieval map depicting the whole world. The new Dean was clearly key to the success of this project, and he preached a memorable sermon in the presence of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh at a service to celebrate the opening of the new building in the Cathedral Close.

In 1995, he was elected to represent fellow Deans in the General Synod, and he chaired the Deans' Conference from 1999 — clear indicators of the respect and regard of his peers.

In July 2001, he became Dean of Canterbury. Now, the full extent of his gifts could be in the service not only of the city and diocese of Canterbury, but also the Anglican Communion, whose members worldwide came to look upon the cathedral as their mother church also. This was something that the Dean did much to foster and encourage.

He was in receipt of many honours — academic, civic, and ecclesiastical, notably a Knighthood of the Order of St John. He served a term as Deputy Lieutenant of Kent. He was a Fellow of the Royal School of Church Music and several of his hymns are included in the latest version of Hymns Ancient and Modern.

Robert was reluctant to retire at the expected age of 70, and was granted leave to remain in post for a further five years. This time proved particularly significant. During the Covid pandemic, while public worship was suspended, he produced daily video prayer time from his deanery garden. These broadcasts became extremely popular, partially due to the antics of his cats, but mainly because of the informal and accessible style. They can still be watched on YouTube.

On retirement, he moved with his longstanding civil partner, Fletcher Banner, to the US, as resident fellow at Berkeley Divinity School, Yale. It was there he died suddenly but peacefully on 22 October of heart failure. His funeral was held in New Haven on 13 November, with a memorial service at Salisbury Cathedral planned in February 2025.

Deborah Bruce

Activity Pages

Try this word search about weather and words relating to weather. The words are written forwards, backwards, diagonally, up or down. At the end you will be left with eight unused letters which describe what conditions are like underfoot when we have had too much of one sort of weather.

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

BREEZE
CLEMENT
DRIZZLE
FOG
FROST
HAIL
HURRICANE
LUKEWARM
MUGGY
RAW
SHOWER
SLUSH
SNOWSTORM
TEMPEST
WET

CALM
COLD
DRY
FRESH
GALE
HOT
ICY
MONSOON
RAIN
SCOTCHMIST
SIROCCO
SMOG
SPRAY
TORNADO
WIND

Twenty Questions to Test You

- Who invented the lightning rod
- In what film series did Princess Leia appear
- What does pizza mean in Italian
- Who was the first President of the United States
- For which country did Kenny Dalglish play international soccer
- What kind of animal was Moby Dick
- Which planet was first seen in 1846
- What was the name of the miser in Charles Dickens' book – A Christmas Carol
- If an animal is a quadruped, what does it have
- Which country has a popular song called Waltzing Matilda
- How many humps has a Bactrian camel
- At the tip of which continent is Cape Horn
- What is the name for a male bee
- What is charcoal made from
- Which animal is the symbol of Russia
- What was DDT invented to do
- What fuel is made by heating coal
- Who was Robin Hood's sweetheart
- What is America's windy city
- Which soccer team is linked to Stamford Bridge

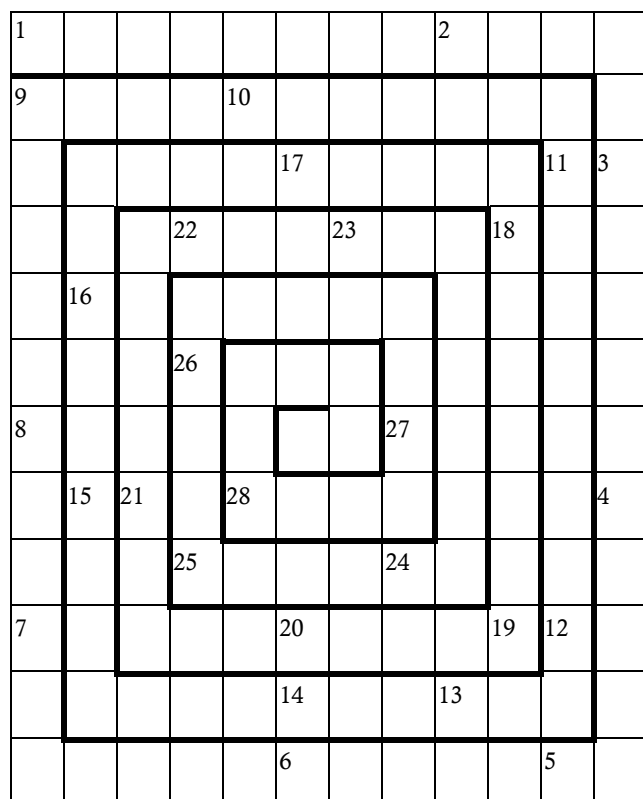
E	O	L		A		N	N
	U	O		R		D	T
			W	A			R
			E				

Try your hand at this Cross-jig.

