

St. George's Montezbury

Magazine 50p



November 2023

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Send e-mail & attachments to stgsmagazine@googlemail.com

Items for inclusion in the **Deanery News** to be submitted by 10th of previous month to

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When the restaurant next to a church put out a big sign with red letters that said, 'Open Sundays', the church reciprocated with its own message:



LIFTING UP OUR EYES

With Pam Bickley

I started to write this piece and then reached a complete stop. So I started again.

I've been thinking about grief because I'm grieving for two close friends who died within days of each other. Over the fifteen years I've been ordained, I've taken many funerals and have also considered it to be the greatest privilege. To walk with people at the most difficult time of their life; to offer comfort and to help them plan their loved ones funeral – you are there amongst all the tears; the pain and the grief. I've taken funerals for young and old; for people I've never met; for family members and for friends. For each funeral, the priest is there to hold it all together – to ensure that it goes as the family wish and their loved ones final day is one that they can remember with love.

I would not be honest if I said that I'm not moved by a funeral because I'm human and I grieve too.

How we deal with grief will be different for each one of us and I would certainly never put a time on how long grief lasts. Even years after the death of a loved one, a memory can trigger grief – perhaps not with that initial intensity but enough to make us think.

Perhaps you are also aware of the Kubler- Ross stages of grief – some say seven but the original book that she produced in the late sixties talks about five - denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Although there is a natural progression, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross also said that people can skip stages or work through them in a cyclical way.

We all find comfort in something as we grieve and for me it's in reading. I have two favourite books – *A grief observed* by C.S Lewis – and *The Madness of Grief* by Rev Richard Coles. And of course I have the Bible – the reassurance of the words of particular passages; or the Psalms for lamentation; and the Gospels for knowing that the love of

Jesus will provide the comfort and strength that I need when grieving. I was trying to pick just one reading and in the end it's this from Revelation:-

He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; [4] he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.

Know that the Lord our God is with you always,

With blessings Pam x



Thoughts from *Canon Paul Hardingham* in this season of Remembrance, we consider those who have heroically given their lives in war. However, Jesus calls all of us to a radical heroism in our daily lives: *'You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.'* (Matt 5:43-45).

Love Your Enemies:

Our *'enemies'* are rarely life-threatening; they can simply be impatient, judgmental, self-righteous or just plain disagreeable! Whether the conflict is with a family or church member, work colleague or neighbour, our attitude toward them should be one of love. We will naturally want to retaliate, but Jesus commands us to love!

Pray for Your Persecutors:

It's only when we are ready to pray for someone whom we find difficult, that God can soften our attitude towards them. Like us, they are those in need of God's forgiveness and grace. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor executed by the Nazis at the end of World War 2, wrote: *'This is the supreme demand. Through the medium of prayer, we go to our enemy, stand by his side, and plead for him to God. For if we pray for them, we are taking their distress and poverty, their guilt and perdition upon ourselves and pleading to God for them.'*

Become More Like Jesus:

When we start loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors, we become more like Jesus Himself. He willingly laid down His life for us, prayed for His persecutors and gives us the power to love our enemies as He did. At a time when we recognise that we all need heroes; how will we respond to this call to radical heroism in our own life?

The Inquisitive Child – a Remembrance Day poem

Author unknown



**Why are they selling poppies, Mummy? Selling poppies in
town today.**

**The poppies, child, are flowers of love. For the men who
marched away.**

**But why have they chosen a poppy, Mummy? Why not a
beautiful rose?**

**Because my child, men fought and died in the fields where
the poppies grow.**

**But why are the poppies so red, Mummy? Why are the
poppies so red?**

**Red is the colour of blood, my child. The blood that our
soldiers shed.**

**The heart of the poppy is black, Mummy. Why does it have
to be black?**

**Black, my child, is the symbol of grief. For the men who
never came back.**

**But why, Mummy are you crying so? Your tears are giving
you pain.**

**My tears are my fears for you my child. For the world is
forgetting again.**

Readings and Services for this MONTH

Here are the Sunday Service details, and the readings which you may enjoy at home if you are unable to join a church service this month.

Date	Service	Readings
5 th November 4 th Sunday before Advent	Morning Worship 10.30am	(All Saints` Sunday) (Isaiah 56 3-8) Hebrews 12 18-24 Matthew 5 1-12
Tuesday 7 th November	Tea Service 2.30pm	
12 th November 3 rd Sunday before Advent Remembrance Sunday	10.15am Remembrance Service	(Amos 5 18-24) 1 Thessalonians 4 13-end Matthew 25 1-13
19 th November 2 nd Sunday before Advent	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Zephaniah 1 7, 12-end) 1 Thessalonians 5 1-11 Matthew 25 14-30
26 th November Christ the King Sunday next before Advent	Holy Communion 10.30am	(Ezekiel 34. 11-16, 20-24) Ephesians 1 15-end Matthew 25 31-end



**Please note that the service
on Remembrance Sunday will
start at 10.15am.**

Nigel Beeton writes: The Sunday before Advent Sunday, this year the 26th November, is often celebrated as Christ the King, when we acknowledge that Jesus is the King of all people, space, and time, sitting at God's right hand in Heaven, and one day He will finally banish all death and sin:

Christ the King By Nigel Beeton

Christ is the King of all Creation
He is the King of all the earth;
Christ is the King of every nation
Lord of life, and death, and birth
On God's right hand our King is seated
Receiving praises for His worth!

