



September 2026

Parish Magazine

St Oswald, King & Martyr, Oswestry
and Christchurch, Rhydycroesau **50p**



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**THE PARISH CHURCHES OF ST OSWALD, KING & MARTYR, OSWESTRY,
AND CHRISTCHURCH, RHYDYCROESAU**

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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

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Dear friends,

Who or what in history inspires you? For the town of Oswestry that has to be St Oswald, King and Martyr, which bears the dedication of our church and the name of the town. The new housing development off the Salop Road is called St Oswald's meadow. You know the story - King Oswald was valiantly upholding Christianity against the pagan Mercians but lost his life on the nearby battle of Maserfield, and was dismembered. A raven picked up his severed hand, and where it dropped, a spring sprang up which is there to this day.

Nationally, you may be inspired by the patron Saint of England, George, who heroically fought against the dragon. Or if you hail from the other side of the border, you may admire the saintly bishop David who worked so hard to establish Christianity in Wales. Or perhaps you admire King Arthur and his fantastic achievements and have visited one of his Welsh 'thrones'.

Except, say the historians, a lot of what people admire and draw inspiration from probably didn't happen. King Oswald almost certainly existed and battled with pagan forces - but in North-East England, not Shropshire. St George was probably a Turkish soldier and Christian martyr and may have battled the forces of evil in his private temptations, but a dragon? They don't really exist, do they? King Arthur was admired by many, including the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian 1, buried in Innsbruck, Austria, who commissioned a sculpture of him to stand guard over his tomb before he died. But seriously - nice stories, but did he ever exist? At least with David, Patron saint of Wales, we are on firmer ground: he definitely existed and ministered in Wales, though some of the stories surrounding him are also fanciful, like the ground suddenly rising to elevate him so those at the back of a crowd could hear his preaching.

But does it matter? For most of human existence the purpose of 'doing history' was to speak meaningfully to the present generation. It shaped meaning and purpose in life, it galvanised communities, and gave nations a sense of identity and belonging. It may or may not have had basis in fact.

That all changed in the Age of the Enlightenment of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, where testable evidence and verifiable facts became all important. That led to huge benefits from scientific discovery, leading to the elimination of deadly diseases, warm homes with modern conveniences, better nutrition, and a better understanding of how the universe, our world, and human beings evolved. But history which had no

basis in evidence was viewed with suspicion. History became a linear timeline of dates and facts. Visit any historic tourist site: you will probably see a poster with a timeline intersected with vertical lines denoting significant events. Many a school pupil has in the past been drilled with dates of Kings and Queens and the dates of significant battles and political events. With dates, at least there is certainty! But an excessive fact-based history can lead to a loss of understanding of what life was like for those people, what motivated and inspired them, and how we can be similarly motivated and inspired, as well as learn from their successes and failures.

When it comes to reading the Bible, one has to remember that it was constructed in the pre-enlightenment era, where the telling of history was designed particularly to resonate with the present hearers. Archaeologists and historians are fairly certain that the Israelite exodus from Egypt, the 40 years of wandering in the desert, the fall of the walls of Jericho and the subsequent conquest never happened. Probably a small band of Israelites did travel from Egypt to Canaan and joined an already settled Israelite community - but the story of their heroic endeavours became dominant and supplanted other blander Israelite histories.

Further back still, the stories of Noah and Adam and Eve are on a footing with Arthurian legend - fascinating stories, but a literal reading discredited by modern science. So should we ignore them, or the stories of the Exodus, or other stories in the Bible like Jonah and the whale which had minimal basis in fact? No indeed! They have so much to teach us about human nature and God's interaction with humanity which have inspired countless generations. They are referred to even by Jesus and St Paul in the New Testament and have become woven into the Christian narrative.

