

# The Messenger

## October 2025

### The Parish Of Dursley



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and**

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**OCTOBER 2025**



## A Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Welcome to our October edition.

It is the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness and hopefully time to sit and read the Messenger. We have some important information and the first results of the word of the month competition.

If you have anything to say please let us know, we are always open to new ideas, we also like photos of events in the town.

From Valerie and Judith (editors)

**Front Cover:** theme for 2025

'In and around St James' –

Harvest Giving 2024.

*Photo by Clare White*

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## CONTENTS

Rev Dr Juliet writes	2,3,4
Benefice office thoughts	5
Dates for your diary	6-9
Music Notes	10
Thank you	12,13
Bells	14
Book Stall	16
Diary for October	18,19
Culture and Me	21,22
Eco News	23,24
Diocesan News	29,30
Word of the month	31,32
Important notices	34
100 Club & Year's Mind	35
Parish Registers & Flower Rota	36

**DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER 2025 ISSUE  
IS SUNDAY 19th OCTOBER 2025**



## Revd Dr Juliet Jensen writes.....

---



Well, there's some news from The Rectory Garden...things are growing again!

Some of you will have watched with horror as, first all the pots disappeared, then during the vacancy the maintenance team cut everything down, then the wall was re-pointed and more plants we cut down and then, in a state of grief, your new Rector completely failed to manage what is supposed to be a manageable garden!

I was very pleased to meet Max earlier this year, in preparation for his marriage to Georgina. They live locally and were married at St Giles in May...I'll let him tell the story in his own words.

.....  
*This year, on the 17th of May I got married to Georgina, we were very fortunate to have Rev. Juliet conduct our ceremony. Before being married we were helped to prepare by Juliet and the church. It was really lovely, having recently moved into the area, to get to know people through the church.*



*During our conversations, getting to know each other, I mentioned that I was a landscape gardener. After a little while Juliet mentioned to me that she might need some help with her garden, and would I be able to take a look. I was delighted to be asked! Being new to the*

area, I was keen to take on a local project. We made arrangements for me to visit the rectory, take a look, and see if there was anything I could do.

Looking at the task at hand it was clear the entire garden would need to be brought under control and the many weeds that had started taking root would need to be dug out, and some shrubs that had overgrown would need to be cut back. But the area of the garden that would become the primary focus was the courtyard outside the back door. A unique space with huge potential crying out for renovation, I was excited at opportunity to make a positive impact and bring life into what felt like a wasted space in an important location.

Juliet expressed an interest in growing vegetables and we wanted to soften and add interest to the brilliant white of the courtyard walls formed by the old part of the rectory building. We also wanted to create a cosy place to sit encompassed by plants, that would also be pleasing to look at from the kitchen window. So, I proposed the idea of a series of raised beds around the perimeter of the courtyard, and one in the middle in-between of a series of concrete pathways, believing this would accomplish our goals.

Raised beds would add height to any planting, provide a bed of good quality soil in which to grow vegetables, and allow me to install posts and wires without fixing to, or risking damage to the old walls



whilst providing a structure for climbing plants to grow up.

So I set to work for 3 weeks, and now you can see the results. All in all the courtyard garden project has been a great success. I'm thrilled to have added to and improved the garden at the rectory. I hope Juliet will be able to enjoy many moments of tranquillity and

*calm as she tends to her vegetable garden, and maybe those who visit the rectory will also be able to enjoy the garden.*

*The other main part of the garden is looking much better now that it's cleared of weeds, and the shrubs cut back. However, a blank canvas has presented itself, with empty beds waiting to be planted....*

*What to plant with? Well, dear reader, with autumn coming and the time to divide herbaceous perennials fast approaching, I thought it would be nice to ask if anyone would like to contribute some plants from gardens in the parish, and contribute towards the development of the rectory garden!*

.....

You may be wondering where on earth the spiritual significance of any of this is.....I will leave that with you to ponder, for now.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

If people are in need, unwell,  
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### **SAFEGUARDING**

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## October thoughts from the Benefice Office (actually from home this month)... by Clare White.

---



When I wrote for the September magazine I was completely unaware of what was going to happen on Bank Holiday weekend. Being struck down with appendicitis wasn't on our weekend's plans. All a bit of a shock, I visited the Vale in Dursley at 8.30am on Saturday, was in Gloucester Hospital by 10am, surgery was quickly performed on Sunday at 8am, where I received the very best treatment and care. Recovering by 10am and home on Bank Holiday Monday.

So work has been very slow ever since and I will be back up to normal hours when I return from my long awaited holiday.

My reflection of this time has been that we really don't know what's around the corner. Well I did know this already, but it reinforces the need to look after yourself, enjoy today, worry less about tomorrow and make sure you take advice about your health at the earliest opportunity. I'm very good at burying my head in the sand and just carrying on. But a crisis point does hit and you are faced with no choice.

In Paul's letter to the Philippians (4:6) we read *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."*

As I arrived at Gloucester hospital I popped into the Chapel and said my prayers (very quickly), which helped to give me strength to cope in an unknown situation.

From Isaiah 41:10, we are told *"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*

I learn to take strength and feel God's support in times of illness and need of healing.

I am now well on my way to recovery and will learn to cope with the other medical issues that have set me back this year.