He came from God to dwell with sinners
Sinners, including you and I
We know, with Him, we'll be the winners
Of life with Christ the King on High!
With all the angels we will praise Him
Who died and rose in victory!

Christ the King will come in glory
With trumpet blast – the glorious one!
All people then will know His story
All people bow before the Son!
No more death and no more sorrow
His Kingdom here on earth shall come!

Crown Him our King – His vict'ry praising
God of all gods, and King of kings
Sing of His grace and love amazing
He is the King above all things!
Through all Heav'n and earth all voices
Our song of triumph ever rings!

Our Local and Church COMMUNITY

Advent Course



Over 4 weeks, commencing **Thursday November 30th at 1.30pm**, *The Prayer Course* is being offered at The Deanery, Main Road, Pontesbury, SY5 0PS.

In four sessions, we will be exploring The Lord's Prayer, using resources provided by 24-7 Prayer, and featuring Pete Greig videos. We will be looking at different types of prayer: adoration, meditation, petition and listening as well as why some prayers seem to be unanswered.

A warm welcome and refreshments will be provided.

For further information, please contact Greg on 07902 794653 or rectorpontstip@gmail.com

DATES for your diary—watch out further details coming soon:

Saturday 2nd December *Wreath making* two sessions, afternoon & evening.

Friday 15th December *Shrewsbury Brass Band* Christmas Concert 7pm

Come and Sing for Christmas

The benefice choir will be rehearsing at St George's on :

Friday 1st December at 1.30pm

Friday 8th December at 6.30pm

Friday 15th December at 1.30pm

All are welcome to join us to sing at the Carol Service which will be on Sunday 17th December in St George's.

Contact Barbara on 01713 683485 if you are interested.





Trustee Vacancies

You may have heard of the charity The Pontesbury Project. Dr Ian Bradley and his wife Beryl had a vision to provide homes and support to adults with learning difficulties, who might challenge behaviourally. This vision was developed in conjunction with the Pontesbury churches. We now support 17 people in homes, owned by the Project, that are scattered through Pontesbury and Minsterley. It is wonderful to see the way good care in adapted, warm homes can enable these men and women to live fulfilled lives in the community.

Currently we have vacancies for Trustees and would like you to consider whether you have the time and interest to join those of us already over-seeing this charity. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who feels drawn to this role, as your interest will be the most important gift. If, however, you have any knowledge or interest in property, finance or care, that would be a bonus. It is an interesting and exciting time to join us, as we look to the future of this specialised care in the heart of our community.

The Pontesbury Project has a website which you can access via any search engine. If you would like to find out more, please contact me on: jane.cooke@pontesburyproject.com or philip.bailey@pontesburyproject.com

Jane Cooke
Chair of Pontesbury Project - Special Needs
Philip Bailey
Chair of Pontesbury Project Housing

Some Bits & pieces from Greg for this month:

Men's Group A reminder that the Men's Group jointly hosted by Community Good Neighbours and St George's Church operates on the fourth Thursday of the month from 11-1 p.m. at the Pavilion.

Pontesbury Youth Café After many months of discussion, the launch of Pontesbury Youth Café takes place on Weds Nov 8th at 3.20 p.m. at Pontesbury Baptist Church, a unique partnership between the Baptists, Congregationalists and Anglicans. The café will meet every Wednesday during term-time to provide for Years 7-9 at Mary Webb School. Anyone interested in volunteering should speak to Greg or Stuart Carter.

Repair Café The next café is on Saturday 11th November, 10 - 12noon. Do arrive early so that the volunteers have a chance to repair items before the café closes.

OASIS *FREE lunch & companionship for anyone living in Pontesbury, Minsterley and surrounding villages, who has been recently bereaved...
...on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays every month, 12pm - 1.30pm
Minsterley Methodist Chapel, Horsebridge Rd, Minsterley.
Transport is Available—Friends & Family are Welcome too.*

Contact Heather Ryder for more information, at
ryder928@btinternet.com or 01743 790359

St. George's PARISH VISITORS Would you, or someone you know, appreciate some help or a phone call? Maybe you're feeling lonely, isolated, in need of support and friendship?
*St. George's Church has a team of friendly people who would love to **phone** or **visit** you - **if we can help, we will !***
Call in confidence: Phone **Marion Elliott 01743 792256**

St. George's Prayer Chain is a small group of people who believe that prayer can make a difference. Each person within the group offers daily prayer for anyone who asks for prayer.

