
Ludlow
TOWER
the
Parish Magazine
of LUDLOW ST LAURENCE
Remember
Pg5
The Forge
Pg15
Evergreen
immortals
Pg33
NOVEMBER 2026



VISIT OUR CHURCH TO SEE OUR

Mediaeval stained glass
Mediaeval misericords
Historic monuments
Housman memorial
Bells and Carillon
Comper banner
Snetzler organ
Baldacchino
Icon Coffee
Gift Shop

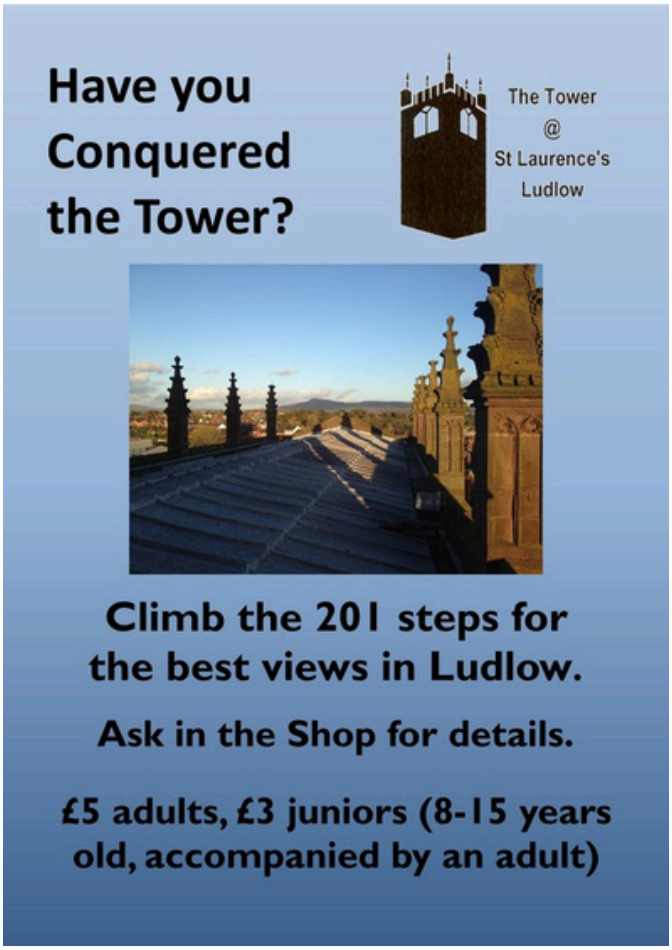
Visitors welcome

10am-5pm Monday-Saturday
11am-5pm Sunday

Icon Coffee and Shop
Closed Sunday

Admission free - donations appreciated

Children's area
Dogs welcome





Ludlow TOWER

The turbulence of the late October storms may have consigned the long, hot, dry summer to a distant memory but its legacy is all around us. Some trees responded to the stresses of extreme weather by shedding their leaves early. Others are hanging on to their leaves later than usual and there is little sign yet of the colourful kaleidoscope of reds, oranges and yellow we associate with the autumn.

Some things, though, do not change and, for most of us, November is the month to remember, a recurring theme in this month's Ludlow Tower. Many of the memories relating to Remembrance and Armistice are sombre but Mark, our Vicar, urges us (p5) to remember the good, Paul, our Lay Worker, celebrates (p11) the revival of a happy memory and we wonder (p25) about a grave in St Leonard's Churchyard carefully tended more than 60 years after it was last used. Clearly somebody remembers.

Lesley Harling (Editor)
07309 263730

We apologise for the late appearance of this issue and for any formatting errors as a result of an enforced change of desktop publishing software.

This month's cover

Image: **Parish Pump**
Poppy field

Graphic: Nicky Luck
Nickyluck@nannolica.co.uk

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Opinions expressed in contributed articles in this magazine are those of the contributor and do not necessarily represent the position or opinions of the PCC or Editorial Committee.

ACE
Member Editor 2026
Association for Church Editors

When you go home, tell them of us and say
"For your tomorrow we gave our today"



A moving remembrance display
in St. Laurence's Church
2nd to 14th of November 2026

THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LAURENCE LUDLOW

EXHIBITION ORGANISED BY
Poyner's events

REMEMBER ALL THAT IS GOOD

As we approach Remembrance Sunday we remember our dead from wars of the past past and pray for peace – though there have been many other wars we have taken part in and other wars raging today. There will be towns in Russia counting their dead and towns in Ukraine keeping a tally of those who are defending their country and perhaps one day there will be a service to remember and give thanks all over Russia and all over Ukraine – naming just one conflict. Crosses, memorials and plaques will be lovingly commissioned and installed in towns and villages, churches and town halls from that war, for the soldiers, but also for the civilians killed in rocket and drone attacks. And they will be remembered, just as we do now. We remind our children and grandchildren that this is an important day, just one day set aside as special between Hallowe'en and Christmas when we all pause, just for a few moments, in the midst of busy lives with all of our own successes and failures, sadnesses and joys, to remember others long gone.

The Royal British Legion says:
You are all welcome to our churches, and places of worship - those of any faith and of no faith, those who believe in God, those who are not sure and those who are certain that God does not exist - because we are united at least for a little while, in sacred acts of remembrance. You are all welcome.

Remembrance honours those who serve to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life. We unite across faiths, cultures and backgrounds to remember the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces community from the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. We will remember them. We acknowledge innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict and acts of terrorism.

