



the **Parish Magazine**

of LUDLOW ST LAURENCE

**What is your
calling?**

Pg9

Meet Mark

Pg5

**Angels and
dragons**

Pg25

OCTOBER 2026



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Nothing seems to be quite as we expect it this year. Here we are on the verge of October with mince pies in the supermarkets and Christmas cards in the Shop at Laurence (p35) but leaves on the trees and temperatures in the mid-twenties. For St Laurence's this certainly promises to be a month of new experiences, starting with two major services on 10 October which Bishop Richard asked us host as the largest church in the diocese after the cathedral. Then two days later we welcome Revd Mark Inglis who is coming to the benefice on secondment as an interim priest to support us through the ongoing vacancy and help us to prepare for a new rector. Exciting times.

In this month's magazine we learn a little more about Mark with one or two surprises in there (p5), discover just how close we are in Ludlow to a sleeping dragon guarded by a ring of churches (p25) and consider the sacred origins (p15) of the secular celebration of all things scary and unexpected, Halloween.

Lesley Harling (Editor)
07309 263730

This month's cover

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Autumn foliage

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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.



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OPEN TEA AT ST LAURENCE



All are welcome for a cuppa, cake and chat on the first Monday in the month between 3pm and 4pm.

Monday 4 October

INTRODUCING ...

Please tell us a bit about yourself.

I am Mark Inglis, soon to be seconded to the Ludlow Benefice as interim vicar. I come from Hawick, a small Scottish borders town, am married to Samantha and have two grown up children. I gained a masters degree in history from Edinburgh University and worked mainly in public sector management, finishing as Acting Town Clerk of Hereford City Council. I was ordained deacon in 2013, served a curacy in Hereford and have been team vicar in Tenbury since 2016

What brought you to this part of the world?

We moved to Hereford in 2005 to be closer to family and joined St Pauls in Tupsley where I served on the PCC and ran the youth group, alongside a parttime job at the diocese doing youth work. I learned a lot from being a member of a local church.

And to the Ludlow benefice?

I was aware of the vacancies in our deanery, and beyond, and I had been exploring where my next role might be. I am familiar with Ludlow and really enjoyed taking some baptisms at St Giles so when our Archdeacon suggested a secondment I was keen to think and pray about that possibility and hope that I can bring some of my experience and enthusiasm to the Ludlow benefice

What is going to be your role?

My understanding is that the secondment will last until a final decision is made on recruiting a new Rector for the benefice. I am not sure how long this might be. I will be taking up most of



Revd Mark Inglis

the duties that you would expect from a member of the clergy – firstly the Sunday rota, PCCs and governance. I expect to take a lead in the pastoral offices of weddings, funerals and baptisms and to be involved heavily in mission and outreach to the local as well as financial planning and other decision making.

Where do you think your focus will lie?

The focus of the work will emerge fully over the next few months but I see three main themes: the worship and governance of the three churches as we all seek to follow Jesus in our own callings; making sure that all the pastoral offices continue to be offered to local people; and engaging with mission and outreach across our communities.

(cont on p7)



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Introducing Revd Mark Inglis

(cont from p5)

All of this has to be done in collaboration with existing clergy, lay workers and church members. I would hope to listen closely to the needs of the churches, the needs of the communities and to God to discern the best path ahead. There is something about developing new forms of ministry amongst family and children that will need some particular attention.

Most of all, and key to all, is keeping a sharp focus on my own walk with God and encouraging others to do the same.

How do you spend any spare time?

I enjoy walking the local hills and forests. I enjoy going to concerts, music, comedy and theatre and try to go regularly. I enjoy spending time with family and friends. And I really enjoy time away on holiday.

What has been your most memorable holiday experience?

Probably going to New Zealand and Australia in 2016, especially spending several days near Uluru, in the red desert. We took a day safari into the desert and our local tour guide introduced us to the history, culture and cuisine - bush tucker like witchetty grubs, honey ants and bush cucumber.

What might we be surprised to know about you?

I once spent an evening in a pub with several people, not knowing then that three of them would be in the Cabinet, two would be Chancellors of the Exchequer and one would be Prime Minister. I think I bought them all a round.

