

IN TOUCH

Magazine of the Hanley Team Ministry

TIME TO REMEMBER



NOVEMBER 2025

TIME TO REMEMBER

Rt. Revd. Matthew Parker
Bishop of Stafford

November is the time of remembering. In its dark days, we turn our hearts and minds to the past and we remember.

On All Saints Day we remember the saints of our faith, those who have shown how it is possible to live as Christians in the world.

On All Souls Day, we remember those we have known and who have died. It is a remembering tinged with both loss and love.

On the 11th November, we recall the sacrifice of those who have died in war and pray earnestly for peace.

Less gloriously, “we remember, remember the fifth of November”, in a festival deeply rooted in English anti-Catholic feeling; a reminder that remembering is not always a good thing or, at least, we need to be sure that remembrance is not just a means by which we keep alive old hatreds.

Remembrance is – almost by definition – backwards looking. We call to mind what once was so that we can grieve, learn, give thanks. But remembrance also has a role in the present and for the future. Remembering loved ones helps us come to terms with the grief we feel now. By remembering those who have died in war, we resolve to live more peacefully today and pray for peace for the future.

One of the great acts of remembering in the Bible takes place in the book of Ezekiel. God takes the prophet Ezekiel to a dreadful valley piled high with old, dry, *dismembered* bones. He learns later that these are the bones of his people who lament, “Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone ...” God says to Ezekiel, “Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!’” and when he does, “there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them”.

What God calls the prophet to do is to “re-member”, literally to knit together the members of these dried up bodies so that they are whole again. And then to the “re-membered” bodies, he prophesies breath and they live again. God’s people will be restored because God is faithful. He has been in the past and he will be again and in the future.

Remembering is not nostalgia nor is it a hanging on to past grievances or regrets. In a world where so much is “dismembered” by war and hatred and violence, true remembering is gathering memories and past experiences to make sense of the present and to give hope for the future.

In re-membering, we prayerfully and gently put back together again things that were lost and broken and dried up. This is most obviously so when we celebrate the Eucharist together and we remember Jesus and in this act of the remembrance though we are many members, we are made one body, re-membered, put together “in Christ”.

As you remember this year, I pray that the fruit of your remembering will be a deeper sense of God faithfulness amidst all the chaos of the world and a resolve to seek peace and unity in a divided and fractured world.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

The Book Centre Hanley
is celebrating its
80th. Birthday
and would like to give away
80 Bibles

**Could you, as an individual or church,
sponsor a Bible to give away?**

**Suggested donation £10
(or whatever you can afford)**

**The Book Centre will purchase
the Bibles to give away**

**e-mail enquiries@crfl.co.uk
for bank details or 'phone**

01782 212146

NOVEMBER DIARY

Events in bold take place each week but check with organisers

Mondays	Cobridge Kiddies	Christ Church	10.00
Tuesdays	Lunch Club	Christ Church	12.00
Wednesdays	Places of Welcome	St. Luke's	08.30
	Open Door	St. Mark's	09.30-13.30
	'Drop-In'	Christ Church	10.00
	Baby & Toddler Group	St. Luke's	13.00
	Over 55s	St. Matthew's	13.30
Thursdays	Place of Welcome	St. Mark's	08.30
Fridays	Open Door	St. Mark's	09.30-12.30
Second Sat	Bingo Afternoon	St. Luke's	15.00
Last Sunday	Bubble Church	St. Luke's	15.00
Sat. 15 th	Coffee Morning	St. Matthew's	10.00
	Quiz	N'wood Parish Hall	19.30
Sun. 16 th	Evensong	Holy Trinity	16.00
Tue. 18 th	PCC	Christ Church	19.15
Thu. 20 th	Messy Church	St. Matthew's	15.30

YMCA North Staffordshire is hosting the national Chief Executives & Strategic Leaders' Conference this year from 19-21 November. The aim of the gathering is for leaders across movements in the four nations of the UK to rest, network, exchange ideas and build enduring friendships in the spirit of our Christian values. On day two, Thursday 20 November, delegates will attend a holy communion service at St. Mark's Church to reflect and share fellowship.