All the words have building connections. Fit the 12 five-letter shapes into the grid to find the names of the ten items.

O					C	L	S	G	
W	Y	T	S				H		
					L				
W	P	T		I	L	N		S	
I	A				A			G	E
							R	E	
T	R	R	E	G					
		S	C	L	A				
O	T				R	O		I	A
					D			L	
					E			E	R

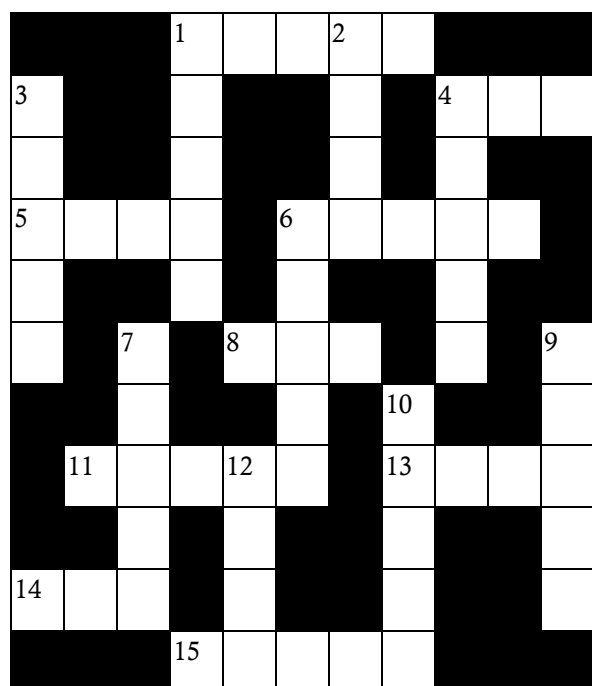
Try this Crossword with a Difference where the last letter of each answer is the first of the next.
It is all about festivals.



1. An explosive connected with 5th November
2. An animal often linked with Easter
3. Sparkling Christmas decoration
4. A name for a former Harvest festival
5. Building where Jesus was born

6. Festival celebrated on 6th January
7. Word which precedes log – a type of Christmas cake
8. Festival which remembers the dying and rising of Jesus
9. Bird which often appears on Christmas cards
10. Where Mary and Joseph lived
11. The week before Easter
12. Another name sometimes given to wise men
13. A gift brought by the wise men
14. A flower often linked to Mothering Sunday
15. Name for the 40 days before Easter
16. The number linked to the night before the Feast of the Epiphany
17. Complete Hark the _____ angels sing
18. He wrote the book 'A Christmas Carol'
19. Nickname for Father Christmas
20. These were seen by the shepherds out in the fields in the Christmas Story
21. Name given to a cake eaten at Easter
22. One is often carried by Carol singers
23. Another name for Whitsun
24. Number of gifts brought by the Wise Men
25. Chocolate ones are popular at Easter
26. Possibly hung up on Christmas Eve
27. Complete 'All good _____ around us
28. Form of meat often cooked around the bonfire on 5th November

Try this crossword – the answers are mainly trees



Clues Across

1. Used for Christmas decoration
4. Sounds like a container
5. To waste away with grief
6. A stoneless fruit
8. Often found in a churchyard
11. A conifer that is not an evergreen
13. Not fast
14. The heart of England
15. From Lebanon

Clues Down

1. Girl's name
2. Fruit similar to a lemon
3. Trembling Poplar
4. Punishment rod
6. At the seashore
7. Colour connected with a prickly bush
9. Eating chestnut
10. Kind of willow
12. Fruit of pine, fir etc.

Christmas Greenery

Holly and possibly ivy are the most used items of greenery at Christmas. The custom of using these for decoration at this season goes back to the time when houses were hung with evergreens as a charm to protect against evil. The spirits were supposed to come in and shelter in the evergreens away from the bad weather.