PCC NEWS



Summary of PCC meeting 5 August

8 members of the PCC attended

- ♦ **Membership:** accepted resignation of two members for personal reasons
- ♦ **Resolutions:** to support in principle secondment of interim priest during on-going vacancy; to form new Health and Safety working group; to authorise limited use of silk flowers in church arrangements; to proceed with interim faculties for summer use of churchyard for Icon coffee shop seating and beer garden; to reinstate use of aumbry in St John's chapel for reserved sacrament
- ♦ **Policies:** reviewed and adopted
- ♦ **Discussions:** proposal to replace projector, screen and video cameras; Martyn's Law and incident management plan
- ♦ **Committee Reports:** received from People, Finance, Fabric, Liturgy, Pastoral, Arts@StLaurence committees, LTC-PCC Town Wall Joint Working Group, Safeguarding and Electoral Roll officers
- ♦ **Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 29 September

A copy of the two latest confirmed PCC minutes is available on the noticeboard above the pigeonholes at the back of the church. All confirmed minutes can be viewed in the parish office.

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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



The Marches Choir and Marches Sinfonia

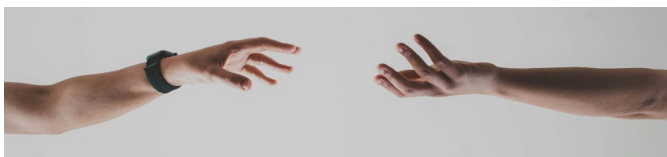
Are joining forces for a spectacular autumn concert, taking place at St John's Church in Bishop's Castle on Saturday, November 28th at 7:30 pm. The programme will be Haydn's majestic **Harmoniemesse**, Haydn's dramatic and fiery motet, **Insanae et vanae curae** and Mozart's enchanting **Concerto for Flute and Harp**.

Tickets are priced at £15 (free entry for children and students) and are available from Ticket Source

(www.ticketsource.com/the-marches-choir) or by phone on 07806 433394, and on the door

WHAT IS YOUR CALLING?

I wonder what you have felt called to do during your life? Maybe you felt called to be a nurse, or police officer, maybe a teacher, or a carer. Maybe you felt called to be a parent or a foster parent. Maybe you felt called to live in, or return to live in, Ludlow! There can be many things that we feel an overwhelming urge to become, during our lives.



It's the same in our Christian lives. Jesus called his first disciples with the simple words, 'Follow me, and I will send you out to fish for people.' That same invitation still stands today; Jesus is calling us, all of us. Jesus calls us to use our lives and gifts in his service. This calling is not just individual - we are called together as the Church, one body with many parts, each with a part to play in God's story.

So, what is your Christian calling at the moment? What is God calling you to do? Is he calling you to pray for a particular situation? Maybe he is calling you to talk to your neighbours, who might benefit from a listening ear. Is he calling you to volunteer for the church in some way, great or small?

Some will be called to lay ministry, as a Lay Worship Leader, Lay Missioner or Lay Pastoral Visitor and some to ordained ministry. You may feel that you are an unlikely person to receive such a call, but we are all called; we just need to make sure that we are listening. God made each of us, with our own unique set of gifts and he has plans for each of us. Through our lives, as we continue to listen to God's call on us, the aim is for each of us to become more fully the person God created us to be. Amen

Caroline Culley



NEWS FROM ST JOHN'S



Tea & Toast - a group of people meeting at St John's for a weekly cup of tea/coffee, a selection of toast, crumpets, tea cakes, and most importantly lots of chatting.

Everyone is welcome

Wednesday mornings at 10am

....all free!

All is safely gathered in



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YOU HAVE NOT BECAUSE YOU ASK NOT!

Might it be that we often do not receive because we do not ask? Numerous times in Scripture we are exhorted to ask like a child might ask of their father and also to receive. There are conditions for prayer being answered in Scripture, like not nurturing sin, forgiving others, having a thankful spirit etc., but do we always ask?!

Interestingly, the words 'we do not receive because we do not ask' were written by James (4:2) to Christian communities, not first of all to individuals. Lobbyists know that when a group of people ask for something it has more impact than when a solitary person campaigns for something. Jesus actually spoke of there being extra power in prayer when two or three agreed on something (Matthew 18:19-20), showing the value of corporate prayer.

There used to be a pattern of the local vicar going to his church to say morning and evening prayer at certain times and any people who were free joining him. This is still at least partially observed in many places, in our benefice by prayers at 10.30am on Mondays and Fridays at St Laurence's and 9.30am on Wednesdays at St John's.

With the busyness of life and to engage as many people as possible, prayer meetings are also very common. In my first curacy, our fortnightly prayer meeting was attended by usually over 120 people, including youth - could this be one reason, humanly speaking, why, with a church building that seated 350, we had to go to two main morning services? Overseas, I have attended early morning prayer meetings attended by several hundred – could that also be a reason for their great growth?!

In the Book of Acts, we see corporate prayer meetings leading to the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, the healing of a paralysed man and other miracles, the word being spread with boldness, Peter miraculously escaping from prison, missionaries being sent off and formerly resistant people coming to faith.

