

October 2026

PARISH MAGAZINE



HARVEST FESTIVAL

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and Christchurch, Rhydygroesau **50p**



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Interregnum

Interim Ministers

Reverend Dr Keith Musson Tel: 656212

Reverend Adrian Bailey Tel: 238744

Father Phil Hughes

Commissioned Lay Ministers

Mrs Jenifer Chippett Williams

Mrs Lindsay Clarke

Miss Sally Wright

Mrs Catherine Lefebvre

Churchwardens

S Oswald's: Miss June Williams

Mrs Muriel Jones

Mr John Abram MBE TD

Mrs Ann Ashworth

Christchurch: Mrs Elizabeth Stanley

Rosemary Davies

Tel: 652544

Tel: 653598

Tel: 653316

Tel: 07702027290

Tel: 676450

Tel: 07813757498

Parochial Church Councils

S Oswald's: Hon Secretary: Ms Carron Boulton

Hon Treasurer: Mr Paul Evison

Tel: 652861

Tel: 653315

Christchurch: Hon Secretary:

Hon Treasurer:

Director of Music

S Oswald's: Mrs Samantha Lewis-Widnall

Email: samanthalewiswidnall@gmail.com

Organist:

St Oswald's: Josephine Sands email: joasands@hotmail.co.uk.

Christchurch:

Parish Office

S Oswald's: Church Street, Oswestry SY11 2SY.

Tel: 652861

Parish Administrator: Ms Carron Boulton

email: stoswald.office@gmail.com

Reg. Charity No. 1133346

Dear friends,

Many years ago, when I accepted a call to being ordained I realised that it was, one way or another, going to involve a lot of study. I wasn't too happy with that idea – I'd already spent years of study in a completely different field and was a little daunted by starting over again. Over the years I'd been in the offices of many clergy friends and had always seen huge bookshelves stacked with an unimaginable range of books. Had they actually read them all? Did you really have to read that lot to be an effective parish priest? So, before setting out I asked a very experienced priest what, apart from a Bible, was the most important book to buy. His answer was; "a good dictionary – you'll need that more than anything". How right he was, and my Collins English Dictionary now looks decidedly grubby and well worn.

Some of you may remember, although it now seems a long way off, that when I was preaching at St Oswald's I often started my sermon with this short prayer.

*Lord, grant for our hallowing;
thoughts that grow into prayer,
prayer that grows into love and service,
love and service that grow into eternal life with You.*

It's a prayer that was used by the late bishop of Crediton, Peter Coleman, who was our link between the overseas church in which I served and the Church of England. For me it's a prayer that, in very few words, sums up our individual journeys of faith. But in its first line it brings up an example of the need for a dictionary; what exactly is 'hallowing'? Collins defines 'hallow' as '*to consecrate or set apart as being holy or to venerate as holy*'. Helpful? – not really, what do we mean by 'consecrate' or even 'holy'? Words that appear regularly in church services but what do they mean? Consecrate is defined as; 'to make or declare 'holy'. So, 'holy'? '*relating to, or associated with God or a deity*' - Then at the end of the definition of 'holy' the dictionary says that it comes from the same German word; '*heilig*' as does '*hallow*'. It seems that at times we use words for the sake of using words.

At times I get the feeling that theologians use words as propaganda for theologians and to hide from ordinary human beings. One word I came to dislike as a student was a German one; '*glaubensweg*'; it translates as 'faith journey' or 'faith way'. If you mean 'faith journey' then in English, please say so. We all have a faith journey; for some of us it may be like a version of a crowded religious M6 motorway, for others it may seem to be like a faint path through dense woodland. Indeed, within each of our lifetimes we'll probably be able to look back at our faith journey as a

mixture of the two. Whatever the state of the pathway, its real purpose is for our hallowing, for bringing us closer to God and to set us aside for God. It's the life into which Christ beckons us. It's not the life of the holy huddle, it's certainly not the same as being the miserable 'Holy Willie' in the scathing poem by Robert Burns. (It's too long to include in this letter, but I'm sure that within the congregation of St Oswald's we can source a copy and even find a translator if needed.)

Thoughts that grow into prayer. Peter Coleman's prayer doesn't end with praying to be holy. All our thoughts, all our worries for that matter, are themselves the cause for prayer. Not prayer that tells God what he must or must not do. But prayer that aims to bring our thoughts and deeds into line with God's thoughts. Prayer that aligns our lives with God's aims for each of us as an individual. Lord, we have a situation, what can I do?

Coming close to God involves love and service. Jesus told his disciples that it's love and service for those who are not generally seen as worthy for love and service which brings us closer to him. Jesus showed that same love and service in his own life when he washed the feet of the disciples; the most unpleasant task it involved feet that had been walking on the filthy and soiled streets of an Eastern village. I've walked enough streets in villages of the developing world to have a fairly graphic experience of the state of those feet. I won't spoil your Sunday lunch by giving accurate descriptions.