In part of England it is supposed to be unlucky to take holly into the house before Christmas Eve, while in another area tradition says that if you bring 'smooth' holly into the house the wife will be the master of the home, but if 'rough' is brought in then the husband will rule.

In some English country areas the prickly and non-prickly kinds are known as 'he' and 'she' Holly. A countryman believed that early berries foretell a hard winter. You will notice that the leaves have sharp spines around the edges which are twisted up and down. One reason for these spines is to protect the tree from being eaten by animals such as deer. Higher up the tree where the deer cannot reach you will find the leaves spineless.



Holly is, of course, an evergreen. It does not lose its leaves in the autumn – they are always hard and stiff. The cold does not harm them and because they are shiny the rain and the snow slip off them. The waxy surface also explains why holly does not wither when it is hung up on walls for Christmas decoration.

Holly had a special place in old pagan worship, but as Christians continued to use it they looked for a Christian meaning. It is thought that the word holly once meant holy. It is a 'holy' tree because it reminds us of the death of Jesus. The prickly leaves are like the thorns

used in the Crown of Thorns that Jesus was forced to wear on Good Friday. The red berries are to remind us of the drops of blood that came when the thorns pierced His flesh.

The Ivy is different from most flowers since it bears flowers in the autumn and has ripe fruit or berries in the spring, which gives a rich supply of food to those insects which survive the autumn and winter. The flowers are a yellowish, pale green colour while the berries start as green, but as they ripen they turn to a blackish purple. Legend says Ivy has magical powers and at Christmas kept houses safe from demons.



Mistletoe is a half-parasite plant. A parasite means someone or something that takes its life from another person or thing. It doesn't work for itself. The mistletoe does some work for itself, but it also takes some food from the plant on which it is growing. It tends to grow out of the branch of an oak, apple or poplar tree. Birds eat the white, soft sticky berries and wipe the seeds on to a branch from their beaks. The seeds grow on the branch and a new plant begins.



There is a very old northern legend which explains why we hang up mistletoe at Christmas. Balder, the sun god, was so fine and so great that the other gods promised never to hurt him. They place a spell on everything to take care of him. Now when the gods were laying their spells, they forgot the mistletoe. Loki, the god of evil, found this out, and made a sharp arrow out of a mistletoe branch. He put the arrow into the hands of the blind god, Hoder, and guided Hoder's hand so that the arrow struck Balder. Balder was killed but the other gods brought him back to life again and the mistletoe promised never to hurt anyone again. This story made mistletoe an

emblem of love.

The use of mistletoe at the winter festival goes back before the coming of Christianity to this country. It was the sacred plant of the Druids and the practice of kissing beneath it is thought to come from an ancient Druid rite. When Christianity came to this country the Church allowed most of the old winter festivities to be continued, but so greatly was mistletoe a part of the old heathen religion that Christian priests would not allow it to be used for decorating the church at Christmas.

ANSWERS

Wordsearch – The eight unused letters spell Squelchy

Twenty questions to test you

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Benjamin Franklin | 8. Ebenezer Scrooge | 15. Bear |
| 2. Star Wars | 9. 4 legs | 16. Kill insect pests |
| 3. Pie | 10. Australia | 17. Coke |
| 4. George Washington | 11. Two | 18. Maid Marian |
| 5. Scotland | 12. South America | 19. Chicago |
| 6. White Whale | 13. Drone | 20. Chelsea |
| 7. Neptune | 14. Wood | |

Crossword with a Difference

- | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Gunpowder | 8. Easter | 15. Lent | 22. Lamp |
| 2. Rabbit | 9. Robin | 16. Twelfth | 23. Pentecost |
| 3. Tinsel | 10. Nazareth | 17. Herald | 24. Three |
| 4. Lammas | 11. Holy Week | 18. Dickens | 25. Eggs |
| 5. Stable | 12. King | 19. Santa | 26. Stocking |
| 6. Epiphany | 13. Gold | 20. Angels | 27. Gifts |
| 7. Yule | 14. Daffodil | 21. Simnel | 28. Sausage |

Cross-Jig

Reading columns from left to right:

W	P	T	S	C	L	C	L	S	G
I	A	O	T	E	O	L	A	H	A
N	N	I	A	L	U	O	R	O	R
D	T	L	I	L	N	S	D	W	A
O	R	E	R	A	G	E	E	E	G
W	Y	T	S	R	E	T	R	R	E

Crossword Mainly Trees

Across

1. Holly
4. Box
5. Pine
6. Berry
8. Yew
11. Larch
13. Sloe
14. Oak
15. Cedar

Down

1. Hazel
2. Lime
3. Aspen
4. Birch
6. Beech
7. Black
9. Sweet
10. Osier
12. Cone

Whatever happened to good manners?