Our Bishop said, 'Intercessory prayer is the foundation of a church totally dependent on Jesus Christ'. We already have prayer meetings advertised on our notice sheet, not very well attended in my experience. Might it not be a God-appointed challenge for us at this time to put corporate prayer at the centre of our church life and see if God does not do wonderful things amongst us!?

LUDLOW BENEFICE PRAYER MEETING

When: 11am on the second Saturday of each month

Where: St Giles church, Ludford

Next meeting: Saturday 17 October



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
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ALL HALLOWS' EVE - THE HOLY EVENING

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times. In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers.

Then the Romans arrived and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November, All Saints' Day, was dedicated to all Christian martyrs and saints who had died. It was known as 'All Hallows' Day'.

The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', the Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad luck, and everybody believed that witches rode about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night.

Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death

FROM THE REGISTERS

At St Laurence's

Funerals & memorial services

24 September	Marie Glaze
28 September	Rob Angell

Baptisms

30 August	Freddy Ronald Francis
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THIRD SUNDAY SERVICES IN SEPTEMBER

First Sunday

CHORAL EVENSONG



3.30pm

In St Laurence's chancel

4 October



OPEN TEA AT ST LAURENCE

3pm-4pm

First Monday in the month

7 October

Third Sunday

CHORAL MATINS



11.30am

In St Laurence's chancel

18 October

Fourth Sunday

Celtic Prayer

An Evening Liturgy

St Laurence's Church, Ludlow



**A simple service in a style used
by the Iona Community**

6.00pm

25 October

PRAYER FOR THE MONTH



Disturb us, Lord

Disturb us, Lord,
When we are too well pleased with ourselves,
When our dreams have come true
Because we have dreamed too little,
When we arrived safely
Because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord,
When with the abundance of things we possess
We have lost our thirst
For the waters of life;
Having fallen in love with life,
We have ceased to dream of eternity
And in our efforts to build a new earth,
We have allowed our vision
Of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly,
To venture on wider seas
Where storms will show your mastery;
Where losing sight of land,
We shall find the stars.

We ask You to push back
The horizons of our hopes;
And to push into the future
In strength, courage, hope, and love.

Attributed to Sir Francis Drake, 16th Century



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

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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@gmail.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)

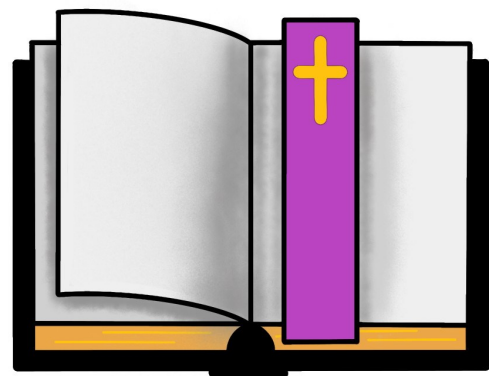
Morning prayer

9.15am Monday-Friday

9.45am Saturday

Contact

st.peters.ludlow@talktalk.net



STOPPING AWHILE

Life as a lay pastoral worker is busy and varied, with no two days the same – this week, I've taken part in the community lunch at the Rockspring, liaised with a landlord on behalf of their tenant, and supported a nervous member of the community with a hospital appointment as well as spending some time at the Foodbank and Hands Together. Some of the items donated to Stephen House have been put to good use too, helping a vulnerable person with their new accommodation.

Our lives are often filled with lots of plates spinning - appointments to keep, emails to write, conversations to have ... it can sometimes be difficult to find space for ourselves in the busyness. I've been lucky enough recently to attend a meeting of The Forge, our weekly men's bible fellowship group. It was a fulfilling and affirming experience – I was welcomed warmly to a simple meal, conversation (and laughs!) with friends, followed by a discussion on a bible

passage and ending in prayer. In what was a full week, it led me to appreciate anew the benefits of stopping awhile to recharge and reconnect with God, and how His presence and Love strengthens and prepares us for whatever we encounter in our lives. Please feel free to contact me if you'd like more details of any of our fellowship groups.

In a similar vein, it was lovely to see the engagement with our prayer stations in St Laurence's during our September Week of Prayer, with visitors stopping awhile and taking time to start a conversation with God.

Thank you as ever for your support and prayers for me and for the work of Stephen House.

God Bless



Paul
07785 254568

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES

BABY LOSS AWARENESS WEEK 9 -15 OCTOBER

St Laurence's will again offer an opportunity for those affected by pregnancy or baby loss to remember those they lost by tying a ribbon on the railings on the north side of the church (backing onto the Garden of Rest green space). Ribbons will be available throughout the week outside the north door and anyone who wishes to add a ribbon is welcome to do so at any time.



