

# C o n t e n t s



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

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*Cover picture*

**'Bank Holiday Worship:  
Peterborough & Norwich'**

*Visit our Website*

[www.solihullparish.org.uk](http://www.solihullparish.org.uk)

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# Editorial

At the end of *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam, who accompanies the hero on his epic journey, returns home. Here the author, JRR Tolkien, describes Sam's homecoming:

*And he went on, and there was yellow light, and fire within; and the evening meal was ready, and he was expected. And Rose drew him in, and set him in his chair, and put little Elanor upon his lap.*

*He drew a deep breath. 'Well, I'm back,' he said.*

There is something here which echoes in me, as I settle back into parish life after my sabbatical earlier this year.

The theme of my sabbatical was 'simplicity'. My aim was to try to simplify as many aspects of daily life as possible and to see what items, activities and commitments I could live without in order to try to introduce more space and clarity to life. And in order to keep track of my efforts, I kept a written journal throughout the three months.

The first entry in my journal included this reflection:

*The theme of my sabbatical is simplifying: managing with less, being open to what is simpler and more life-giving, travelling more lightly. And I have some questions which I want to travel with:*

- *How much 'stuff' do we need - and what can we do without?*
- *How can I travel more lightly, and minimise what I carry on the way?*
- *How does following Jesus invite a greater simplicity?*

I spent as much of my sabbatical as I could seeking some answers to those questions. For example, when I went on retreat to Devon, I tried to minimise the number of books I took with me, and also took fewer items of clothing than usual, knowing that I always end up wearing the same few comfortable things anyway.

At home, I have made changes to my working environment, so that it is less cluttered and less complicated, with the aim of being able to focus and think more clearly. I also started to go to a local meditation class which I have found enormously helpful in clarifying my patterns of thought and outlook on life.

It is tiny steps such as these that have gradually enabled me to realise that much of my own desire to cling to things and to resist the invitation to live more simply is rooted in my fear of what might happen if I no longer have access to these familiar things.

When I looked back at my journal, I was drawn to a reflection which I wrote at the end of May:

*The only thing which can conquer fear, so I believe, is love: the knowledge that one is so much held in love – by God, by family, by oneself – that fear evaporates like mist in sunlight. I recall that Mother Julian, in one of her showings, heard the Lord say that all he created was created for love – nothing was outside that love, and love sustains it all.*

*And of course, the challenge for us frail human beings is believing that we could possibly be included in such a love. Thus, we put into place an endless litany of precautions and safety features that will fill in the gaps that we believe will quickly appear in the fabric of love.*

Now that my sabbatical is over, the challenge is to resist the compulsion to seek security in material things and to seek to trust God's unfathomable love.

Perhaps these words of Jesus are a helpful guide in this challenge:

*Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves can break in and steal them. Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will always be where your treasure is. (Matthew 6.19-21, CEV).*

It is tempting for the Church to look for security in physical items, procedures and financial resources. But whilst these things can be essential tools in our life and work, they are not the purpose of our belonging together, of our worship, nor of our mission. Some might say that the more lightly we travel, the more readily we can respond to the leading of God's Spirit. Perhaps this is a process of discovering how much is 'enough', so that we and all living beings can enjoy what Jesus offers to us: life in all its fullness.

*It is good to be back with you all!*

**Simon**

## **WHAT IS 'JUST EXPLORE' AND WHO IS IT FOR?**



***just explore*** is a course which explores the key aspects of the Christian faith.

2 sets of 5 sessions on Thursday evenings, starting in November, are held in a relaxed and informal environment where you are encouraged to ask anything you are unsure about; no question is too simple or too challenging.

The sessions provide an opportunity to learn, discover and discuss.

***just explore*** is for everyone regardless of their current understanding of faith or their spiritual journey so far:

- Those wanting to explore Christianity,
- Newcomers to Solihull and/or their local church,
- Those wishing to be baptised/confirmed following completion of the course,
- Those who want a refresher on the basics of Christianity.

**More details are shown on the website**

**[www.solihullparish.org.uk](http://www.solihullparish.org.uk)**

(and look under the three menu dots on the right side of the home page)

or contact Andrew Williams - [arwilliams399@gmail.com](mailto:arwilliams399@gmail.com)

or contact the Parish Office on **0121 705 5350**.

***We hope you will want to join us on our journey of faith.***

## Creationtide 2019

The theme for Creation-tide 2019 has been "The web of life". We are all aware of how fragile our ecosystems are and we need to make strenuous efforts to try to keep the overall temperature of the earth from rising more than 1.5°C. It is easy to feel helpless, but there are things we can do – "little steps" as one of our preachers said.

### What can I do?

- 1. Environmental advocacy** – the protection of species and their habitats.  
Take Action – a billion acts of Green: [www.earthday.org/Take-Action/Environment](http://www.earthday.org/Take-Action/Environment)  
Green Alliance: [www.Green-Alliance.org.uk](http://www.Green-Alliance.org.uk)  
Energy saving trust: [www.EnergySavingTrust.org.uk](http://www.EnergySavingTrust.org.uk)  
Friends of the Earth: [www.friendsoftheearth.uk](http://www.friendsoftheearth.uk)  
Ethical Consumer: [www.EthicalConsumer.org](http://www.EthicalConsumer.org)  
Wildlife trusts  
Recycle now: [www.RecycleNow.com](http://www.RecycleNow.com)  
Keep Britain Tidy: [www.keepbritaintidy.org/litterheroes](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/litterheroes)  
Church of England Shrinking Footprint programme: [www.ChurchofEngland.org](http://www.ChurchofEngland.org) > environment
- 2. Social justice** – protecting people at greatest risk from global warming.  
Amnesty International: [www.Amnesty.org.uk](http://www.Amnesty.org.uk)  
Christian Aid: [www.ChristianAid.org.uk](http://www.ChristianAid.org.uk)  
Tear Fund: [www.tearfund.org](http://www.tearfund.org)  
Fair trade: [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)
- 3. A Rocha UK** – 'Caring for God's Earth'  
Eco Church initiative: [www.ARocha.org.uk](http://www.ARocha.org.uk) > ecochurch  
Twice-yearly magazine with Biblical reflections, discussion on crucial issues and ideas for practical action: [www.ARocha.org.uk](http://www.ARocha.org.uk)
- 4. Meat-free days.**
- 5. Buy responsibly-farmed products** and/or organic products – animal, fish, vegetables and fruit – more expensive but eat less! Buy seasonal produce.
- 6. Recycling**
- 7. Drive less:** Walk and cycle more.

Some people have approached me about forming a group that can head up action that we could take as a church and get involved with EcoChurch. Beryl Moppett has been a "Green" warrior for many years and St Helen's has made great headway. But we need more people like Beryl to come together. Please let me know if you are interested.

Jane

# Roundabout

## Soul Survivor 2019

During the summer holidays the youth spent a week at Soul Survivor, a five-day Christian youth festival in Peterborough. Every year the youth look forward to this event as a 'spiritual reset' and chance to spend time worshipping, praying and discussing how to live out what the Bible says with 8,500 other young people.

Every day would have two main talks with worship led by musicians such as Tom Smith, Guvna B, Rend Collective and Beth Croft, before a message shared from a speaker followed by prayer and ministry time. The main talks this year were incredibly powerful and gave us all a lot to think about, particularly of note was one from Laura Hancock in which she took her make-up off while talking about being our authentic self which left everyone in the room silent.



Outside of the main talks there were multiple seminars on a range of topics from 'Church, football and Jurgen Klopp', to 'Life according to Love Island' tackling ways in which Christian young people can balance what is popular today and their Christian faith. The evenings were full also with more opportunities to worship, films to watch, silent discos, and much, much more.

We joined with Knowle, Dorrige and Olton Baptist church this year, which meant we had a larger group of 90, which again was a great chance for our parish young people to meet other young Christians in the local area. As always, we would like to say a big 'thank you' to our volunteers who sacrificed their time off to come along and serve the youth in all the ways they do, we could not have done it without them.

Please join us in praying for guidance on where to go next year, as this year was the final Soul Survivor. It has been a space in which the young people have greatly grown in spirituality and faith and we are very grateful for all that soul survivor has been to so many people. As always though we look forward to what God has in store for us next year.

**Joe Minall**

## Churchyard Tidy-up Day

### The best cakes and drinks to date?

Eighteen adults, nine Parish youth and two children accomplished, with an average of two hours effort each, more than the work of one full time worker for one and a half weeks in the churchyard on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Thanks to the efforts of Anne, Richard, David, Jeroen, Susan, Chris, Jenny, Nigel, Sarah, Joe, Richard, Carl, David, Sam & Charlotte + children, Youth leader Joe with Lynn, + George, Lilly, Annie, Will, Mary, Lydia, Cloe, Paige and Kyra, we managed together to:



- Clear out gutters,
- Gather up old flowers and grave goods,
- Collect up tree debris,
- Dig out invasive weeds generally or remove seed heads,
- Sweep paths and take out weeds.

