



the **Parish Magazine**

of LUDLOW ST LAURENCE

**The Responsibility
Is Ours**

Pg9

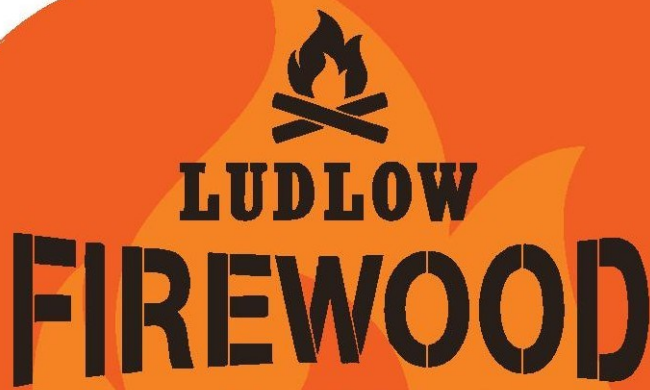
**Wild goose
chase**

Pg15

**Gathering
nuts in May**

Pg29

MAY 2026

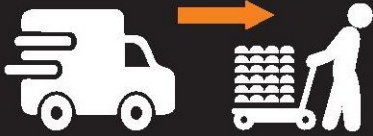


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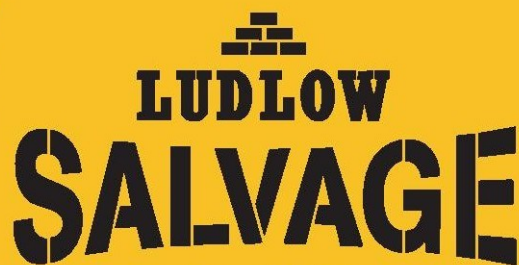
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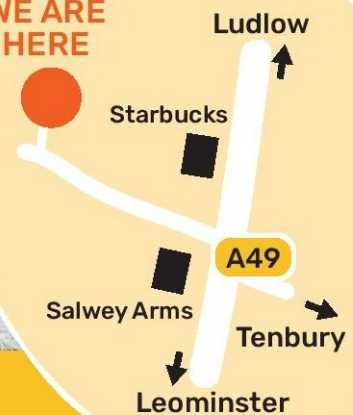
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For many In Ludlow May means only one thing – the arrival of the May Fair (and with it the swifts) when the transition from winter is complete and we can finally start looking forward to the summer when our ‘town of good company’ (p27) really comes to life. The signs of transition, renewal and fresh beginnings are everywhere.

In the church calendar we mark first Ascension (p3) and then Pentecost (15) two key stages in the progression from the Resurrection to the launch of the church’s mission to the world.

Meanwhile as we embark on a second year of ‘vacancy’, new entries in St Laurence’s own calendar signal the first stages of our progression towards the appointment of a new rector for the three CofE churches and the launch of a new mission to Ludlow (p7).

We learn of exciting development for an established local business (p25) while several empty shops are coming back to life. Even Uncle Eustace is looking forward to the joys of the summer fête.

Lesley Harling (Editor)
07309 263730

This month’s cover

Image: Greg Bunn
Still life with candle

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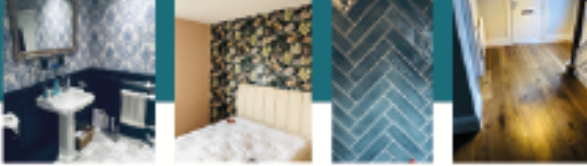
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THE RELEVANCE OF JESUS' ASCENSION



A day overlooked by most these days is Ascension Day, the day when historically Christians have celebrated Jesus departing from this earth to heaven. Some don't believe it, but if Jesus' body has never been found and He is not here today, logically He must have departed somehow.

In fact many key aspects of having a relationship with God today depend on it:

It showed that the sacrifice Jesus had offered for all our wrongs, past, present and future, had been accepted by the Father (Hebrews 10:11-14). The demands of the law that the just penalty for our sins be paid has been met; we do not have to earn our salvation just receive it as a free gift, by faith.

Jesus has gone before to prepare a place for us in heaven (John 14:2-4). The path He trod we can too, by following Him.

He now intercedes for us in heaven so we can pray to Him and need no other mediators (Romans 8:34). Prayer can be

a reality as we have someone praying for us, who knows what it is like to live on this earth.

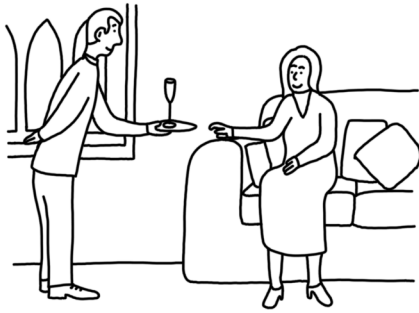
He was able to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, so He can now be in as many places as there are His followers, having departed from this earth and received the spoils of His victory over sin and death. Receiving this Spirit into our lives makes God real, enables us to have the most intimate relationship with God as our 'Daddy' (Romans 8:15) and gives us an inner assurance that we are accepted by God, and are secure in our relationship with Him both for now and for eternity!

Christianity is first of all not about 'doing' but a 'done' - what Christ has done for us and living in the light of that. So let us rejoice in what God has done for us through Jesus, receive all the blessings offered to us and live lives that show how grateful we are!

Richard Hill

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

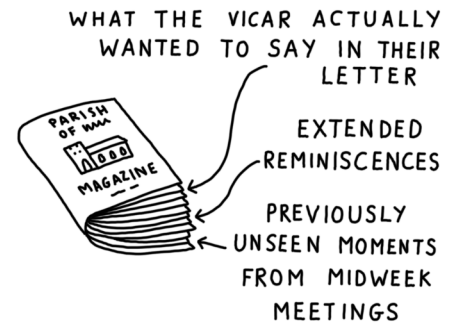
THE BENEFITS



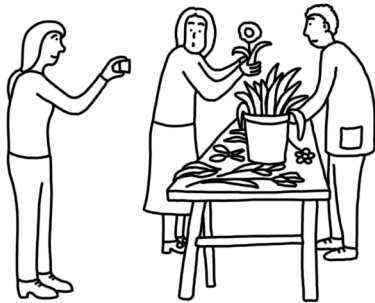
USE OF THE SECRET MEMBERS-ONLY LOUNGE



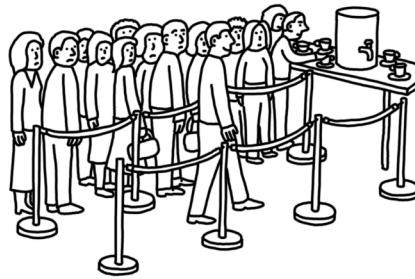
PREVIEWS OF SERMONS THE NIGHT BEFORE RELEASE