SUNDAY READINGS IN NOVEMBER

2nd. The Fourth Sunday Before Advent [All Saints Sunday]

Dan. 7: 1-3, 15-18 Eph. 1: 11-23 Luke 6: 20-31

9th. The Third Sunday Before Advent [Remembrance Sunday]

Job 19: 23-27a 2 Thess. 2: 1-5, 13-17 Luke 20: 27-38

16th. The Second Sunday Before Advent

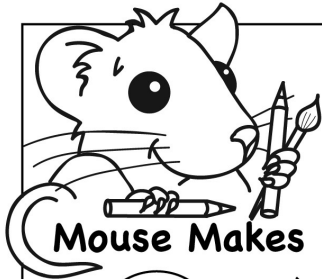
Mal. 4: 1-2a 2 Thess. 3: 6-13 Luke 21: 5-19

23rd. Christ The King [Sunday Next Before Advent]

Jer. 23: 1-6 Col. 1:11-20 Luke 23: 33-43

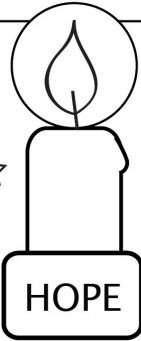
30th. The First Sunday Of Advent [Common Worship Year A begins]

Isa. 2: 1-5 Rom. 13: 11-14 Matt. 24: 36-44



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November. ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour. We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



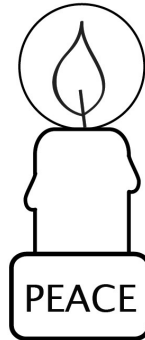
Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



Read:
LUKE 2:10-11
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



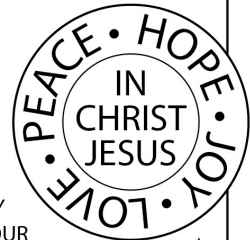
Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



Read:
Romans 5:1-2
Through who do we have peace with God?

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

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT



See also 'Light And Truth' pages 15/16

CHRIST THE KING

Sunday, 23 November is the last Sunday of the church year, and in some ways the most important. Why? Because everything else in the Christian year looks back on what happened 2,000 years ago. The Sunday of Christ the King looks forward to what we can expect next.... the return one day of Jesus Christ to this earth, as King of Kings.

Does the idea of Jesus of Nazareth literally returning to earth seem a bit quaint to accept in our modern world?

Well, that is what the Bible says will happen. The Bible is quite clear: the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of Kings will take place personally, powerfully, bodily, visibly, publicly – and instantly. (Read Matthew 24:30,31, or I Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:3.) Here are words of Jesus Himself:

For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. (Luke 17:24)

This will be no story for TV reporters to cover. That day, they won't be interviewing the Carpenter of Nazareth. Jesus will be in his incandescent brilliance as when Peter, James and John were witness to their familiar Master 'transfigured', in a dramatic preview of Christ's triumphant final rule (Luke 9:28-36).

The martyred Stephen, about to die, had a similar glimpse: *'Behold I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God'* (Acts 7:56). The exiled apostle John on the island of Patmos saw the same figure: *'...His face was like the sun shining in full strength'* (Revelation 1:16.)

When Christ one day returns, the whole world will finally witness this same spectacle (Revelation 1:7). His return will mark the end of history, as we know it. It will inaugurate the final Judgment. It will reunite the Lord with his Church on earth.

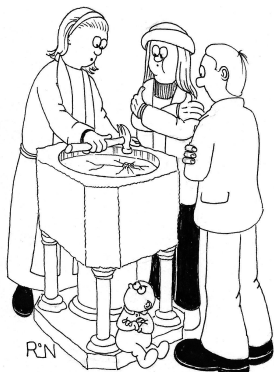
Jesus' return to us will bring about the new heaven and the new earth. Pain, death, persecution, privation and sorrow will all be banished. The entire edifice of evil that has raised itself against the rule of God will be dismantled in a moment. We have been warned all along not to place a date or a time upon the Second Coming of Christ. (Matthew 24:42-44) Sadly, many people ignore this warning and waste endless time in calculations. The way in which we should be spending our days before the end is to work, watch and witness to our Lord Jesus.