Special thanks are due to the Parish youth who not only provided the refreshments but prepared everything, served and cleared up the vestry afterwards leaving it spotless. (One problem – who ate the doughnut I had my eye on?)

### The great leaf collection: can you help us to break the record?



As a one-off change, the next Church tidy-up session already set for **2<sup>nd</sup> November** will have a change of timing from the usual 10am-1pm morning slot to an **afternoon slot of 1pm-4pm**. This is to allow for an All Souls' Day Parish wide Eucharist to be held in the church at 10.30am.

This is the final session planned for this year and concentrates on collecting up all the tree debris from the autumn storms and also the fallen leaves. This allows for a final grass cutting in the following week to leave the churchyard safe and tidy for the Remembrance Sunday external services around the War memorial.

In previous years many families with children have joined in to help and had a lot of fun and fresh air helping to gather up, in our best year, **a record 164 black bags of leaves**. These are then collected for recycling on a set of local allotments where the members keep asking "When are the

# Roundabout

Holy leaves coming?" They also say that they feel that their vegetable crops are "blessed".

Everybody is welcome to come and help, for as short or long a time as they wish. I would be happy to speak with any families who haven't been before if they would like any further information. We have a refreshment break with suitable drinks and "exceedingly fine cakes" half-way through – some of which are home made. (Just make sure I get some this time!)



**Michael Rumball (0121 711 1726)**  
**Chairman Church and Churchyard committee**

## The Day Maisie Came to Church

As part of the creation-tide season, at the St Alphege All Age service on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September, we were thinking about how we might exercise dominion over God's creation. We were aware of all the damage human beings have done to other human beings and the seas, rivers, forests, soil, the air... the list is endless.



Maisie came as a visual aid – particularly for the children. We heard from her owner, Lou, how she looked after Maisie because she loved her and wanted to treat her well. We then thought that if this was how Lou looked after Maisie, then, we in a similar way should care for one another and all that God has created.

Maisie appeared as a great surprise because she was silent for the whole service. She loved meeting everyone and wanted people to stroke her.

I think the children will remember Maisie for a long time!

**Jane**

## **Change into Action Scheme.**

**SCAH** and a number of other organisations have teamed together to launch a new initiative "Change into Action". It is an "alternative giving scheme", meaning that rather than giving change to people asking for it on the High St, members of the public make donations online or at particular points in the town centre. The funds are held by SCAH then applied for by organisations who work with the homeless and those at risk, so that the money goes directly towards helping people improve their circumstances.

To donate by card, find out more or to find a current list of donation points (this will grow as the scheme grows!) see [changeintoaction.org.uk/solihull](http://changeintoaction.org.uk/solihull). In the meantime, Sporting Barbers (High St, opposite Carluccio's) is the closest donation point to St Alphege. Cash donations can also be made at Specsavers in Solihull and ASDA in Shirley.

**Sam**

## **The TeddyRose Foundation Memorial Service**

***St Alphege Church, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 6:30pm***

**T**his year we are hosting a very special service for The TeddyRose Foundation. It will mark the end of Baby Loss Awareness Week, an annual event that takes place between 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Throughout the week, bereaved parents and those who are close to them unite with each other to commemorate the lives of babies who died during pregnancy, at or soon after birth and in infancy.

Local parents Michael and Trisha White suffered two devastating losses between 2017-2018, losing not one, but two children, Teddy and Rose. Teddy sadly passed at 21 weeks and Rose at 41 weeks. When born they wrapped them up in a blanket and when it was time to say goodbye, rather than leaving the hospital empty handed, they scissor-cut their blankets in half, taking half home and leaving half with them. The comfort that this provided led to the foundations of what has become a registered charity for them in July of this year.

Their creation of 'cuddle blankets' that are adapted so that they can be separated are now supplied to 8 hospitals/bereavement suites in the Midlands: The Eden Suite at Heartlands, Snowdrop at Good Hope, Birmingham Womens, City, Coventry & Warwickshire, Russells Hall, Dudley Manor and George Eliot. We are incredibly blessed that Rachel, current Chaplain of Solihull and Heartlands Hospital is able to join us for the service.

**Jane**



# Roundabout

## Restore

**R**estore is the inter-church organisation in Birmingham which befriends and helps Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Birmingham and with which Solihull Welcome (Solihull Churches Asylum Seekers Support Group) is closely associated. With volunteers from member Churches, SCASSG runs a Drop-in Centre at St Augustine's Church Hall on Wednesdays and Fridays, offering friendship, refreshments, clothing and toys.

Befriending is a great way to welcome and support a refugee or asylum seeker on their journey to settling into life our city. It can make a massive difference. One refugee wrote:

*"In the country I fled, so many people were trying to break me down. Through Restore and befriending I have learnt the beauty of being built up. This was new to me."*

You are invited to join Restore for training sessions aimed at those interested in refugee issues or befriending. This is a course of 3 sessions. Each session has different content. All new volunteers with Restore need to complete all 3 sessions. Training is offered free of charge but donations towards costs are welcome.

The next Restore training course will be on Mondays 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October from 7.15pm to 9.15pm at Carrs Lane Church, B4 7SX. For more information please see:

<https://www.restore-uk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Restore-training-course-October-2019.pdf>

Angela Cameron

### **Music Recitals : St Alphege Church at 1:10pm**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> October - Alison Holford (cello): Impressions of France  
- early 20th century masterpieces for cello and piano.
- 9<sup>th</sup> October - Charlotte Sleet (mezzo-soprano): Songs by Vivaldi, Ravel and Debussy.
- 16<sup>th</sup> October - Syska Flutes: A flute septet creating a musical journey through time, playing music from Bach to Klezmer (supporting Myton Hospice, Leamington).
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October - Alex Woodrow (organ): Works by Franck, Howells and Liszt.
- 30<sup>th</sup> October - Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Harps:  
A programme showcasing harpists of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Works by Scarlatti, Bartok, Cardon, Grandjany, Respighi and more...

**Light refreshments from 12.30pm    Recital ends 2.00pm**  
**Any voluntary donations to Friends of St Alphege Music**

## **A Short History of St Alphege**

*On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October, we will be celebrating the Patronal Festival at St Alphege (moved from the usual feast day of St Alphege as this clashed with Easter). But who was St Alphege, and why and how do we remember him? Here's a short history...*

St Alphege was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1006 to 1012. According to tradition, he was born at Weston, near Bath in 954 to a noble family. He became a monk at Deerhurst Priory in Gloucestershire, and was noted for his holiness and austerity of life. Chosen to be Abbot of Bath, he was later consecrated Bishop of Winchester, and was elevated to the see of Canterbury in 1006.

Alphege was captured during the Danish sacking of Canterbury in September 1011. Despite being kept in wretched conditions, he refused to require his flock, already impoverished by Danish raids and the payment of Danegeld, to raise the enormous sum required for his release. On April 19<sup>th</sup> 1012 at Greenwich, frustrated by his continuing refusal to be ransomed, Danish soldiers, in the middle of a drunken feast, dragged Alphege from prison and showered him with ox bones. He was eventually killed by an axe blow, which some interpreted as an act of mercy.

The killing of Alphege produced a wave of revulsion among Saxons and Danes alike. He was buried first in St Paul's Minster, London. Later in 1023, Cnut, King of Denmark, on assuming the English throne, as a gesture of reconciliation, had Alphege's remains transferred with great solemnity to Canterbury Cathedral. There they lay opposite the shrine of St Dunstan until the Reformation.

Alphege was regarded as a martyr for justice. His place in the canon survived the Norman Conquest, and he was officially canonised by Pope Gregory VII in 1078. Nine English churches, including the Parish Church of Solihull, are dedicated to him and five others have a close connection with his life and ministry.

The year 2012 marked the millennium of Alphege's martyrdom. It was celebrated with many events at national and local level. The twin themes of social justice and reconciliation between divided peoples were at the heart of the celebrations. An icon by the celebrated iconographer, Aidan Hart, was commissioned for the millennium celebrations and can be seen near the pulpit of St Alphege Church. Among many special services during that year, there was an ecumenical vespers at Canterbury Cathedral attended by Archbishop Rowan Williams, accompanied by his guest Cardinal Koch, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The choir of St Alphege, Solihull, sang at the service on that memorable occasion.