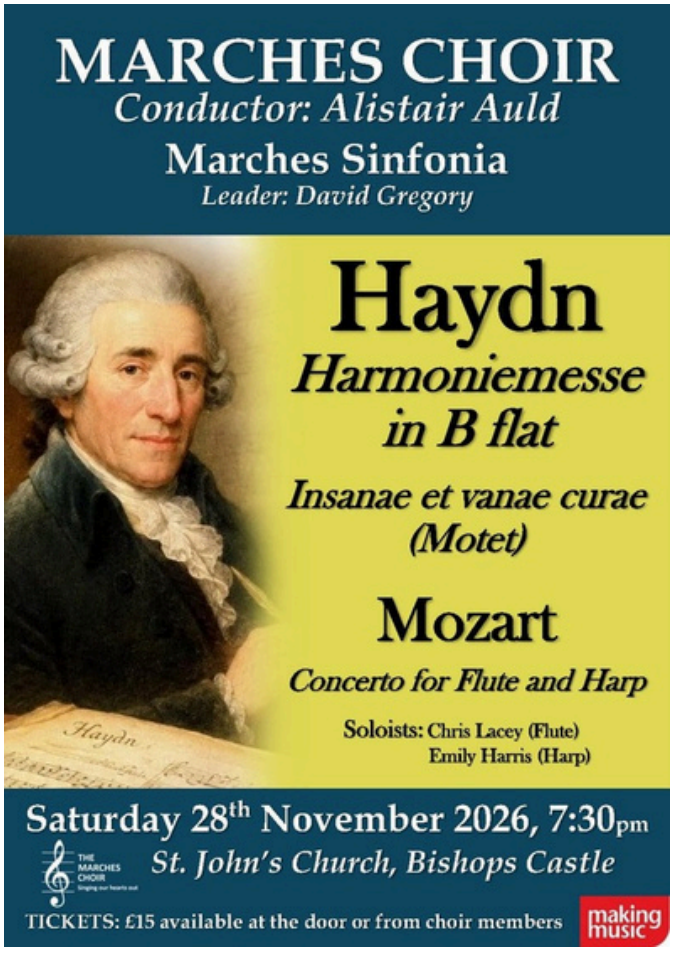
As I get older, memories sometime play tricks on me – there are things in the past I cannot quite recall, and things I did yesterday I cannot recall at all. That's the way of things as we age. There is great power in remembering in our spiritual lives as well. But here too we forget the things we need to remember and remember the things we should forget. Instead of reminding ourselves that God loves us and has a purpose and plan for our lives, we focus on our mistakes and problems.

The God who created us knows how easily we forget what's most important: we forget who he is; we forget what he has done in our lives; we forget the hundreds of promises he has made to us. And some of us have forgotten the power and importance of the resurrection.

So remember all that is good in your lives, as we also remember the absolute worst that humanity can do. And remember this: you are always invited by God to get to know him; you are always invited to come to church to get to know him; you are always invited to talk and to pray with him. It's up to you whether you accept that invitation.

Revd Mark


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MARCHES CHOIR
Conductor: Alistair Auld
Marches Sinfonia
Leader: David Gregory
Haydn
Harmoniemesse
in B flat
Insanae et vanae curae
(Motet)
Mozart
Concerto for Flute and Harp
Soloists: Chris Lacey (Flute)
Emily Harris (Harp)
Saturday 28th November 2026, 7:30pm
St. John's Church, Bishops Castle
TICKETS: £15 available at the door or from choir members
making music


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INTRODUCING ...



Please tell us a bit about yourself.

My name is Christine Tait. I grew up in Oxted, Surrey and studied biochemistry and physiology at Newcastle University, where I met Graham who was studying dentistry and whom I later married. After graduating I moved to London where I worked at Northwick Park Hospital for The Medical Research Council in their Radio Isotope Unit. It involved measuring low level radiation coming from people (yes, we are all naturally radioactive and have been even before the nuclear age).

What brought you to this part of the world?

In short - Graham's work. After initially working in North London, he joined a dental practice in Broad Street. It seemed like a good move, as we were thinking of starting a family. We lived in Richards Castle for seven years then moved into Ludlow in 1985 and have been here ever since, although we kept links with All Saints in Richards Castle – I was PCC Secretary for 35 yrs until Covid. It's now a Festival Church with services/events most months of the year. It has wonderful acoustics, but its size makes it very difficult to manage as a regular country parish church.

When our son and daughter were growing up I worked in credit control at a steel fabricators in Leominster and at Greenall's in Ludlow and I spent 20 years at a SEN school in Hereford, working as their finance secretary.

And to St John's?

After All Saints became a Festival Church, I was looking for a place to worship more regularly. St John's was close to home and less formal, which suited me. In time, I was persuaded onto the PCC.

What is special about St John's for you?

St John's tries to be involved in community life (Tea & Toast, Toddler Group, Tea Services) and its worship leans towards the evangelical. I do get involved with the Tea Services, which happen about four times a year.

What was your first impression of St Laurence's?

Its services seemed very formal and frankly more like going to a performance with insufficient participation by the congregation. Maybe I am being unfair and things have changed. It is true that most services I go to there are 'special services', which probably lean towards 'high church'.

How do you spend any spare time?

Cooking, sewing, walking and cycling, spending time with the family in Tewkesbury and Saffron Walden.

Most memorable holiday experience?

A Ramblers' trip to Canada, from Vancouver to the Cascades, Jasper, and Banff.
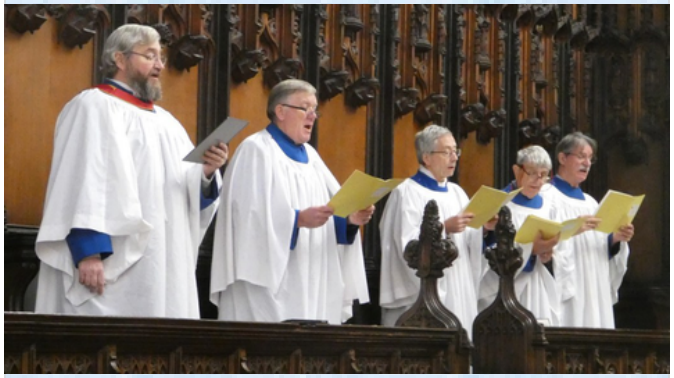
What might we be surprised to know about you?

I still enjoy skiing!