In the meantime, where is Jesus now? The Bible writers tell us that Jesus has returned to the place of privilege and power, and is 'seated at the right hand' of the Father (Ephesians 1:20-21; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3), and is waiting for the Father's timing for him to return to earth in glory (Mark 13:26-27,32), to raise the dead (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and give them their resurrection bodies (1 Corinthians 15:35-44).

Jesus will never be a baby again. He is now Christ the King – today, tomorrow, forever.

Parish Pump

In accordance with usual practice, there will be one Team Eucharist on Sunday, 23 November, at Christ Church at 10.00 a.m.



**Endon Dramatic Society
presents 'Absent Friends'
by Alan Ayckbourn
Endon Village Hall
Wednesday November 19th 2025
'til Saturday 22nd November
at 7.30pm
Admission £10.00
includes Programme and
Refreshments
Tickets available from
Jenny Otter at
Christ Church**

The boiler worked only if the verger switched it on

NOVEMBER'S WINTER WARMER FROM THE KITCHEN

Rev. Philip Smith, former Team Vicar at Christ Church, Cobridge, discovered this recipe through his interest in Jewish European Culture. Philip passed on the recipe to the Wednesday Club that compiled a booklet called *'Hanley History in the Baking,'* published in 1998. Philip said: *'The pudding is a good winter warmer. The recipe states that it is a scrumptious, lethargy-inducing pud. It's name is Lökschen, which is Yiddish for "noodles". Use any ribbon noodles you prefer.'*

LÖKSCHEN PUDDING

Ingredients:

100g ribbon egg noodles
(boiled 'til tender, then sieved)
1 egg whisked
500g sugar
25g melted margarine
2 Tablespoons currants
Grated rind of half a lemon
Half teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt
2 large cooking apples or more to taste
Golden syrup or honey

Method:

Line the bottom of a greased bowl with apples
Cover with layer of golden syrup or honey
Mix all the other ingredients together and place on top of the apples
Cook for about 45 minutes Gas Mark 6 (375F, 190C) but preferably much longer on a lower heat
The pudding should be crisp on the outside but set on the inside
Eat on its own or serve with cream

WUNDERBAR!



SPOTLIGHT ON... PETER SHORE

Peter Shore is organist at Christ Church, Cobridge, and regularly at other churches across the Hanley Team. He works hard for his church in other ways, too. He is also Sergeant to the Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme.

My Grandad bought a newsagents shop in Etruria Vale Road after serving as a gunner on the Western Front during the Great War.

In 1970, when I was three years' old, my dad moved from Trent Vale to a Grocers shop a few doors way.

I went to Sunday School at St Matthew's Church, Etruria then, over the years, I attended matins and evensong. I started learning the piano when I was aged about ten, with a Mr Billington, then with Arthur Ford who was the organist at St Mark's, Shelton. It was then that I started to play the organ. I used to deputize for Miss Edwards at St Matthew's.

We moved to Basford and I lost contact with Etruria. Many years later, Rev Hartnell from Hartshill came to the door, asking if I could play at St. Matthew's as Miss Edwards had passed away. I played at Etruria for many years until it was decided that the church would close and not be part of the new Hanley Team Ministry.

When I played for the last service, the church was packed, a change from the usual ten worshipers. It was very sad seeing the candles extinguished for the last service. The final hymn was *Thy way, not mine, O Lord*, from Mission Praise (number 950). The organ from St Matthew's, Etruria was installed at St Laurence, Chapel Chorlton and is still being used.

At Christ Church, our vicar Chris Goodley was the Industrial Chaplain for Shelton Bar and I was by then a casting plant foreman on the continuous casting plant and foreman at the last cast of steel, (another last).