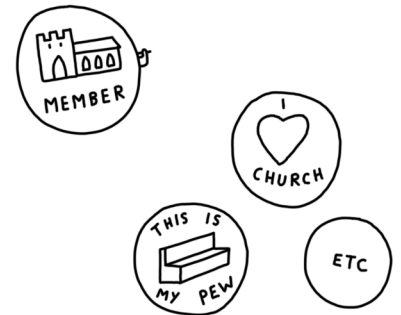
WHAT THE VICAR ACTUALLY WANTED TO SAY IN THEIR LETTER
EXTENDED REMINISCENCES
PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN MOMENTS FROM MIDWEEK MEETINGS
A SPECIAL BUMPER EDITION OF THE PARISH MAGAZINE



A 'GET OUT OF A ROTA FREE' CARD



PRIORITY LANE AT AFTER-SERVICE COFFEE



A BADGE, AND SOME STICKERS

CartoonChurch.com

This CartoonChurch.com cartoon by Dave Walker originally appeared in the Church Times.



All are welcome at St Laurence's for a cuppa, cake and chat on the first Monday in every month between 3pm and 4pm.

Monday 4 May

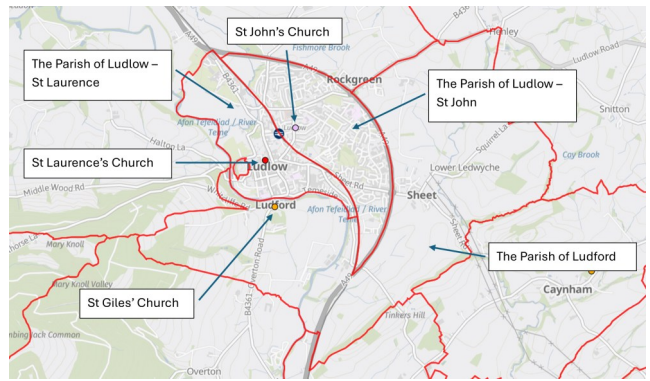
Do drop in and join us.

OPEN TEA AT ST LAURENCE'S

BENEFICE EXPANSION

The good news this month, following April's announcement that the diocese has agreed that we can finally embark on the process of recruiting a new incumbent for the Ludlow benefice, is that the individual who is selected in June will become in due course the Rector of an expanded benefice comprising three Anglican churches.

From 1 May 2026 the parish of St Giles, Ludford will be joining the parishes of St Laurence, Ludlow and St John, Ludlow in a single benefice, a partial return of the old Ludlow Team Ministry.



Each of the three churches will retain its own identity and autonomy, its own PCC and wardens and its own finances under the leadership of the incumbent. All the congregations, PCCs and wardens are delighted with the move and are already working together both towards the appointment of the new incumbent and towards building closer links between the church communities.

ANNUAL MEETINGS 10 MAY 2026

The Annual Parish Meeting of Ludlow Saint Laurence will be held on

Sunday 10 May at 11.30am

in the church after the 10am service. The purpose of the meeting is to elect churchwardens for the next year. It is open to all members of the church electoral roll and all residents of the parish.

The purpose of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting which follows immediately afterwards on

Sunday 10 May at 11.45am

is for the congregation and members of the church electoral roll to receive a report of the business of the church in the past year,

PCC NEWS

Summary of a meeting held on 20 April 2026 in the Ann Barge Room

12 members of the PCC attended.

- ◆ **Resolutions:** delegated authorities; archive storage and record-keeping; nomination of chalice assistants; sustainable church flowers proposals; terms of reference for Personnel committee, Stewardship Campaign working group; Benefice Profile
- ◆ **Discussions:** reviewed existing electoral roll prior to update; summer beer garden arrangements;
- ◆ **Reports:** received from Finance Manager, Health & Safety, Electoral Roll and Safeguarding Officers; Fabric, Finance and Arts committees

Date of next meeting:

Monday 20 April 2026 (provisional)



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THE RESPONSIBILITY IS OURS - TRIO

Good news! We have begun advertising for the new Rector, and the vacancy begins a new and final stage. As a community we can start to move on from coping with the hiatus to preparing for the arrival of our new incumbent, whoever that may be. We need to be **Ready for the Rector**. To do that the PCC is calling upon the church community to look to how it can contribute more to the life of the St Laurence's and its mission in Ludlow.

To do this we have three pressing needs to fulfil.

First, we need the **Time** of more volunteers to help with work that requires only an enthusiastic and planned presence to keep the church working in all that we offer. Learning will be 'on the job' for

activities like reading the lesson, filing, serving coffee and welcoming visitors. Last month we touched on this in the after-service discussion with the congregation.

Next, we need help with **Talents**, where your specific expertise and experience can help us in specific ways on an ad-hoc or regular basis, in areas like minute-taking, accountancy, IT, HR or project management. This will be the subject of another discussion with the congregation after the service on

Sunday 14 June.

Finally, we need your **Treasure**, that is more of your money. The last stewardship campaign at St Laurence's was ten years ago, and the church is no more immune to the increased "cost of living" than anybody else. The Diocese funds the cost of our priest – training, salary, pension and housing – and all the support services they offer us. At least, we should aim to cover the cost of

supporting our own clergy, in our contribution to the Diocese – the Parish Share; something we don't do at the minute.

We need to raise more income, on a planned basis, to supplement the income that we are fortunate to get from the Shop, Icon Coffee, visitors and

hire income, as well as the specific support we get from the Conservation Trust for fabric work so that we can present ourselves to the new priest as being truly sustainable. We will engage on this subject at an event on the evening of Saturday 12 September in church, so put the date in your diary, please.

There is no one else who can get us
Ready for the Rector

The Responsibility Is Ours



LUDLOW ROTARY IS GETTING ITS DUCKS IN A ROW

Following the success of Ludlow Rotary Club's Duck Race over the past two years, which together raised over £4,500 for good causes, the club will be holding another on Bank Holiday Monday 25 May.

This fun event is being arranged to raise funds for Ludlow Rotary Cares, the club's community grants scheme, and other Rotary causes.