**Stephen Linstead**

## From the St Alphege Register

### Baptisms

1 <sup>st</sup> September:	Albie Patrick Connor Orme	Autumn Hamill Caley Orme
8 <sup>th</sup> September:	Olivia Homer Vincent Vasey	Molly Mukherjee
15 <sup>th</sup> September	Louis Edwards Louie Ackers	Harley Humphries

### Weddings

7<sup>th</sup> September     Thomas Anthony Smith & Daniella Berry

### Funerals

None

### Memorials

None

## Names taken from the Chantry Book for Remembrance in October

Mabel Griffiths	Michael Simcock	John Roberts
Frank Leach	Carl Hampson	Peter Brotherton
Muriel Leach	Ruth Humphrey	Nicola Blakeman
Chris Collenette	Margaret Fenwick	

### St Alphege Pre-School

We welcome you to apply for a Pre-School place for children who will turn 3 in the academic year beginning September 2020. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Application Form and Admissions Policy are available online (paper copies can be requested). St. Alphege Pre-School offers highly experienced and qualified staff. The last Ofsted Inspection result rated us 'Outstanding'.

#### **Little Treasures** (baby, toddler and pre-school age)

Wednesday afternoons in the OBH : 1.15pm until 2.30pm. Children accompanied by parent/carer. Drop-in session, no need to book, just turn up!

#### **2's Group** (in the term a child reaches age two)

Monday mornings (3 in 4 per month) in the OBH : 10.00am until 11.30am. Children accompanied by parent/carer. Drop-in session, no need to book, just turn up! Activities aimed at children who are 2 years old or who will be approaching 2 years old.

**Further information available : [www.stalphege-preschool.org.uk](http://www.stalphege-preschool.org.uk) or email Pre-School Manager, Meryl Homer : [manager@stalphege-preschool.org.uk](mailto:manager@stalphege-preschool.org.uk)**

## Worship Notes October 2019

This month sees the final Sundays in the season of Creationtide, including Harvest. The main liturgical colour is green with the exception of several important feast days where the colour is red or white.

### Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October

Today is the feast day of Saint Francis of Assisi. Although there are no Eucharist services in the Parish on a Friday, we give thanks today for Francis' life and ministry, and we remember and give thanks for the former church of St Francis in our parish.

### Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October

9.30am: Requiem Eucharist at St Alphege.

### Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October

At all of today's services at St Alphege, we shall be celebrating the feast of the dedication of the Parish Church. This will incorporate a commemoration of St Alphege, whose feast day this year fell within Eastertide and is therefore transferred to the dedication. Canon Dr Edmund Newey, Sub-Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, will be the visiting preacher at the 9.15am and 11am Eucharists.

### Wed 9<sup>th</sup> October

10am: Eucharist at St Michael's Chapel at which we will commemorate the life and work of Thomas Traherne (feast day Thurs 10<sup>th</sup> Oct). Thomas Traherne lived in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. His life was illuminated by an intense vision of happiness and he communicated this joy and mystery in his extensive writings, which are works of great depth and beauty.

### Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October

4pm at St Helen's Church: Messy Church, a fun worship event for families with songs, stories and activities to help us to learn more about following Jesus - followed by a cooked tea!

### Tues 15<sup>th</sup> October

9.30am: Eucharist at St Alphege at which the Feast Day of Teresa of Avila will be celebrated. Teresa lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. She travelled throughout Spain founding many new religious houses for men as well as women. Her writings about her own spiritual life and progress in prayer towards union with God include *The Way of Perfection* and *The Interior Castle*, which are still acclaimed.

### Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October

Feast day of St Luke the Evangelist.

### Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October

4pm at St Helen's Church: Jigsaw, a service for all ages with songs, prayers and opportunities to explore the Bible through a wide range of activities - followed by Sunday tea!

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October**

Many churches keep this day as Bible Sunday, an opportunity for churches to celebrate the continuing impact the Bible has on individuals and communities in the UK and throughout the world. For more information, visit: <http://www.biblesunday.org/>

### **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October**

9.30am: Eucharist at St Alphege at which the Feast Day of Ss Simon and Jude will be celebrated. They were named among the twelve apostles in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

## **Harvest Thanksgiving**

### ***Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2019***

Our annual Harvest Services on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October at St Alphege are once again a wonderful opportunity for all of us to think about how food reaches our plates, to give thanks to God and last, but most certainly not least, giving to those in need.

According to a ComRes survey of over 4,000 adults, two thirds of people (67%) say there is still value in children taking part in Christian Harvest Festivals, this is wonderful news. Our Parish has a deep-rooted tradition in the bountiful support of Harvest charities, reaching out to those in need and by heartfelt actions bringing about positive change.

After careful consideration, WaterAid, the UK's dedicated water charity, was chosen to benefit from our retiring collections after each service. We take certain things for granted, don't we? Clean water to drink, decent toilets and basic hygiene, but what if we had none of these? The statistics speak for themselves, 785 million people -one in ten-do not have clean water close to home so there is much work to do. Digging a well or installing a tap stand in a community can transform lives and WaterAid are doing this tirelessly with their teams and partners in 28 countries around the world, but they need our help. Please remember to Gift Aid if you are in position to do so, it really makes a difference to the charity.

In addition to our support of WaterAid we will also be supporting the Sparkhill Foodbank, Fry House and Solihull Churches Asylum Seekers Support Group. As we look forward to our 800th celebration year in 2020 let's do our absolute utmost to make this our best Harvest to date.

## **All Souls' Services**

### ***Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> & Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2019***

We will have the usual All Souls' services in St Alphege:

- Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 10.30am – All Souls' Requiem Eucharist
- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 6.30pm – New Door Service

During October, there will be lists in St Alphege Church for you to enter the names of deceased loved relatives/friends you'd like us to remember at those services.

**Jane**

# Music Matters

This month, I have handed over to the Head Chorister and Deputy Head Chorister of the Girls' Choir to give their accounts of the summer cathedral tour to Norwich Cathedral – thank you Darcy and Katherineine.

## Norwich Cathedral Residency

From the 26<sup>th</sup> August – 1<sup>st</sup> September, the Girls' Choir went to Norwich to sing at the cathedral for our annual residential tour. We sang for five out of the seven days, doing an Evensong every evening with the Morning Service as well on the Sunday. This was my eighth choir tour and it was definitely one of the best! Norwich Cathedral is a beautiful place to sing in as it had a good acoustic and a very nice and modern song school to rehearse in. We stayed in Langley School which was a lovely big building with huge grounds for evening football games and a common room which was a great place to chill out after a long day. There was a really nice variety of food for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



On the Thursday, we had our day off and headed to Gorleston beach. This day was really fun – we swam lots, did beach yoga and had lots of ice cream. On Friday, the Men's and Ladies' Choirs joined us and we attended a drinks reception in the Cloisters, set up by the priests and wardens of the cathedral, who welcomed us and really enjoyed our singing, inviting us back in the future. Overall, we all had a great time together creating new and stronger friendships. I look forward to next year's tour and thank you to all who organised it.

**Darcy Humphries**

In the final week of the school summer holidays, the St Alphege Girls' Choir enjoyed the chance to go to Norwich Cathedral. Although they missed the helter-skelter, the opportunities to sing some of their favourite repertoire remained. All of the Girls' Choir have got much closer throughout this week and have had plenty of practice with psalms: 108 verses in two days to be exact! Many enjoyed learning new and challenging pieces as well as performing them in a beautiful place.

One of the highlights of the trip was a beach day in Gorleston where the day was rounded off with ice-cream (of course). The sun decided to come out for us, and we left ready to prepare for the weekend.





On Sunday the combined choirs sang two Sunday services, ending the week with 'A Hymn for Saint Cecilia' by Howells which is an all-time favourite piece. On behalf of the choirs I would like to thank Isabel Baumber who organised the week for us. It would not have happened without her.

**Katherine Rawlings Smith**

## Other News

Looking ahead, we will be attending the RSCM Festival Service at Birmingham St Philip's Cathedral on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October, where a number of our choristers will receive RSCM awards. This year we will have five choristers receiving the Gold Award (the highest award they can achieve), which is examined at a national level, testing musical and liturgical understanding. Members of the congregation would be welcome to join us if they wish, for Choral Evensong at 3.30pm.

In November, we will be singing at Lichfield Cathedral on Saturday 23rd November, the first Evensong for Christ the King – look out for details of this trip if you're interested.

**Isabel Baumber**




**PIANO LESSONS**  
Theory Aural Harmony

**JUANITA WATSON**  
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**Tel: 0121-706-3819**

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## *The Guardians of St Alphege Parish Church*

### **EVENTS & NEWS**

Dear Guardians,

The Trustees have met on several occasions in recent months, and we are delighted to have agreed funding for several works as requested by the Church and Churchyard Committee. The Guardians are meeting the costs for the replacement Lightning Conductor at £1,245, work in the Vestry at a cost of £872, as well as the heating restoration work to protect the fabric of the church, which totals £8,760.