I started learning about Jesus when my grandma used to tell me and my big brother Ray such lovely stories from the Bible (the picture is of us in 1951). I don't really find it

easy to talk to people about my faith, but recently, with all the problems and how we are destroying our beautiful world, I do say sometimes how different it would be if we all obeyed the ten commandments. I have really enjoyed

over the years being involved in so many ways with all the vicars (they have their ways), lay people and playing for so many occasions. We all miss Phillip so much but during the vacancy, thanks to Glenys, we are meeting so many different clergy and also the talents of our church members are being used. The



NOVEMBER QUIZ Answers on page 16

If you like a team quiz, why not come along with a friend or two to Northwood Parish Hall on Saturday 15 November or just come alone and we will pal you up with others to make a team. It's fun, with fellowship, prizes, a raffle, and refreshments. We start at 7.30 p.m.

1. His tomb was found on 4 November 1922
2. This wide, important canal was opened on 17 November, 1869
3. This 'Iron Lady' resigned in November, 1990
4. Patron Saint's Day 30 November
5. Name of the ship that landed at Cape Cod in November, 1620
6. Crowned King of England on 6 November, 1429
7. Author of 'Kidnapped' who was born on 13 November, 1850.
8. English city and cathedral bombed on 14-15 November, 1940
9. Assassinated on 22 November, 1963
10. Plot arranged for 5 November, 1605
11. Exhibition palace burned down on 30 November, 1936
12. Flower linked to November
13. Name of the dog that orbited the earth on 3 November, 1957
14. Royal Family member born on 14 November, 1948
15. Where Sir Winston Churchill was born on 30 November, 1874



The Rt. Revd. and Rt. Hon. Dame Sarah Mullaly, who is to be Archbishop of Canterbury, will lead the global Anglican Communion of around 85 million people across 165 countries. She says: *'I want to seek to bring people together to find hope and healing.'*

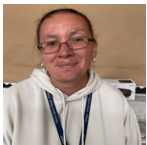
Grandmother Jenny points the way to Bubble Church at St. Luke's (last Sunday of each month at 3.00 p.m.)



Inside the church, the puppets and puppeteers are ready to teach the toddlers about the love of Jesus through stories and song



Regular Sunday worship has resumed at St. Mark's, Shelton. Rev. Mike Bridgewater has brought together a new congregation



👋 Farewell & Thank You ... at half term, St. Luke's CoE Academy bid a fond farewell to Mrs Grundy and Mrs Jones, who had both served the school community with dedication and care over many years



Co-op Academy schools in Birches Head and Northwood held their harvest celebration assemblies at St. Matthew's and Holy Trinity churches in October. Church Warden Mel Bourne addressed the children and their parents at Holy Trinity.

ST. JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL

The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from the elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar Eustace to Darren, his nephew, an Evangelical curate

On what it takes to be an ordinand

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren,

I was intrigued that you have been nurturing someone called Dave who is considering ordination. Since Dave had never travelled outside the city, your decision to send him to me was understandable. Sadly, I don't think he is cut out for the ministry.

We did our best. In a fit of hospitality, the Colonel invited this Dave to stay at the Lodge, and to join his Saturday pheasant shoot as a beater. But Dave said firmly that he was against beating any kind of bird and abhors all kinds of murder. It seems young Dave is a vegetarian! You might have warned us. The Colonel is now concerned that Dave is connected in some way with the Green Party. You cannot be too careful these days.

Then Miss Saxby and Miss Tarby stepped in. They enjoy mushrooming, and kindly took young Dave off to the woods. It is not their fault that they are a bit deaf and so did not hear his cries of distress when he lost them among all the trees. They just assumed he had gone back to the Colonel's, and so of course they did not organise a search party until much later.

Fortunately, the church warden's spaniel has a keen nose and found Dave before midnight. During all that time, Dave seemed to have had nothing better to do than slide about on fallen leaves and trip over hidden logs in the dark.

He was even babbling about having heard a crying ghost. We feared he might be delirious but then realised he meant the local owl.

He also seemed surprised by the darkness and asked how we manage without any streetlights at all in the parish. We explained the obvious – we simply follow the example of the well-refreshed when leaving the pub, and feel our way along the walls.

On Sunday morning Dave rushed into the church to warn me that there were several loose sheep in the churchyard. I decided then that he should return to the safety of the city. There was no point in letting him near most of our church ladies, who would have savaged him on sight.