THIRD SUNDAY SERVICES IN NOVEMBER

First Sunday

CHORAL EVENSONG



3.30pm

In StLaurence's chancel

1 November



OPEN TEA AT ST LAURENCE
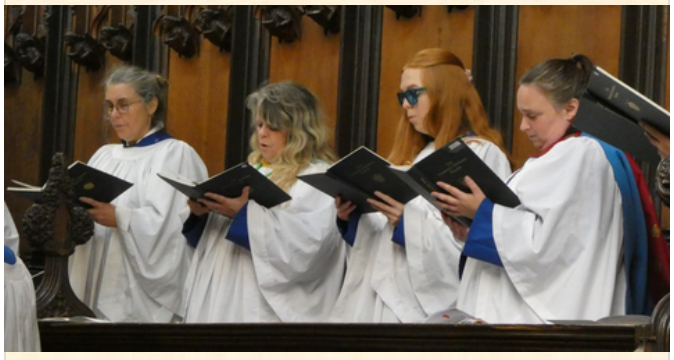
3pm-4pm

First Monday in the month

2 November

Third Sunday

CHORAL MATINS



11.30am

In St Laurence's chancel

15 November

Fourth Sunday

CELTIC PRAYER

An Evening Liturgy

StLaurence'sChurch,Ludlow

A simple service in a style used by the IonaCommunity

6.00pm

22 November

FROM THE REGISTERS

At St Laurence's

Funerals & memorial services

1 October	René Legrand
3 October	Henry Mackley
16 October (Ludlow Cemetery)	Alan Powell
19 October (Ludlow Cemetery)	Bernard Angell

Baptisms

4 October	Nevaeh Turner
	Herbie Gower

LUDLOW BENEFICE PRAYER MEETING

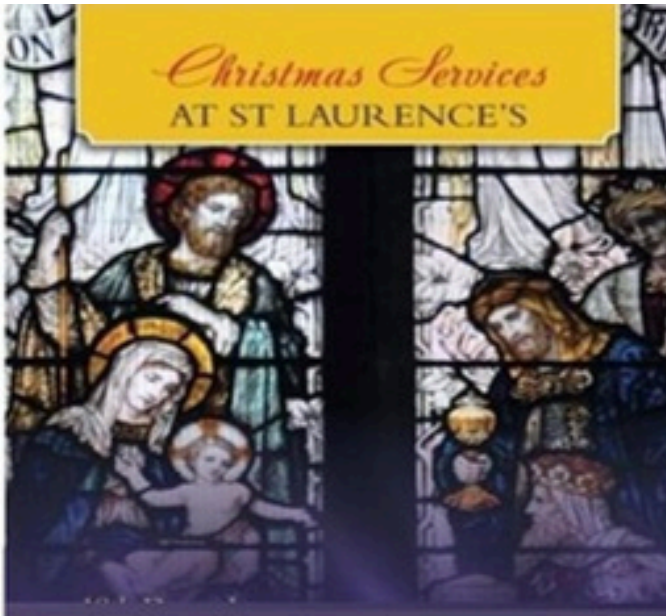


When:
11am on the second Saturday of each month

Where:
St Giles Church, Ludford

Next meeting:
Saturday 14 November

Members of the three churches of the Ludlow Benefice, St Giles', St John's and St Laurence's, are invited to come together to pray for our churches, our town, our interim Vicar Mark Inglis and the person who will follow him in due course to become the new Rector of Ludlow.



Sunday 29 November
7pm Advent Carol Service

Tuesday 8 December
6pm Living Nativity (Market Square)

Friday 18 December
7pm Service of Light for the Bereaved

Tuesday 22 December
7pm Carols in the Castle

Wednesday 23 December
7pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Thursday 24 December
4pm Christingle
11.15pm Midnight Mass

Friday 25 December
9.15am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30am Family Christmas Service

Sunday 27 December
8.15am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Benefice Eucharist at St John's



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OPENING UP MEMORIES

Years ago, in my brass band days, I was moved by a particular piece of music that we played. The piece seemed to portray all emotions, as well as being an enjoyable piece to play. Fast forward to a few weeks ago: I no longer played in a band, the name of the piece had escaped me and I hadn't heard it for years, despite considerable efforts. Sitting in church at the end of Eucharist that Sunday, I couldn't believe what I was blessed with hearing from the organ ... it was that piece! I was immediately transported ... I found I remembered every note, every emotion. After all that time, searching and trying to remember what the piece was called, the answer was there, in His House – God had rewarded me by reintroducing me to it!

It made me appreciate that we are constantly rewarded by Him, nowhere more so than at Stephen House. For example, we recently had a large unexpected donation of things for the kitchen.

Unbeknown to the donor they were much needed and immediately put to use. It was the same with another donation of equipment from elsewhere, 'We thought this would be useful for you' – it certainly is!

We are also blessed to continue to reap the benefits of the relationships fostered at Stephen House – with people in the community, other service providers and statutory bodies, relationships that directly benefit the people we support.

Oh … and the piece of music? It was Suite Gothique, by Leon Boellmann, and hearing it again led to rediscovering the pleasure of making music in brass bands! Thank you, as ever, for your support and prayers. God Bless.

Paul

Stephen House Ludlow

an open door for everyone

With grateful thanks to Dr Andrew Padmore BEM.