I don't think I will be completing The Arch Angel Way Pilgrimage this year, that's for sure. But I won't give up as hope for a 2026 completion.

I'll report on our holiday in Australia when we return.

St James in Sydney, where my daughter worships, is on the list of places to visit, they have a very strong choir too, she says.

## Sharing the Common Cup at St James. Dursley

---



The PCC listened to the distress of those who have felt excluded and considered the need to offer a service where the Common Cup is shared by intinction (the priest dipping the wafer into the wine, as we did during lockdown and after). The PCC has decided that sharing the Common Cup by intinction can take place at the Thursday Morning Service of Holy Communion.

This will mean that people who feel fearful of sharing the Common Cup in the usual way can be included.

The PCC do not think that there is an infection control reason to be doing this as we are comfortable to return to other pre-Covid practices, such as enjoying sitting together for refreshments and not wearing masks so, all other services of Holy Communion will continue to share the Common Cup in the usual way. Our Church Wardens, Chris Tyler and Danny Parker, will welcome your response to this proposed change in practice and we will take notice of this before any changes are implemented.

### **Stop Press:**     *by Judith Staddon*

---

September has been a month of celebrating. First David Wood's 80 years in the choir, Maureen and David's 65 years of marriage and then Nigel's 75th birthday, with his organ recital and lunch kindly provided by Barbie. Also we have new beginnings with the first of the 'Shine' Praise Parties for families at Dursley Academy which on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September, led by Revd Juliet and Richard Whitham from 'Sportily' was very well attended by parents and children with members of St James congregation. Thanks to Ann King and her helpers for providing refreshments during the morning. There were games, singing and prayers. The weather was kind and the games were held outside.

Now we then settle into autumn and winter and hope and pray that the heating in St James will be sorted out.

So, What's next? Not wishing my life away I much prefer spring but then again there are more new beginnings and much to celebrate.



# Quiz Night

**18th October, 7pm**

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# Harvest Festival

St James the Great, Dursley

10am

5<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Collection for the food bank

Harvest Lunch  
in the  
Parish Centre  
following the service



Ewelme Benefice

# St James the Great, Dursley Coffee, Cake and Music 2025

April 26th

May 31<sup>st</sup>

June 28th

July 26th

August 30th

September 27th

**October 25th**

Nigel Davies

Keith Hearnshaw

Nigel Nash

Pavlos Triantaris

John Pennington

Nigel Davies

**Jonathan Hope**

**Coffee and homemade cake will be served from 10.30am.  
The music begins at 11am and last for 30-40 minutes**



**There is no charge,  
but a retiring  
collection will be taken,  
the proceeds of  
which go  
to the work of  
St James' Church**



## MUSIC LIST FOR OCTOBER

---

It was good to see nearly a "full house" in the choir stalls on Sunday 14th September when Rev'd Ian Gardner presented David Wood with a medal commemorating 80 years' service to St James' choir. A specially made cake and wine followed the service which included one of David and Maureen's wedding hymns (65 years ago at St James'), the hymn David sang for his audition to the choir, and an all-time choir favourite "O Praise Ye the Lord" sung to the tune of Gloucestershire-born composer C H H Parry. David and Maureen have contributed much to our church and in the wider community and it was lovely to see such a large congregation for this special occasion. David now becomes the Senior Choriman; a position held by the late Lionel Jones for many years

Edwina Walton directed the choir in Lynn James' absence. Lynn is slowly recovering from a stroke/seizure which has left her devoid of any energy. We all know that Lynn gives minimum of 150% effort into everything she does, so she really needs to take time to recuperate fully before resuming her choir duties – and then just 100% please!

The final recital in this year's well attended Coffee, Cake and Music series will be given by Jonathan Hope on Saturday 25th October. An extremely gifted organist, Jonathan is currently Assistant Director of Music at Gloucester Cathedral and this will be his third visit. Highly recommended!

*Nigel Davies*

### Music for October

5th	am	Look at the World – Rutter	Mass of St Mary - Davies
(Harvest)			
12th	am	Ave Verum – Byrd	Sumsion in F
19th	am	Informal Service	
26th	am	Benefice Service at Uley	
	pm	O Come Ye Servants – Tye	Smith Responses
		My Soul there is a country - Parry	Short Service - Weelkes



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## **Thank you all...** *by Maureen and David Wood.*

---

Following a hectic period of four days, September (10th to the 14th) covering a birthday (88th) a Wedding Anniversary (65 years) and a celebration of David's presentation of the Senior Chorister Award due to his 80 years' service to Saint James Choir, we wish to extend our thanks for all the gifts cards, flowers, phone calls, prayers and kind messages from our family, friends and members of the congregation who we sincerely thank for joining us for wine and cake following the 10am service on September the 14th.

We particularly wish to thank the Director of Music, Nigel Davies, for composing the beautiful motet 'Lord Remember David' words from Psalm 132, (see next page) which the choir sang during the congregation communion. It is a great honour to have music dedicated to one person composed by such a talented musician. We are truly privileged that Nigel Davies is directing music at Saint James.

Thanks also to Anne Shipton who arranged for us to have choice of hymns, each one of great significance to us both, also to the Reverend Ian Gardner who finding there was no priest available to take the service on the 14th, promptly volunteered. Thanks to everyone for making it such a memorable time for us both.