All told there will be four 'duck races' beginning at 11am with everyone who sponsors a duck for £2.50 having the chance of winning £100 if theirs is the first across the winning line.

There will be plenty of opportunity to cheer on the ducks from the banks of the river on the day.

Organising a duck race is not always straightforward as Ray Cork of Ludlow Rotary explained, "Last year the river flow was so slow due to low rainfall that we had to shorten the course so that the races didn't take all day. Even so, with the encouragement and cheering from the crowds, some of our helpers in canoes had to use their paddles to encourage the ducks towards the finish line. We're hoping that this year the ducks will be able to cover the full course unaided."

Ducks will be available to sponsor on the day, but queues may be avoided by sponsoring them in advance online at www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk, by using the QR code on the posters displayed around the town, or at our market stall in the days leading up to the event.



INTRODUCING ...

Please tell us a bit about yourself.

I am Angie Jones, born and brought up in West Wales, the eldest of three. I always wanted to nurse so on leaving school I successfully completed my State Enrolled Nurse training at a local NHS hospital. Eighteen months later I joined the Army, as I wanted to travel. My 22-year Army career took me from Catterick to Northallerton via the Falkland Islands, Hong Kong, Bosnia, Belize, Oman, Kosovo, Cyprus and Iraq. During this time I converted my qualification to Registered General Nurse, specialised in trauma nursing, and was promoted up to Regimental Sergeant Major. In 2009 I was mentioned in the Queen's Birthday Honours list and presented with the Associate of the Royal Red Cross medal by Princess Anne at Buckingham Palace for going above and beyond in my Army nursing role. I enjoyed the unpredictability of trauma nursing and the chance to make a real difference. When I left the Army, by contrast, I worked as a police custody nurse for seven years.

What brought you to Ludlow?

I used to visit when I was working at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham. It was the ideal place to decompress. Although I was not a regular churchgoer I was drawn to St Laurence's which felt very tranquil. Following a split with a long-term partner Ludlow was the obvious place for a fresh start.

And to St Laurence's?

Within four days of moving into an empty house I was in St Laurence's and

found myself chatting to members of the congregation and learning about

bellringing. My new next door neighbours were Andrew and Eileen Padmore. Everything seemed to be linked to St Laurence's. I started coming to services. and nine months after moving to Ludlow I was confirmed in the church on Easter Sunday in Kelvin's last service as rector.

So what is your role in the church?

I attend one of the weekly fellowship groups, I ring the bells before the Sunday service and I am considering standing for the PCC.

One feature of St Laurence's which is special for you?

The view down the nave and chancel the east window.

How do you spend any spare time?

Keeping fit, interior design and teaching myself to play the piano.

Which is your most memorable holiday experience?

A round-the-world trip in 2011, visiting friends in Hong Kong, New Zealand and Los Angeles.

What might we be surprised to know about you?

In the early nineties I went on Anneka Rice's Romania Challenge volunteering to work at an orphanage caring for children with HIV, I ran the London Marathon in 2002 and I passed my HGV (3) test.



THIRD SUNDAY SERVICES IN MAY

First Sunday

MAY FAIR SERVICE



11.30am
On the dodgems
Event Square
3 May

Second Sunday

THE LIVING ROOM



All-age informal worship
Conversation, play, food and a simple
sharing of bread and wine

3.30pm at St John's

10 May

Third Sunday

CHORAL MATINS



11.30am
In St Laurence's chancel
17 May

Fifth Sunday

Celtic Prayer

An Evening Liturgy
St Laurence's Church, Ludlow



A simple service in a style used
by the Iona Community

6.00pm

31 May

OPEN FOR BUSINESS AS USUAL



Life at Stephen House continues much as at the last time of writing. Our cooking group thrives, as does our relationships with other agencies, including the rough sleeper team and the domestic abuse service. Outreach work at the Foodbank and the Rockspring Centre still happens every week, as do the weekly Tea and Toast gatherings and house groups and the monthly Living Room service.

It's great that what we do is increasingly being seen as regular, dependable and reliable – it was always part of the plan that Stephen House would have that role in the community. Reliability is always important: especially when we feel vulnerable or unsettled, whether in our own communities or, as we have seen recently, on the world stage.

One of the outcomes of routine is affirmation. At last Sunday's service (at the time of writing) we heard how Thomas needed physical proof from the

Lord of his resurrection, possibly due to the tumultuous events leading to the crucifixion. The affirmation he received helped him understand what had happened, and why.

A couple of days ago I had a member of our community call me, asking if they could pop round to Stephen House. They just wanted a cuppa and a chat, to share how things were going on their support journey. I was struck by how, after the Easter period and all it represents, this simple occurrence was affirmation of the benefits of our regular activities: an uplifting and important result of our day-to-day work.

Thank you as ever for your support and prayers.

God Bless

Paul

FROM THE REGISTERS



At St Laurence's

Funerals and memorial services

1 April Christine (Ann) Duce

7 April Morgan Florence

21 April Clive Roberts

23 April Alice Lycett
(Shrewsbury crematorium)

At St John's

Funerals

12 March Wendy Lloyd

26 March George Shurmer



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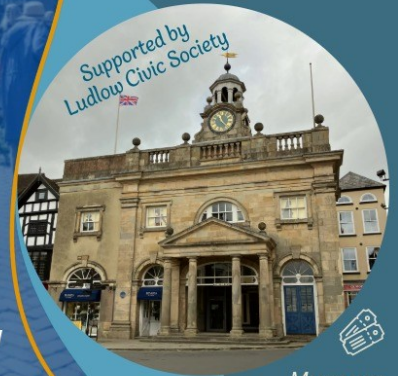
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In Celtic Christianity, the symbol for the Holy Spirit is the wild goose. By flying in a V-formation, as each bird flaps its wings the whole flock adds 70% more flying range than if each bird flew alone.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they want to go more quickly and easily because they are all travelling on the thrust generated by all.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation it quickly gets back so that it can continue to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

If we have as much sense as a goose we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go.

When the lead goose gets tired, it moves back into the formation and another goose flies at the point position.

It pays to take turns at doing the hard tasks - sharing leadership and maintaining interdependence.

The geese in formation 'honk' from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

We need to be sure that our 'honking from behind' is an encouragement to those who lead us.

When a goose gets sick, or wounded, or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow the one to help and protect it. They stay until it is able to fly again or dies.

In our fellowship as Christian people, we stand by each other in all circumstances.