HARVEST FESTIVAL AT ST JOHN'S



St John's Church, Ludlow

Sharing the good news of God's love



Arts@St Laurence – November 2026

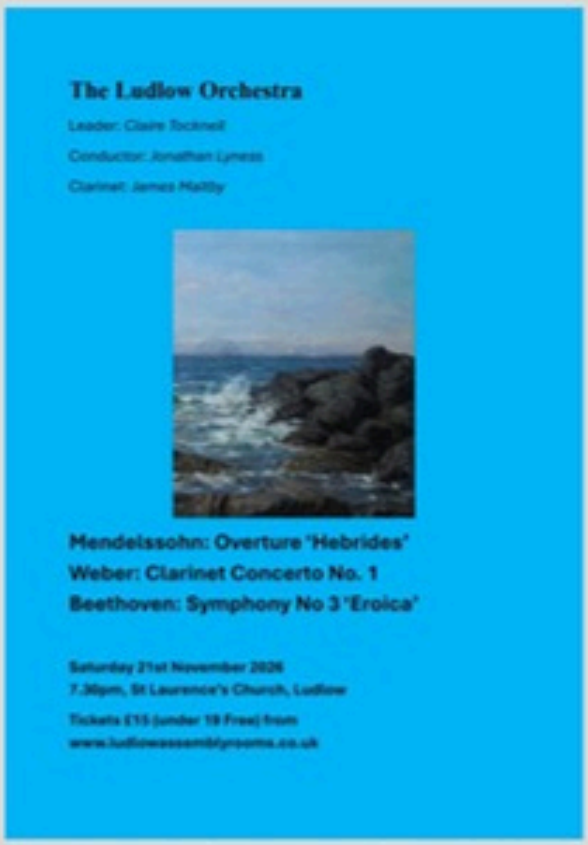
Further information: Recitals and Concerts – St Laurence (stlaurences.org.uk)



OPEN PIANO

During the day Friday 13th and Saturday 14th November come along and be entertained by talented local pianists showcasing their skills and the wonderful sound of our Steinway piano.

The Cafe and Shop will be open as normal so get a coffee and enjoy!



A GRAIN OF SAND AT A TIME

This autumn, do you feel overwhelmed with all the things that you need to get done? Am I 'ready for an emergency? How many shopping days are there until Christmas?

Then think of your life as an hourglass. There are thousands of grains of sand in the top of the hourglass; and they all pass slowly and evenly through the narrow neck in the middle. We are like that hourglass.



When we start in the morning, there are hundreds of tasks which we feel that we must accomplish that day. But if we do not take them one at a time and let them pass through the day slowly and evenly, as do the grains of sand passing through the narrow neck of the hourglass, then we are bound to break our own fragile physical and mental structure. Do not attempt more than God designed you to do.

THOSE GIANT AUTUMN HOUSE SPIDERS

We've all been there – quietly relaxing at home, when suddenly a HUGE thing with LONG legs scuttles right by you. You can't help but jump and, if you are normal, scream. What just scared you was a fully grown adult male *Eratigena atrica,* among the largest spiders in Central and Northern Europe.

It has not just come in from the cold. It has been living warm and cosy, hidden in your house for weeks. Now it has left its dark hiding spot to race across your carpets and walls and bed with a definite purpose in mind: it is looking for love. For autumn is mating time for the big spiders, and there are also females living in your house, safe and secure in cracks, lofts and behind furniture.

With a body length of 1.6cm and a leg span of up to 7.5 cm they are fast hitting speeds of up to half a metre per second.



The good news is that they are as scared of you as you of them, they are disease-free and their bite is extremely rare and harmless. They even pay their rent by eating your flies, mosquitoes, and other small bugs.

So, try and be kind to them, and let them live with you – they don't like the cold outside very much. Just lift your feet as they gallop across the carpet…

Come and join the

LIVING NATIVITY

as we tell the story of the first Christmas in the streets of Ludlow



- **Carol singing** led by **Ludlow Town Band**
- **Live Donkey**
- **Hot Chocolate** and **Mince Pies**







Tuesday 8th December 2026

Starting at Peace Memorial at 6.00pm,
Market Square, Ludlow
Ending around 7.00pm at the Castle

In severe weather the event will be held in St. Laurence's Church

For any enquiries please email: ludlowmethodist@outlook.com

CTaL Organised by Churches Together around Ludlow

THE FORGE

The Men's Bible Study Group, which we call 'The Forge', has about a dozen members, who meet on Thursday evenings at 7.00pm in Stephen House. Meetings always begin with a meal followed by some bible study and prayer, usually finishing just after 9.00pm. The bible study is usually led by one of the leaders either focusing on a passage from the bible, following a recognised course, or preparing for the following Sunday Service theme.

Usually there is some general discussion as the group aims to be a mutual support for members. There is a strong sense of belonging to the wider family of St Laurence's which always features in the prayer time which is an important aspect of every meeting.

The group began when a few young men who were baptised by the Rector (some in the river at Ashford Carbonel and others at the Easter Day Service) wanted to have greater understanding of the Christian faith.

A couple of older members were invited, and it was made available to any man who had an interest in learning more about the Bible and deepening their Christian faith.

We have supported younger members in their preparation for marriage. Help and support has been offered to some who have had difficulties in their personal life. Young men with no Christian faith were introduced to the group and are now also regular members of St Laurence's congregation. The group has helped others who have needed support for their faith journey, and there have been several miraculous answers to prayer.

The group certainly does not have a 'sexist' agenda but recognises that men (particularly young men) have certain difficulties and issues in today's world and feels that Christian support in a male environment can be valuable for their wellbeing.



Regular Thursday evening meetings in Stephen House 7 – 9 pm

Meal, short general discussion, Bible Study, Prayer

Encouragement to attend Services at St Laurence's

Encouragement to deepen faith and Christian Commitment

Contact and support available on a WhatsApp group

Contact Revd Mark on 07456 651795

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LUDLOW PALMERS AUTUMN LECTURES

Just south of the historic town of Ludlow, standing high above the River Teme, hidden away in a peaceful sylvan setting of great beauty, dating back to the eleventh century, lies the ancient parish church of St Giles, Ludford. Within the church is a particularly fine memorial brass, dating from 1554, commemorating William Foxe, his wife and family, which nonetheless is something to which the casual visitor may give scant attention.

Yet, there is a very great deal more to those commemorated by the brass as well as to the memorial itself than meets the eye. A quintessentially English pastime, the rubbing of monumental brasses in both parish churches and cathedrals is a hobby which has endured down the years.

While still a schoolboy, T E Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was bitten by the bug, continuing the hobby as a student whilst at Jesus College, Oxford. So, too, William Morris, the designer and conservationist most associated with the English Arts and Crafts movement. The speaker giving this lecture, Jonathan Moor, a long standing member of the Monumental Brass Society, has himself been rubbing brasses and writing articles on them for over sixty years.