## **David also says...**

Following repeated requests for a sight of the wording of the motet 'Remember David' sung on Sept 14th at the presentation of David Wood's Senior Chorister Award, the composer Nigel Davies has authorised the Editors of 'The Messenger' to reproduce the wording herewith:

**To celebrate David Wood's 80 - years membership of the choir  
of St James the Great, Dursley**  
**Psalm 132                      Lord, remember David                      by Nigel Davies**

---

Lord, remember David and all his troubles, his troubles.

How he swore unto the Lord. How he swore unto the Lord and vowed a vow unto the mighty God of Jacob.

Turn not away, turn not away the presence of thine anointed.

The Lord hath made a faithful oath unto David, and he shall not shrink from it.

For the Lord hath chosen, the Lord has chosen Sion to be an habitation for himself.

There, shall I make the Horn of David flourish, to flourish, to flourish, I have ordained a Lantern for mine anointed.

Lord, remember David, Lord remember David.

Postscript from David:

'I have informed the choir that I am aware of the rumour currently in circulation regarding my imminent retirement from the choir. However, those members who are thinking, 'thank goodness', will be disappointed as, God willing, I intend to be at rehearsal next Friday!'

*David*

*there'd be no one to do the Tambourine Award at the Choir Dinner!!*

# Bellringing *by Elizabeth Byrne*

---



We helped celebrate David Wood's remarkable achievement of 80 years' service to St. James' choir by ringing a Quarter Peal for Choral Evensong, details below.

Sunday 14 September 2025

1280 changes of Bristol Surprise Major, in 46 minutes

1 Andrew M Bull

2 Jane D Bull

3 Alice V Franklin

4 Anne E Pope

5 Anthony M Bulteel

6 Andrew J Binstead

7 Philip F Pope

8 Isaac J O'Shea (conductor)

First in the method 3 and 8

Bristol is one of the more challenging methods we ring, and hasn't been rung to a Quarter Peal here since 4 June 2017. This band comprised all of our own band except for Tony Bulteel who normally rings in Bristol, but often comes to visit us. You may have noticed that our Sunday morning ringing is variable – we either have feast or famine as regards the number able to be present.

We will be going on our annual outing on Saturday 27 September, over to the Forest of Dean, ringing at English Bicknor, Littledean, Newent and Longhope. Ironically, a band from The Forest will be coming to ring here on their outing at the same time. Hopefully there will be a report of this in next month's magazine.



# **Chris Pengelly**

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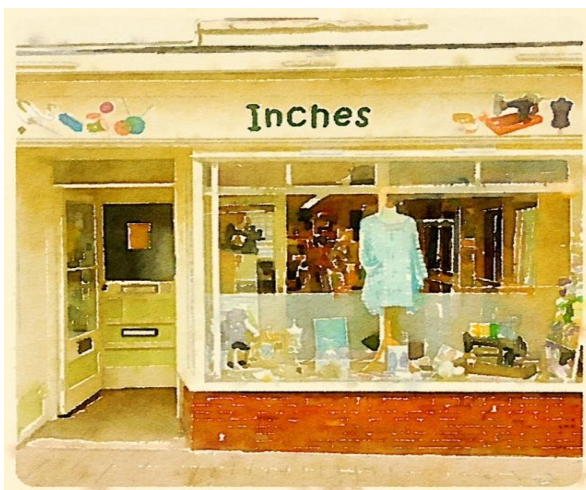
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Clive writes,

I should like to begin this month's report with the usual request for volunteers to help put out the books each week. I don't mind whether you come along out of a genuine interest, curiosity or just straightforward altruism but, with thousands of books to put out each week, any occasional help you can give would be appreciated. Do come along at 3:30pm on any Friday. it's usually about 45 minutes but you can give as little time as you can spare. You might even find you enjoy it!

But the main purpose of this report is to just give an example of the wider effect of "The Books" This is an e-mail Anthea received recently from the charity we supported last month called CALM.

" I wanted to get in touch to let you know about a new 4-week programme we're offering for parents and carers of young people with additional needs. We'd like to use the funds you raised to make this pilot project available at a slightly reduced rate.

Initially, I had mentioned these funds would go towards the children's sessions, but after careful thought, we felt this pilot for parents/carers would have an equally valuable impact. I hope that's ok with you?

If you're happy, I'd love to share a social media post about the programme and highlight your support in making it possible.

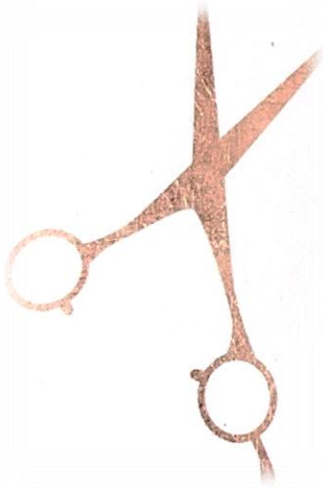
Thank you again for your generosity!

Best wishes,

Mariachiara Apruzzese

Director and Founder of CALM

It's good to get such positive feedback. Let's hope we can keep it up. This month, all donations received on 11th October will go to the Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper.