So next time you are tempted to dismiss received history, whether national or Biblical, on the basis that it might not be true, stop and think: am I trapped in a post-enlightenment way of thinking? If so, perhaps you need to re-set your mental parameters to appreciate the way of 'doing history' for the majority of human existence. St Oswald may never have set foot in Shropshire, and St George may never have set foot in England. But what heroes! What sources of inspiration and examples of Christian discipleship! I'm proud to be part of a church and a town that bears Oswald's name. Likewise, I'll continue to be inspired by many of those stories in the Bible, however much archaeologists and historians may dispute their veracity.

One final thought: we all have personal histories in addition to the communal and Biblical ones. Some things in those personal histories may

be tragic, traumatic, or painful. Sometimes, by our actions, either deliberately or unwittingly, we may have instigated those painful emotions in others, and we now feel deeply ashamed. Human brains have evolved with a defence mechanism to focus on positive and constructive thoughts so that, to a certain extent, we see our personal history through rose coloured spectacles. When this defence mechanism fails, or the traumas are too severe, we are in danger of suffering from a range of mental illnesses. Having an 'untrue' picture of ourselves (in the post-enlightenment way of viewing history) might be the price we pay for sanity and being able to function.

So, there are some things that are better left to God and his judgement. Only he can untangle the range of influences and circumstances that made us the complex humans that we are, and what caused us to carry out our actions. When we confess our sins in church it is more of an acknowledgement that we are fallible human beings, rather than presenting God with a long list of actions. But Jesus showed us that the God who sees beyond individual, communal and even Biblical histories is ultimately a loving, merciful and forgiving God, who understands us through and through. Faith in Jesus brings salvation and freedom from guilt, which impacts positively on mental health. In life, in history, there is never complete justice, however much we try to bring it about. We trust that God, who sees all things, will dispense perfect justice in the life to come.

Adrian Bailey



***“We plough the fields
and scatter”***



**Harvest Lunch—Sunday, October 4th
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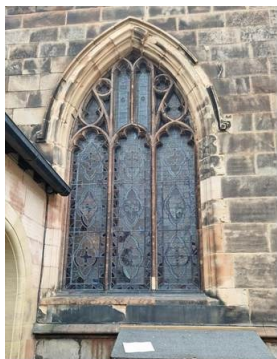


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THE LADY CHAPEL WINDOW

Some weeks ago it was noticed by an observant churchwarden that some of the stonework from the outside of the window at the west end of the lady chapel had fallen to the ground. Quick as a flash(!!) the Building and Fabric Committee were alerted; they investigated and sought professional advice.

The recommended contractor is Midland Masonry, who specialise in all manner of stonework repairs; their report shows that, in some places, there is general deterioration to the stonework in the area of the window structure, but the main problem to be resolved first is that some of it is being used as a nest by mortar bees. The bees themselves are “on site” for perhaps 2 months in the spring for nestbuilding. In our case, the relatively soft sandstone used to construct the window surrounds provides a base for their nest and they take advantage of cracks and crannies to lay their eggs. In themselves, they do not cause damage, but the holes they use can retain moisture and, when it freezes, this can cause the stone to crumble. This what we believe happened to our structure. Professional advice is that we should cut out the stone where it has been damaged and weakened, so that it can be replaced to keep out the moisture and future bees and thus avoid further damage. Below are two photos showing some of the damage.



Of course, all of this comes at a cost. To replace the voussoir completely, and repair the damage which is apparent in other places around the window, is estimated to cost £5,674, and, with VAT added, £6,609.19. Obviously, if only superficial damage is found, the costs would be less.

Having recently spent some £50,000 on the new heating system, we do not have finance available now to carry out this work, so we will have to defer action and let it take its turn in the priority list. Look out for an update later.

Interestingly, these masonry bees are relatively harmless. The males do not sting, and live only for a few weeks after mating. The females are more useful in maintaining the breed. They sting only occasionally. There is a fascinating entry in Google – “Masonry Bees life cycle UK”. Worth a look.

Mike Peters
Secretary,
Building and Fabric Committee

MOTHERS` UNION FELLOWSHIP GROUP

A few of us met in St Andrews Church at Welsh Frankton, along with members throughout the Diocese and invited people who the Mothers' Union have helped over the years. It was to celebrate our Founder, Mary Sumner, who started a group 150 years ago.