For, hidden behind these memorials lie fascinating histories which are often overlooked or else entirely unknown. So, come and join us for a fascinating journey into the past to learn about William Foxe, a sixteenth century recusant philanthropist.

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

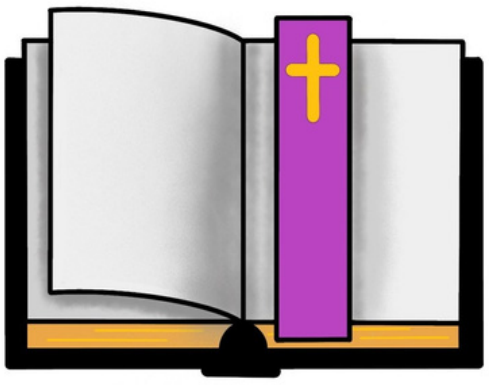
Contact
Cynthia Prior 01584 831855

St Peter's Roman Catholic Church

Mass11.00am Sunday
9.30am Monday-Friday
6.00pm Saturday (Sunday Vigil)

Morning prayer
9.15am Monday-Friday
9.45am Saturday

Contact
st.peters.ludlow@talktalk.net



A NEW NAME FOR SHEMA

The former 'Shema' prayer-craft group has re-invented itself into a 'Craft Cafe', with a strapline of 'crafting with prayer.'

Over the summer we experimented with a weekly meeting in the Icon coffee shop on the sofas of the north aisle at St Laurence's. This made us more transparent and facilitated all kinds of connections with passing footfall. We have also grown in number – and skills.

Our aim is to make beautiful and useful things with love and prayers in the style of Dorcas, an early Christian disciple. Dorcas, or Tabitha, was 'full of good works and alms deeds' (Acts 9:36). She used her talents as a seamstress to serve others, making garments for those in need. She had a special ministry of compassion and care for widows, who deeply mourned her passing by displaying the clothes she had made for them.



How does this look in the 21st century? We make emotional support chickens for anyone who needs comfort – such as an elderly person with dementia. Then we make prayer shawls for those in trouble, or to help celebrate birth, baptism or marriage, and we make scarves, hats and gloves for people on the margins.



We have hand crafted remembrance poppies and this year agreed to decorate a Christmas tree in the outer Bailey of the castle. This requires skills of crochet, knitting and calligraphy. How fortunate we are to have Kate in the group! She also knits beautiful mittens.

The group embraces all kinds of crafts and all skill levels from beginners to experts. It seems to have developed as a 'safe space': for some it is therapy and others come for prayer. We meet on Fridays between 10 and noon. As a work in progress we are open to new ideas about how we might continue to offer service to our neighbours in our ordinary, every day lives.

Eileen Padmore
padmoree@icloud.com



LUDLOW LOCAL LISTING

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WHAT'S ON AT ST LAURENCE'S IN NOVEMBER

Remembrance display 2 - 14 November in Lady Chapel

Sunday 1
- Choral Evensong 3.30pm

Monday 2
- Open Tea 3.00pm
- Solemn Requiem Mass for All Souls 7.00pm

Sunday 8
- Act of Remembrance *(Peace Memorial* 10.50am
- Civic Remembrance Service 12.15am

Wednesday 11
- Armistice Day Service *(Peace Memorial)* 10.55am
- Catwalk Collective Fashion Show 7.30pm

Saturday 14 - Ludlow Piano Festival
- Open Piano 10am-4pm
- Piano Recital Scipione Sangiovanni 7.30pm

Sunday 15
- Choral Matins 11.30am

Saturday 21
- Ludlow Orchestra Concert 7.30pm

Sunday 22
- Celtic Prayer 6.00pm

Friday 27 - Winter Festival
- Beer & Pizza Evening 5.30-9.30pm

Saturday 28 - Winter Festival
- Craft Fair 10.00am-5.00pm

Sunday 29
- Benefice Service at St John's 10.00am
- Advent Carol Service 7.00pm

MIDWEEK

Daily prayer
Mondays & Fridays **10.30am**

Tower bells practice
Mondays **7.30-9.00pm**

Handbells practice
Tuesdays **5.30-7.15pm**

Choir practice
Thursdays **7.00-8.30pm**

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) 07785 254568



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

Remembrance Day Walk

If you would like to hear about some of the men who gave their lives during the two world wars, come on this war walk on 11 November around the streets of Ludlow town centre, led by Ludlow war historian Clive Richardson. It will last about an hour.

Outside some of the homes of men killed in the two world wars we will stop, hear their stories and pass their photographs around.

Meet outside the south porch of
St Laurence's Church
at 12.00pm
Wednesday 11 November
£5 per person for the Friends of St Leonard's Churchyard





Armistice Day Service

St Leonard's Churchyard, Corve Street
10.45am Wednesday 11 November



The ceremony will take place by the grave of
Private W H Millichamp
(behind the NW corner of the chapel)
The service will be officiated by Revd John Williams and local trumpeter, William Chapman will play the Last Post.

There are five casualties of World War One buried in the cemetery and the service is held by a different one of their graves each year. As part of the service, as well as remembering all of the casualties of war, we talk specifically about the man by whose grave the service is taking place. We feel that this helps those attending to connect in an additional way.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AFTERNOON

November sunlight shimmers on the Wear,
Wide waters slip by unhurried by each bank
And soothe Remembrance Sunday afternoon.
After the service, after the parades.
After the poppies, after the last post,
I sit and drink in quietness and peace,
The peace those Durham infantry forsook
To keep it sacred for the likes of me.
Some of them surely fished this very spot
Where Durham fishermen are sitting still
On folded campstools. May those fallen men
Whom we remembered in the high cathedral
Drink deep now from the river of true life
Where all their wounds are healed, where living light
Flows from the source of every time and tide
And may they know that we remember them.

Malcolm Guite4

A GRAVE MYSTERY?