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## October 2025



(Joining Zoom details on Ewelme Benefice website)

---

### **Wednesday 1st October**

#### **Office closed**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

### **Thursday 2nd October**

#### **Office closed**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

### **Friday 3rd October**

#### **Office closed**

### **Saturday 4th October**

4-6pm Wotton Branch Bellringers peal

### **Sunday 5th October – Trinity 16 – Harvest Festival**

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James

12noon Harvest Lunch in the Parish Centre

5pm Churches Together AGM at St Bartholomew's, Lower Cam

### **Monday 6th October**

#### **Office Closed**

### **Wednesday 8th October**

#### **Office Closed**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

### **Thursday 9th October**

#### **Office Closed**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

### **Saturday 11th October**

4.30-5.15pm Bellringing

### **Sunday 12th October – Trinity 17**

10am Parish Holy Communion at St James with the Precentor of Gloucester Cathedral



### **Wednesday 15th October**

#### **Office Closed**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

### **Thursday 16th October**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

11.15am Communion at Henlow Court

### **Saturday 18th October**

9.30-12.30 Bellringer peal

7pm Quiz in the Parish Centre in aid of Julius and Dora Orphanage

### **Sunday 19th October – Trinity 18**

8am Said Holy Communion at St James

10am Reflective Worship "Living faithfully in the time of creation"

10am "Shine" Praise Party worship at Dursley Academy School

### **Wednesday 22nd October**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

### **Thursday 23rd October**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

### **Saturday 25th October**

10.30am Coffee, Cake and Music at St James – Jonathan Hope

### **Sunday 26th October – Last Sunday after Trinity**

2am YOU NEED TO PUT YOUR CLOCK BACK ONE HOUR.

10am Benefice Holy Communion at **St Giles, Uley**

6.30pm Choral Evensong at St James

### **Wednesday 29th October**

6pm Evening Prayer via Zoom

### **Thursday 30th October**

9am Morning Prayer in St James

10am Holy Communion at St James

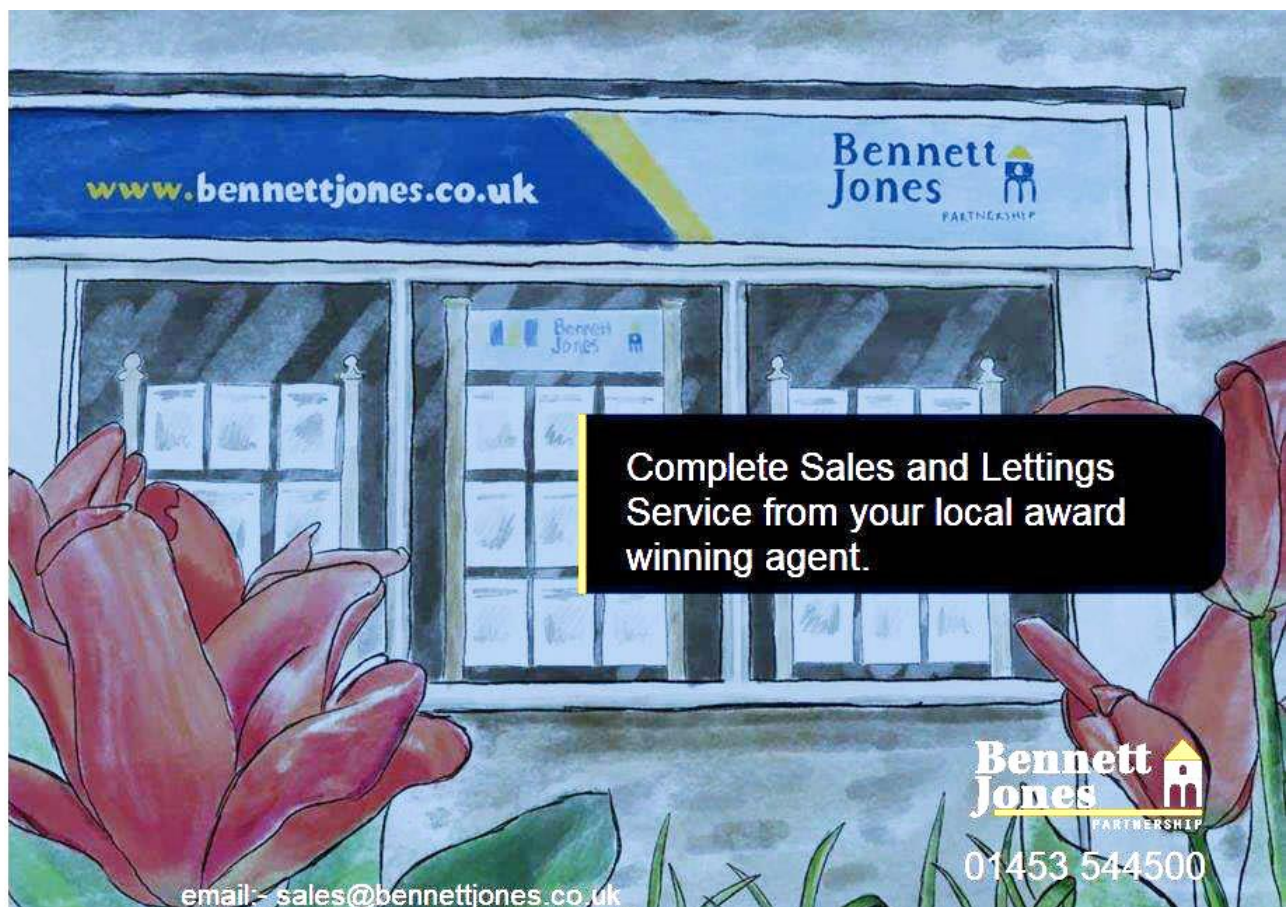
### **Sunday 2nd November – Advance Notice**

4pm Service of Remembering and Thanksgiving at St James.