At 7pm on Thursday 15 October everyone is invited to light a candle, at home or wherever they happen to be, to join the Global Wave of Light.

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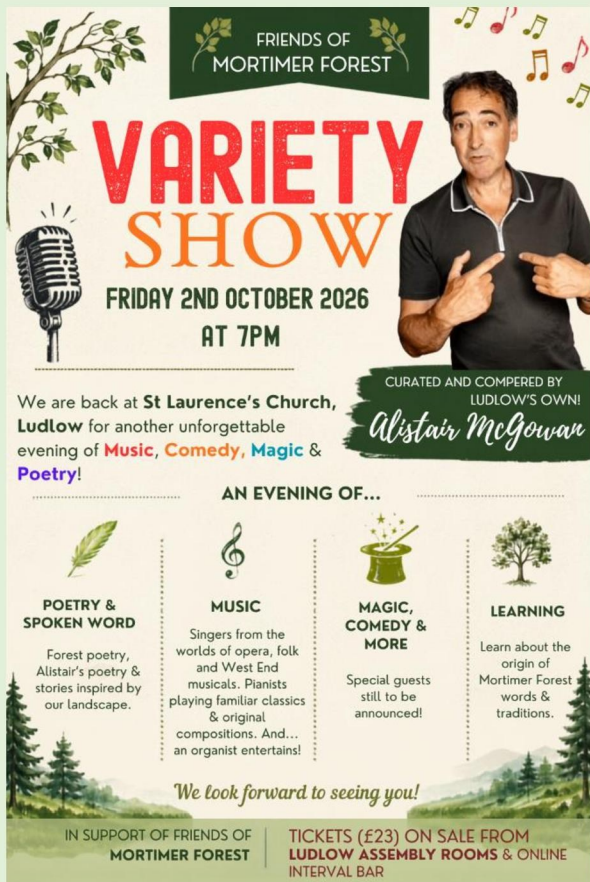
Eighth page - £75

Classified - £40

Contact 01584 872073 or office@stlaurences.org.uk

Arts@St Laurence – October 2026

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



FRIENDS OF MORTIMER FOREST

VARIETY SHOW

FRIDAY 2ND OCTOBER 2026
AT 7PM

CURATED AND COMPERED BY LUDLOW'S OWN!
Alistair McGowan

We are back at St Laurence's Church, Ludlow for another unforgettable evening of **Music, Comedy, Magic & Poetry!**

AN EVENING OF...

 POETRY & SPOKEN WORD Forest poetry, Alistair's poetry & stories inspired by our landscape.	 MUSIC Singers from the worlds of opera, folk and West End musicals. Pianists playing familiar classics & original compositions. And... an organist entertains!	 MAGIC, COMEDY & MORE Special guests still to be announced!	 LEARNING Learn about the origin of Mortimer Forest words & traditions.
---	---	---	---

We look forward to seeing you!

IN SUPPORT OF FRIENDS OF MORTIMER FOREST

TICKETS (£23) ON SALE FROM LUDLOW ASSEMBLY ROOMS & ONLINE INTERVAL BAR



Arts@St Laurence

Organ Recital

Saturday
3 October
1 pm

Gareth Price

Free Entry: Donations Welcome

THE SPACE AT ST LAURENCE, LUDLOW



Arts @ St Laurence 2026

Free Entry
Donations Welcome

Summerleaze
Wind Ensemble

Saturday
17 October
At 1pm

THE SPACE @ ST LAURENCE LUDLOW

Dates for your diary:

Ludlow Piano Festival Pop Up is on 13th & 14th November with live piano music in St Laurence throughout the day on Friday and Saturday plus evening concerts in two venues.

WHAT'S ON AT ST LAURENCE'S



IN OCTOBER

Friday 2 7.00pm

Mortimer Forest Variety Show

Saturday 3 1.00pm

Organ recital - Gareth Price

Sunday 4 3.30pm

Choral Evensong

Monday 5 3.00pm

Open Tea

Friday 9 - 15

Baby Loss Awareness Week

Saturday 10

Diocesan services

Celebration of Lay Ministry 11.00am

Confirmation 2.30pm

Saturday 17

Benefice prayer meeting 11.00am
at St Giles'