We had a very joyful service which we all enjoyed, led by the Rural Dean and their Branch leader. After this we enjoyed fellowship together and in my case meeting and chatting to many of my previous M.U. colleagues.

Next month, on Thursday 10th September, I am hosting a Mothers' Union QUIET DAY. It will be all day, times to be announced later.

Pam Musson



COVER PHOTO BY FRANCES MAJOR

A view of a very parched-looking countryside taken from Old Oswestry August 2026

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE – 278. REFERENCES TO THE CHURCH'S 'SECURE COFFER' OR PARISH CHEST

I had been looking for a topic for this month's article for some days, wanting to find a subject that I had not covered already. I was struggling to find one, so came over to Oswestry to have a look around the church, 'looking for inspiration'. I was able to see the magnificent new vestment cupboard, featured in last month's magazine, and whilst there I also looked at other cupboards at the back of the church, either side of the west door. In the Lady Chapel, I saw the handsome wooden chest which our new guide book tells us is used to hold altar cloths, and was formerly used to hold the church registers and other important documents. And in the north transept, behind the piano, I saw a second old chest, with heavy locks and hinges, and slots for donations.

And it dawned upon me that I had written very little about these two ancient chests, important parts of the church's fabric and fittings for several centuries. In June 2015, I had written about the church's role in providing for the poor of the parish, and in June 2023 I had looked at that turbulent time in our church's history, in the years 1610 to 1614, when the vicar, Nathaniel Tattersall was deprived of the living, and eighteen months later, his brother Philip Tattersall was sacked from his position as parish clerk. That article focussed on changing the church locks, looking at how the vicar and clerk's dispute with the churchwardens and others had resulted in work for local locksmiths to mend or change the locks on various church doors, to the "poore mans boxe" and to the "great cheast in the vestry".

Parish chests such as ours have a long history. Many churches had strong boxes in which to store important items – church records and deeds, church plate, and other valuables – from medieval times. In 1538, Thomas Cromwell, as Henry VIII's vicar general, issued instructions that *all* churches should have a secure coffer or parish chest, with keys held by the churchwardens and the vicar, as a safe place for keeping records of christenings, marriages and burials. For records of ours, my starting point was – as it often is – to look through the churchwardens' accounts for the years 1579 to 1613, transcribed by William Day in 1970.

There are several references to the "poore boxe" or "poore mans boxe", some to the receipt by the wardens of small sums of money placed in the box, others for the distribution of money from the box to individual parishioners. For example, on March 6th 1604, the churchwarden Richard Lloyd received the sum of two shillings and ninepence, "in the poore man his boxe", and recorded the distribution of this sum to thirteen people,

each receiving sums ranging from a penny to sixpence. The recipients were listed: "John Phyllys wyffe ... katherin Price ... a blind woman of ulliow street ... Elen kyffyn ... a blind boy of swyne ... gwenhwyfar vechan of morton ... katherin vechan of swyne ... Robt Jon corvisor ... Thomas Edds sonne ... marie, dd bobith his sister ... katherin vch Edd ... Annes the wyffe of Jon Bach ... [and] Thomas Edds his boy"¹.

There are also payments for the upkeep of the poor box. In 1598/99, the warden Richard Jones paid Jeuan Thomas, smith, seven pence "for mendinge the pore mans boxe and for making 2 keyes for it". And in 1606 the wardens Edward ap John and William Thomas paid David Moris, smith, twelve pence (a shilling) "for a thirde locke for the poore mans box"².

Turning to the parish chest, the earliest reference in these accounts is from 1598/99, when the aforesaid Richard Jones paid sixpence to "Thomas the joyner for mendinge the great cheast in the vestry", fourteen pence to "Jeuan Thomas smyth for making 2 kyes 4 hinges and mendinge the lokes of the same cheast", and a further twopence "for nayles to set the lokes". The same year, the warden John Williams paid a shilling "for eirne [iron] for the hinges of the chest beinge in the vestrie" and another fourpence "more for eirne & nayles". And in 1605/6, the wardens paid sixpence "for a thirde locke to put on the chest that keepes the Regester booke in the vestrie", and a further threepence for "a hespe and a staple for the said chest"³.