It was wonderful to welcome members to our impromptu cheese and wine recently and we can now confirm the following forthcoming events:

- The AGM is being held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November this year, at the slightly later time of 8:30pm in the OBH. Although we only recently held last year's delayed AGM, holding this year's in November will bring us back on track.
- Our Christmas Luncheon is on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November at Olton Golf Club. Tickets will be available a little nearer the time, so please keep an eye out for details in the Pew Slip, and book in good time to avoid disappointment.

**Ruth Morton**

### **FLOODLIGHTING**

The Guardian's Floodlighting Scheme is available for anyone who would wish to celebrate or mark an occasion, or to commemorate a date. The cost is £8.00 for 2 hours; £14.00 for 4 hours. Please give 14 days' notice. Forms are available from the Guardians notice boards in St Alphege Church or in the Oliver Bird Hall.

Names are displayed on monthly lists on these notice boards and also in the Parish magazine and acknowledged with a card sent to the donor. For further information please contact the Scheme organiser:-

Sheila Payne, 0121 706 0520; or email [sheilaepayne@aol.com](mailto:sheilaepayne@aol.com)

#### **The Church was floodlit to remember the following:**

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 6 <sup>th</sup> September  | In loving memory of Peggy Oswald.   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> September  | In loving memory of Jean McDonough on her birthday.   |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> September | In loving memory of Edward (Ted) Corbridge, beloved husband of Wendy.   |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> September | The birthday of Margaret Oswald.  |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> September | Noreen Porter. Treasured memories of a dear wife, mother and grandmother. David and family.                         |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> September | The anniversary of the death of Laura Patricia Clark.   |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> September | In loving memory of Mabel Victoria Florance on this her birthday.   |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> September | In loving memory of Susan Hewitt.   |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> September | In loving memory of Rebecca Davies.   |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> September | The 48 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the marriage at St Alphege of Chrissie and the late dearly loved Robert Lambie. |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> September | To commemorate the birthday of the late Canon Harry Hartley.  |



# ST ALPHEGE BEER FESTIVAL



**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November 5.30 - 10.30pm**  
**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 12 noon - 10pm**

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## St Helen

### Creationtide

On 8<sup>th</sup> September we welcomed Revd Canon John Nightingale to be our guest preacher as we began the season of Creationtide. John spoke of the urgency of our need to respond to the changes in climate even though we might not be able to directly relate them to human activity. The urgency being that it is now widely accepted that we only have 12 years in which to take significant action.

He commended the Eco Church Award scheme and congratulated St Helen's on achieving the Bronze award. He also was able to show us the award plaque that we had received only a few days before (see picture) and we look forward to being able to proudly display it.

John encouraged us all to consider what actions we could take on personal level to adapt our life-style – the major factors for consideration being,

- Transport: flying less and less car usage
- Diet: a reduction in the consumption of red meat
- Clothing: reduce purchase of new clothes and buy those made from recycled material

The Creationtide season will finish with our Harvest service on 6<sup>th</sup> October which will followed by a 'Bring and share' lunch.

### Services

The next **Jigsaw** service will be held on 20<sup>th</sup> October at 4.00pm

**Forget me Not** will meet on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October at 3.00pm



**Beryl Moppett**

## Skittles evening

from 7.30pm at St Helen's

**Saturday 12 October.**

Ticket prices are £12 for adults and £6 for children, for the evening's entertainment and food (jacket potatoes with fillings & salad plus desert).

Drinks will be available to purchase on the evening.

Tickets can be obtained from Paula, Sam or Grace McClenaghan. We are also happy to reserve places with payment on the night if people want to telephone us in advance on 707 2996.

All proceeds will go towards Grace McClenaghan's trip to Cambodia in July 2020 which will include undertaking a project to help a rural community



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**St Michael****There and back again**

I would like to express my great very grateful thanks to everyone who made it possible for me to enjoy my sabbatical during May, June and July. I am particularly grateful to my clergy colleagues, to all those who took on extra duties – especially in covering services at St Michael's – and to members of all three churches for their prayers for me throughout those three months. I look forward to sharing some of the insights I gained on my sabbatical over the coming months.

**Getting a handle on plastic**

We hear a great deal in the media about the worldwide over-consumption of plastic in many areas of daily life, and rightly so. At St Michael's we have been all-too conscious of our part in this for some time, given our use of disposable plastic cups for refreshments after our Sunday services. Therefore we have begun to ask our regular members (and visitors!) to bring a reusable cup from home for their coffee after the Sunday morning service. And for those who occasionally forget or are unable to do so, we have some spare cups to hand!

**A warm welcome**

There is a short service of Morning Prayer at St Michael's Chapel on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am. The liturgy we use is taken from the Iona Community and has a simple format which is easy to follow. We hear a seasonal Bible reading and take a short time to reflect on what we have heard. The service ends by 9.45am. Many of those who attend then stay on for the 10am Eucharist service, whilst those who have other appointments to keep are free to leave. Everyone is very welcome to attend, even if only on an occasional basis.

**An important question (and a wonderful answer!)**

The August Bank Holiday weekend brought some very good news to the Vicarage! Our eldest son, Sam, made a proposal of marriage to his girlfriend, Lucy, at the Greenbelt Arts Festival. We are delighted to learn that she said yes!! There are no firm plans yet as far as a date and venue are concerned, as Lucy is waiting to complete her training to be a primary school teacher. But in the meantime, we wish Sam and Lucy our most hearty congratulations!

**Simon**

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**Pioneer Diary****November 11<sup>th</sup>**

I wonder what you think of when you hear that date.

For many of course, their first thought is of Armistice Day - the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month marking the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front of World War I. In churches we might mark this event on Remembrance Sunday, which this year falls on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

As a child I know I linked that date, unable as yet to comprehend the full meaning, with the sale of poppies, and everyone but everyone had to wear one. It was law. At least, that's how I saw it as a child.

More recently I have come to know friends who lost their baby on that date. And, more latterly, some other friends who got married on that date. The point being, I suppose, that although it is important that we remember, it is equally important to acknowledge that life goes on.

This year, for me and David, November 11<sup>th</sup> is the day that we will be moving to Solihull, so that I can begin my role in the parish at the end of that month. (My licensing has been confirmed as November 26<sup>th</sup> at St. Alphege for those who would like to come along in support or even out of curiosity ☺.)

To return to Armistice Day for a moment, the most powerful minute's silence I have ever experienced was on that day some years ago, when we lived in the North East of England, and we were shopping in Asda.

The tannoy system in the supermarket announced to the whole store, just before eleven, that they would be observing a minute's silence at eleven and we were welcome to join them or, if not, would we please be mindful of those who were observing it. When eleven came the whole store came to a standstill. Every customer (bar one, but that's another story!) just stopped where they were and it was so moving that I became quite emotional. I still remember the power of it even to this day.

Of course I've had time since to wonder why that particular minute's silence affected me, and the others around me, in the way that it did, and I've come to the conclusion that it was because it happened in daily life. We were all going about our business, doing our own thing; mundanely shopping (I don't like shopping at all!), until we were all given the opportunity to step out of that and experience something different. Yes, to remember those who had gone before - but also to experience a glimpse of peace in our everyday lives, and to experience it all together. We were no-longer strangers parallel shopping - we were a community remembering and experiencing alongside one another.

This has parallels for me for each of our faith journeys:

- We can all come together on a Sunday, in fellowship and to praise God together, that is right and good, but it is outside of the walls of the church, on the other six and a half days of the week, in our daily life that we can have the most powerful experiences of God in our lives and in the world around us.

- Plus, are we aware that, as we go about our daily lives, ***we are the Bible that most people outside of the Church will read?*** What do they read and how attractive is it to them?

Of course this will be my challenge, living and working as a pioneer minister around the old St. Francis' area of the parish, but the challenge isn't solely mine. As Jesus instructs us in the Beatitudes:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 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. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (*Matthew 5: 14-16 NIV*)

Finally, please do pray for me and David as we prepare to move to Solihull, and for me, as preparations are made for my licensing. See you soon!

*Blessings,*

**Suzette** ☺

## 2019 Parish Christmas Card



The Solihull Parish Christmas Card is now available from St Alphege Bookstall in church and from the Parish Office in the Oliver Bird Hall. Please buy while stocks last and support the Bookstall which distributes its profits to selected charities.

The picture is a representation of a Georgian Christmastide from an original watercolour by Roger Heath.