Jesus had conversations with people who were regarded as the dregs of society – and they weren't occasions for him to be lecturing people on the way that they should live their lives; they were in general quite witty and lively meetings. Not the encounters that people expected from the 'holy willies' of the pharisees but the purest expressions of love and service.

Love and service that grow into eternal life with You. Just as both the M6 and a woodland pathway have their own destinations, so too does our faith journey. Its ending is expressed simply as eternal life with God. The final meaning of being set aside for God.

This month ends with halloween – the evening before a day which is set apart to think of and give thanks for those we believe to have been especially hallowed. Please, ignore all the gaudy tat in the shops this month and focus on real hallowing.

As I come to the end of this letter, I realise that I haven't delved into my dictionary for a definition of 'prayer'. There's a whole new can of worms – perhaps the seed for a future letter.

John Chesworth



WE PLOUGH THE FIELDS AND SCATTER

**Join us at 12.30 p.m. on
Sunday 4th October
for a Ploughman's Lunch
with Apple Crumble
and a quiz.**

**Bring your own drink
Tickets costing £10 are
available from
June Williams**

Christchurch Rhydygroesau

This year, we are holding our Harvest Service on
Sunday the 11th October at 11.00am,
followed by a Harvest Lunch at 12.30pm
in the Village Hall.

Everyone is very welcome to join us.

The cost of the lunch is £10

If you plan to come to the lunch please let either
Rosemary 07813757498 or Elizabeth 676450 know.



All Souls at St. Oswald's... *'Those we love but see no longer'*

Our annual service of thanksgiving and remembrance will be on 1st November at 4pm. Following the pattern of recent years, we shall only read out the names of those who have died during the last twelve months. The names of loved ones who died prior to that will be remembered on the wall of remembrance which will be displayed in church. It will be possible to light a candle for both, before, during, and after the service.

If you would like the name of a loved one included on the Wall of Remembrance, please contact Carron either by phone or email (stoswald.office@gmail.com) or write their names clearly on a slip of paper which should be placed in the box provided in church.



A(nother) note from the Building and Fabric Committee

I thought readers would like to be kept abreast of the activities of the committee. There are three significant projects of interest. I outline them below.

First – the boilers. The replacement boilers are now installed. They have been the subject of earlier reports.

Second – the curtains across the screen by the organ. At the recent fire safety inspection it was noted that these curtains do not have current fire-retardant properties and therefore constitute a fire hazard. The committee appreciated that we have not had a fire since before those curtains were first hung, but, if we take no action the likelihood is that we may be refused insurance or the premium will be seriously increased. After considering various options other than curtains, and obtaining quotations locally, Chris Abram finally found that Textile Express could supply a fire-retardant fabric which met the standard required for a public building at a reasonable cost. We are most grateful to Chris for sourcing this and also for offering to make up the curtains for us, free of charge. The total cost of all the materials required to make the 2 pairs of curtains has amounted to approximately £270 - less than half the original estimates.

Third - Lighting in the Parish Centre. For some time there have been complaints about the lighting in the Parish Centre and after more research our Chairman David identified some smart, unobtrusive strip lights which fit very neatly on the joists. In the interests of economy, we have decided to fit one strip to every other joist; we can add more if we later decide more light is required. Fitting them was not a task suitable for our DIY team, so we have had to get contractors to fit them. All this costs money, of course; the lights and fitting came to £2,479.20. In addition we had to hire some scaffolding for the workers to access to joists, at a cost of £128.40 (all these include VAT, which we cannot now recover.) Total cost is £2,607.60. This would have been higher had our DIY team not helped with many of the tasks. Let's hope the improvement is noticed!!

Finance. To publish this summary of some expensive improvements to the church fabric so soon after the Treasurer's warning about controlling expenditure would seem to be fool-hardy. But we are broadcasting this information in the fervent hope that some members of the congregation will wish to make a contribution. If you would like to donate (any sum small or large will, of course, be welcome) may I ask that you use a blue envelope (found on the table at the base of the tower). Just write "B and

F Costs" on it. If you pay sufficient tax for the donation to qualify for Gift Aid, please complete the name and address sections as well. If you do not qualify, leave those parts blank.

Thank you very much for even considering it.

Mike Peters
(Secretary, B and F Committee)

COULD YOU HELP SUPPORT OUR CHURCH?

We are looking for volunteers to join a small Fundraising Committee, helping to come up with ideas and raise much-needed funds for our church.

If you would be interested in getting involved, we'd love to hear from you.

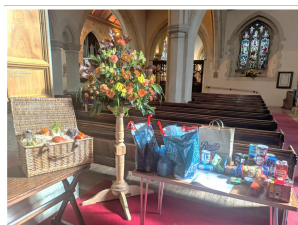
Please contact Ann Ashworth on 07702 027290

MOTHERS' UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

Our September meeting was an all-day Quiet Day centred around the hymn "Tell out my soul". We had some readings and personal thoughts from our Diocesan President, Deb Tudor, and one of the trustees of Lichfield Mothers' Union, to centre our thoughts throughout our time together. Four areas were set aside for different activities and we were also free to go into Church for solitude and inspiration. We concluded with Prayer and singing the hymn, "Tell out my soul".