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## **CULTURE AND ME** *by David Vonberg.....*

This month David asked Judith Staddon to give her thoughts.

---



### **Do you have a favourite author or book**

Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier. It is so colourful unlike the first film which in black and white is really stark.

### **What are you reading at present?**

I belong to a book group and I have read The Names by Florence Knapp, which was page turner! Over the years, through this WI group, I have read a lot of classics that I should have read growing up and didn't get round to, so that has been really good for me.

**Is there a book which you have often wanted to read or would like to read next?** No, generally if I want to read a book, these days, I get on with it. I have no burning ambition to read War and Peace!!

### **Is there a song or piece of music you turn to, to cheer you up?**

To cheer me up or get me through a tough time I have to play anything by 'Queen' very loudly!

### **Do you have a favourite piece of music?**

No my music taste ranges from the Beatles, Queen, trad Jazz, right through to Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov.

### **Do you play a musical instrument. If not what would you like to have learnt?**

I learnt the piano when I was young but marriage and babies got in the way and I've never gone back to it, but I love listening to piano concertos and when our granddaughter Bella is in the mood or she's playing to an audience I then wish I'd kept it up but realise what a lot of blood, sweat and tears have gone into the finished piece.

### **What is your favourite film?**

My most watched film is Easter Parade, Fred Astaire and Judy Garland are wonderful. I love the dancing and the music. It came on the BBC last Christmas and I said that it ain't fitting!!

### **Do you have a favourite play?**

No but I love the ballet especially the Nutcracker. Again the dancing and the music. On one famous occasion we went to the Royal Opera House and saw Darcy Bussell in Manon. FAB-U-LOUS, which brings me on to the next question.



**What about a favourite television series?**

That has to be Strictly Come Dancing with all the dancing, music and the glitter.

**If there was one painting you could own, what would it be and what is special for you about it?**

It would be by Claude Monet the Waterlily Pond. Having been to his house and garden at Giverny I could live with any of his paintings.

**Do you have a special building which means a lot to you and if so why?**

St Mark's meant a lot to me as we had Clare and Steve's wedding, Eliza and Kathryn's baptisms but also said goodbye to Mike, Mum and Dad there too, also there were some lovely people in the congregation who helped me through many tough patches. St James too means a lot as my Christian journey started there with Sunday school and have been married there twice!!

**Is there a place (town, village, a county?) where you have felt happiest?**

I have been happy in Dursley and felt at peace when I visited Ketton, near Stamford in Lincolnshire where I was born and I met my long lost family.

**You are having a fantasy dinner party for five – who would you invite? (This could be anybody from any century and from any country)**

I'd need a good chef to cook this meal! King Charles III, Queen Camilla, Princess Anne, Mary Berry and Monty Don. As you can see I am a Royalist, I love gardening and good food. I wanted to say my long gone family members but it would be too hard to let them go again, so I chose living people.

After a month of celebrating, first David Wood's 80 years in the choir, Maureen and David celebrating 65 years of marriage and then Nigel's 75th birthday, with his organ recital and lunch kindly provided by Barbie and new beginnings with a service for families at Dursley academy we settle into autumn and winter. So What's next? Not wishing my life away I much prefer spring and more new beginnings.



The Church's fifth mark of mission is 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth'.

The Church of England's goal to reach Net Zero by 20230 has been in our minds when we have been reviewing our goals for the Silver Eco Church award here in St James.

Recently, I learnt about the harmful effect that floral foam (Oasis) has on the environment and felt I needed to share this information with you. There is a movement of organisations advising against its use. I must admit, it hadn't crossed my mind until relatively recently, that floral foam is plastic. I have read that due to its spongy, cellular make-up, it crumbles easily into minuscule particles. This contributes to the global problem of microplastics.

Also, floral foam isn't biodegradable.

If used wet, it shouldn't be discarded down the drain. This is because the foam will ultimately breakdown and become a microplastic which can then enter the water systems and contaminate other habitats which is bad for the environment

Another important consideration is the environmental impact the use of mass-produced flowers has. 90% of fresh cut flowers, available all year around, will have been grown abroad. Most are grown in the Netherlands in glass houses and then flown over to the UK. A certain amount is grown in Kenya and then flown over. Energy to heat greenhouses, and fuel usage by the aeroplanes all contribute to the carbon footprint of these mass produced fresh cut flowers.

Organisations including the Church of England are encouraging the use of locally sourced, seasonal flowers in our flower arrangements.



Beth Bruce-Gardner, from St Mary's, Fairford, is a Deanery Eco Ambassador for Sustainable Church Flowers. Sustainable Church Flowers (SCF) offers practical, achievable ways to align floral traditions with environmental stewardship.