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# CHURCH 4 CHILDREN

## October

### Sunday Worship

#### St Alphege

At 9.15am there's a choice of:

**The Junction** which meets in the Oliver Bird Hall - An informal service for young families offering tailored activities for children of all ages.

It's lively and laid back! Or

**St Alphege Kids** - You are welcome at the 9.15am service for worship in our beautiful church building. Space for all ages with dedicated activities for children.

On 13th October everyone will meet in the church building for Harvest All age Thanksgiving

#### St Helen

Every Sunday in term time at 10.00 am (apart from 20<sup>th</sup> October when it's **Jigsaw** at 4pm) there is worship in a modern space with a community feel with tailored activities for children

#### St Michael

Every Sunday in term time at 10.30am there is worship in the school hall where a warm and welcoming space is created for all ages to worship. There is a crèche for little ones and activities for children of all ages. On 13th October everyone will worship together with activities for all ages.

### Other Activities

Friday 11th October **Messy Church** St Helen's Church 4-6pm

**Praise and Play** Every Friday from 9.30am onwards Oliver Bird Hall  
(Term time only)

**Oasis** Tuesdays 9.15- 10.15am Oliver Bird Hall

**Little Treasures**, Wednesdays at 1.15pm Oliver Bird Hall



Activities for families of all shapes and sizes with lots of hands-on, crafty fun - followed by a celebration including a song, a story and a prayer. Finally we'll finish with a tasty hot tea for everyone!

**WHEN?** 4.00pm 'til 6.00pm on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October, and 8<sup>th</sup> November

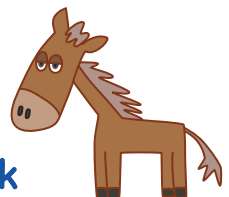
**WHERE?** St Helen's Church, St Helen's Road, B91 2DA (off Buryfield Road)

**WHO?** EVERYONE! Children, bring your friends, but be sure to bring an adult to share the fun.

Cost: £2 per person, max £7 per family



Contact us to book your place by phoning 0121 270 7390 or email [l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk](mailto:l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk)



# OASIS



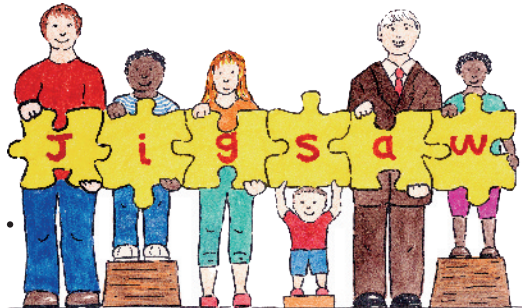
A warm and welcoming space for parents and Carers to meet each week for friendship and support, to share a cuppa and talk about love, life and faith.

We'll provide toys for the children to play with, while you enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, posh biscuits and a friendly chat with other parents and Carers.

**Tuesday mornings from 9.15am-10.15am in the Main Hall of the Oliver Bird Hall**

For more information contact Linda Hicks [l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk](mailto:l.hicks@solihullparish.org.uk)

We'd love you  
to be part of ..



A time to get together with others to explore a Bible story in lots of different ways. to sing and pray to God and to have tea together. It's for everyone and we we hope it will be for you!

**Why not give it a try and find out?**

.Do come along to the next session of Jigsaw at St Helen's Church, St Helen's Road (off Buryfield Road) Solihull B91 2DA on Sunday 20th October at 4pm



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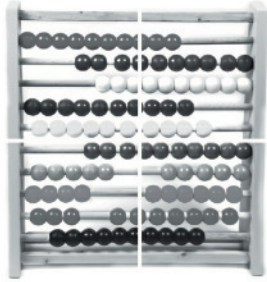
Come along and chat, play, eat biscuits, sing  
action songs, explore a bible story.



No need to book but if you want to know  
more ring Linda on

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# Youth Stuff

Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	<b>Junior Refresh</b> -Bible based activity group for years 6, 7 and 8	Group 1 - 6.30-7.30pm Group 2 - 7.30-8.30pm; Youth Room
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Reflect</b> Youth Session	6pm-7.30pm Fun, Games, Pizza and Reflection. In the Youth Room
Sat 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Film Club</b>	6.30-9.15pm Youth Room, OBH Bring your own snacks
Sun 6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Revive-Youth at St Michael</b>	10.30am St Michael (Sharmans Cross School)
Mon 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Relax</b> -Our fellowship group for all year 9+	7-9pm Youth Room
Wed 9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Refresh</b> -Bible based activity group for years 9+	7.30-8.45pm Youth Room
Fri 11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Reflect</b> Youth Session	6pm-7.30pm Fun, Games, Pizza and Reflection. In the Youth Room
Sun 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Revive-Youth at St Alphege</b>	9.15am St Alphege (arrive by 9.00am, if you can, for sidesperson duties)
Mon 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Relax</b> -Our fellowship group for all year 9+	7-9pm Youth room
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Junior Refresh</b> -Bible based activity group for years 6, 7 and 8	Group 1 - 6.30-7.30pm Group 2 - 7.30-8.30pm; Youth Room
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Reflect</b> Youth Session	6pm-7.30pm Fun, Games, Pizza and Reflection. In the Youth Room
Sun 20 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>Revive-Youth at Junction</b>	9.15am OBH / Youth Room
Mon 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	<b>Relax</b> -Our fellowship group for all year 9+	7-9pm Youth Room
Wed 23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	<b>Refresh</b> -Bible based activity group for years 9+	7.30-8.45pm Youth Room
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> Oct	<b>HALF TERM SOCIAL</b>	Details to be confirmed
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct - 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov		Half-term break
Sat 2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	<b>Churchyard tidy-up</b> <b>Film Club</b>	1pm-4pm St Alphege Churchyard 5pm-7.45pm Youth Room. Bring your own snacks.

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# UK Anti-Slavery Day - *18<sup>th</sup> October 2019*

A few weeks ago, I spoke about Modern Day Slavery in St Alphege and said that we would be marking this day on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

## The Clewer Initiative

The Clewer Initiative enables Church of England dioceses and wider church networks to raise awareness of modern slavery, identify victims and to help provide victim support and care:

- **40.3 million** people are estimated to be trapped in some form of modern slavery in the world today.
- **136,000** victims estimated in the UK (according to the Global Slavery Index).
- **6,993** potential victims found in 2018 (UK).

Modern slavery is an umbrella term for all forms of slavery, trafficking and exploitation.

At the core of this crime is deception. Survivors of modern slavery tell stories of being sold a better life. They are often vulnerable, coming from areas where there is little possibility of work. They are offered a job, a chance to make money and to build a new life for themselves. Those who offer these opportunities may even organise their travel to a different country, controlling every aspect of their trip.

The job they are offered turns out to be a lie and instead they are forced to work in difficult and degrading conditions, with little or no pay. The threat of violence, to themselves or their families, hangs over them and traps them in their situation. Even if their trafficker does not physically control them, a mistrust of authority may stop them from going to the police.

This could be the reality for 136,000 men, women and children in the UK. Modern slavery knows no borders, and people of all ages and races can be victims. The 6,993 potential victims referred to the National Crime Agency in 2018 came from 130 different countries, the most common of which were the UK, Albania, and Vietnam.

## Forms of exploitation

In 2018, the National Crime Agency received 6,993 potential victim of trafficking (PVOT) referrals. Every referral is voluntary and can only happen if the potential victim gives their permission by signing the referral form (in the case of children their consent is not required). Referrals are categorised as one of four distinct forms of exploitation: labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and organ harvesting.

**Labour exploitation:** Victims of forced labour are made to work long hours, often in hard conditions, without relevant training and equipment. They are forced to hand over the majority, if not all, of their wages to their traffickers. In many cases victims are subjected to verbal threats or violence and often large numbers of people are kept in the same house in horrific conditions.

Cases of labour exploitation have been widely reported in car washes and nail bars, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Victims have been found in the manufacturing, entertainment, travel, farming, and construction industries.

Labour exploitation can sometimes mean criminal exploitation, where victims are forced to commit crimes. For example where they are forced to pickpocket, or made to work on a cannabis farm, tending the plants.



**Sexual exploitation:** This involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim's permission. This includes prostitution, escort work, or pornography. Women, men and children of both sexes can be victims and many will be controlled through violence and abuse.

**Domestic servitude:** Victims of domestic servitude are forced to work in a private household. Their movement will often be restricted and they will perform household tasks like childcare and house-keeping over long hours and for little, if any, pay. In rare circumstances where victims receive a wage it will be heavily reduced, as they are often charged for food and accommodation.

Victims will lead isolated lives and have little or no unsupervised freedom. Their own privacy and comfort will be minimal, often sleeping on a mattress on the floor.