The next meeting is on Thursday, October 8th at 2.15pm, when our speaker is Father Phil. All welcome.

Pam Musson



OCTOBER FRONT COVER

Photo by Chloë Fraser

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ANGEL TREE AT HMP BERWYN

Yes, it is early to be talking about Christmas, but it's once again time to be thinking about the Angel Tree gifts scheme at HMP Berwyn in Wrexham, and I shall be organising our participation again this year.

Angel Tree is a way of giving prisoners the opportunity to send a present to their children at Christmas. It helps families to stay connected and strengthens family relationships, and it provides these children with unexpected joy to receive a present from their father on Christmas Day.



For those who may not have supported the scheme before, the way it works is this. During October the men will be able to submit through the Prison Chaplaincy a request for gifts for their children. They give details of the child's name, girl or boy, age and the kinds of things the child particularly likes or is interested in. People who have offered to support the scheme will then be asked to buy a particular gift for a named child, costing no more than £10. Chaplaincy volunteers then arrange for the present to be posted to the child. Each gift is sent as though it is from the father with a personal message written by him.

If you would like to share in this opportunity to show God's love by supporting these families, then be in touch with me during October, preferably by email. There will also be a sign-up sheet on the table at the back of church. You will be allocated your individual present by early November and the gifts will need to be bought, wrapped and dropped off with me before the end of the month. If you prefer, or perhaps find shopping difficult, then you can support the scheme by making a cash donation, which will be used either to buy presents or to help fund the postage.

The Prison Fellowship really values the support that comes from St Oswald's and I hope many of you will want to be involved again this year.

Elaine

Elaine Leek: e-mail leek1@btinternet.com

Tel: 01691 778024



A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 279

RICHARD MORRIS, A LOCAL CONJUROR

Last month I attended the monthly talk arranged by the Oswestry & Border History & Archaeology Group (OBHAG) to which I belong. The speaker was Dr Jack Hunter of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, and his subject was the folklore of the Tanat Valley. A fascinating subject, and one which drew a sizeable audience.

One of the topics included in his talk was that of ‘wise men’, ‘cunning folk’ and conjurors – local people known to their neighbours and people in the wider area whose advice and assistance could be sought, for example in case of illness (to family members, or to livestock), or loss of property. And an example given was Richard Morris, known as ‘Dick Spot’ because he had a dark spot on the side of his face, who lived in Oswestry, and who was, we were told, buried in our churchyard. As an example of his powers, we were told how he had freed the people of Llanwddyn of a very mischievous goblin called Yspryd Cynon who had been “put down by ‘Dic Spot’ and put in a quill, and placed under a large stone in the river” there.

This was someone that I had come across before. He is mentioned in Cathrall’s *History of Oswestry*¹(1855), and in a number of contributions to the *Advertiser’s* ‘Bye-Gones’ column², and I had provided details of his burial – on March 8th 1792, recorded in our registers as “Richard Morris of Willow Street (a conjuror aged 85)” - to another member of OBHAG a couple of years ago. And, as the deadline was fast approaching for me to prepare this month’s contribution to the parish magazine, and I was aware that I had not written about Richard Morris before, this seemed to be the ideal time for me to do so.

He was someone whose fame extended far beyond our locality – he was known across Shropshire, with a story printed in ‘Bye-Gones’ in 1876 indicating that he was regarded as the chief of the conjurors of the county, receiving clients from as far away as Shifnal. In 1792, a notice was printed in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*³, published in London and circulated throughout the land, with its readers told of the death, “in Oswestry, in Shropshire, in the 85th years of his age, Mr Richard Morris, better known by the name of *Dick Spot the Conjuror*, in which profession he was thought by country people to excel most astrologers”.

The notice continued, “He was a man of no education, but endowed with strong natural abilities, with which he read mankind to some purpose” with

¹ W. Cathrall, *History of Oswestry*, p233-234

² *Bye-Gones*, for 1876 (13-20 Sep., 29 Nov., 20 Dec.), 1878 (27 Mar., 24 Jul.), 1881 (1 Jun.), 1890 (6 Aug., 24 Sep.) and 1910 (2 Feb.)

³ *Gentleman’s magazine*, March 1792, p283

readers told that “He was in good credit, and well spoken of by the generality as a good sort of man. He was charitable to the poor. Latterly he was in affluent circumstances, and kept his carriage”. His fee, for advice on stolen property, was always a piece of gold.

And six years after his death, a pamphlet was printed, entitled *The life and mysterious transactions of Richard Morris Esq., better known as Dick Spot the conjuror, particularly in Derbyshire and Shropshire written by an old acquaintance who was a critical observer of all his actions for near fifty years*. A contributor to ‘Bye-Gones’ in 1876 noted that there was a copy of this pamphlet at the British Museum – 38 pages long, and priced sixpence when published. The pamphlet is now held at the British Library, and their online catalogue provides a link to a digital copy available via Google Books. The pamphlet indicates that Morris was a native of Bakewell.