Recital - Summerleaze wind quartet

Sunday 18 11.30am

Choral Matins

Sunday 25

Celtic Prayer 6.00pm

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

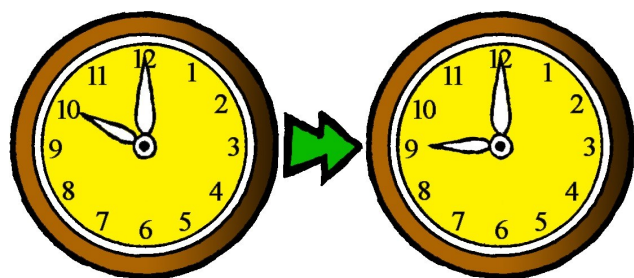
Prayer Hour 4.00pm

FELLOWSHIP

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

Paul Kemp (Lay Pastoral Worker)

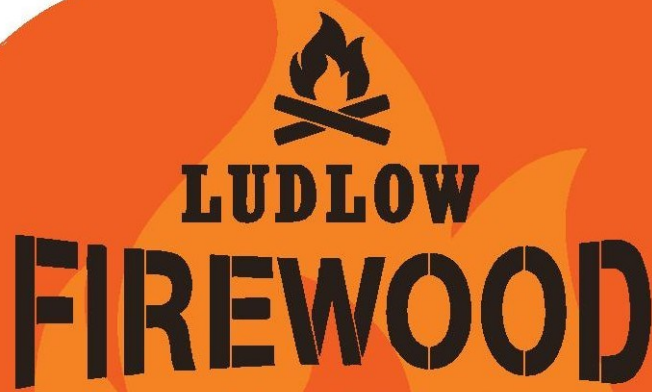
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Don't forget the end of British Summer Time
Clocks go back at 2am on
Sunday 25 October



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



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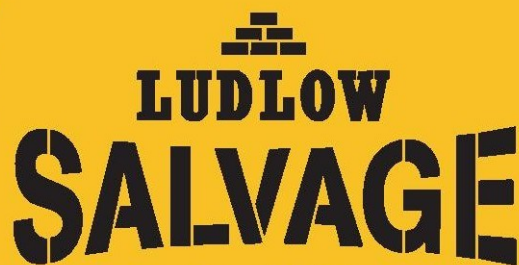
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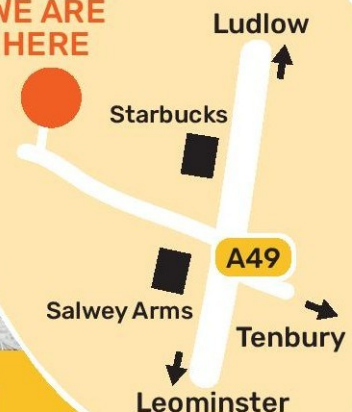
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ANGELS AND DRAGONS

Do you believe someone is taking care of and protecting you? Do you believe in guardian angels? I do. I believe we each have one angel whose mission is to serve, guide and keep us safe. He is invisible but can manifest himself as a benevolent presence, an angel by your side.

And then there are the seven archangels who act as intermediaries between God and human beings. Archangel Michael, the Great Protector and their Prince is depicted with a golden sword and a glimmer of blue light. Of the others: Rafael restores inner peace and brings harmony and healing; Gabriel brings us messages of clarity and meaning; Ariel, protects our planet and all animals; Jophiel clears chaos and brings calm, beauty and love in our lives; Azrael helps the dying and the grieving; and finally, Chamuel brings peace to the world and heals division and separation within communities. Please Chamuel, the world needs your help right now!

You can invoke and pray to any of these angels, asking for protection and they will help you. I like to feature them with their beautiful wings and imagine being safe inside them like a divine blanket!

There is an interesting story linked to local churches dedicated to St Michael. According to local legend Radnor Forest, just across the Welsh border, is home to the last dragon in Wales who sleeps undisturbed in the forest. A ring of churches built around the forest, each dedicated to St Michael, the angel who defeated the dragon, are said to contain the sleeping dragon.

In Welsh Llanfihangel means the church of St Michael, and the churches at Rhydithon, Nant Melan, Cefnlllys and Cascob form the ring. Local folklore suggests that should any of the four churches be destroyed, the dragon would be woken! Cascob is the 'Abracadabra' church. There, the word is used as exorcism to purge a woman called Elizabeth Loyd of evil spirits - a combination of religion and magic. There is a fifth ancient St Michael church at Discoed, for added protection. Local author, Phil Rickman has written a series of books featuring a deliverance minister, Merrily Watkins, on the English/Welsh border. He covers this local legend in his book 'A Crown of Lights'. Read the book, get spooked, visit any of the churches in the ring and say a prayer to St Michael, he will always listen.