Margaret Bevis

PENTECOST



Pentecost marks the occasion, 50 days after Easter, when God poured out his Spirit on the human race. Those present described it in terms of wind and fire - a great surge of energy and conviction. It used to be known as Whitsun (White Sunday) because children walked to church dressed in white.



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- ◆ Mediaeval stained glass
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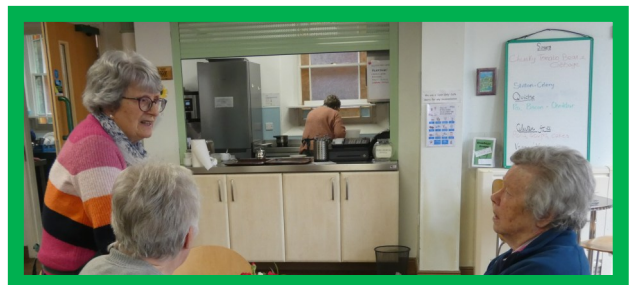
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Monday-Saturday

11am-5pm Sunday

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closed Sunday**

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Children's area**



HAPPY 20TH ANNIVERSARY TO WESLEY'S

Preparations are going well for Ludlow Methodist Church's week of events marking 20 years since the completion of the refurbishment of our church in Broad Street. It was a major undertaking at the time, requiring huge vision, faith and not a small amount of money! All this meant that the church as a whole - worship area, meeting rooms, kitchen facilities and the rest - were brought up to date to make it all fit for modern-day needs – without losing the essence of what the old building was. We are grateful to all those who worked so hard to make the vision a reality. We are proud that we now have the technology to stream our worship each week on Zoom, our rooms are flexible and accessible and the door swings wide as you approach.

It was also the time when Wesley's Café came into being, with an ecumenical team of volunteers providing a warm welcome to locals and visitors, a space to linger over a cuppa, have a quick lunch and maybe find new friends.

To celebrate all that, to remind ourselves how far we have come and to share the journey with the community,

there will be exhibitions and events during the week: displays of 'before and after' photographs and information on the project; exhibitions entitled 'Look What We Made' (banners etc); 'Look What We Do' (testimonials from hirers, Wesley's customers etc) and 'Look Who We Are' (our mission, our members etc); floral displays; and guided tours around the building.

For one week only (!) Wesley's prices will be put back to 2006 levels.

Friday 15 May sees an evening of entertainment – 'Chiefly Yourselves' – a range of talents within the congregation on show.

The week begins and ends with worship. Our very own Rev Dr Neil Richardson takes the service on Sun 10 May and our current Chair of District, Rev Rachel Deigh, will lead us on 17 May, both at 10.30am. We extend a warm welcome to everyone.

If you have any memories you would like to share please get in touch.

Joyce Evans

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SUNDAY SERVICES IN LUDLOW

Anglican

St Laurence, College Street

- 8.15am Holy Communion (BCP)
10am Parish Eucharist
For livestream/recording - link at
<https://stlaurences.org.uk/live-stream>
11.30am Choral Matins
3rd Sunday
3.30pm Choral Evensong
1st Sunday
3.30pm The Living Room
1st Sunday (St John's church)
6pm Celtic Prayer - evening liturgy
4th Sunday
5th Sun Joint benefice service
with St John's

Contact

office@stlaurences.org.uk
01584 872073

St John, Gravel Hill

- 10am 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays
Holy Communion
2nd & 4th Sundays
Morning Worship
5th Sun Joint benefice service
with St Laurence's

Contact

Mike.Beazley@hotmail.co.uk
01584 873570

St Giles, Ludford

- 11.15am 1st Sunday
Family Worship
2nd & 4th Sundays
CW Holy Communion
3rd Sunday
Lay-led Worship

Contact

ashfordspa@outlook.com

Ludlow Baptist Church

10.30am Sunday worship

Contact

hello@ludlowbaptistchurch.org.uk

Ludlow Elim

10.30am Service at Elim

11.30am Online

Contact

www.ludlowelim.com 07791 483284
dainpritchard@googlemail.com

Ludlow Methodist Church

10.30am Sunday worship

Contact

Ludlowmethodist@outlook.com

Ludlow Quakers

10.30am Meeting for worship

Contact

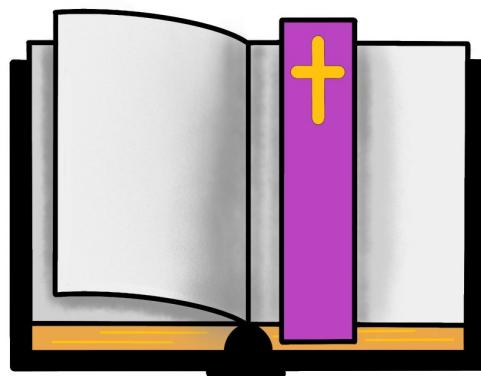
Cynthia Prior 01584 831855

St Peter's Roman Catholic Church

- Mass 11.00am Sunday
9.30am Monday-Friday
6.00pm Saturday (Sunday Vigil)
Morning prayer
9.15am Monday-Friday
9.45am Saturday

Contact

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Classified - £40

Contact 01584 872073 or office@stlaurences.org.uk



MHS Spring Conference 2026

Saints & Sinners on the March of Wales

Saturday 16th May 2026
Ludlow Assembly Rooms
10am to 4.45pm

Speakers

(1) Prof. Marion Gibson

Witches: Magic and Power in the Middle Ages and Later

(2) Dr Rhun Emlyn

Hywel Cyffin: The 'Hawk in Holy Orders': Champion of the Welsh Church or Reprehensible Rebel?

(3) Dr Harriett Webster

Who Saved William Cragh? Lay Devotion, Aristocratic Agency, and the Making of a Saintly Miracle.

(4) Jonathan Moore

The Hereford Use: How Liturgy Forged Saints from Sinners in the Marches.