The visit only proves the obvious: potential ordinands should be carnivorous, cricketing fly-fishers, most at home in well-worn tweeds and preferably accompanied by a muddy dog. How else will they get along with normal folk?

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Damning with faint praise

A visiting priest told us about a time a vicar announced he was leaving the parish. A parishioner came up to him and said: *'The next won't be half as good as you.'* He was flattered but replied: *'You cannot know that.'* *'Oh yes'*, the parishioner said, *'In my time here, I have seen half a dozen vicars come and go and each was worse than the previous one.'*

Hear, hear

A very deaf, elderly parishioner was finally fitted out with a hearing aid that really worked. A little while later her vicar said: *'Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again.'* The lady replied, *'Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to conversations. I have changed my will three times!'*

NATURE NOTES

Overwintering reptiles and amphibians

Harriet Carty, Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Adviser

Churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries are great places to find both amphibians and reptiles. These two groups include frogs, toads, newts, lizards and snakes. The first three can come as a surprise as burial grounds rarely have ponds in them but actually, frogs, toads and newts all spend much of their time on land and really use ponds mainly for breeding and laying spawn. Amphibians (frogs, toads and newts) and reptiles (lizards and snakes) all hibernate, except for some individuals in particularly mild winters, and whilst some amphibians may overwinter within ponds, most find a suitable spot on land. Both amphibians and reptiles need to overwinter in places that are frost-free and unlikely to flood. They need to be protected from predators and from disturbance. This might be within the soil, perhaps using a crack caused by grave subsidence or beneath tree roots, under stones and grave kerbs, inside a chest tomb with a suitable hole or wide crack to clamber in, between the stones of a wall, under a pile of leaves or in a pile of deadwood.

One of the differences between amphibians and reptiles is in their skin. Amphibians have smooth skin which can look velvety or have a bumpy, warty texture. Their skin is permeable which means they can dry out. When on land, they need to keep moist, so will overwinter in a damp and shady spot, often under leaves or deadwood. Reptiles have scales and impermeable skin so don't need a damp spot and may use compost heaps as well as cracks in walls and monuments. Amphibian skin can also pick up chemicals easily, herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers can be fatal, again making burial grounds, with their lack of chemicals, particularly suitable. N.B. you may see coloured frogs that have picked up the colour of the soil where they overwinter; these can be quite brightly coloured red, orange or yellow. Try to imagine that you are an amphibian or reptile and take a good look around your local churchyard or cemetery and you'll probably see that its full of good spots to hibernate.

LIGHT AND TRUTH

The Rt Revd Jan McFarlane
Dean of Lichfield

Much as I'd prefer not to think about Christmas presents and cards until the week before Christmas, the reality is that as soon as Bonfire Night and Remembrance Sunday are over, I must procrastinate no longer!

Poor Advent. It's lost in the mists of time, its season of spiritual preparation for Christmas overtaken by ever exotic Advent Calendars, their numbered windows promising expensive 'treats' to help us to get through the stress of Christmas preparations. I've even seen a cheese-a-day Advent calendar. Seriously, who thought of that one?

Instead of moaning about the commercialism of Christmas, here at Lichfield Cathedral we do all we can to keep the Sundays of Advent special, beginning with the hauntingly beautiful Advent Carol Service. But then we go 'full bling' with the Christmas Light Show and the Christmas Tree Festival. They're ever popular, a seasonal 'must' in many people's diaries.

At the heart of both is a search for the light in the midst of the darkness. Physical light in the long nights of winter. And spiritual light in a world which feels chaotic and dark. One of my favourite worship songs is 'Christ be our Light' by the Roman Catholic songwriter Bernadette Farrell. It's beautiful. If you don't know it and have access to the internet, do search for it. You'll soon be singing along to its gentle tune and meaningful lyrics.

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.*

This is why, I think, so many people turn to the Church at Christmas, on the shortest days of the year. Our ancestors prayed that the sun would return. We search for the Son – the one who is the Light of the World. Even those who don't yet know him for themselves.