Ros Sargent



Cascob church

*Archangel Michael image by openclipart-vectors
from Pixabay*



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TAKE A PEW PART 2 - THE FALL OF THE BOX PEW

By the 1830s, the influx of people into the cities meant that there was often a shortage of churches in urban areas but a decline in numbers of churchgoers elsewhere. Box pews, often taking up an excessive amount of space, came under scrutiny. Many churches now aimed to make the altar the focal point of the church, often by removing galleries, moving the pulpit to the side and getting rid of any other furniture which blocked the view. George Gilbert Scott was one of many architects who enthusiastically accepted commissions to make major changes to church structures. The box pews, along with the galleries, became a casualty of his changes in St Laurence's.

Box pews became a hot topic elsewhere. In 1844 John Coke Fowler Esq, a barrister at law of the Inner Temple, wrote. 'Even if pews had been a peculiar feature of English parish churches ever since the foundation of them, this would be but a slender argument in their favour, if it can be shown that they are in fact injurious now to the business and interests of the Church'. The writer anticipated considerable opposition to the proposal at first. 'The proposed destruction of barriers and distinctions between rich and poor will be regarded by many as a revolutionary movement and denounced as contrary to the ancient custom of the Protestant church.' He argues that on the death of the pew-owning individuals their seats should 'not again be appropriated but are intended to remain free like the rest of the church'.



Box pews at St John's, Stokesay

Though many examples of box pews remain, with fine examples at nearby Stokesay, they disappeared from St Laurence's in 1859, replaced with the bench pews that many of us remember.

The most recent change in church seating is, of course, the replacement of those bench pews in favour of chairs, a process completed in St Laurence's in January 2019. Those who argue for these changes highlight the decline in church numbers. The modern church needs to diversify, providing a venue for secular activities to gain extra income. They will also point to the fact that during the Covid pandemic of 2020/2021, the flexibility provided by chairs meant that worshippers could be placed at safer distances, a major factor in allowing an early return to normality. Nevertheless many still mourn the passing of the pew.

Grace Wilkins

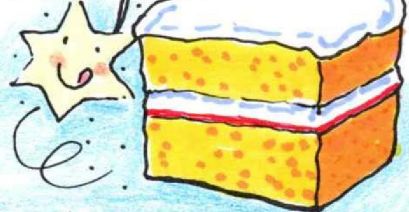
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followed by



TEA & CAKE!

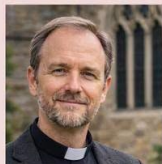
at St. John's Church, Gravel Hill

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd

2-30pm

WELCOME TO ST FAITHFUL'S

St Faithful's Havnot is a fictional parish, imagined by a real-life Church of England priest. It reflects familiar church cultures, observed with affection and humour, in the belief that theology still has something to say.



Books by Canon Tom Kennar (including 'The Parish Life' - about St Faithful's) are available in print and e-book.

Merchandise lurks online. See <https://tomkennar.blogspot.com/.../st-faithfuls-authors...> for more details.



Vicar's Standard Apology Form

(Please tick the one you need me to apologise about and then stick it to your fridge)

I'm SO sorry that...

- ☐ You didn't know the hymn
- ☐ The church was too cold for your t-shirt
- ☐ The toilet wasn't redolent with the odour of a soft-rained meadow
- ☐ You didn't know that event was on (it's been in the bulletin for weeks)
- ☐ I mis-pronounced your favourite Greek*, Hebrew*, Medieval* word
- ☐ My sermon was longer than your attention span*/ bladder control*
- ☐ My sermon was too short for your academic interest*/ morning nap*
- ☐ The time of our service doesn't suit your domestic arrangements
- ☐ That the unusual length of the service meant your parking ran out
- ☐ That you don't like our choice of coffee*/tea*/wine*/squash*/biscuits*
- ☐ That a homeless man* / screaming child* / teenager* / toddler* / person living with memory loss* spoiled your 'holy time with the Lord'
- ☐ That you don't like vicars in robes
- ☐ That you don't like vicars in jeans
- ☐ That you don't like guitars
- ☐ That you don't like organs
- ☐ I don't talk enough about congregation giving
- ☐ I talk too much about congregational giving
- ☐ That your story about your 1985 cruise didn't make it into the newsletter
- ☐ That my psychic powers don't stretch to divining that you would appreciate a pastoral visit

Tim

Rev. Dr Tim Keen, Vicar

Source: www.facebook.com/stfaithfulshavnot

**delete as appropriate*



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WHAT'S GOING IN YOUR GRAB BAG?

We all treasure and value our homes and their contents, so what would we save in the event of an emergency. Perhaps we should all make up a grab bag. What would you put in yours, apart from valued photos and the passports?