I haven't as yet mentioned the story linked to the chest now placed in the north transept, included in the church guide book which states that "this chest is reputed to have been used as a corn bin for feeding the horses of the 'Roundhead' soldiers who occupied the ruined church after the Battle of Oswestry in 1644". A previous guidebook, from 1992, tells us that "In the Civil War, when the ruined church was used as stables, the chest became a cornbin, and rumour has it that Cromwell's forces used it to feed their horses after capturing the town".

Whether this story is true or not is difficult to say. Stories of churches being used as stables by Parliamentary troops during the Civil War are

¹ *Oswestry Parish Church: the churchwardens' accounts for 1579-1613* (1970), p114; note that 'ulliow street' is Willow Street; 'swyne' is Sweeney

² *Churchwarden's accounts*, as above, p76, p130

³ *Churchwardens' accounts*, p76, p78, p131. 'Thomas the joyner' may be Thomas Kynsricke, mentioned elsewhere in the accounts (p126, p129)

not uncommon. Doing a search via Google, its artificial intelligence (AI) summary referred to “local English church lore”, and to “local tradition” up and down the land which “frequently claims Oliver Cromwell’s Parliamentary cavalry stabled their horses inside medieval village churches”. We do know that our church was the scene of conflict during the 1644 ‘battle of Oswestry’, and that the church suffered great damage as a result⁴, but there is no real evidence that this chest was used as described. It is perhaps unlikely, but it’s a good story.

John Pryce-Jones

⁴Some of that damage was caused before the ‘battle’ by the Royalists fortifying the town

OUR NEW BOILERS



The replacement of our outdated boilers was completed on time. The contractors were extremely efficient and courteous. They will return when the heatwaves abate so they can test the full firing up of the system. A few significant people have the knowledge to operate the controls; thanks to modern technology, they can even operate it from home via their mobile phones! So we avoid ‘fiddling’!

ST. OSWALD’S LADIES GROUP

Our next meeting will be in the Parish Centre on Monday 7th September at 2.30 p.m. when we welcome Julie from the Ellesmere Honey Company to talk to us about their Business and their bees.

We are always pleased to welcome new members to our monthly meetings. If you would like further details, please contact me either in church or telephone 01691657903.

Ann Sagar
Hon. Secretary

BONUS BALL

Congratulations to the July winners of the weekly Lotto Bonus Ball draw who will each receive £29. The winners were:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Ball Number</u>	<u>Winner</u>
4 July	47	Elizabeth Steele
11 July	41	George Gill
18 July	10	Pam Willing
25 July	50	Martyn Bentley

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.

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CHALLENGE FOR DEBRA



I will be doing the National 3 Peaks Challenge - climbing Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon from October 9th-11th - the challenge is completing all 3 peaks in 24 hours.

All donations will go to the charity Debra which helps children and adults who have an incredibly painful genetic skin blistering condition - Epidermolysis Bullosa - known as EB. The money will help to provide enhanced EB care and support and to help secure effective drug treatments.

Sponsor forms will be in church.

Thank you .

Haydn Jones.



Oswestry & Borders

Foodbank

Together with Trussell

September 2nd 2026
AGM

You are welcome to join us at 7pm (7:15pm start) at Cafe Life in Cabin Lane Church, to hear about who we are, how we are doing and where we are heading.

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rsvp: Liz Jermy manager@oswestryandborders.foodbank.org.uk

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together**

MUSIC NOTES

The choir and I have enjoyed a very well-earned summer rest after an incredibly busy and rewarding term. We finished the year on a real high, particularly with our celebrations for **St Oswald's Day**. With several new pieces of music and plenty of challenges along the way, the choir made me incredibly proud, and I hope they made you proud too.