But light and truth are in short supply at the moment – and in the Church we know both.

*Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.*

So many people are lonely at Christmas. So many are searching for somewhere to belong.

As Christians we belong to one big family, made brothers and sisters through our baptism. Whom might we 'serve' this Christmas by simply inviting them to 'come and see'? Invite them to a carol service, or a social event at church, or bring them to their cathedral to see the Christmas Trees or Christmas Light Show.

You might make someone's Christmas, and it might be for them the first step to joining the church and finding faith. The worst that can happen is that they say no, so what's to lose?

A blessed Advent from us all at Lichfield Cathedral. Your Cathedral.

Longing for God *'If you want God, and long for union with him, yet sometimes wonder what that means or whether it can mean anything at all, you are already walking with the God who comes... If you have ever had an obscure intuition that the truth of things is somehow better, greater, more wonderful than you deserve or desire... that there is a mercy beyond anything you could ever suspect, you are already drawn into the central mystery of salvation.'*

Maria Boulding: 'The Coming of God' Canterbury Press

November Quiz Answers

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Tutankhamun | 6. Henry VI | 11. Crystal Palace |
| 2. Suez | 7. Robert L. Stevenson | 12. Chrysanthemum |
| 3. Margaret Thatcher. | 8. Coventry | 13. Laika |
| 4. St. Andrew | 9. John F. Kennedy | 14. King Charles III |
| 5. The Mayflower. | 10. Gunpowder | 15. Blenheim Palace |

POETRY CORNER

175 years ago, on 19th November 1850, Alfred, Lord Tennyson became Poet Laureate of the UK until his death in 1892. He succeeded William Wordsworth and became known as the poet of the Victorian age. Born in Somersby, Lincolnshire, in 1809, he was one of 11 children of 'a mentally unstable and embittered clergyman'. All the surviving children, some of whom were talented individuals, suffered at least one mental breakdown.

Tennyson found popularity and happiness at Trinity College, Cambridge. He struck up a close friendship with another poet, Arthur Hallam, who sadly died young. In the 1830s and 40s Tennyson published many poems and was granted a £200 pension by the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel. In 1850, Tennyson married Emily Sellwood, an author in her own right. The elegies on Hallam that he had been writing over the years were published as *In Memoriam*, to great acclaim from reviewers, public and Queen Victoria herself, leading to his appointment as Poet Laureate. He was granted a peerage by Gladstone in 1883. His accumulated poetry, admired technically for its imagery, verbal dexterity and underlying melodies, came to epitomise the age he lived in, where established Christian faith was challenged by scientific doubt.

Parish Pump

The poet Thomas Hood, who died five years before Tennyson became Poet Laureate, wrote a poem called 'November' that ends:

*'No warmth, no cheerfulness, no healthful ease,
No comfortable feel in any member –
No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees,
No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds,
November!'*

There. That has cheered you, *No end*, hasn't it? Ed.

HYMN OF THE MONTH: ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

The apostle Paul recognized the reality of spiritual warfare when he wrote, '*Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*' (Ephesians 6:11-12 ESV) It is important to recognize a distinction between spiritual warfare and physical, political warfare. The church universal should oppose war that is sought for human, political reasons, but it cannot avoid fighting evil in all its forms through the armour of God: truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, and prayer (Ephesians 6:14-18).

The author of Onward Christian Soldiers was Sabine Baring-Gould who was born at Exeter in 1834. He was educated at Clare College, Cambridge and took Holy Orders in 1864. He held the curacy of Horbury Bridge, near Wakefield and in 1867 was preferred to the incumbency of Dalton, Yorkshire. He later became Rector, first of East Mersea, Essex, then Lew Trenchard, Devon. He wrote this hymn in 1864 for a children's Pentecost Sunday procession, with the idea of the school joining forces with that of a neighbouring village.