Tomorrow a few of us are attending a morning of sustainable church flowers at Fairford church. This is being hosted by

Cirencester Deanery. Beth will be demonstrating at this and I shall report back to everyone how the morning went.

The great news is that another similar event being held more locally in Dursley Methodist church, Tuesday 21st October at 10.30am. The cost will be £5 payable on the day. Beth Bruce-Gardner will be demonstrating at this too. If you would like to attend this event, please book your place

[Breadbakerdanielle@gmail.com](mailto:Breadbakerdanielle@gmail.com) or scan the QR code on the poster below. Please let me know if you need any help making a booking.

Best Wishes from Gill

St James Eco Church Team Member

### References

[www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/environmental-impact-oasis.php](http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/environmental-impact-oasis.php)







## **Bible Sunday ....by Canon Richard Morgan**

---

In the new Church of England calendar, Bible Sunday has moved to the end of October, so we get a reminder this month of the importance of the Bible to our faith. It gives us the earliest and best accounts of Jesus in the Gospels, of his meaning in the Epistles, and of the earliest Church in the Epistles and Acts. And the Old Testament gives us God's preparation for Jesus in his relationship with Israel.

So it's important to read the Bible. Different Christians will read in different ways. The late John Baker, Bishop of Salisbury, said that we need to drink the Bible like water before we sip it like wine. We need an overview, not just snippets. I took to reading the Bible all through in my teens. There are lots of difficult bits. The daily lectionaries give most of the Bible, and may be a better way for some to read it like water. To get a good range of its content and helpful explanations, the Scripture Union provides daily readings and comment. The Bible Society has a wide range of resources and materials.

To sip the Bible like wine, to roll it round our minds and hearts to savour and appreciate it, to let it sink deep into us, we may dwell on certain texts, short passages, to think about them, to repeat them.

It is vital to pray the Bible, to turn its central message and particular passages into prayers. [I try to include such prayers in my sermon handouts.] We all use the Lord's Prayer, Jesus' great prayer that is itself part of scripture, and the grace. The canticles and responses at Evening Prayer and the 'Gloria in Excelsis,' the 'Holy, holy, holy,' the 'O Lamb of God' and other parts of the Communion services are or include scripture. But here's a general prayer to read scripture deeply, and to let it read us.

O God, our life and our guide,  
teach us to read your word in scripture  
not casually or superficially,  
but letting it sink deep into us to examine us and to remould us in  
your image.

Help us to meditate on your word, to wrestle with it and to submit to  
it,  
that we may find life and true freedom in it,  
and that it may live and be fulfilled in us,  
forming us after the pattern of Jesus Christ, your eternal Word,  
by the power of your Holy Spirit,  
through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



As a 16 year old, I started work with a daily commute, between Weston -super-Mare and Bristol. At precisely 8am each day all front doors up and down the street opened as the men folk and me left homes to take the 'bus to the station for the 8.20am train. I don't recall any chat except if a regular was absent or delayed, when a quick assessment was made, situation resolved and folk quietly settled down to hide behind their newspapers! Exactly 30 minutes later, as the dear old steam engine gently nudged the buffers at Temple Meads, snorting with what sounded like a sigh of satisfaction, the train stood still and the Guard's voice echoed'

'All Change. Everybody. All Change''. Whoever was near a carriage door swiftly yanked the leather strap to lower the window and leant out to turn the highly polished brass handle allowing us to escape in an orderly fashion down the platform. No rush or rude hustle! The crowd soon disappeared into different workplaces, shops, offices, factories, warehouses, breweries all within walking distance! By 9 am I had signed in at the Central Health Clinic where I was a gopher! Monday to Saturday! Same satisfaction. No change.

Now 88 years old, I have the luxury of hindsight and appreciation of a long life with many changes all seamlessly supported by my simple faith. With no formal qualification, I left home at 17, with an innate sense that all would be well as i had landed a low paid job in a convalescent hospital with free accommodation. Four years later, with much study and hard graft, I was a State Registered Nurse! Easy! Then a near fatal horse-riding accident left me with a broken neck and short term paralysis which changed everything, until a kind surgeon was persuaded he had the skill to improve my mobility. He operated and then made me a special brace, clumsy but functional, out of sight and supporting. Faith did the rest and I carefully moved on.

Later I met and married a wonderful man, we travelled, had children, and lived a full life of exciting challenges and many changes! Easy! Without warning, and with no preparation at 50 I was plunged into solo survival mode. Suicide beckoned, but that, somehow seemed such a waste, so once more my faith took charge with change and blessed assurance and life went on, but very differently!

Now in 2025, I am being challenged by a failing heart! I have no problem with being dead, but would like to choose to live

independently 'til then! Discernment is difficult. To change what I can, live with what i can't change and know how to tell the difference!

For a while I have been a lost sheep in stony pastures, impatient for answers! No longer pro-active but unsure of direction! Without realising it, I retreated into private prayer and quiet contemplation at home which, surprisingly, led to a week away in respite care, a totally new experience and change of outlook.! It opened my eyes to new ideas and a vision of a beautiful landscape of rich brown earth, skilfully ploughed in straight furrows, stretching into the far distance just waiting for the seed sower.

All change again. Another new beginning. Of one thing I am certain. My life is in His hands. Praise the Lord.