(5) Tanya Heath

Maps of Mercy or Menace: The Significance of the Location of Paintings of Saints and Sinners in Parish Churches

Ticket prices

Attend In person - Members: £24; Non-members: £30

Attend Online - Members: £13.50; Non-members: £17



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WHAT'S ON AT ST LAURENCE'S



IN MAY

Saturday 2

Organ recital **1.00pm**
Joseph Jacob and Adam Heron

Sunday 3 **11.30am**

May Fair service
NB no Choral Evensong this month

Monday 4 **3.00pm**

Open Tea

Sunday 10 **11.30am**

Annual Parish Meeting and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Service of Collation of **3.30pm**
Archdeacon of Ludlow

Thursday 14 **7.00pm**

Solemn Eucharist for
Ascension Day *with incense*

Friday 15 **7.00pm**

Catwalk Collective Fashion Show

Saturday 16 **7.30pm**

Ludlow Orchestra Spring Concert

Sunday 17 **11.30am**

Choral Matins

Wed 20 – Sat 24 **10am-4pm**

Ludlow Piano Festival street piano

Thursday 28 **2.00pm**

Children's workshop - design a shield

Sunday 31 **6.00pm**

Celtic Prayer

MIDWEEK

Daily prayer

Mondays and Fridays **10.30am**

Tower bells practice

Mondays **7.30-9.00pm**

Handbells practice

Tuesdays **5.30-7.15pm**

Choir practice

Thursdays **6.00-8.30pm**

WEDNESDAYS AT ST JOHN'S

Daily prayer

9.30am

Tea and toast

10.00am

Holy Communion

11.30am

Prayer Hour

4.00pm

FELLOWSHIP

For details of weekday fellowship groups meeting in Stephen House or in private homes please contact:

Paul Kemp (Lay Pastoral Worker)

07785254568

office@stlaurences.org.uk THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST LAURENCE LUDLOW 01584 872073

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Welcome to St Laurence's

For all the latest news including last-minute changes go to <https://stlaurences.org.uk/>

Arts@St Laurence – May 2026

Further information: [Recitals and Concerts – St Laurence \(stlaurences.org.uk\)](http://stlaurences.org.uk)

Arts@StLaurence 2026

Organ Recital

Saturday 2nd May
1.00pm

Joseph Jacob
& Adam Heron
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Free Entry – Donations Welcome

 THE SPACE AT ST LAURENCE, LUDLOW 



Ludlow Orchestra

Spring Concert 2026

Saturday 16th May 7.30pm
St Laurence's Church, Ludlow



Franz Schubert: Symphony No. 3 in D major
Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 4 in G major

Leader: Claire Tocknell
Conductor: Jonathan Lyness

www.ludlowassemblyrooms.co.uk



 LUDLOW PIANO FESTIVAL

Ludlow Piano Festival

20TH - 24TH MAY 2026

Five days celebrating
the art of the piano.

Full festival programme and tickets at:
www.ludlowpianofestival.com

 LUDLOW PIANO FESTIVAL

Ludlow Piano Festival

20TH - 24TH MAY 2026

| DATE | TIME | EVENT | VENUE | |
|----------|----------------|---|--|-----|
| 20TH MAY | 7:00pm | The Celebrity Concert | SLC | |
| | 21ST MAY | 2:00pm | Rainer Hersch: Wagner's Ring Cycle in One Hour | LAR |
| | | 4:30pm | Ellis Arey: Working Classical Hero | PH |
| 22ND MAY | 7:30pm | Isata Kanneh-Mason | SLC | |
| | 10:30am | Richard Coles: Desert Island Piano | LAR | |
| | 2:30pm | Connor Fogel: Showtime! | LAR | |
| | 4:30pm | Clara Rodriguez: The South American Way | PH | |
| 23RD MAY | 7:30pm | Danny Driver | SLC | |
| | 11:00am | Luke Faulkner: By Special Arrangement | LAR | |
| | 2:30pm | Anne Lovett: The Paris Connection | LAR | |
| | 4:30pm | Eilsey Mysin: The Concert | PH | |
| 24TH MAY | 7:30pm | Peter Donohoe | SLC | |
| | 11:00am | Peter Donohoe: Masterclass | LAR | |
| | 2:00pm | Eilsey Mysin: The Encore | PH | |
| | 4:00pm | Martin Pyne Trio: Small Blue | LAR | |
| 6:30pm | Vanessa Wagner | SLC | | |

SLC: ST LAURENCE'S CHURCH · LAR: LUDLOW ASSEMBLY ROOMS · PH: PALMERS HALL

Events will sell out quickly so please sign up to our news updates at:
www.ludlowpianofestival.com

FOCUS ON FOOD

This month the spotlight falls on a popular Ludlow restaurant as its owners, Linda and Dave, embark on an exciting new venture.



Linda and Dave currently run Athena, a restaurant specialising in Greek food, at the Mascall Centre but they are soon to move to new premises at the heart of Ludlow. They are renovating the Angel building in Broad Street. If all goes to plan the new Athena will open at the end of May.

Linda says: Dave was a qualified tailor, and I had had a prom dress shop for many years when Covid struck. That difficult period coincided with a request from Dave's friend, who had always appreciated his cooking, to organise a Greek-themed meal for forty of their mutual friends. We jumped at the chance, as I (Linda) am half-Greek, we had previously owned a house in Greece for many years, and I was steeped in Greek cooking, particularly remembering my aunt's wonderful recipes. The meal was a great success

and inspired us to move into the restaurant business

We currently offer meze, mains, platters and sharing boards but the extra space offered by our imminent move to new premises at the Angel in Broad Street will allow us to extend our menu to include afternoon tea, both Greek and British, and also a wine bar.

People already love the ambiance of our current restaurant, our friendly service and our Greek food. We are excited about our move to the Angel, an iconic and historic building dating back to the early 15th century, which, following our renovation, will be like stepping inside to sunny Greece

Our ideal meal? Although we both love Greek food, we try to broaden our horizons when not at work and love a curry or a Sunday lunch.



Ludlow Piano Festival

20TH - 24TH MAY 2026

"Your festival is full of more ideas than any other around," said last year's closing act, Tyler Hay. And 2026 is no different!

This May we bring you some old friends, lots of big names and five days of non-stop, fabulous pianism.

Cally Beaton is back to host our legendary 'Celebrity Concert', we have **Rev Richard Coles** telling **Alistair McGowan** his 'Desert Island Piano' choices, **Rainer Hersch** returns with 'Wagner's Ring Cycle in One Hour'; we have more jazz, another masterclass, solo recitals from emerging young talent like

'Working Class-ical Hero' (and former boxer) **Ellis Airey**, local YouTube sensation, **Luke Faulkner** and 15-year old future Superstar, **Elisey Mysin**; **Clara Rodriguez** plays it 'The South American Way', **Anne Lovett** returns with her own compositions on two pianos (with audio-visual back-up), **Connor Fogel** gives us songs from the musicals, and hot from the world's biggest platforms **Danny Driver**, **Peter Donohoe**, France's leading pianist **Vanessa Wagner** and **Isata Kanneh-Mason**.