The House of Commons Standards Committee recently reported that they were so concerned about the behaviour of Members of Parliament that they have introduced refresher courses on how to behave, despite all members being presented with a rule book. This followed several unsavoury incidents which included members swearing at, or referring, to other members as 'you' defying the rule of referring to the 'Right Honourable Member'. Other breaches included members being chastised for eating and drinking in the Chamber in direct contravention of rules and in another case a male member appearing bare footed looking, as the Committee reported, 'as if he had just got out of bed.'



General Information

Vicar Rev. Ronnie Williams, The Vicarage, Bretland Road, Rusthall	521357
Associate Priest Rev. Nicholas Burton (c/o Parish Office)	521447
Reader Daphne Pilcher	521691
Churchwardens Rod Garcia-Fermer May Graves	
Please contact via email to Churchwardens@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk	
Deputy Churchwardens Graeme Anderson Chris Dobson	532922 539539
Parochial Church Council Secretary Mione Palmer	667951
Youth Council Angela Culley	07779 098026
Treasurer and Planned Giving Pat Cripps	521447
Safeguarding Officers Daphne Pilcher	521691
DBS Officer Clive Brown c/o the Parish Office	521447
Bible Reading Fellowship Secretary Vivienne Sharp	543263
Choir Leader Fiona Johnson	07540 273303
Magazine Editors Deborah Bruce and Sue Hare c/o the Parish Office email – magazine@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk	
Flower Team Daphne Hodges	533492
Parish Hall Bookings Churchyards Enquiries to Parish Office	521447
Rusthall St Paul's Primary School Executive Headteacher – Mrs Liz Mitchell Head of School – Mrs Lyndsay Smurthwaite	520582 520582

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

All worshippers who are baptised members of the Church of England, and aged over 16, should have their names entered on the Electoral Roll. This entitles them to attend and vote at the Annual Parochial Meeting. Forms for enrolment will be found in the Parish Church or the Parish Office and should be sent to the Vicar.

Organisations

Julian Group Pat Stevens	529187
Group Scout Leader Gavin Cons Email – rusthallsoutgroup@gmail.com	
Scout Membership Secretary Juliet Waller Email – rusthallsoutgroupwaitinglist@yahoo.co.uk	
Squirrels: rusthallsquirrels@gmail.com Beavers: beaversrusthall@gmail.com Cubs: rusthallcubs@hotmail.co.uk Scouts: rusthallscouts@gmail.com	
Guide Senior Section Helen Deller	07720 252481
Guide Guiders Gemma Bradley	07377 061398
Brownie Guiders Karen Miller (Thurs) rustahallbrownies@btinternet.com Tina Francis (Mon)	545877
Rainbows Mary Saunders Email – saundii@aol.com	319872
Playtime at St Paul's Liz Mankelow	07840 837968
Rusthall Lunch Club Ros Rodwell	01892 618538
Rusthall Community Larder Bjorn Simpole	07900 906294
Rusthall Community & Youth Project Barry Edwards	680296
Rusthall Village Association Alex Britcher	07967 011467
Rusthall Parish Council Council Clerk: Alison Stevens	520161
Rusthall Bonfire and Fete Committee Annie Softley	548366
Friends of TW and Rusthall Common Clive Evans	518975



The Parish Office

Parish Administrator - Mrs Ginette di Palma

St Paul's Parish Office, Church Centre, Rusthall Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8RE

Telephone (01892) 521447

Registered Charity in England & Wales, Number 1132681

Office email: office@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk

Magazine email: magazine@stpaulsrusthall.org.uk

Website: www.stpaulsrusthall.org.uk

The Office is open on weekday mornings (except Tuesdays) between 10 am and 1 pm.