### **From ALL AMONG THE BARLEY by MELISSA HARRISON.**

The spring she is a young maid who does not know her mind,  
The summer is a tyrant of a most ungracious kind,  
But the autumn is an old friend who does the best he can  
To reap the golden barley and cheer the heart of man.  
All among the barley, oh! who would not be blithe  
When the free and happy barley is smiling on the scythe!

The wheat he's like a rich man, all sleek and well-to-do,  
The oats they are a pack of girls, all lithe and dancing too.  
The rye is like a miser, he's sulky, lean and small,  
But the free and golden barley is monarch of them all!  
All among the barley, oh! Who would not be blithe  
When the free and happy barley is smiling on the scythe.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **AN ACRONYM FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY.**

**A**cknowledgement of uncertainty

**P**ause. Inhale for 2 counts, exhale for 4 counts.

**P**ause again and breathe.

**L**et go of negative thought.

**E**xplore ways to change, challenge or find new friends.

Taken from Saga Magazine.





## Acrostic Poems....by Sally Hayward

---

**O**ctober we are well into Autumn,  
**C**locks go back an hour  
**T**hen the Tortoise and  
**H**edgehogs begin their hibernation  
**O**ur Summer we  
**B**roke records with 4 heatwaves  
**E**verlasting sunshine and  
**R**emember those days gone by.



## Sunflowers Acrostic

**S**unflowers are one of my favourites  
**U**p my days, when  
**N**ot my best and  
**F**or one reason or another I  
**L**ook at those Sunflowers  
**O**ne seed  
**W**ill grow;  
**E**ndless  
**R**emarks to how they grow  
**S**o tall?



## Meeting Jesus online

**For many people, gaming is a space for competition, creativity, and connection. For the Revd Jay Niblett, Rector of Rivervale Churches, he also sees gaming as a platform to explore faith and meet Jesus.**

Jay runs a gaming portal, Eden Forge, with business partner Josiah Holloway. Eden Forge offers individually crafted Sunday School sessions for children aged 7-12, which are run virtually and in person at local churches. It provides a Minecraft Online Club open to young people across the world, and it also offers teaching for young people and their parents or guardians as they start to learn the basics of Minecraft.



Jay said: "Gaming is a powerful platform for building relationships and discussion. For children, particularly children who maybe aren't connected to churches or places where it's a bit more rural, they can connect with other young people in the online world and use Minecraft to learn about the Bible and faith."

In the summer, Jay ran a free, two-day holiday gaming club in Meon Vale, introducing children and young people to popular games like FIFA and Mario Kart.

They also entered a custom-built Minecraft world, where meeting Jesus was key to the success of the mission.

Jay said: "They entered the cave as a team, encountering dangerous creatures and obstacles. The world was designed to be challenging, so teamwork was essential. Then Jesus arrived in the game, who intervened to help them succeed. It illustrated the idea that God gives us what we need when we need it in life."

Eden Forge was born out of lockdown, when Jay began exploring how games could support safe conversations. During this time, he encountered *Land of Promise*, a Singapore-based initiative creating biblical storylines within Minecraft. After testing one of their virtual

worlds with his own children – walking through a desert while experiencing the story of Moses – Jay recognised the potential of gaming to provide new opportunities for exploring faith.

“You could use Eden Forge to go through a six or seven-week course, but through gaming,” Jay said. “The average age for a gamer is 30 years old – many adults are gaming, why not meet them there? It seems like now’s the time to find any angle where we can connect and see people and become the Church of the future for the next generation. Gaming can help do that.”

Longer term, Jay’s vision is to start regular online gatherings for young people, and occasional events for adults. These would encourage discipleship and fellowship and eventually would evolve into structured resources for churches to run short faith courses within a game.

Find out more at [edenforge.gg](http://edenforge.gg).

### **A life of prayer: The diocesan prayer companion**

The diocesan prayer calendar has been relaunched this autumn under the new name, the Diocesan Prayer Companion. This prayer scheme aims to support people in praying for the people, places and projects of this diocese and beyond.

Each Sunday contains a collect and a prayer focus for the week to come, looking at different areas of the Life vision. There are daily prayer prompts to encourage prayer for benefices, schools, the diocese and beyond, uploaded quarterly to the diocesan website.

### **Prayer is integral to our relationship with God and our growing in faith as followers of Christ.**

**Bishop Rachel said: “If we want a relationship with someone to deepen and grow, we need to spend time with that person. It can be no surprise that the same is true between us and God.”**

You can download the Prayer Companion from

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/living-faith/your-prayer/calendar-of-intercessions/>

If you’d like to try praying, or reignite your prayer life visit

<https://gloucester.anglican.org/living-faith/your-prayer/> for more resources and support.

**Have your say** - Visit Facebook **f/Diocese.of.Gloucester**, email Katherine at **kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk**, follow us on Twitter **@glosdioc**, view videos on YouTube **Diocese of Gloucester** or visit our website **Gloucester.anglican.org**



## **WORD OF THE MONTH – SEPTEMBER.**

**Procrastinate:** delay or postpone action; put off doing something.

**Some interesting entries:** The response has been good, please keep it up.

I sat down this afternoon to compose a sentence about the word procrastinate, but then I thought I would put it off until tomorrow or whenever..