When I became Chairman of the Friends of St Leonard's last year, I understood that the cemetery had become full causing Henley Road Cemetery to be opened in 1915. I knew that additional burials were made in existing plots in the following years and that there were some people who still had the right to choose to be buried with loved ones in the graveyard. As far as we were aware, the last burials had been in the early 1920s. We also believed that none of the graves in the churchyard were tended other than a handful that had been adopted by 'Friends'.

I was walking recently in a part of the site well away from the main path and could not help but notice a sparkling white headstone that had clearly been carefully cleaned. I read the inscription and the last person, Margaret Emma Holt, was buried there in 1963 with her husband, Henry, who died in 1937 and her two-year old son, George, who had died in 1900 when the plot must have been purchased.

I began researching the family. Henry was born in Leominster in 1861 and by 1891 was working as a fishmonger, living in Castle Street with his barman brother George. He married Margaret (born in West Derby, Liverpool) in 1898. By 1901 he was described as a fishmonger and game dealer living and working at 5 Church Street (now Aragon's Restaurant). Brother George went on to be the landlord of the Eagle in Corve Street (now Mortimers Restaurant, with Eagle Insurance next door).

Henry, however died aged only 39 in 1904 leaving a wife and three young children. 5 Church Street was put up for auction at the Angel by Norton's in 1930 and Henry and Margaret moved to 42 Gravel Hill for his retirement. Henry died in 1937 and the funeral was attended by at least two of their sons, three of their daughters and a nephew. Henry had been a sidesman at St Laurence's Church for many years. Margaret was still at Gravel Hill in 1939 and lived to the ripe age of 93.

Who is the mystery visitor to the grave? The Friends of St Leonards are always looking for new members to help us maintain the churchyard as both a leisure facility and an urban space for nature. The subscription is only £10 a year £15 for a couple. Contact nino.binns@gmail.com if you would like to join.

Clive Richardson



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WORTH THE WAIT

At 92, and after a wait of 85 years, Peter Wood of Aylesbury finally made it to the top of St Laurence's tower in October, accompanied by his son.

Previous attempts were thwarted by his parents saying they hadn't the time or they had to be somewhere else, etc.. And, he said, "It was worth the wait - I really enjoyed it". We believe that Peter may be the oldest visitors to St Laurence's to leave ssorting an 'I Conquered the Tower' sticker. Or perhaps you know better?

FLOWERS DEDICATED IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE

Would you like to contribute to the 2026 Christmas flower display in St Laurence's by making a dedication in memory of a loved one?

The display is installed on 23 December and covers every part of the church. Dedications will be listed in the church.

Please donate by completing one of the dedication forms at the stewards desk.





Friday 27 November
5.30pm-9.30pm

Live music, pizza and beer
Mulled wine and mince pies
Tombola
Entry: free

Saturday 28 November
10am-5.30pm

Winter Fair

Craft, gift and community stalls
Tombola
Children's activities and games
Festive music
Hot and cold refreshments
Entry: adults gold coin (£1/£2)
Children under 12 free

Sunday 29 November
7pm

Advent Carol Service
All welcome

Come and join us in St Laurence's Church for our Winter Festival events

Further information
social.media@stlaurences.org.uk
01584 872073

THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LAURENCE LUDLOW

ONE YEAR ON FROM AN EARTHQUAKE

I am writing this as I munch a few crisps (feeling only a little guilt). Perhaps that's why I've gone for a story about something other than starvation this month. Whilst we may have an inkling of what real hunger feels like, through particular experiences, and even, following this summer, the danger of fire on dry ground, very few of us have lived through and can imagine the horrific realisation that we are experiencing an earthquake. 'Suddenly we felt the shaking,' explains farmer Nann Mya. 'Right in front of us we saw our farm collapse. Everyone lost something.'

In March 2025 a terrifying 7.7 magnitude earthquake hit central Myanmar, destroying homes, businesses and farmland. Thousands were killed, tens of thousands made homeless. Local communities reacted immediately, helping neighbours and sharing supplies, however little they had. As one survivor, Daw Thaung, said, 'If I say 'I am building a house, everyone comes to help. And I would do the same for them.'



We are part of that community through our giving and our prayers. Our compassion and generosity allowed our partners in Myanmar to support the communities' recovery efforts and to equip survivors with vital resources.