As composer, Debbie Wiseman, said last year: *"It's a very special festival."* We think she's right!

Events will sell out quickly so please sign up to our news updates at:

www.ludlowpianofestival.com

LUDLOW - A TOWN OF GOOD COMPANY

One of Ludlow's most popular events is just around the corner. Now in its fourth year the Ludlow Piano Festival has been a welcome addition to our artistic scene. For at least eight centuries, Ludlow has been host to all kinds of artistic entertainment - drama, painting, carving and, of course, music. It was identified as a 'town of Good Company' by the traveller John Mackey in 1714 and the description remains very apt today!

During the five days of the Piano Festival, Ludlow comes alive with music. With three different venues for daytime and evening concerts, have-a-go street pianos and the Open Piano event in St Laurence's, the town is a-buzz! The church is also the venue for several concerts, starting with the legendary Celebrity Concert on the opening night.

Here in the Shop at St Laurence, we have several piano-related items for sale, so visitors can take home something to remind them of the fun of the Piano Festival. St Nicolas produce beautiful handmade AND Fairtrade decorations, like this grand piano.



Our very popular angel chimes made by Pluto Designs come with an instrument version for the virtuoso in your life.

Oakapple produces wonderful resin figurines with mice playing a variety of instruments, including the flute, organ and psaltery. We also stock a varied range of classical CDs, including two from Alastair McGowan himself, the creator and driving force behind the festival. On our bookshelves, you can find copies of Alastair's poetry book 'Not What We Were Expecting'.

So, do pop into the shop for some musical inspiration and we hope to see you in St Laurence's for a concert or two during the festival, and beyond.



The Shop at St Laurence
Mobile: 07833 866485
www.theshopatstlaurence.co.uk

Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm



THE SHOP
ST LAURENCE LUDLOW

A SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO HISTORY

What our historic buildings teach us about resilience

This month's Palmers trip offers a special opportunity to discover two of Britain's greatest ecclesiastical buildings - Gloucester Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey.

Both buildings are survivors. A potted history of Gloucester Cathedral, for example, reveals that, starting as the place where William the Conqueror ordered the Domesday book, it later witnessed two disastrous fires yet rose from the ashes with an ambitious rebuilding programme, master masons constructing the first fan vaulting that had been seen in England. Originally an abbey, Gloucester saw the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536. Fast forward four hundred years and we find the Cathedral in its new reincarnation as Hogwarts School in the ever-popular Harry Potter film series.

Their past, then, is a rollercoaster of events. Tumbling through the centuries, both Gloucester and Tewksbury have experienced highs and lows, witnessing disaster, wars, both civil and global, destruction and renewal. And yet they still remain, in all their glory, as a testament to the life and work of the hundreds of ordinary people whose names are not known to us but whose work continues to astound us seven centuries later.

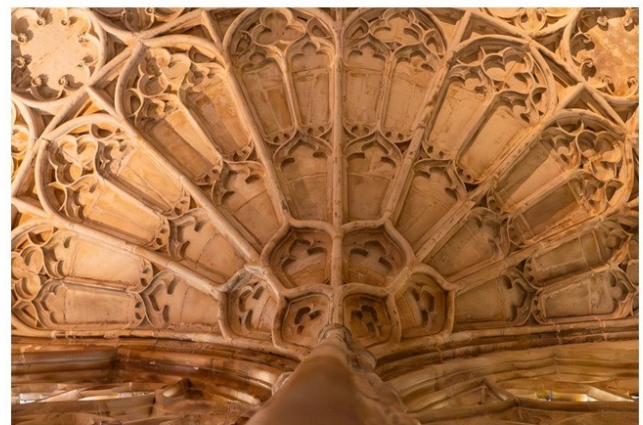
The Palmers trip includes private guided tours of both buildings, featuring their links with the fascinating world of Benedictine monks and concentrating on their greatest architectural features

including Tewkesbury's wonderful 14th century mediaeval glass and the exquisite fan vaulting that can be seen in both. There is also an exciting opportunity to visit parts of the Cathedral not normally open to visitors, and, by special arrangement, to take coffee and lunch in the Parliament Room where Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn stayed in 1535.

For further information about this event which also includes a visit to St Mary the Virgin Church, Hartpury, please see www.ludlowpalmers.uk

LUDLOW PALMERS 2026 SPRING SERIES

CATHEDRAL, ABBEY & CHURCH CRAWL



WEDNESDAY, 27th MAY 2026

**Departing Ludlow Assembly Rooms
(Mill Street) at 8.45am**

Private Guided Tours of

**GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL, HARTPURY
CHURCH & TEWKESBURY ABBEY**

Tickets £55/person

To book please contact info@ludlowpalmers.uk

or call/text 07887 710140

The Conservation Trust for St Laurence Ludlow Reg. Charity No. 1114678

GATHERING NUTS IN MAY

One of the joys of exploring a churchyard, chapel yard or cemetery can be the small, unobtrusive plants that you may find. Pignut is one of these. This plant has light, feathery leaves, looking like those found on a carrot top and you may find a near carpet of them in an old churchyard in the spring. It flowers in April and May, producing small, white flowers in clusters known as umbels. In fact, Pignut is a member of the umbellifer family, the same plant family as the more familiar carrot, cow parsley and fennel, but unlike its relatives, it is small, the leaves low to the ground and the flower on an upright stem of about 30cm.

Pignut has several names referring to the dark brown tubers found on its roots: ground-nut, cat-nut, earth-nut, earth-chestnut and the less obvious jog-journals. Pignuts were dug up and eaten raw or cooked, when they taste like parsnips.

Pignut is a plant of the undisturbed, flowery grassland often found within burial grounds, where there is little change, consistent management and low chemical use. Pignut is also found in woodland, glades and sunnier spots similar to the mosaic light and shade in burial grounds, creating different habitats.

So what of the nursery rhyme, Here we go gathering nuts in May, on a cold and frosty morning? Pignut leaves wither and disappear in late spring and, although the flowering stem with seedheads remains visible, the lack of



leaves makes Pignut plants hard to spot. The time of year to gather them is May, as opposed to other kinds of nut which are harvested in autumn. Another interpretation of the nursery rhyme is that it is a corruption of Here we go gathering knots of may, may being another name for hawthorn. A knot is an old name for a bunch of flowers and the hawthorn flowers in April when frosts are more likely to occur, making sense of the cold and frosty morning.