When exactly he moved to Oswestry is unclear to me, at this stage at least. We know that he was living hereabouts by 1761, as his name is included in a property deed of that year, preserved at Shropshire Archives. This relates to land – three roods and 28 perches of meadow – on Gwern-y-Brenin common, where the under tenant at that time was “Richard Morris alias Dick Spott”.

So, where in the churchyard was he buried? Askew Roberts, writing in ‘Bye-Gones’, tells us that the grave “is situated in front of the houses near the Griddle Gate”, that is, close to the Lych Gate and the old Grammar School buildings. Cathrall refers to Hulbert’s *History and description of Shropshire* (1835), in which the author had described a conversation he had had with “an eccentric but ingenious inhabitant, now one of the Churchwardens” who had told him that he had purchased the grave plot from Richard Morris’ grand-daughter, and that he now had amongst his possessions the conjuror’s skull.

Askew Roberts, in his list of the gravestones in the churchyard⁴, confirms that the churchwarden in question was the printer Richard Minshull (d. 1841), who is listed along with his wife Margaret (d. 1846) and Margaret’s mother Elizabeth Pugh (d. 1821). The grave, and the gravestone, were located next to those of Morris’ grand-daughter Mrs Thomas. Having spoken with a bricklayer John Thomas, the conjuror’s great-great grandson, Askew Roberts advised that Minshull had obtained the plot by what might be seen as underhand means: he had “first borrowed the use of it ... for the purpose of burying his wife’s mother in it, and then ... put his name on the stone and claimed it!”.

John Pryce-Jones

⁴*Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society*, VI (1883), p151-152

ADULT CHORAL WORKSHOP



SATURDAY 10TH OCTOBER
11:00am - 4:00pm

DAY OF SINGING & MUSIC

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Choral • Pop • Musical Theater • Jazz

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ST. OSWALD'S LADIES GROUP

St. Oswald's Ladies Group met in the Parish Centre on Monday 7th September at 2.30 p.m., when we welcomed Julie from the Ellesmere Honey Company to talk to us about their Business and their bees.

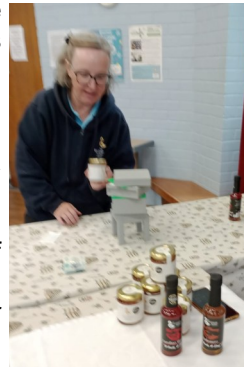
Ellesmere Honey Company is a family-owned and operated business just beyond Ellesmere. The Company was founded in 2013 on a small-scale local honey operation. Since inception in 2013 their bee farming business



has steadily expanded cultivating multiple apiary sites across the area. Their aim has always been to produce the finest pure local honey available. They believe that healthy contented bees are the key to producing the best honey. They safeguard the bees against disease and provide them with all they need. Julie brought some pots of her honey which the members were able to purchase.

They now have a good selection of honey as well as Beeswax furniture polish and candles. Julie has a stall in Oswestry outside market.

She gave a most interesting talk on the preparation of the honey including the different seasons when this takes place. The family are obviously very busy for most of the year and are now harvesting.

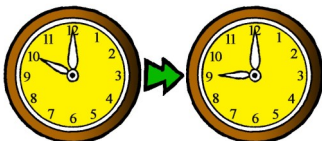


Following the talk members enjoyed a cup of tea and chat.

The next meeting will be on Monday 5th October when we welcome Margaret Jones, one of the first Female Vets, as our speaker. I am sure this will be a most interesting talk.

We always look forward to new members joining our group and if you require information, please contact me either in church or telephone 01691657903

Ann Sagar
Hon. Secretary



**Clocks go back one hour
at 2:00am on
Sunday, October 25**



KIDS CHORAL WORKSHOP

LOVE TO SING? COME & JOIN THE FUN!
MAKE FRIENDS, BUILD CONFIDENCE &
DISCOVER YOUR VOICE!

Sat 3rd October
11:00am - 4:00pm
Ages 16 & below

🎭 SING MUSICAL • POP 🎤 • JAZZ 🎷 • CHORAL 🎵

AND A PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITY ON 4TH OCTOBER

🎫 **FREE & LUNCH PROVIDED!** 🍴

Book your place: samanthalewiswidnall@gmail.com

Where? St. Oswald's Parish Centre

MUSIC NOTES

As I write, the choir is already looking ahead to a busy and exciting autumn season, and it is wonderful to hear our singers making such excellent progress. We have also recently celebrated an important milestone for four of our choristers: Sam, Ava, Ollie and Lyra have been “dunked”! For those unfamiliar with the terminology, dunking is the rather lovely tradition of giving a chorister their surplice at the end of a six-week probation period, marking their full membership of the choir. I’m sure you will join me in congratulating them, and we look forward to seeing them continue to grow in confidence and musicality.