### **Procrastinate**

Is this the word used on how long it has taken to install the new boilers in the church ha ha!!

### **PROCRASTINATE**

Elizabeth the First  
Thought that the worst  
A queen can do,  
It is true,  
Is to do today  
What wisely may  
Be put off till tomorrow,  
Avoiding pain and sorrow,  
- Or, lest annoyance should befall,  
It never should be done at all:  
She thought it great  
To procrastinate.

Or  
Good Queen Bess  
Would have said, 'Yes,  
It's wise and great  
To procrastinate:  
Unwise 'twould be  
To do today  
All that, you see,  
Might wisely be  
Put off until tomorrow,  
Thus avoiding sorrow!'

**P**rocrastinate you should  
**R**eally do it right now, no delay  
**O**ften  
**C**rawling, dawdling  
**R**ight not to hesitate  
**A**nd or  
**S**tall where necessary  
**T**hings are very  
**I**mportant  
**N**ever put off what can be done today or  
**A**t least  
**T**omorrow  
**E**verlasting times can be remembered either good or bad



## WORD OF THE MONTH COMPETITION

Each Month there will be a new word which we need you to fit into a sentence. The sentence, which best conveys the meaning of the word and will be judged by the editors and Benefice Administrator, will be the winner. There will be a small prize.

The word for October is

**Tarry**

From Rev David's letter in September.

Send entries to the Office, Valerie or Judith  
by 20th October

We thought all the entries were very good but after much deliberation we have chosen Paul Prodger's entry – very amusing and topical.

Is this the word used on how long it has taken to install the new boilers in the church ha ha!!

Valerie, Clare and Judith

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## **TWO IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

### **Advance Notice.**

The price of our magazine has remained the same for many years and elsewhere prices have risen significantly, and now we feel it is time for a modest increase in the price of The Messenger.

**So from 1st January 2026 they will be 70p each or £7 annually.**

We do feel that the magazine is good value for money and we hope you continue to enjoy it.

## **100 CLUB**

Members of the 100 Club are advised that the 100 Club will be

### **DISCONTINUED**

AT THE END OF 2025

The final draw will be the December draw this year.

Sincere thanks are expressed to Sarah Hodge who has administered the Club for the last 25 years and to David Wood (greatly helped by Philip Staddon) who has been responsible for recruitment of members.

Members of the 100 Club who still wish to support the church in a tangible way are advised that the 'Friends of St James' welcomes new members and Clive Orchard is always seeking help with his 'Free Books' on Fridays at 3.30pm and Saturdays at 8am and 12 noon.

Members of the 100 Club are sincerely thanked for their support over so many years.

## 100 CLUB

Results for September is as follows:-

1st - 168 - Elizabeth Rolfe

2nd - 122 - Judith Staddon

3rd - 135 - Anne Colebrook

*Many thanks Sarah*

### Year's Mind in October

1st Nancy Walker 2022; (Edith) Mary Robinson 2023

2nd Mary Cuff 1975; Stuart Young 2000

3rd Lily Neale; Angela Sandalls 1997; Molly Chandler 2011;  
Laurence Bishop 2024

4th Lorna Eades 2004; Margaret Roper 2005

5th Ivor Ford 2019

6th Lena Smith 2018; Leslie Duncum 2020

7th Dorothy Wareham 1979; Frances Douglass 2017

8th Audrey Grover 2019; Gerry Pierce 2024

9th Michael Parsons 1984; William Turner 2013; Paul Ayland 2018

11th Robert George Mack 2006

12th Cecil Clarke

14th Alan McVicar 2015; Mary Gale 2017

15th Florence Pope 1966; Harry Prodger 2022

17th Michael Wiggins; Frederick Sheppard 2014

19th Kenneth Cocke 2000

20th Ray Phipps 2000; Bryan Read 2000; Mary Clevedon 1995;  
Marion Jones 2020

24th Bill Nelmes 2004

25th Sally Bedwell 2016

26th Audrey Price 2017

27th George Fouweather 1991

28th Brian White 2016

29th Stuart Read; Patricia Harrold 2022

30th Margaret Ryan 1998

31st Ruth Eileen Hamner 2006

## FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.



### FUNERALS & INTERMENT SERVICES:

**We share our thoughts and prayers with the families of those who mourn the loss of those they love.**

29th August

burial of Marion Osgood's ashes at St James

29th September

burial of Philip Eeley's ashes at St James

## FLOWER ROTA

**October 5th, 12th & 19th**

**High Altar:** Cynthia Martin,

**Tanner Chapel:** Steph Saye

**Lady Chapel:** Valerie Meares

### HARVEST

**Pulpit:** Anne Shipton

**Font:** Anthea Fittall

**Nave Pillar:** Jennie

**Hymnbookchest:** Kim

**Porch:** Sheila Gardner

**October 26th & 2nd November**

**High Altar:** Marion Paisey

**Tanner Chapel:** Ann Orchard

**Lady Chapel:** Glenys Muir.







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**BELLRINGERS**

Elizabeth Byrne      Tel: 07788 800849

**100 CLUB**

Sarah Hodge      Tel: 545155

**CHOIR**

Anne Shipton      Tel: 07557 784858

David Wood      Tel: 545073



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