Our choir continues to thrive, with every singer growing in confidence and ability week by week. You may have noticed some new faces in the stalls recently. These young singers have been working exceptionally hard, as joining a church choir is something of a *baptism of fire*—there is so much to learn! I'm delighted that many have now decided to become full members, and I know you will make them feel as warmly welcome as the rest of the choir already has.

We weren't total relaxing though! As during the summer we were invited to lead a singing day at our local library, which proved to be a fantastic success. It was wonderful to share our music with the wider community, and we're hopeful that we may soon be welcoming even more new choristers as a result.

This year, one of our choristers also attended the course in **Bath**, representing our church wonderfully. We hope they had an inspiring and enjoyable experience, returning with new ideas and skills to share with us all.

Finally, a heartfelt **thank you** to everyone who kindly donated towards our chorister fund this year. Your generosity means the world to us. It provides invaluable opportunities for our young singers and helps them continue to grow both musically and personally.

We're excited to be back to making music together, and we look forward to welcoming you to our **first service on Sunday 13th September**. Until then, I hope you've had a wonderful summer, and I look forward to seeing you all very soon.

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



Services at S. Oswald's

September 6	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Trinity 14</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
	18:00	Evening Prayer

September 13	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 15</i>	18:00	Evening Prayer

September 20	08:00	Holy Communion
<i>Trinity 16</i>	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
	18:00	Choral Evensong

September 27	10:30	Parish Eucharist with sung setting
<i>Trinity 17</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 Rhydycroesau

<i>First Sunday</i>	09:30	All Age Service
September 6		

<i>Second Sunday</i>	09:30	Holy Communion
September 13		

<i>Fourth Sunday</i>	09:30	Holy Communion
September 27		



Parish Church of St. Oswald, King & Martyr

MUSIC LIST - SEPTEMBER 2026

Sunday 6th September

Trinity 14 (*St. Oswald's Singers*)

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Shephard - Addington Service

Anthems: I give you a new commandment - Anon.

Sunday 13th September

Trinity 15

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Archer - St. Albans Service

Anthem: Forgive our sins as we forgive - Trad arr. Baldwin

Sunday 20th September

Trinity 16

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: MacMillan - St. Anne's Mass

Anthem: View me Lord - Lloyd

6.00pm Choral Evensong

Introit: Teach me O Lord - Attwood

Responses: Redding

Setting: Stanford in Bb

Anthem: Rejoice in the Lord always - Anon.

Sunday 27th September

Trinity 17

10.30am Parish Eucharist

Setting: Mathias - Communion Service in C

Anthem: To you, Oh Lord I lift up my Soul - Rachmaninoff

PRAYING FOR OUR WORLD

The next meeting is September 2 at 7 p.m. in the Church Reading Area.

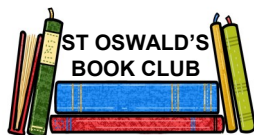


For people who wish to come in and pray during the day, prayer resources can be found in St. George's Chapel.

CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 2026



Tuesday 1	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 2	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
	1900 <i>Praying for Our World</i> — Reading Area
	1900 Oswestry & Borders Foodbank AGM at Café Life, Cabin Lane Church
Friday 4	1400 Building & Fabric Committee Meeting—Parish Centre
Monday 7	0830— 1030 Oswestry School Assembly
	1000 Clergy Eucharist and Meeting
	1430 Ladies Group—Parish Centre
Tuesday 8	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 9	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Thursday 10	1030— 1600 Mothers' Union Quiet Day—see page 11
Saturday 12	Ride+ Stride for Churches—see opposite page
	1615— 1700 Visiting Bell Ringers Quarter Peal
Monday 14	1900 PCC Meeting in Parish Centre
Tuesday 15	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 16	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
Saturday 19	0900— 1200 Oswestry School Founders Day Service
Tuesday 22	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 23	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre
	1015— 1145 Hertfordshire Bell Ringers Quarter Peal
Tuesday 29	1030— 1230 Place of Welcome - Parish Centre
Wednesday 30	1000 Under 5's Playgroup—Parish Centre



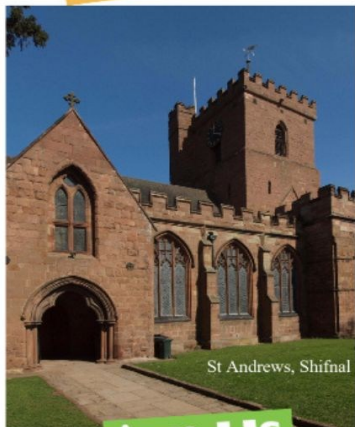
Please check St Oswald's website and weekly pew sheet for information on dates and books. All are welcome to join us for coffee and cake and lively discussion!