We are even beginning to prepare for Christmas, and the choir is sounding great! There is always something special about returning to familiar seasonal music, and we look forward to sharing it with the parish in the months ahead.

Before Christmas arrives, however, we have our Harvest Festival celebrations to enjoy. Among the music we are preparing are the much-loved Badgers and Hedgehogs, which the sopranos in particular are thoroughly enjoying rehearsing! Harvest is always a joyful occasion in the church calendar, and we hope the music will add to the spirit of thanksgiving and celebration.

We are also delighted to be continuing our programme of singing workshops. Following the success of our last children’s event, we will be holding another Kids’ Singing Workshop on 3rd October. It is always a pleasure to welcome young voices and to see children discovering the enjoyment and confidence that singing together can bring.

For adults, there will be an Adult Singing Day on 10th October, offering an opportunity for singers of all abilities to come together, learn new music, and enjoy a day of shared music-making. Whether you are an experienced singer or simply curious to give it a try, you will be most welcome.

Autumn promises to be a busy season, and we are grateful for the enthusiasm and dedication of all our singers. We look forward to welcoming many of you to these events and to sharing our music with the parish in the weeks and months ahead.

Samantha Lewis-Widnall
Director of Music
St Oswald’s Parish Church

Services at S. Oswald's

October 4	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Harvest Festival</i>	10:30	Festival Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 18</i>	18:00	Choral Evensong

October 11	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 19</i>	18:00	Evening Prayer

October 18	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Luke the Evangelist</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 20</i>	18:00	Choral Evensong

October 25	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 21</i>	18:00	Reflective Space

Every Thursday 10.30 Holy Communion (BCP)

MORNING PRAYER is streamed online through the church Facebook page at 9 o'clock on Wednesday and Friday. Sunday worship is on the YouTube page.

Enquires for Baptisms, Marriages etc should be made to the Parish Office. Please email the Parish Administrator (stoswald.office@gmail.com) for an appointment.

Services at Rhydygroesau

First Sunday 09:30 All Age Service
October 4

Harvest Festival 11:00 Harvest Festival Service, followed at 12:30
October 11 by a Harvest Lunch in the Village Hall

Fourth Sunday 09:30 Holy Communion
October 25



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY



Remembrance Sunday will be held on 8th November with the usual service at the park gates with a parallel service in church. There will also be a short act of Remembrance on 11th in St Georges Chapel shortly after 11.00am.

Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

Music List - October 2026

Sunday 4th October

Harvest Festival

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Stopford - St. Patrick's Eucharist
Anthems: Badgers and Hedgehogs - Carter

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Introit: Thou visitest the earth - Greene
Responses: Sumsion
Setting: Sumsion in A
Anthem: A Gaelic Blessing - Rutter

Sunday 11th October

Trinity 19

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Stopford - St. Patrick's Eucharist
Anthem: A Song of Ezekiel - Greenhow

Sunday 18th October

Trinity 20

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Archer - St. Albans Service
Anthem: Sizohamba naye - Trad. Swazi arr. Perona

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Introit: Ubi caritas - Duruflé
Responses: Roth - Hatfield Service
Setting: Smith
Anthem: Ubi caritas - Gjeilo

Sunday 25th October

Trinity 21 (St. Oswald's Singers)

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Shephard - Addington Service
Anthem: As water to the thirsty - Coleman arr. Barnard

HARVEST FESTIVAL 2026

St. Oswald's harvest festival will be on October 4th. As in previous years, any harvest donations will be taken to the Foodbank to support its work among the people of Oswestry and surrounding area.

We will be providing boxes in church so you can make a donation to support their work. We will provide a list of suggested items in the Sunday pew sheet and on the church notice boards.



Thank you on behalf of the Foodbank.



CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 2026

Saturday 3	1100— 1600 Kids Choral Workshop—see page 18 & 19
Monday 5	1000 Clergy Eucharist and Meeting
	1000— 1100 Rehearsal for Harvest Service—Oswestry School Pep
	1100 Visiting Bell Ringing Group from North Cave, Yorkshire—Quarter Peal
	1430 Ladies Group—Parish Centre
Tuesday 6	0845— 1130 Oswestry School Prep Harvest Service
	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 7	0830— 0940 Oswestry School Assembly
	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
	1000 Meeting at Town Council Office, Guildhall - Churchwardens and Rev Dr Keith Musson
Thursday 8	1415 Mothers' Union Fellowship Group
Saturday 10	1100— Adult Choral Workshop—see page 16 & 19
Tuesday 13	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 14	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Tuesday 20	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 21	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 24	Merry Opera Company—Hansel & Gretel
Tuesday 27	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 28	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 31	1000— 1500 Charity Christmas Cards Shop Opens

NATIONAL 3 PEAKS CHALLENGE FOR DEBRA

Haydn is climbing Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon, the weekend of October 9th-11th. The challenge is to climb all 3 mountains in 24 hours.

It is to raise money for the Debra charity which provides care and support for those suffering from Epidermolysis Bullosa - EB, an incredibly painful genetic skin blistering condition.