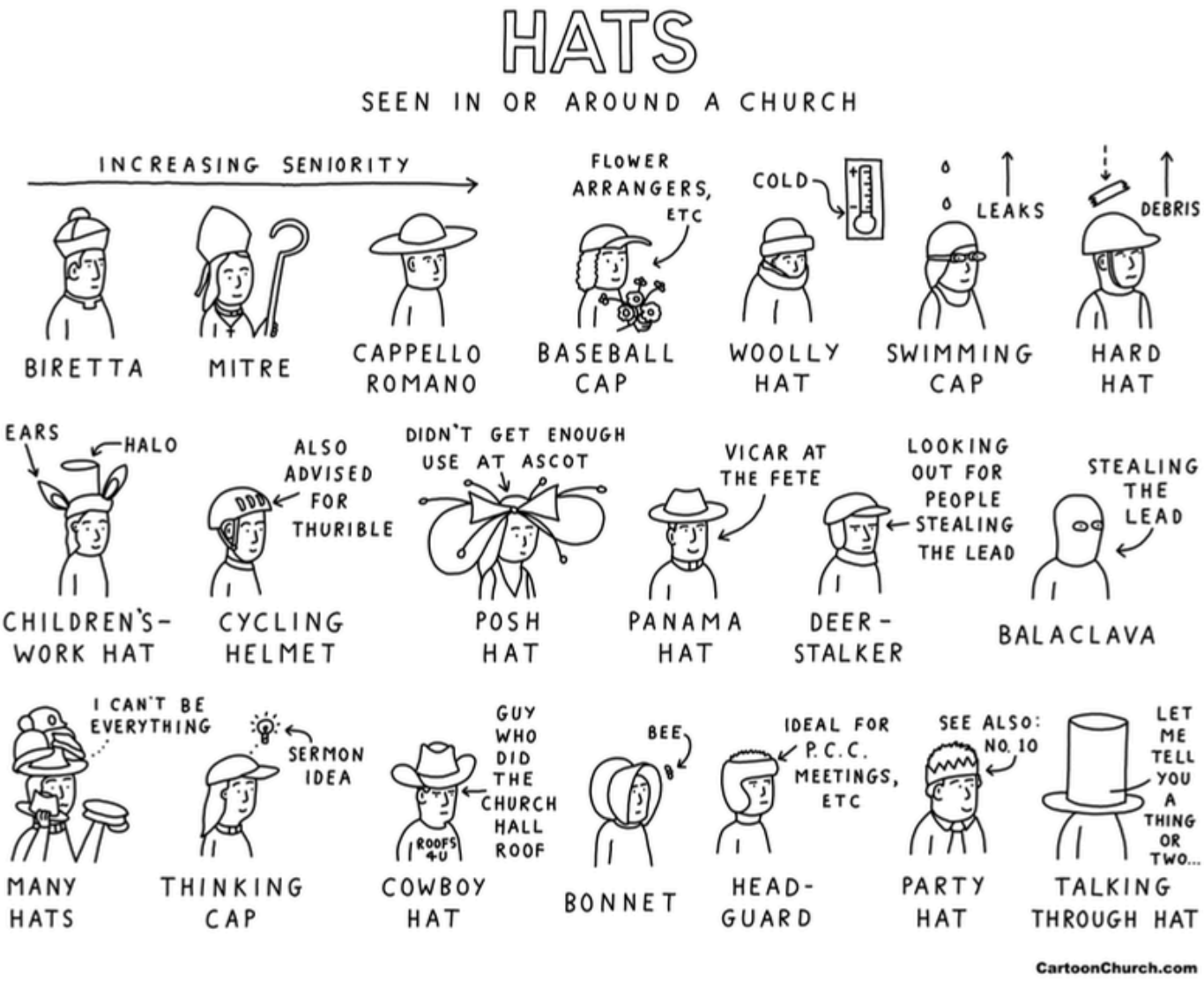
As a member of DEC (the Disasters Emergency Committee) Christian Aid delivered life-saving food, clean water and shelter to some of the worst hit families. It also made cash grants to families empowering them to determine their own priorities. Mobility aids and specialist assistance were provided where appropriate. 'With support we got a safe home,' said a couple who had been forced to sleep outside for a month in monsoon rains while aware of, and terrified by, the presence of poisonous snakes in the area. These families said, 'It wasn't receiving the cash assistance to rebuild that mattered most, it was the generosity behind it'. The support meant more about kindness from human to human than just the money.

Christian Aid has commented, 'A year after the earthquake in Myanmar, families are overcoming hardship with courage and resolve. Your solidarity with our global neighbours puts faith and hope into action.'

We must always remember our global family whilst giving thanks for all our blessings.

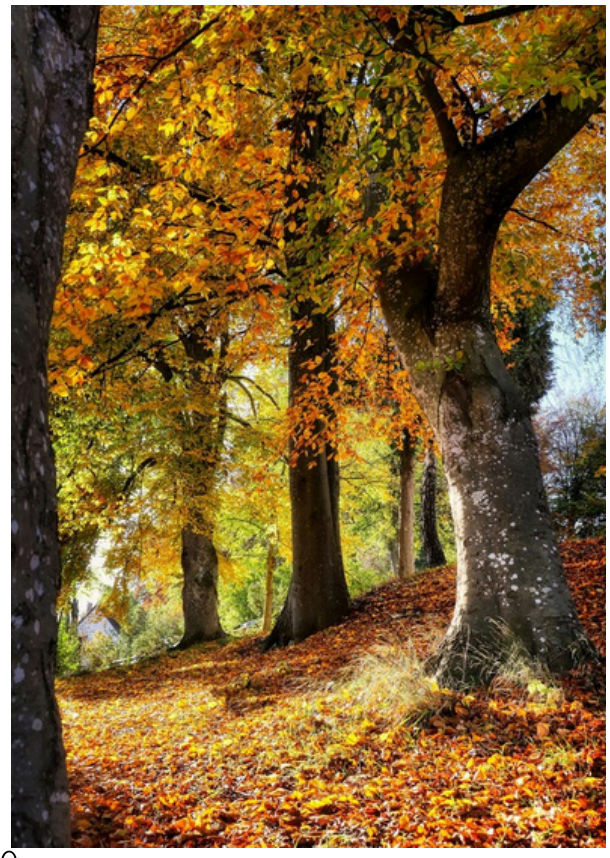
christian aid

Claire Wilcox



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





ARCHBISHOP SARAH AT ST LAURENCE'S

During her visit to the Diocese of Hereford in October the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally visited Ludlow and took part in two special services at St Laurence's - a celebration of lay ministry and the confirmation of forty people, four of them members of our own congregation, including Angie Jones, shown here with the Archbishop after the service.



One of those present at the confirmation service later shared her impressions with her readers in The Times

In Ludlow on Saturday I attended a service in which 40 people were confirmed into the Church of England. Moved by the nervous line of candidates - from little girls in white dresses to besuited men - I reflected how our hunger for ritual and rites of passage can never be quenched by the online world. We want to belong, to be chosen, to feel (in modern parlance) 'seen'.

As the priest cupped the heads of the confirmation candidates, before each was presented with a lit candle and holy water was flicked around the congregation, I thought how the wellness industry has stolen from religious practice.

Massage, aromatherapy, spas, tea-lights … secular substitutes for the divine. Finally, as the newly initiated were greeted by proud families, posing for photos outside a church they felt was now truly theirs, I wished that I too had faith.

Janice Turner
The Times, 15 October 2026

PRAYER FOR THE MONTH

Lord when anxiety rises
And my heart feels unsettled
I turn to You
Quiet the thoughts that race
And calm the fear I cannot name,
Help me breathe deeply,
Rest fully,
And trust you completely
When worry feels overwhelming
Remind me that you are near
And that I am not alone.
Over my heart with peace, Lord,
And hold me steady in this moment.