The popularity of the hymn is partly due to *St. Gertrude*, the marching tune that Arthur S. Sullivan composed for this text. Arthur Sullivan died 125 years ago, on 22 November, 1900. He is best known for his collaborations with the dramatist W S Gilbert on light operas, including *The Mikado* (*their most successful work that ran for 672 performances*), *HMS Pinafore* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Sullivan was born in 1842 in Lambeth. He was drawn to classical and spiritual music of various kinds, and his huge success with Gilbert was awkward for him, as he often felt – encouraged by certain reviewers and others – that he was '*capable of higher art*'. Sullivan never married, though he had close relationships with a number of women. He was devoted to his mother and also to his nephews and nieces. His brother Fred died at an early age. Sullivan wrote '*The Lost Chord*' at Fred's bedside during Fred's last illness.

[From Hymnary.org and Parish Pump]

BACK PEW All Aboard The Clergy 'Bus

'Buses played an important part in my childhood. With no family car, we had to get about by 'bus or, more often than not, 'Shank's pony'. Taxis were out of the question. 'Buses kept you fit. If you were late, there was no greater motivation than having to race up a steep gradient to a 'bus stop at the top of the road, against the progress of a 'bus rounding the bend below. Unfortunately, 'bus drivers appeared happy to engage in the contest, often leaving you gasping, just a few yards short of the stop, as they pulled away.

A passenger once complained that his 'bus had terminated at Hanley, even though the display stated 'Longton'. The driver looked at him with soulful eyes and, with a dismissive air of exasperation, explained *'It says "India" on the tyres, but we are not going there either.'*

Bishops are like 'buses; you wait ages for one, then two turn up at once. I am very grateful to Bishop Matthew for not only leading one of our services over the Summer whilst we are 'Rector-less' but also on making good a promise to write a lead article for 'In Touch'. I am grateful, too, for the monthly diocesan articles circulated by Simon Jones, which this month include one on Advent from Bishop Jan.

The vicar who married us, Rev. Richard Heading, once told us of his time ministering in Africa. He had got on a 'bus one day; after a while, although the driver was at the wheel, the 'bus had not moved. Richard went to the driver and asked when the 'bus was due to leave. The driver smiled. *'When it is full'*, he replied. From this, you might gather that Africans see the world differently. Another missionary vicar tells how this was once described to her: *'You have clocks, we have time.'*

A new journey has begun for a new Archbishop of Canterbury (ABC). The Rt. Revd. and Rt. Hon. Dame Sarah Mullaly has but a relatively short time to steer her passengers towards the future. As with all ABC routes, there will be many obstacles and potholes. Some may say she is going the wrong way, or alternatively not far enough. To help her, people need to be on board. Dame Sarah has said:

'If you want to go fast, go alone – if you want to go far, go together.'

CONTACTS



Rector - Vacancy

Assistant Minister Rev. Mike Bridgewater

07488233118

revmikebridgewater@gmail.com



Assistant Minister Rev. Gill Shilkoff 07525668262

gillshilkoff@btinternet.com

SERVICES

Holy Communion on Sundays:	09.30	Christ Church, Cobridge
	11.00	Holy Trinity Church, Northwood
	10.00	St. Mark's Church, Shelton
	(First & Fifth Sundays, other Sundays Morning Worship)	
Bubble Church	15.00	St. Luke's Church
	(Last Sunday of the month)	
Memorial Service (2 November)	16.00	St. Matthew's, Birches Head
BCP Evensong (16 November)	16.00	Holy Trinity Church, Northwood
Midweek:		
Tuesdays	10.00	St. Matthew's, Birches Head
Wednesdays	11.00	St. Luke's, Wellington
Thursdays:		
Service of The Word	10.00	Christ Church, Cobridge

Whilst the Rectorship is 'in vacancy', services will be co-ordinated by members of the laity in conjunction with available clergy.

***For general enquiries, banns, baptisms and weddings, the contact is Winnie Wilshaw 07731829785
winnie_184@msn.com***

***For funerals, contact a funeral director in the first instance, then
Kathleen Durber
01782 219147
Dekadurber@yahoo.com***

'In Touch' editor Graham Foxley 07707011628 mgtfoxley@live.co.uk



Don't be a Scrooge. Be generous with your news. The deadline for December's issue is the Second Sunday before Advent