The money raised will go towards drug testing for every type of EB, treatments that could help stop the extreme pain. Sponsor forms will be in church or donations can be made via Haydn's Facebook Page.

Thank you from Haydn Jones.



Haydn is having a cake stall in the Parish Centre after the service on **Sunday October 25th**. Donations for the Debra charity. Thank you.

CHARITY CHRISTMAS CARDS



**A POP-UP SHOP IN
ST OSWALD'S PARISH CHURCH,
OSWESTRY**

**WILL BE OPEN TO SELL
CHRISTMAS CARDS & GOODS ON BEHALF
OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL CHARITIES**

**FROM SATURDAY 31st OCTOBER
TO SATURDAY 12th DECEMBER**

**10.00 am to 3.00 pm
(excluding Sundays)**

SEEKING THE KINGDOM: LISTEN, RUN, WAIT

I will stand at my watch
and station myself on the ramparts;
I will look to see what he will say to me,
and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

Then the LORD replied:

“Write down the revelation
and make it plain on tablets
so that a herald may run with it.
For the revelation awaits an appointed time;
it speaks of the end
and will not prove false
Though it linger, wait for it;
it will certainly come
and will not delay.”

Habakkuk 2:1-3

As we continue our journey together across the diocese, I have been reflecting on these remarkable words from the prophet Habakkuk. They were spoken in a time of uncertainty and change. Habakkuk looked around and saw a world that seemed troubled and unstable. His response was not complacency, but urgency. He longed to see God's purposes fulfilled and repeatedly cried out, "How long?"

God's answer offers a pattern that feels particularly relevant for us today: listen, run, wait.

First, Habakkuk listens.

Before action comes attention. Before planning comes prayer. Habakkuk takes his place on the watchtower and waits to hear what God will say. As a Diocese, that commitment to listening has been at the heart of our journey through Shaping for Mission and now Seeking the Kingdom. We have sought not simply to make plans, but to discern where God is at work and how we are being called to join in.

But listening is only the beginning.

God tells Habakkuk to write the vision down clearly, "so that a herald may run with it". The vision is not given to be admired, discussed endlessly or

filed away on a shelf. It is given so that people can act. There is movement in this image. There is purpose. There is urgency.

That challenges us today. We know that we are called to make disciples, grow younger, serve our communities and become financially sustainable for the future. These are not aspirations for some distant generation. They require action now. A clear and compelling vision should encourage prayer, shape decisions and inspire momentum. God's mission calls us not simply to think differently, but to live differently, serve differently and invite others into the life of Christ.

Yet Habakkuk's message does not end with running.

God also says, "Though it linger, wait for it".

At first glance, that seems the opposite of urgency. In reality, it is a reminder that God's timing and God's purposes are not always the same as our own. We are called to act with energy and determination, but we cannot manufacture spiritual growth. We cannot force faith, renewal or transformation. Those gifts ultimately come from God.

The challenge is to hold these truths together. We must resist the temptation either to rush ahead in our own strength or to become passive while waiting for God to act. Habakkuk calls us to a better way: to listen carefully, run courageously and wait trustingly.

As we continue Seeking the Kingdom together, Habakkuk offers a helpful pattern for the road ahead. Let us listen for God's voice, run with the vision he has given us, and trust that he will accomplish his purposes in his time. We need the urgency to act, the courage to change and the patience to persevere. Strategies matter because they help us focus our efforts on God's mission, but it is God who gives the growth. And because he is faithful, we can move forward with both urgency and hope.



*The Revd Canon Nick Smeeton
Strategy Programme Director*

*Read more about the diocesan vision and plans
to enable us realise it together at
lichfield.anglican.org/our-vision/*





WHY WAXCAPS?

Imagine yourself in a gorgeous churchyard on the turn of Summer into Autumn. The days shorten, the air chills, the leaves crunch underfoot. Taking a deep breath, you smell the damp earth and rich soil beneath your feet. You walk through the grass and stumble across something small yet mighty, a sign that the meadow you're in is doing wonderful things to help safeguard species-rich grasslands for the future. You're looking at a Waxcap and we need your help to find them and record them!

Our friends at Plantlife are running their annual Waxcap Watch, a citizen science programme asking you to record what fungi you see in grasslands this Autumn. Among lots of other wondrous flora, Waxcaps are often found in churchyards and burial grounds. They favour low nutrient soils that are regularly managed for species rich grassland. The loss of traditional management elsewhere has meant that these pockets in managed churchyards are even more important for the survival of waxcaps.

Many of our grassland fungi species are common in the UK but are highly threatened globally. Some are even classed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List; the same threat level as Giant Pandas and Snow leopards. There are around 50 species of waxcap, and the majority are recognisable for their bright colours, but are often small and can get lost in the sward.

So, how do you get involved in this year's Waxcap Watch survey?