The presence of the unobtrusive little pignut is indicative of species-rich grassland, a habitat which has declined by a staggering 97% since the 1930s.

*Harriet Carty
Diocesan Churchyard
Environmental Advisor*



Charity no. 1155536



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15.05.26 Doors: 6.45pm
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Proceeds to the church

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the participating shops

A COMEDIAN'S PRAYER BOOK

BY FRANK SKINNER

This is a gem of a book from well-known comedian, broadcaster and radio host, Frank Skinner. Even Frank himself starts his introduction by saying, 'The title is a worry'. He thinks people might think he's using 'prayer' as a vehicle for gags – but he absolutely isn't. Though he admits that if there's a place for comedy in life there is also a place for it in prayer ...

Frank Skinner sets out his stall with an introduction charting his own path with religion. He is a practising Roman Catholic, a faith that he freely admits some find 'exotic', with a certain continental taste and a lot of statue-kissing and eccentric saint depictions. This is a book in which he sets out his thoughts and beliefs and hopes others will find his words helpful and comforting or at least thought-provoking – whether or not they have a faith they follow.

A Comedian's Prayer Book comprises 16 mini-essays, or meditation transcripts, each on a different theme – some laugh-out-loud funny, others mysterious, even challenging – but all food for thought. Each of Frank's essays is introduced by a short thought/theme, for example:

*I thought tonight I'd listen for a change.
No pressure.*

*Perhaps if I believed better, I'd have a lot
less to say about belief.*

*They say the Devil has the best tunes – I
bet he hates music.*

*I wanted to ask what is better – to reach
out or to reach in...*

The 'prayer' essays are each a few hundred words long, there to be read and re-read as the feelings take you. He's not trying to convert anyone to religion – quite the opposite. To quote Frank again: 'God is a tough audience as far as audible response is concerned, but I love that I don't have to explain the references.'

This little book would be a perfect present for a wide range of people whatever their experience of prayer or religions.

Jemima Lord

Frank
Skinner

A Comedian's
Prayer Book



PRAYER FOR THE MONTH

Lord, make me an instrument of thy
peace
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, union;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy;
For thy mercy's sake.

St Francis of Assisi



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WILL MY CHILDREN DIE TOO?

I often write about the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo), as does Christian Aid which tells us that in the last 30 years the number of lives claimed by violence in the country is 6 million in 'this unrelenting, brutal and bloody environment where at least four babies in every ten will tragically die before their first birthday' (Christian Aid News Christmas '25).

Joyce, a farmer and mother of four, was forced to flee conflict with her family when violence tore through their village in February 2025. At the time Joyce was expecting their fourth child, Emiliana, and while in labour she could hear the bombs falling nearby. Two months later the sound of gunshots heralded the arrival of soldiers storming their village. Gripped by terror Joyce and her husband, Michael, escaped to hide in the nearby forest. Baby Emiliana clung to Joyce - she was just two months old and in a near-death state. Joyce feared for their lives: Will I die? Will my children die too?

The family escaped to Bulengo, a camp for displaced people. Relief was temporary and life unimaginably hard with food and water painfully scarce. The family has returned home but the trauma remains, as well as the fear that conflicts will return. Christian Aid worked to support Joyce and millions of other families who have survived



violence and poverty against all the odds. They work with partners in the DRC to make cash grants to empower families and communities to move forward working to their own agendas. The Christian Aid DRC director has commented that communities are leading their own recovery and there is a recognition that this is how it should be: 'We have benefitted from humanitarian intervention where we've been asked to choose for ourselves what we want to do and how we want to do it'.

Courageous Congolese communities are facing unimaginable hardship. The survival of the most vulnerable now rests on urgent humanitarian support. This is where and how we can play our part. Already this year you have demonstrated your willing to do so through attendance at our Lent Lunches. Now Christian Aid Week approaches – 10 – 16 May. Please give generously to our retiring collection on May 17 in St Laurence's. Thank you.

Claire

Christian Aid Week 10 - 16 May
Seven days to make a difference

christian
aid

Half term fun



Design a shield!

Age 7+

Wed 27 May 2-3 & 3-4pm @ Ludlow Library

Thu 28 May 2-3 & 3-4pm @ St.Laurence's Church

Fri 29 May 10-11am & 11-12pm @ Assembly Rooms

Book your **FREE**
place here



POETRY CORNER: WILLIAM

Sonnet 18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

William Shakespeare



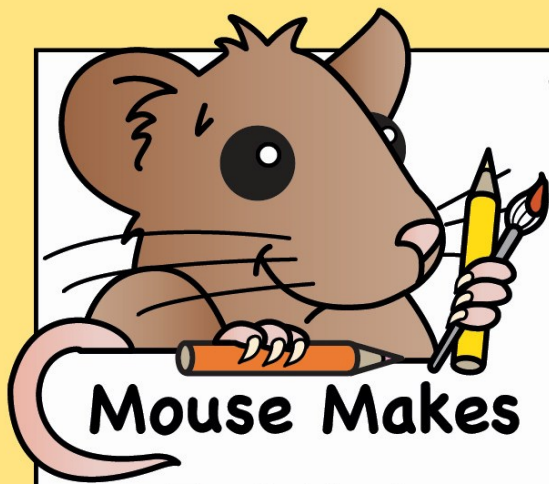
Image by WikimAGES from Pixabay

William Shakespeare
1564-1616

Arguably the most famous writer in the world, best known as a playwright, Shakespeare made his name first as a poet. He was born around 23 April 1564 and grew up in Stratford-upon-Avon, the son of a well-to-do businessman who was active in local politics (rising to be bailiff). Details of his early life are sparse but he is known to have been working in London as an actor and writer when the theatres were closed in 1592 because of the plague. At this point he turned to writing poetry, initially long dramatic poems, many on themes of romantic and erotic love. Shakespeare later returned to London enjoying huge success as an actor, writer and part-owner of the Lord Chamberlain's Men (later The King's Men) company of players. He retired to Stratford where he died in 1616.

In all Shakespeare wrote 160 sonnets, adopting the standard form for the English sonnet of 14 lines with a set rhyming scheme but their content ranged widely to include themes including the passage of time, love, infidelity, jealousy, beauty and mortality. Their subjects too varied, often identified as the Fair Youth, the Rival Poet and the Dark Lady.