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EVERGREEN IMMORTALS

In St George's Churchyard in Clun, Shropshire grows a magnificent ancient yew tree estimated to be around 2,000 years old and the oldest tree in Shropshire. Measuring over 10m (34ft) in girth this fine specimen, while healthy now, has clearly undergone many changes. It now comprises 'three main stems with complete bark cover growing out of the remains of the original circle of wood'. It has stood tall, guarding the churchyard since mediaeval times. If it could speak, it would surely have stories to tell.

There are many yews across the UK, each with its own unique story and heritage. The English yew, Taxus baccata, is an evergreen tree commonly found in and associated with burial grounds. Some are hundreds, even thousands of years old. The yew at Fortingall in Perth and Kinross is believed to be over 5,000 years old making it one of the oldest trees in Europe. Many of these ancient yews predate the churchyards where they grow and have strong ties to pagan, Celtic and Druidic traditions. Yews are steeped in rich and sometimes dark folklore. Known as the 'tree of the dead' it is thought that they were planted in sacred places to watch over the dead and guide their passage to the other side.

The yew is known for its longevity and habit of rooting from branches that droop to touch the ground, further cementing their status as a tree of death and rebirth. All parts of the tree are toxic to humans - it features in the witches' brew in Shakespeare's Macbeth.

Yews all over the UK live for hundreds of years, passing down their stories, legends and history. The Kingley Vale yews in West Sussex are supposedly haunted by local soldiers who died in a great battle with invading Vikings and were buried where the yew trees now stand. Then there are the bleeding yews of Nevern Church in Pembrokeshire which appear to be continuously bleeding red sap from their trunks. One endearing explanation is that they bleed in sympathy with Jesus and his crucifixion.

Most yews don't need much management and they generally like to be left alone. However, clearing anything over their root plate and underneath the trees as well as any ivy growing up the trunk will give them the best conditions to thrive. To learn more go to the Love Your Yew Week page on Caring for God's Acre's website.

Kaitlyn Elverson
Engagement Officer, Nature in Sacred Places Project (NiSP)



Clun yew - photo Tim Hills


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Plus
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THE NATIVITY

The selection of Christmas cards on display and available to buy at The Shop at St Laurence covers a pretty broad church! Goats, squirrels, hares and hedgehogs are found next to wintery scenes, snowy trains and ice skaters galore. Then there are ballerinas, a herd of guinea pigs and at least two London buses decorating some of the cards.



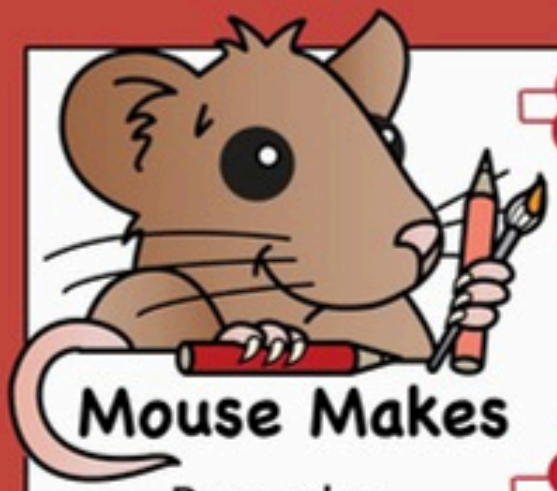


The most important of course are the cards with images showing the Nativity - of which we have a plentiful selection - from a Nativity taken from a late mediaeval book of hours to versions by old masters and modernist artists. Stained glass depictions from around Europe and St Laurence's itself, and modern illustrations join the selection. The tables are currently loaded with cards, but they do sell quickly once people realise December is approaching!





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Mouse Makes

Remembrance Sunday is the day we remember the sacrifice of those who gave their lives so that we could live in peace, it mirrors what Christ did for us when he gave his life so that we could live in peace with God.

Remember
the words Jesus said:
"It is more blessed to give than to receive."
Colossians 3:25

Jesus said:
"No one can have greater love than to give his life for his friends."
John 15:13

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ON WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

The latest letter from Revd Gary Bowness' elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar, Eustace, to his nephew Darren, a low-church curate

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren,

It is quite natural for you curates to enjoy working with young people in your parishes; church youth clubs were created in order to keep the newly ordained off the streets in the evenings. But be assured you will grow out of it. I consent to baptise babies and prepare teenagers for confirmation, but beyond that my contact with this alien life form is kept to an absolute minimum.

Dear Miss Thrush runs our weekly Pram Service - whose sole purpose seems to be to give young mothers an opportunity to discuss the ever-changing liaisons within the village, while their offspring shred hymn books and destroy the flower arrangements. I drop in from time to time in order to check that the more mobile haven't found where we hide the matches. An infant equipped with that knowledge can so easily become a teenage pyromaniac.

I can give you little advice on your youth group. When I was a curate, the major activity seemed to be to teach them how to wear gas masks, although today I imagine there is more concern about protecting them from other sorts of exotic chemicals. Also, I suspect you are kept busy keeping the young out of the darker corners of the churchyard as they develop their anatomical knowledge – a pastime still enthusiastically pursued by each new generation.

You clearly find your monthly Youth Service a deeply enriching experience. As far as I am concerned, if such a liturgy had been necessary, then Cranmer would have provided us with it. Endlessly repeated choruses accompanied by a guitar would make me warm to the Quakers. I am sure St Paul's services would have been much enriched with Hymns Ancient and Modern. The disciples in hiding in Jerusalem were not even able to sing accompanied by an organ, which must have greatly dispirited them. I also feel that our Verger would be unable to cope with organising the strobe lighting and dry ice effects. It takes him all his time to remember to light the candles on the altar.

On this we must differ. You must worship God in your way, and I in His.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace





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Ludlow St Giles

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TUESDAY 6 NOVEMBER

There is no guarantee that material submitted will be included.

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