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/stoswaldsoswestry

**12TH
SEPT
2026**

RIDE + STRIDE
for Churches

SHROPSHIRE CHURCHES OPEN DAY



St Andrews, Shifnal

join us

Join us to keep our churches in good repair and help provide modern facilities.

Anyone can join in - collect sponsors, then plan your own route - walk, bike, or car - visit some churches - enjoy the day.

Half your sponsorship goes to your own church and half to Shropshire Historic Churches Trust, which gives grants for repairs and improvements (in Shropshire Telford and a few parishes over the border).

In **2025** we raised **£44,817**. Thank you. Let's make **2026** another bumper year!

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SEEKING THE 100TH BISHOP OF LICHFIELD

SAYING GOODBYE

As you read this article, Bishop Michael's retirement on the feast day of St Michael and All Angels will either be imminent or recently past. It has been a long goodbye, sometimes sad but often filled with joy and happy memories. Many have said how much they will miss his wisdom, his kindness and his pastoral heart.



TAKING A SNAPSHOT

It has been difficult for some to engage with the idea of seeking the 100th Bishop when the 99th has still been so present but in October the diocese will 'hand in its homework' to the national church – just like when there is a parish vacancy, we have to write our 'diocesan profile' (known as the Statement of Needs) for the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC), the small group who will work together to discern the potential candidates for #Lichfield100. The CNC group comprises fourteen people: two archbishops, six people appointed by General Synod and six people nominated by the diocese.

This group needs a clear brief from us: what is Lichfield like as a diocese, what are our joys and hopes, what are the challenges and who are we looking for to help us to become all that we can be. A group called the Vacancy in See Committee have been putting the Statement of Needs together on behalf of us all, asking those questions of various groups in June and July this year and collecting that wisdom together in one document.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS – SPEAK DIRECTLY INTO THE PROCESS

But the CNC also want to hear from the people of Lichfield directly. Between 5 and 15 October, the Archbishops' Secretary and the Prime Minister's Secretary for Appointments will be meeting with a number of invited groups looking for answers to similar questions.

And everyone will have a chance to speak directly into the process of discernment. There will be an **online meeting on the evening of 14 October, 6pm-7.30pm to which everyone is invited**. There will be more information on how to join on the diocesan website or you can follow this link: lichfield.anglican.org/vacancy-in-see/

Your voice really does matter. So far the most frequent two words we've heard in our consultations for our 'diocesan profile' have been 'huge' and

'diverse'. We can't show people from outside just how big and diverse we are unless they hear lots of different voices from lots of different communities – rural Shropshire accents, Black Country accents, Stoke accents, accents with a touch of Caribbean sunshine or south-east Asian music, all joyfully putting in their two penn'orth. So come and have your say! Who knows, it might be your voice which makes all the difference in discerning the right person to be our next Bishop.



*Sam Rushton is Diocesan Secretary and CEO of
Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance,
and secretary to the Vacancy in See committee.*



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NIGHTWATCH

As the sun sets over our churchyards and burial grounds, a whole other world comes alive. Using some nifty technology, we can listen in on this hidden world to find out just what kind of wildlife is thriving there.

At Caring for God's Acre, we've recently acquired a fantastic bit of kit called a passive acoustic monitor. These little devices can be set up to record and monitor a whole range of sounds in environments that would otherwise be difficult to survey, helping you discover what species are about. For instance, we've been using our acoustic monitor to survey bats in local churchyards.