**Organ harvesting:** This is one aspect of the trade in human organs and involves any organ that can be removed and used, of which kidneys and livers are the most commonly traded. Traffickers may force or deceive their victims into giving up an organ, or victims may agree to sell an organ but are not paid or paid less than the promised price. Sometimes victims are treated for an illness, which may or may not exist, and their organs are removed without their knowledge.

## What can we do?

The role the church plays in the local community is key to this challenge. Every day the church supports people through outreach projects like foodbanks, debt centres, homeless drop-ins, and, throughout the colder months, Winter Night Shelters. Each of those people we support is vulnerable to modern slavery in one of three ways:

1. In their latest annual report, the Modern Slavery Helpline described the recruitment of victims from places of worship as an emerging trend. Each church-based project supporting vulnerable people needs to be aware of the risk and safeguard against it.
2. There may also be people coming to your project who have already been victims of modern slavery, but don't know that there is help and support available if they tell someone their story. Could you say 'let's talk' to a potential victim and help them find help?
3. The support given to 'rescued' victims of modern slavery has gaps and can lead to them leaving the government system without accommodation or stable employment. Due to subsequent homelessness or other vulnerabilities they may attend one of your church's projects. Could you recognise them and prevent them from being re-trafficked?

What follows is one response to modern slavery, lifting up the issue in prayer and petition. We urge you to not stop there, instead begin slavery-proofing your church and church projects today, and help us protect vulnerable people from modern slavery. Go to [www.theclewerinitiative.org/letstalk](http://www.theclewerinitiative.org/letstalk) to find out how to access training materials to start slavery-proofing your church and church projects.

*(Taken from The Clewer Initiative website)*

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October, we will provide you with a resource to help you identify when trafficking is taking place.

**Jane**



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**SATURDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 3:00PM**

Shirley Methodist Church

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**"Voyagers' Chorus"** from Idomeneo by Mozart

**"Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves"** from Nabucco by Verdi

**"Bridal Chorus"** from Lohengrin by Wagner

**"Anvil Chorus"** from Il Trovatore by Verdi

**"Habanera"** from Carmen by Bizet

**"Easter Hymn"** from Cavalleria Rusticana by Mascagni

Soloists: Georgia Treglown (Soprano) & Rachel Crisp (Mezzo Soprano) / Organist: Darren Hogg

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# Bible Sunday – 27<sup>th</sup> October

**H**ow many Bibles have you got in your home? When was the last time you opened one of them and read it? Various charities help all of us to have access to Bibles and help us to better understand the words of scripture. Three such organisations are Bible Reading Fellowship, Scripture Union and the Bible Society.

## The Bible Society

For over 200 years Bible Society has been working to bring the Bible to life; to help people around the world engage with it, relate to it, and make sense of it.

That single mission drives a huge range of activities. In some parts of the world, bringing the Bible to life focuses on translation and distribution projects. Elsewhere it focuses on leadership training, or literacy programmes, or interfaith dialogue. Closer to home, in England and Wales, it focuses on advocacy effort, schools' outreach and devotional resources.

The Bible Society is doing everything they can to help individuals and communities to engage with the Bible because we believe that when they do, lives can change – for good.

### Around the world

Back in 1804, when the Bible Society's founders laid the foundations of Bible Society, they asked a question that would change the world. Affordable printed Bibles had just arrived for Welsh speakers, but why stop there? If for Wales, why not for the kingdom? And if for the kingdom, why not for the world?

This was the moment our global mission was born, and as part of United Bible Societies, the Bible Society is now active in over 200 countries and regions. Through their translation work, they make the Bible available in new spoken and signed languages, as well as revising existing Bibles to bring the language up-to-date. To meet the individual needs and demands of the millions wanting the Scriptures, their production facilities not only print physical copies but also produce visual, audio and digital forms.

Their distribution network takes the Bible to places it might otherwise be hard to come by, and they improve literacy by empowering people to read, using the Book as a reference.

The Bible Society also works to affirm the place of the Bible in society, challenging ill-informed thinking and demonstrating that the Bible can be a force for positive change in today's world. A significant proportion of our international work focuses on three areas which all have different needs and challenges and where Christianity is growing fast: China, Africa and the Middle East.

- **China:** Just over 40 years ago, the Bible was a banned book in China. But today, in this largely atheist country, the Bible is a best seller. Christianity in China is growing at a rapid rate. In China today, you will find churches so full that their congregations spill out on the pavement. Those in rural areas often walk for hours just to attend a service, while more and more city-dwellers can be found in churches – both underground and state-run – on a Sunday morning. What's more, copies of the Bible – once a banned book in China – are now within reach through local churches and specially-licensed bookshops.
- **Africa:** In the next 10 years, more Christians will live in Africa than on any other continent. Demand for the Bible is already unprecedented – and it's on the rise. There's an enormous need and opportunity before us. As part of the Bible Society's work to bring the Bible to life here at home and across the world, they plan over the next five years to step up their efforts in the toughest, hardest parts of Africa. Their aim is to reach the poorest, most marginalized men, women and children. People who against the odds are

striving to lift themselves out of poverty and instability. The Bible Society wants to give them a helping hand by offering them the Bible and the value that the Scriptures bring.

43% of Africa's population live on less than £1.35 per day. The Bible Society will be working in countries like South Sudan, Swaziland, Congo and Central African Republic and they'll be reaching out to leaders too, to help them lead with wisdom. The Bible Society has a long track record of working in Africa. They have witnessed the power of the Bible to bring hope and peace to even the most troubled communities. They have seen that God's word can build bridges where there is conflict and offer hope where it is most needed.

By 2020 almost 50% of Africans are expected to identify as Christians. They know leaders can draw from the Bible's practical advice and wisdom to shape societies, particularly on issues of peace, justice and socio-economic development. We know that when people engage with the Bible, their lives can change, for good.

- **The Middle East:** In the Middle East, the Bible Society has been working to bring the Bible to life there for nearly 70 years. Despite the daily threats of war, violence and persecution, their team of staff and volunteers have remained in Syria and Iraq to offer the Bible alongside practical help to those in need. This is not new work – it's what they've been doing in the region for decades.

In the midst of war and suffering, the Bible Society is discovering an unprecedented demand for Scriptures – from both Christians relying on God more than ever, and Muslims looking for an alternative to the extreme expression of Islam they see around them. The Bible Society team is busy distributing Bibles – alongside everyday necessities like food parcels, toiletries, and mattresses – to families who find themselves living in refugee camps. They also run bookshops in the region, including one in the city of Aleppo – just 150 metres from the frontlines of the war in Syria.

With no education, few playful distractions and a fear of the unknown, daily life for a child in the refugee camps is a far cry from what it should be. That's why the Bible Society is committed to providing picture Bibles, colouring books, comic books and stationery that brighten many a day for these children. They also provide Bible-based trauma counselling for children in Lebanon and Jordan who have witnessed the horrors of war and persecution and have had to flee their homeland.

Bible Society is one of the few agencies with access to the refugee camps of Western Europe – camps like Traiskirchen in Vienna, Austria. Their local team organise meals and German classes for local believers, helping them connect into a local church and even find a home. Last year, they distributed some 2,500 Bibles and booklets to refugees in Western Europe. The desire for God's word is strong in places like Traiskirchen, as Dr Jutta Henner, local Bible Society Director, explains: 'In the Bible they find stories of people who, like them, found themselves far away from home, facing an uncertain future, not being made welcome, being persecuted and afraid. They can cry to God as they read and...find that there is always hope in Jesus Christ'.

The Bible Society works to affirm the place of the Bible in society, challenging ill-informed thinking and demonstrating that the Bible can be a force for positive change in today's world.

## **England and Wales**

In many parts of the world, the key barrier to people engaging with the Bible is availability. At home, it's simply that many people don't think the Bible is relevant to them. The Bible Society is determined to change that, and they're working across society to help people recognise the value of the Bible.

*Continued on next page,*

They're developing resources that help local churches to engage more deeply with Scripture, and sending thousands of volunteers into primary schools to share Bible stories with a generation almost entirely unfamiliar them. And in politics, the media and the arts they're bringing the Bible to life in fresh, exciting and relevant ways.

*(Notes taken from the Bible Society Website)*

In this parish, we are hoping to run the Bible Society's "The Bible Course" and make it available for housegroups as well. Watch this space.

## **Bible Reading Fellowship and Scripture Union**

BRF and SU produce daily Bible Reading Notes to help you read the bible and offer explanations and reflections on the Bible passage.