The survey season takes place between Sept and Nov, when all the fungi should be out and easily visible. You don't need any fungi ID skills or specialism to take part in these surveys. All you need is a smartphone or access to a computer. Find out more on the Plantlife website with full instructions.

You can survey any grassy area open to the public (or site you have gained permission to access). The best way to start is by walking over an area in a slow zig-zag pattern so you give yourself time to spot the fungi. Some species can be small and elusive, so it might take you a while to get your eye in!

It's vital we protect these important species and their delicate but beautiful habitat. Where waxcaps live, continued traditional management will help conserve them. Things like scything and removing the grass cuttings are

fantastic methods of keeping grasslands fungi friendly. Feeds and fertilisers should be avoided at all cost!

If you visit a local churchyard to complete your Waxcap watch, we'd love to hear from you. Please take lots of photos of what you find. We'd love to see what's being found and hear how you've got on in your local burial ground.

Kaitlyn Elverson

Nature in Sacred Places Engagement Officer

COFFEE ROTA FOR OCTOBER

4 Harvest Lunch in Parish Centre

11	Hazel Pryce	Dilys Lloyd	Jane Mayne
18	Val Hamer	Glenda Evison	Kay Cole/Fiona Pearson
25	Ann Sagar	Dilys Lloyd	Olwen Phillips



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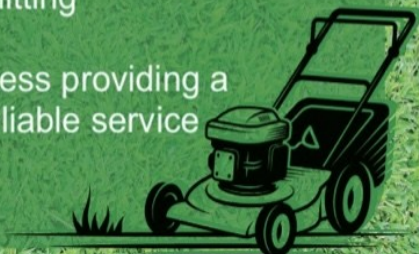
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Dear Supporters

As the season begins to change, schools are spending time focusing on harvest. A time to reflect and give thanks for the world around them, and consider how they can share with others.

Most of my activities have now begun, with my regular schools booking sessions for the term. I recently met with the headteacher of Woodside school and they are keen to work with the project. Please continue to pray for this new relationship, and that I will be able to schedule some sessions with them.

What's Happening in October

- Assemblies this month will focus on themes such as friendship, kindness, thankfulness, doing our best and caring for our world.
- The Christian Unions will be focusing on people from the bible who had encounters with Jesus.
- St Martins RE lessons will focus on what Christians believe and why this is important.
- Journey Day.
I will be taking part in a Journey Day with Morda and Whittington Schools. Journey days allow for pupils to spend the day focusing on some key aspects of the bible. This journey day will allow them to explore the parables of Jesus.

Things to Pray For

- Harvest services and activities happening in Schools.
- Assemblies – Pray for both staff and pupils as they hear the message of Jesus.
- That God's light will shine amongst the Halloween activities that schools have planned this month. Also pray for Churches who are offering light parties and alternative activities for children and young people

Jane webber
Schools Worker
Schools Christian Worker Project

BONUS BALL

Congratulations to the August winners of the weekly Lotto Bonus Ball draw who will each receive £29.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ball Number</u>	<u>Winner</u>
1 Aug	29	Paul Crosby
8 Aug	43	June Williams
15 Aug	7	Marcus Bull
22 Aug	3	Val Hamer
29 Aug	55	Fr Phil Hughes

The Bonus Ball year starts at the beginning of March. The cost of taking part is £13/quarter which is collected either annually, half yearly or quarterly.

If you would like to join the St Oswald Bonus Ball, please let me know.

Paul Crosby
658606

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To St Luke, whose feast-day is 18th October, we owe a beautifully written gospel as well as the Book of Acts. He was a Greek physician and faithful travelling companion to St Paul. Under house arrest near the end of his life Paul noted, 'only Luke is with me'. Luke's gospel focuses on the compassion of Christ, and offers us moving parables, such as the Good Samaritan and Prodigal Son. Women figure more prominently in Luke's gospel than in any other: look out for the extended story of the Virgin Birth, and stories of Mary, Elizabeth, and the woman who was a sinner. His gospel also features more poor people, more lepers, more 'sinners', who are all shown to be 'inside' the love of Christ. In Acts, Luke skilfully links sacred and profane history, as subsequent archaeology has shown. He tells of how the early Christians moved away from Jerusalem into the pagan world, and especially on to Rome.

Luke	L P F Y A A M P O P G I M Y	Prodigal
Feast	P P A R A B L E S O J A A I	Son
Day	N T I G T G O S P E L P N N	Good
Written	C C T S A E F R R L U E H I	Samaritan
Gospel	C I H S G N O U I E A L E K	Women
Acts	L O F R N D S P R R P I E L	Poor
Greek	E G U E I A A H L P S E U M	Lepers
Physician	E A L G L S O Y O G R K L N	Sinners
Travelling	N S A E L R T S G G E O C P	Jerusalem
Faithful	S L M N E T T I R W N A O E	Pagan
Paul	R T N C V C G C A N N A G P	Rome
Compassion	C O M P A S S I O N I P O W	Early
Parables	S A M A R I T A N N S H O R	Christians
	E L C E T L A N E M O W D A	

Solution on Page 35

SMILE-LINES.....