But then we won't ever need one ... will we? The sudden catastrophic loss of homes reduced to

rubble is very rare in the UK these days, although our parents and grandparents will have had vivid memories of such devastation from World War II. This summer saw devastating fires across Europe and in England one of the worst was alarmingly close to Ludlow. In Stourbridge during the August heatwave 19 homes across five streets were completely destroyed and a further 13 damaged. How did we respond to this? Perhaps by thinking about what to put in that grab bag? Checking our home insurance? Praying for those affected and giving thanks that it wasn't us? Expressing concern and moving on, knowing that the local authority is there to provide support?

Meanwhile in parts of the Middle East 'the ominous buzz of drones has become part of everyday life for many families. Airstrikes have hit camps built by generations of displaced families to give themselves somewhere to call home. The mental and physical challenges of surviving day to day have become even harder'.

Manal, a mother of two recalls how her family came to be living their precarious lives in Beirut. In great distress she says, 'As the war escalated in south Lebanon there was a lot of bombing with many dead people in the streets. We left without anything, not even food'. Her family home was completely destroyed – 'there was nothing for us to go back to'. They were thankful that they were visiting relatives and so escaped the attack.

But what next? When Manal speaks about the drop-in centre run by Mouvement Social, one of the oldest and most active NGOs and one of Christian Aid's local partners, her face lights up. 'When I entered the centre they welcomed me with the warmest welcome. The benefits of the services offered are making a huge impact on my family with the support they have offered us'. These include everything from meals and facilities, to clothing, schooling as well as managing the extreme stress of their situation. Now, Manal is one of the many volunteers. 'Our situation remains hard but when I arrive at the centre, I feel I'm coming home.'

I cannot imagine how I would respond to such a situation - but we can play a very small part in supporting those who have to. Please remember the work of Christian Aid and its partner agencies and the work that goes on to support millions in their situations, sharing God's love and embracing our global brothers and sisters.

Claire





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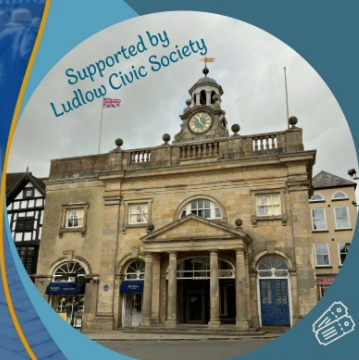
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COLD COMFORT FARM

BY STELLA GIBBONS

This time for light relief and a book that has stood the test of time – and indeed should be read again and again – and I guarantee will still make you laugh, namely *Cold Comfort Farm*.

First published in 1933, *Cold Comfort Farm* is not only a portrait of British rural life in the 1930s, it is famously a fabulous send-up of the many novels about country life popular at the time, from Jane Austen's *Emma* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, to Thomas Hardy and even D H Lawrence. The book also won the author the 1933 Femina Vie Heureuse Prize, a British spin-off of a French feminist writing prize – judged only by women.

Cold Comfort Farm tells the story of a well-educated London-raised 20-year-old, Flora Poste, who finds herself orphaned when both her parents died in quick succession from the Spanish flu, leaving her relatively penniless – certainly unable to buy stockings. Rather than get a job she seeks refuge with dysfunctional cousins on a chaotic farm in Sussex – the Starkadders. The Starkadder family is headed up by Aunt Ada Doom – Flora's mother's sister – who rules the family with a rod of iron while rarely leaving her bedroom. In turn the family feels obliged to take Flora in because of an unspecified 'wrong' done to her father – supposedly by Ada's son in law Amos Stakadder, preacher of the Church of the Quivering Brethren ... The scene is set.

Flora sets about her project of 'sorting' out the farm and the various members of the family – brothers, sisters, parents, cousins and half cousins and their endless hangers on and it's complicated. It is also important not to forget Graceless, Pointless, Feckless and Aimless the cows and Big Business the family bull, and their 90-year-old minder. The book echoes throughout with Aunt Ada insisting she saw 'something nasty in the woodshed' as a child and won't shut up about it. Did you know this is where that phrase originated? All comes good though and Flora resolves the Curse of *Cold Comfort Farm*, but if you don't remember what it was, or you have never read the book, it's time to get it and read on ...