- New Daylight (BRF)
- Guidelines (BRF)
- Day by Day (BRF)
- Daily Bread (SU)
- Encounter with God (SU)

We will have some on display at the back of church on Bible Sunday for you to order. You can also use an app for these notes. Do give it a try if you have never done this. The apps can be found at [Brfonline.org.uk/collections/apps](http://Brfonline.org.uk/collections/apps) and [www.scriptureunion.org.uk](http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk).

**Jane**

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## Calendar and Prayer Intentions for October

1	Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury	Tuesday lunch club at St Alphege	Redbrooks Close
2	Feria	Wednesday lunch club at St Helen	Redlands Close
3	George Bell, Bp of Chichester	Our Bishops David & Anne	Redlands Road
4	Francis of Assissi	Those living in poverty	Riverside Drive
5	Feria	Those who lead our parish study and fellowship groups	Rollswood Drive
6	16th Sunday after Trinity	The people of St Alphege Church	Rowlands Crescent
7	Feria	Those who work in the Touchwood Centre	Rowood Drive
8	Feria	Our Parish Wardens, Deirdre and Neil	Ryefield Close
9	Robert Grosseteste, Bp of Lincoln	Our Rector, Jane	Saddlers Mews
10	Thomas Traherne, Poet	Poets and spiritual writers	Saintbury Drive
11	Ethelburga, Abbess of Barking	Those who lead and attend Messy Church	Sandal Rise
12	Elizabeth Fry, Prison Reformer	Those who work in prisons & prison chaplains	Sandhills Crescent
13	17th Sunday after Trinity	The people of St Helen's Church	School Lane
14	Feria	The Parish Growing Leaders course	Seven Star Road
15	Teresa of Avila	Staff of Queens' Theological Foundation	Sevington Close
16	Nicholas Ridley & Hugh Latimer, Reformation Martyrs	Those imprisoned or tortured for their faith	Sharmans Cross Road
17	Ignatius Bp of Antioch	Diocesan office staff	Shelsey Way
18	St Luke the Evangelist	Doctors and medical staff in our town	Shustoke Road
19	Henry Martyn, Bible translator	The work of the Bible Society	Silhill Hall Road
20	18th Sunday after Trinity	The people of St Michael's Church	Silverbirch Road
21	Feria	Our Parish curate, Sam, and his family	Smiths Lane
22	Feria	The staff and pupils of the schools in our parish	Solihull Bypass
23	Feria	Staff, patients and volunteers of the Marie Curie hospice	Somerby Drive
24	Feria	Joe Cooper, St Alphege Director of Music and the St Alphege Choirs	Southey Close
25	Crispin & Crispinian, Martyrs	Craftsmen and craftswomen	Spilsbury Croft
26	Cedd, Abbot of Lastingham	Those who maintain our church buildings	St Alphege Close
27	Last Sunday after Trinity	Clergy, staff and congregations of the Cathedral	St Bernard's Road
28	Simon & Jude, Apostles	The Government & Members of Parliament	St Helen's Road
29	James Hannington, Bp & Martyr	Our part in God's mission to Solihull	Station Approach
30	Feria	Staff and residents of local care homes	Station Road
31	Martin Luther, Reformer	Our Deanery & Diocesan Synods	Stonebow Avenue

The Church prays for the community daily: please include these topics in your personal daily prayers.

# *Let us Pray*

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## **Oct 1<sup>st</sup>: St Alphege Luncheon Club**

The St Alphege Luncheon Club meets weekly on a Tuesday lunchtime (12.30-2.30pm) in the OBH. The club provides our members with a chance to meet, chat and have a good lunch – and generally have a good time! For many of our members, it is the only chance that they have to get out each week, and the lunchtimes are much enjoyed by all.

The club is only possible because of our dedicated team of volunteers, including drivers, cooks and helpers. Solihull Ring & Ride also help with transporting members to and from the OBH.

We are always looking for new volunteers, and are currently particularly in need of an extra driver and an extra cook. If you think you can help, please let me know. We also have a couple of spaces for new members – so if you, or someone you know from church, are interested, please get in touch.

Please pray for the club, for our members and helpers, and that God will be with us as we continue to meet and share together.

**Debbie Woodward (d.woodward@solihullparish.org.uk)**

## **Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>: St Helen Wednesday Lunch Club**

The Wednesday Lunch Club was started in 1991 by Diana Gregory, as an expression of the Church's concern for people living alone who may be lonely. Invitations were delivered locally and there was a positive response to come to St Helens and enjoy a freshly prepared lunch in the company of others.

After 28 years it continues to be enjoyed; our members making warm friendships. The charge for a cooked meal with pudding and tea or coffee is just £5. We meet every week except in the month of August and 2 weeks for Christmas and New Year. Just before Christmas we have a free Christmas meal with all the trimmings, with carols and a Christmas message from our Vicar or one of our Readers. Members who are 90 or over also have a birthday cake.

In accordance with health and safety regulations we are regularly inspected and have a 5-star rating.

We have 4 teams comprising cooks and helpers preparing the food, washing up, serving the food, etc., as well as drivers for members who need transport. We always welcome new relief helpers to take the place of regulars who are ill or on holiday. At present we are very much in need of a cook: anyone who comes will find a warm friendly atmosphere.

Please pray that God will continue to bless our endeavours and that new volunteers can be found to fill the vacancy for a cook, and to help cover for regular helpers who are unavailable.

**June Paddock (Coordinator)**

## Researching Jesus

Part 2 of "Exploring the New Testament", by Sam Gibson

**I**t may surprise you to know that there is a whole discipline devoted to the study of Jesus. It takes place all over the world, East and West, and in various kinds of departments (theology, religion, history, sociology). For us as Christians, Jesus is Messiah, Lord, Saviour, God and Brother, among many other things. Yet there is a form of researching the life of Jesus and his teaching which is (in principle) open to everyone, regardless of their religion or cultural context. Historians are fascinated by the figure of Jesus of Nazareth. Even those who are not Christians generally agree both that his existence as a person is beyond doubt, and that he was the generator of a movement which has left an extraordinary impact on the world.

Although Christians have always investigated the life of Jesus in considerable detail, especially in the first five centuries when the intellectuals of the late Roman empire devoted themselves to close study of the Gospels, the form of "historical" research we are now familiar with arose later on. As literacy increased in Western Europe, and more ancient sources became available, thinkers turned their attention to the New Testament as a mine for historical treasures. But this time there was a difference, because Biblical texts were, for the purposes of history, put on a par with other writings or sources, like witness accounts, ancient histories, army records or letters. This is what we might describe as the "historical-critical" approach to reading the Bible, as a way of accessing the events and sifting through the evidence they might present about what happened in the past.

When you look at Jesus this way, it will be different (but not incompatible) with the way Jesus is taught, preached, prayed to in church. Rather than focussing straight away on the relationship-dimension of Jesus (who is he for me / us, now?), historical Jesus research looks at the Bible – especially the Gospels, but also Paul and other texts – and tries to get right into the heart of what Jesus, as he lived then, was saying and doing.

This might seem straightforward at first thought, because we have a written record of Jesus' words and deeds that we could only dream of for most historical figures. In fact, it is actually quite a complex (though abundant) set of sources. The Gospels tell Jesus' story differently, not just with different emphases on the same passages and sayings, but also sometimes telling stories or recording words that the other Gospels do not.

The Gospels are like four overlapping lenses and if you look through all of them at once, your brain might find it hard to process the information. So instead you could look, for example, at how Mark presents Jesus in focus (as a prophet, a radical, or as Jewish Messiah) or you could look at John and see how he presents Jesus as the Word made flesh, God come to be with us.

These are two very different pictures of Jesus. Some historians might decide one is more correct than the other (and regularly do – look in the popular religion section of a big bookshop!), but as Christians we would want to listen to what they are saying while holding the different views together in our one experience of Jesus as Lord.

On top of all this, there is a gap between the world Jesus lived in and our world. Jesus and his followers spoke Aramaic (an everyday kind of Hebrew-like tongue) and possibly some

Greek, which the NT is written in. Words that Jesus is recorded as having said can have several possible meanings, and the Gospel-writers might have recorded them more than once. Take the Lord's Prayer, for example, which appears in Matthew and Luke in different forms. Which way did Jesus really teach that prayer, and what did he mean by it? Perhaps he taught it on several different occasions in different ways, or his disciples remembered different parts. Comparing the different forms might help us to pray this prayer more deeply, but we can't just jump to that part. First we need to do some critical work, thinking about the words, and what they might have meant to Jesus and his first hearers. Only then can we move to the relational "what this means for us now" stage.