The sonnets, long overshadowed by the fame of his plays, now attract more interest and increasingly subjected to a similar level of scholarly analysis and discussion. Sonnet 18 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day', while fairly typical of Shakespeare's work, remains one of the best-loved and most-quoted of his poems, displaying his virtuosic linguistic elegance and dexterity.



Mouse Makes

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit of

Genesis 1:2

The

of the Father.

Acts 1:4

The Spirit of

A _____

Romans 8:15

H _____

John 14:26

The Spirit of

John 16:13

The Spirit of

Acts 16:7

The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

___ O ___

___ Y

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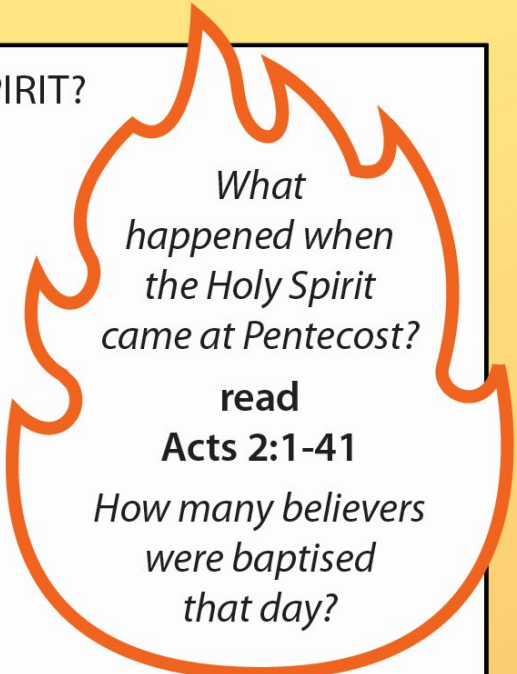
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What happened when the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost?

read **Acts 2:1-41**

How many believers were baptised that day?

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

Look up the Bible verses and fill in the missing words. Look for them in the word search then look for these words below.

- HOLY • SPIRIT • COUNSELLOR • COMFORTER
- ADVOCATE • TEACHER • LORD • PROMISE
- GLORY • GRACE • FAITH • DOVE • FIRE • WIND

ON DEALING WITH CHURCH FÊTES

The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren,

So, you are beginning to plan your first Summer Fête in your new parish. That you appear to be looking forward to it shows how little you know about such things.

Parishes hold Summer Fêtes so that their clergy can preach more meaningfully on purgatory. Their ostensible purpose is to raise money for the church - which is wholly illogical. The parish could double the money raised if the Fête were dropped, none of the endless preparations made, and everyone spent a pleasant afternoon in their own gardens with each person simply donating £20 to the church instead. But we still feel obliged to go to endless trouble, making ourselves miserable so we can show each other what a good time we are having. That it generally pours seems to make the entire event even more grimly satisfying.

No, the real reasons for a Summer Fête are twofold. First, it gives the entire parish the chance to inspect the Rector's garden. Whatever state it is in, it will cause disapproval. If it is poorly kept, then I am clearly being ungrateful for having three acres of lawn to enjoy. Mowing it each week should be one of my delights; what else would I do with a whole day off each week anyway? The

hand mower, kindly given by Colonel French is assumed to be quite adequate - and rumour has it that I need to lose weight anyway. The mower was presented to me when the Colonel bought his own gardener a sit-on motor mower - which is of a size and opulence that makes me assume it has a drinks cabinet and satellite navigation.

The second reason for a Fête comes as a special perk for the organisers. It gives them a chance to inspect the inside of the Rectory. Under the pretence of looking for a little more sugar, they can systematically inspect all the kitchen cupboards and comment on their contents. By the end of the day, the whole parish will know what marmalade I spread on my toast, that I use unnecessarily expensive washing powder and where I have unsuccessfully tried to hide the gin.

The details of what then happens while the Fête is in progress must wait until my next letter, when we will have had our own. It is now time for Evensong, drinks with Major Mallet and his wife, and then a quiet evening with a good book, while I toy with other possible hiding places for the gin this year.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



PARISH DIRECTORY

Ludlow St Laurence Parish Office

Stephen House, 2 College Street, Ludlow, Shropshire. SY8 1AN

e-mail: office@stlaurences.org.uk website: www.stlaurences.org.uk Telephone: 01584 872073

Rector: In vacancy

Licensed Lay Minister: Caroline Culley 07557 983940

Lay Pastoral Worker: Paul Kemp 07785 254568

Ludlow St Laurence

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Parish Office | 01584 872073 |
| Office Administrator | Nicky Luck |
| Finance Manager | Anna Dunne |
| Gift Aid Secretary | Martin Salmon |
| Social Media & Press | Kate Garrett-Nield |
| Director of Music | Michael Oakley |
| Custodian | Matthew Lenthall |
| Conservation Trust Chair | Sebastian Bowen |

PCC

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Churchwarden | Lesley Harling | 07309 263730 |
| Assistant | Michael Davies | 07970 434822 |
| Churchwardens | Dick Franks | 892019 |
| Electoral Roll Officer | Dick Franks | 892019 |
| Safeguarding Officer | Dick Franks | 892019 |
| PCC Secretary | Lesley Harling | 07309 263730 |
| Bible Reading Fellowship | Penelope Bridstrup | 876992 |
| Flowers | Sue Thornley | 872292 |
| Tower Captain | Richard Bracher | 811514 |
| Ludlow Tower | Lesley Harling | 07309 263730 |

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Ludlow St John

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|-------------|
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| Churchwarden | Mike Beazley | 873570 |
| Treasurer | Mike Beazley | 873570 |
| PCC Secretary | Mike Beazley | 873570 |
| Electoral Roll | Sue Thomas | 07929900671 |

Ashfords Benefice

| | | |
|---------------|------------|--------|
| Rector | In vacancy | |
| Parish Office | Jemma Saer | 831203 |

Bromfield Benefice

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Rector | Revd Justin Parker | |
| Parish Office | Martin Scott | 07395 413004 |



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TUESDAY 5 MAY

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ONE DAY A THOUSAND SONGS

by JOHN MILLER



On 6 May last year, just before the first light of day, a robin sang the opening notes of the dawn chorus in John Miller's Wiltshire garden at precisely 4.35am. Over the next 17 hours, each bird is briefly brought to life with John's fascinating backstories: their nests, their eggs, their battles, their triumphs. He offers guidance on how to encourage the wildlife closer to home.

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