Scammer! I got a call from a scammer who said, "I've got all of your passwords."

I said, "Great. What are they? I'll grab a pen."

Doors

My granddad always said, "Where one door closes, another door opens."

Lovely man. Terrible joiner.

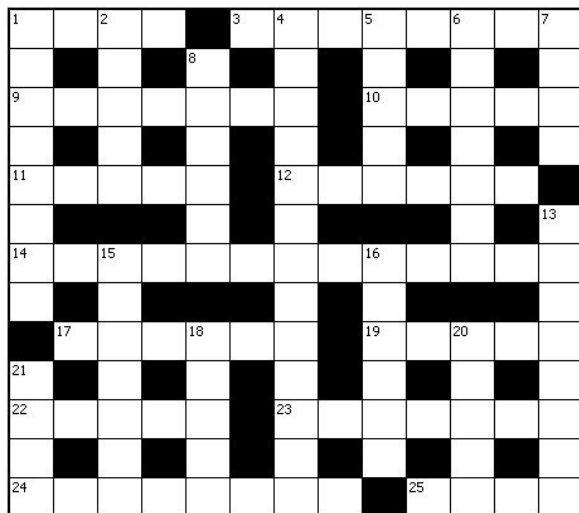
Pastors

What do they call pastors in Germany?

German Shepherds.

Across

- 1 'Those who were standing near Paul said, "You — to insult God's high priest?"' (Acts 23:4) (4)
- 3 They were assigned to guard the tree of life (Genesis 3:24) (8)
- 9 'Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the — of — , the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite' (1 Samuel 1:1) (3,4)
- 10 Surrender (Joshua 24:23) (5)
- 11 Where American livestock can be reared (5)
- 12 Listen (anag.) (6)
- 14 Alternative name for Kiriath Jearim (2 Samuel 6:2) (6,2,5)
- 17 He founded Westminster Abbey, — the Confessor (6)
- 19 Hebrew word for the place of the dead (5)
- 22 Allies of Persia in the fifth century BC (Esther 1:3) (5)
- 23 Where John Wesley was forced to preach a lot (4,3)
- 24 Rebellion against God; abandonment of religious belief (8)
- 25 Note (anag.) (4)



Down

- 1 Give an account of (Mark 4:30) (8)
- 2 'I — — the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free' (Psalm 119:32) (3,2)
- 4 'He took the ephod, the other — — and the carved image' (Judges 18:20) (9,4)
- 5 'You are a chosen people, a — priesthood' (1 Peter 2:9) (5)
- 6 The meek, the merciful and the mourners are all this (Matthew 5:4–5, 7) (7)
- 7 Musical Instrument Digital Interface (1,1,1,1)
- 8 He was the son of Nun (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 13 'Let the little — come to me' (Matthew 19:14) (8)
- 15 'About three thousand were — — their number that day' (Acts 2:41) (5,2)
- 16 In John's vision, the wall of the new Jerusalem was made of this (Revelation 21:18) (6)

- 18 'Our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly — a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ' (Philippians 3:20) (5)
 20 'Glorify the Lord with me: let us — his name together' (Psalm 34:3) (5)
 21 Young Men's Christian Association (1,1,1,1)

Sudoku

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

Easy

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

Medium

PUZ?LES

**Solutions
on page
35**

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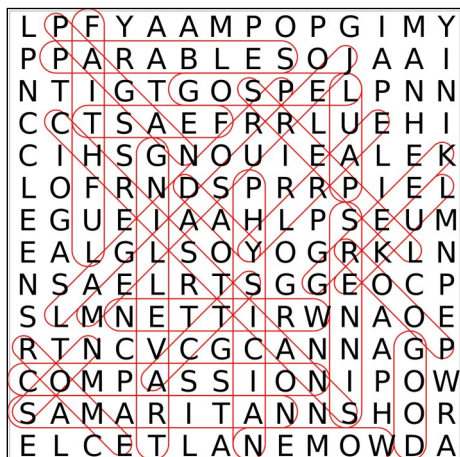


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6	1	7	3	5	4	9	2	8
1	7	4	5	8	2	6	9	3
2	3	5	9	6	7	8	1	4
8	9	6	1	4	3	7	5	2
7	2	8	4	3	5	1	6	9
5	4	1	2	9	6	3	8	7
9	6	3	8	7	1	2	4	5

Medium

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

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Material required
SUNDAY, 11 OCTOBER
Make-up day for working party,
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We welcome in HOLY BAPTISM

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As God has lent them to us, so we say farewell and give back in HOLY DYING:

S Oswald's

September 9

Anne Marie Roberts, aged 59

September 21

Jean Catherine Trobridge, aged 92



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For people who wish to come in and pray during the day, prayer resources can be found in St. George's Chapel.



Oswestry Parish Church exists to propagate and nurture the love of God through the teachings of Jesus Christ thereby serving the needs of the whole community and enriching everybody's lives, through worship and prayer.

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