The devices can be left out for a few hours, days or even weeks. They utilise a small microphone, to detect and convert incoming sound waves into a signal which can be recorded and stored for later analysis. Once back at home, you can then download the data to analyse and see what species you've heard. Some models will do this for you, some won't; it entirely depends on the model.

Bats use echolocation to hunt for insects at high frequencies that we humans can't hear. Individual species emit calls that correspond to their size, flight, behaviour, environment and prey types. Each will produce a distinctive call that can be recognised on the acoustic monitor or during sound analysis.

It can be difficult to navigate these tools for a first timer. Never fear; our friends at Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) have made surveying for bats accessible and easy for everyone.

BCT has been running the National Bat Monitoring Programme since 1996. Through its various mediums, all the recorded data helps inform bat conservation across the UK. One part of the programme is the NightWatch survey. Taking place between July and October, NightWatch is a community science project helping you discover the hidden world of nighttime nature living in your neighbourhood. No experience or previous knowledge is needed to take part, just for you to be over 16 and have a windowsill, garden, churchyard or urban space you have permission to survey. They greatly encourage people in towns and cities to get involved, so we can monitor how bats are faring in urban areas.

The process is simple. Choose a date and book your kit via the survey portal. Next, a free kit arrives in the post including an "AudioMoth". This is

your mini passive acoustic monitoring device! Switch it on, secure in place and you're ready to go. At the same time, you'll sit with the detector watching and listening for any night wildlife. Whatever you spot, you make a record of. Once you're done, put the kit back in the post and wait to hear back from BCT with your personalised report of the bats you discovered during the survey.

More information on how to sign up and book your kit is linked here: <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/science-research/passive-acoustic-surveys/nightwatch>

Between 60-90% of historic churches now have protected bat roosts, making the surrounding churchyard space even more important for bat conservation. Keeping churchyards chemical free, full of rich and diverse habitats that attract varied food sources, provides critical sanctuary for these nocturnal species. Consider getting involved in your local burial ground for bats and other wildlife in whatever way you can.

Kaitlyn Elverson
Nature in Sacred Places Engagement Officer



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THE PARABLE OF THE WEEDS (MATTHEW 13.24-30)

Ever wonder why there is both good and evil allowed in this world? Jesus told a parable that touched on this subject – it is called the Parable of the Weeds. It runs like this: Consider the world as if it were a field where a Farmer has sown good seed. But then an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. So, when the wheat came up, so did the weeds. What to do? Instead of destroying the weeds, and thereby risking the wheat, the Farmer tells his reapers to wait and let both wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. At the harvest he will instruct the reapers to gather up the wheat, but to discard the weeds. So do not despair when evil seems to thrive in this world – there is a reckoning still to come, and justice will be done.

Kingdom	H	I	U	S	L	E	E	P	I	N	G	Sow
Heaven	E	E	R	E	A	P	B	E	H	T	K	Gather
Good	N	I	A	R	G	E	U	W	W	I	B	Reap
Seed	O	D	R	V	D	K	N	T	O	U	T	Root
Field	R	L	E	A	E	I	D	T	R	S	H	Let
Sleeping	Y	E	H	N	S	N	L	N	G	D	A	Grow
Grain	T	I	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	Together
Weeds	Y	F	A	S	O	D	S	M	B	E	V	Harvest
Enemy	T	T	G	O	A	O	D	A	Y	W	E	Bundles
Servants	E	V	D	N	D	M	R	D	E	E	S	Barn
Master	H	S	E	O	A	N	P	I	L	E	T	Burned

Solution on page 31

COFFEE ROTA FOR SEPTEMBER

6	Ann Sagar	Dilys Lloyd	Olwen Phillips
13	Mary Jones	Natasha Bell	Sally Wright
20	Jane Mayne	Chris Abram	Jean Lawrence
27	Jane Wilkinson	Val Hamer	Carol Burke



[illegible]

- 1 'Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders — in vain' (Psalm 127:1) (6)

4 Season of the year (Psalm 84:6) (6)

7 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. — here and keep watch with me' (Matthew 26:38) (4)