Jemima Lord



The 2026 sale of Christmas cards from The Shop at St Laurence will be supporting the following charities

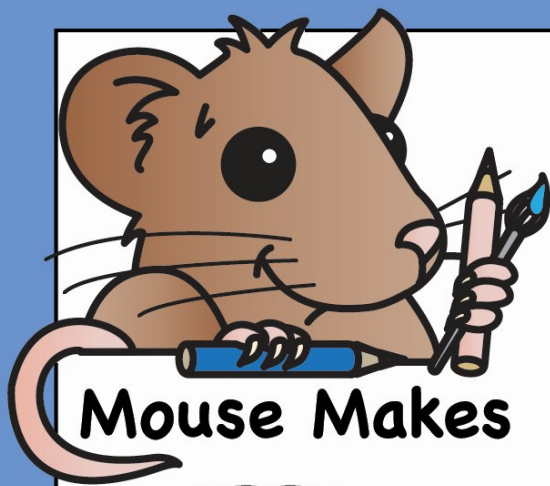


AN EARLY CHRISTMAS IS ON THE CARDS

Even though I am writing this in the last week of the summer holidays, my mind is firmly on the winter months. Behold, a pallet of boxes - just a small portion of our Christmas cards for this year! So please take this photo as a placeholder, with normal service to resume next month, and as a reminder that we stock a LOT of Christmas cards! Some are sold in aid of specific charities, but of course everything sold from The Shop at St Laurence goes to help the church.

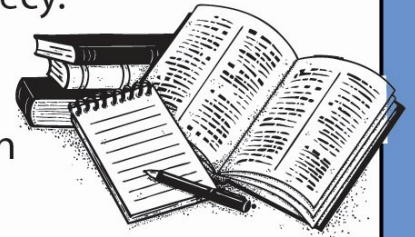


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2. Which book of the Bible has the shortest title?

1. How many books are there in the New Testament?

3. The Word of God is sharper than a two edged

Hebrews 4:12



B I B L E S U N D A Y

4. He was an Old Testament prophet that has a book named after him.

5. The first book of the Bible.

6. God's word is like?

A _____ and a _____
Psalm 119:105



8. The last book in the Bible.

9. The Old Testament book of poetry and songs.

11. The last book in the Old Testament.

10. Who wrote the third book of the New Testament?

7. What are the first four books of the New Testament known as?

12. Which book tells the story of the spread of Christianity?

13. The Bible is also known as the

14. A book of the Bible named after a woman



of God.
Hebrews 4:12



ON HOW LONG A SERMON SHOULD LAST

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,

I am afraid we will never agree about the appropriate length of sermons. Your 50-minute exposition on the theology of St Paul concerning women wearing hats in church is, I am sure, of real interest to you. But as your sermon slowly unfolds, I suspect it will prompt quite a different concern among your congregation. Have they set the oven timer to come on too early?

Whenever I even hint that a matter of theological importance may be about to appear in one of my sermons, an expression of benign incomprehension comes over my congregation. You know the look – you see it on golden Labradors whenever they try and work out what their owners are telling them. There are certain sure signs that should warn you when you have preached for long enough. One is when members of the congregation reach for their prayer books to try to work out for the umpteenth time how the date for Easter is calculated. The organist turning on the blower when you say 'and finally' is another.

Most members of the congregation will count the number of dead flies on the windowsills during your sermon. But when you can see members of the

congregation counting the numbers in the congregation counting the numbers of dead flies, that is proof absolute that it is time to stop.

There has only been one occasion when I preached for longer than my standard eight minutes. Our former organist was in the habit of taking his dog for a walk during the sermon. I knew I had to carry on preaching until I heard the latch on the vestry door for the second time. That meant he was back, and ready to play the last hymn. Unfortunately, one Sunday, his dog ran away.

While he searched for it over every field in the parish, I spent the intervening two hours reading the greater part of Leviticus, discussing the food laws set forth in Deuteronomy, and arguing for a Deutero-Isaiah. I was headed for the Babylonian exile when we all heard the vestry door re-open.

After the service, the congregation left looking as though they had just been rescued from a major shipwreck. And at the next church council meeting, we unanimously voted to buy our organist a stronger lead.

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

Interim Vicar: Mark Inglis 07456 651795

Licensed Lay Minister: Caroline Culley 07557 983940

Lay Pastoral Worker: Paul Kemp 07785 254568

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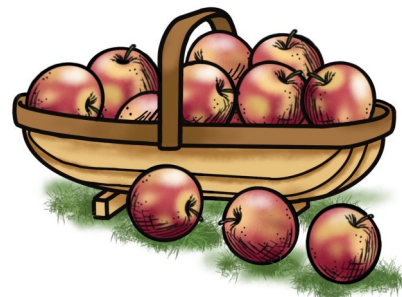


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PCC Secretary	Mike Beazley	873570
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TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER

There is no guarantee that material submitted will be included.

Please send articles by email to
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