All this matters to us, even if we are not historians, because we want to understand Jesus as deeply as possible. Reading historical writing on Jesus may not be comfortable, and not all writers will share our beliefs, but they will often enrich our understanding of the parables, Jesus' teachings, the early church, and how he died. If we neglect this work, we can go wrong and construct a Jesus of our own making. This might seem benign enough, but as Christians we care about truth.

A major example of this is the movement to understand Jesus as he was, a first-century Jewish man. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, historians in England and Germany especially de-emphasised the Jewishness of Jesus, arguing that he was a critic of Judaism *per se* and came to abolish it as a completely corrupt religion. This historical thinking contributed, directly and indirectly, to harsh attitudes and anti-Semitism, which eventually ended in the Holocaust. After 1945, many Christian scholars repented of this unhistorical and unhelpful outlook, and began to read Jewish sources of Jesus' time afresh. The result has been an explosion in good commentaries, new light shed on Jesus' self-identity as Jewish Messiah, as well as a rekindling of Christian-Jewish relations. This filters down too to our preaching, teaching and Bible studies. Research really matters!

If you'd like to delve into this kind of research further, a good place to start might be Marcus Borg and N.T. Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Views*.

*Next instalment: How the NT got to us.*

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[www.stalphege.solihull.sch.uk](http://www.stalphege.solihull.sch.uk)

## **Lost and Found**

**L**ike many of us, I have been taught that our God is loving, and the Bible certainly has lots of stories to show how much God cares for us and his world. However, in my younger days I heard more messages about God's holiness, our utter human sinfulness, the need for redemption and ultimately, judgement, heaven and hell, than God's joy in and love for humanity.

My earlier learning will of course have had a profound effect, and in dark times, it has given me a legacy more of fear than the trust I feel I should have. A recent experience of a lost piece of jewellery surprisingly made me see things in a slightly different way.

I have form by the way in losing things – an expensive eternity ring!!- so my level of anxiety and panic was high!! I therefore spent a long time looking, de-cluttering, looking again, and praying...and panicking! And praying!

I reassured myself: I was insured. It wasn't the worst thing in the world. And perhaps I didn't have to confess my worries to my long-suffering husband just yet...

As I prayed, I eventually had the slow dawning that my piece of jewellery was NOT LOST! I just HADN'T FOUND IT!!

I suddenly felt reassured, calm and very expectant. It wasn't lost. It was actually safe... I could relax, I could trust, it would be alright. And it was. I did find it. Whew!

It made me think of my anxieties about loved ones who haven't yet found faith. Are they lost? Do I need to be panicking? And distraught? Can I actually trust they will be safe? That God, our loving God can be trusted to seek and find them?

I hope so.

I know that people have choices, that people can often seem totally uninterested in God; I know some people may actively reject Him.

But I hope that the small voice that whispered to me about a mere item of jewellery, may continue to give us hope: that we can cry to God, He will listen, and like the Good Shepherd will find our lost sheep. Perhaps He will even be like the Woman who found her lost coin.

**Wendy Westley**

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# For Your Diary

- Thur 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct 1.30pm in the O.B.H. *Faith and the Feminine : a journey to the altar via motherhood.* A talk by Charlotte Gibson.
- Thur 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 10.30am in church. *MU Corporate Eucharist* followed by coffee in the vestry.
- Sat 26<sup>th</sup> Oct 10.00am at Carrs Lane. *Autumn Members' Meeting (Diocesan Council).*  
NOTE Change of Date.
- Thur 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 1.30pm in the O.B.H. *A talk by a local historian.*
- Thur 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 10.30am in church. *MU Corporate Eucharist* followed by coffee in the vestry.

Everyone is welcome to come to our meetings - you don't have to be a member.  
Lifts are available to most events - phone 705 8761 or 270 6132

## WIVES' FELLOWSHIP

We are a women's group who meet monthly at different venues.  
We warmly welcome visitors at our various activities.

- Tues 8<sup>th</sup> Oct Fellowship Walk at Hampton Arboretum  
10.30am Meet at Sports Club car park for walk  
12.30pm Lunch at Barston Golf Club
- Fri 11<sup>th</sup> Oct 6.30pm at West Midlands Bridge Club - Member's Miscellany  
Cost £5 to include coffee and cake
- Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Nov Fellowship Walk in Dorridge Park  
10.30am Meet at Sports Club car park for walk  
12.30pm Lunch at Barston Golf Club
- Fri 13<sup>th</sup> Dec 12.30pm Christmas Lunch at West Midlands Bridge Club

For further details contact Carol Caldicott - 0121 705 3168.

## Second Saturday @ St Alphege

### *Breakfast & Bible Study*

The Second Saturday group meets on the second Saturday of every month between 10am and 11am in St Alphege church building. We share a simple breakfast before opening up Scripture together. All ages and generations are welcome. Children are catered for with food, drink and a simple activity.

Second Saturday Bible study dates until the end of the year are: 12<sup>th</sup> October, 9<sup>th</sup> November and 14<sup>th</sup> December. Why not join us? You don't need to know anything beforehand or prepare anything. For more info contact me at [solihullcurate@gmail.com](mailto:solihullcurate@gmail.com)

**Sam**

## **Women's Theology Groups**    *Meeting • Discussing • Praying • Supporting*

The Women's Theology Groups are safe spaces for exploration, discussion and even disagreement! We have studied a range of passages relating to women in the Bible, and have been exploring what it means to be a woman and a disciple in our own lives.

Our usual pattern of meetings resumes on:

- October: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>/Friday 4<sup>th</sup>; Thursday 17<sup>th</sup>/Friday 18<sup>th</sup>; Thursday 30<sup>th</sup>/Friday 31<sup>st</sup>
- November: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>/Friday 8<sup>th</sup>; Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>/Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>
- December: Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>/Friday 6<sup>th</sup>

Our three groups meet on:

- Thursdays 1pm (note change of time), 'The Core café (at Solihull Library)
- Thursdays 7.30pm, Room 5, OBH
- Friday 10am, 'The Core café (at Solihull Library)

For more information do contact me ([chachagibson@gmail.com](mailto:chachagibson@gmail.com) or 0121 709 0668), I would be delighted for more people to join us!

**Charlotte Gibson**

## **Christian Men Together**

On Saturday morning **12<sup>th</sup> October** we are again undertaking well received work on the Gardens at the Marie Curie Hospice.

Following our recent meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September, our next Saturday breakfast meeting will be on **2<sup>nd</sup> November**, at which we will be welcoming back Bob Telford to speak to us.

And preceding Christmas we are going Ten Pin Bowling followed by a meal on Friday evening **29<sup>th</sup> November**.

So we have a full programme and look forward to seeing as many men as possible at these events.

For more details and to book in - let me know – [arwilliams399@gmail.com](mailto:arwilliams399@gmail.com). Do come and join us and bring friends.

**Andrew Williams**

**St Alphege**

Deputy Warden:	Chris Thorp, 29 Dovedale Avenue	243 4340
	Susan Gomm, 10 Silverbirch Road	705 0015
Pro Warden:	Linda La Roche, 66 Church Hill Road	704 2282
Readers:	Stephen Linstead	705 1376
	Linda Hicks (Parish Licence)	01564 782557
Stewardship Recorder	Frank Upton, 1 Rectory Road	705 2963

**St Helen**

Deputy Wardens:	Phil Godfrey	705 3923
	Jean Fewins	07925 688897
Readers:	Beryl Moppett	705 0337
	Chris Carrington	705 0902
Church Office	(Tue & Fri 1.30pm-4.30pm)	704 2878
Administrator's email	(Jane Pickett) sthelensoffice@yahoo.co.uk	
Hall Bookings:	Jeremy Eade, solomere@aol.com	706 3831

**St Michael**

Deputy Warden:	Keith Wilson	778 2295
	Merrill Flood	705 3291
Readers:	Paul Smith	705 1377
	Nick Partridge	07970 297377

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**NOTE FOR ADVERTISERS AND POTENTIAL ADVERTISERS**

Would all advertisers please ensure that any changes they might require to their advert, or notice of cancellation, are routed through the Advertising Manager (Tim Drakeford, 42 Fowgay Drive, Solihull B91 3PH, Tel 705 4494) in sufficient time to meet the copy date for the issue in which they wish the changes to take effect. The copy date is usually the first Friday of the preceding month, but the exact date of the next copy date is shown below. Similarly, would new advertisers please ensure that their requirements for advertising space are also routed through the Advertising Manager in plenty of time to meet the required copy date.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of *Solihull Parish News* or of *Solihull Parish*.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NOVEMBER EDITION OF THE PARISH NEWS  
MUST BE IN BY FRIDAY, 4TH OCTOBER PLEASE.**

**Email to [parishnews@solihullparish.org.uk](mailto:parishnews@solihullparish.org.uk) or leave in the Parish Office**