8 It came over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour on the first Good Friday (Luke 23:44) (8)

9 Paul invariably did this in the synagogues he visited on his missionary journeys (Acts 17:2) (8)

13 'It is God who works in you to will and to — according to his good purpose' (Philippians 2:13) (3)

16 Members of the Church of Scotland (13)

17 'Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountain side and — down' (Matthew 5:1) (3)

19 Mock(Luke14:29)(8)

24 Disgrace(Psalm44:13)(8)

25 First month of the Hebrew calendar (Exodus13:4)(4)

26 Christianity of the Britons before Augustine arrived from Rome(6)

27 Mean (Numbers 35:23)(6)

- 1 'Whoever finds his life will — it' (Matthew 10:39) (4)
- 2 'My lord the king, let the — — on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt' (2 Samuel 14:9) (5,4)
- 3 O raid (anag.) (5)
- 4 'If two of you on earth — about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven' (Matthew 18:19) (5)
- 5 Take care of (1 Samuel 17:15) (4)
- 6 What the older son heard as he came near the house the day his prodigal brother came home (Luke 15:25) (5)
- 10 'Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with — judgment' (Romans 12:3) (5)
- 11 Do ten (anag.) (5)

- 12 Architectural style first used in Greek temples in the sixth century BC (5)
 13 Capable of being used (1 Kings 7:36) (9)
 14 'Each one should — his own actions' (Galatians 6:4) (4)
 15 Among the items imported by Solomon's fleet of trading ships (1 Kings 10:22) (4)
 18 'But I am afraid that just — was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray' (2 Corinthians 11:3) (2,3)
 20 Outstanding 18th-century hymn writer, — Watts (5)
 21 One of the four sons of Asher (Genesis 46:17) (5)
 22 Be distressed (Proverbs 24:19) (4)
 23 He was the father of Gaal, who threatened rebellion against Abimelech (Judges 9:28) (4)

Sudoku

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

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Easy

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

Medium

PUZ?LES

**Solutions
on page
31**

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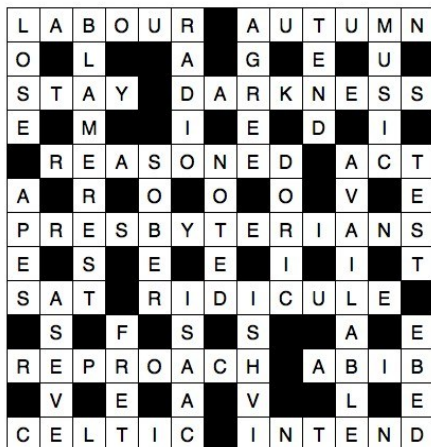
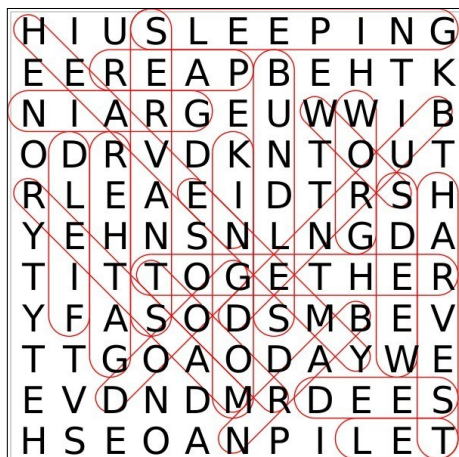
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7	3	1	5	4	8	9	6	2
6	4	8	9	3	2	7	1	5
9	2	5	1	6	7	4	8	3
1	7	2	4	8	9	3	5	6
4	9	3	6	2	5	1	7	8
5	8	6	7	1	3	2	9	4
2	5	7	8	9	4	6	3	1
3	6	9	2	5	1	8	4	7
8	1	4	3	7	6	5	2	9

Medium

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

PUBLICATION DETAILS FOR NEXT MONTH

Material required SUNDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

Make-up day for working party, and publication:

Tuesday, 22 September

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