If you yourself or someone you know needs special prayer for any reason, please contact

Rev. Shirley Small 01743 791885.

All information given is given in confidence.
A name is enough if that is all you wish to give.

Coming this month:

Saturday 4th November ***Bingo, Bangers & Mash*** at St George's 7pm.
Tickets £5, bingo cards £1 each



Coming next month:

Weekend: 8th, 9th, 10th December

Festival of Trees and Cribs: This year's theme is **'LOVE'**

Please contact Marianne McCall for further details
07944333830 or mariannemccall.17@gmail.com

The Two Minutes Silence *some thoughts from David Pickup, a solicitor.*

Remember, Lord, Your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to Your love remember me, for You, Lord, are good. (Psalm 25:5-7)

I love the Psalms, as they cover every emotion and religious experience, from despair to praise and from fear to rejoicing. Some say they are difficult, but life is difficult, and so the book of Psalms is great for dipping into and finding the right one for you. This one is about remembering – remembering the past failures in our lives, and dealing with them.

What do you think about during the Two Minutes' Silence on Remembrance Sunday? Perhaps you do not think about anything. I find it helpful to make an effort to think about the war dead. I used to do some research into local men who were casualties. I had some photos taken from newspapers or sent home. These memories added some personalities and characteristics to the names on memorials.

I also think of members of my own family, who lived through the wars, and the experiences they had. Most did not go off to serve away from home, but lived through the blackouts, blitz, and evacuation and rationing. My grandfather left a photo of some comrades and had written on the back a request to 'keep this safe'. And so we have, for over one hundred years! I also remember, with thanks, the comparatively peaceful lives we have had.

There are some things we do not want to remember, usually bad things we have done or had done to us. When we turn our memories over to God, we are asking God to be merciful and loving, for although we make mistakes we can appeal to His enduring love.

The Story Behind the Hymn: O God our Help in Ages Past

1 O God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,
our Shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal Home.
2 Under the shadow of Thy throne, Thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defence is sure.
3 Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,
from everlasting Thou art God, to endless years the same.
4 A thousand ages in Thy sight are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.
5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream bears all its sons away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the op'ning day.
6 O God, our Help in ages past, our Hope for years to come,
be Thou our Guard while life shall last, and our eternal Home!

Source: Psalms & Hymns to the Living God

O God our Help in Ages Past is considered one of the grandest hymns in the English hymnody. It is sung at the annual Remembrance Sunday Service at the Cenotaph in London, and it was also sung at the funeral of former prime minister Winston Churchill in St Paul's Cathedral.

The hymn was written by Isaac Watts in 1719, as a paraphrase of Psalm 90. It is a psalm of Moses, and carries a strong message of hope and faith in God's loving care.

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton in 1674, the eldest of nine children. His father, an educated deacon in a dissenting Congregational church, was in prison for his non-conformist beliefs at the time of Isaac's birth.

Watts had an outstanding aptitude for language. By the time he was 13 he had learned Latin, Greek, French, and Hebrew. He had also begun to write in verse, even speaking in rhyme in ordinary conversation – much to the irritation of some of his family!

By the time Isaac was 18, he had a particular bugbear – the deplorable state of congregational singing. It was mostly metrical psalms, which were heavy going and ponderous. But many non-conformists thought that if congregations sang anything other than the actual words of Scripture, it would be an insult to God.

Isaac was complaining about this one Sunday when his father suddenly challenged him: 'Why don't you give us something better to sing, then?'

Isaac accepted the challenge. The next Sunday he produced his first hymn, and the congregation loved it. Isaac then wrote new hymn texts for his church - every Sun-

day for the next two years. By 1719, Watts had published a hymnal: *The Psalms of David in the Language of the New Testament*. He had paraphrased nearly the entire Psalter.

In all, Watts wrote more than 600 hymns. Other favourites include: *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*, and the famous Christmas carol *Joy to the World*.

At the time, some people felt Watts's hymns were "too worldly" as they were not based solely on the Psalms. Yet Watts argued that the Christian church should sing of Christ. He explained his approach this way:

"Where the Psalmist describes religion by the fear of God, I have often joined faith and love to it. Where he speaks of the pardon of sin through the mercies of God, I rather choose to mention the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God. Where He promises abundance of wealth, honour, and long life, I have changed some of these typical blessings for grace, glory and life eternal, which are brought to light by the gospel, and promised in the New Testament."

Watts died in 1748, having been a much-loved hymn-writer, scholar, pastor and preacher.

Looking at GOD

The Ven John Barton Looks back on the 2023 cricket season

The 2023 cricket season ended on a jarring note. A widespread review of the game in England found it suffered from racism, sexism, elitism and class-based discrimination.

Older cricket fans will wince. They recall the days when each county side was divided into amateurs and professionals, called Gentlemen and Players. They had separate changing rooms. Gentlemen came from wealthy families, so didn't need the wages paid to the others. You could distinguish them on cricket scorecards, where Gentlemen's names were printed with their initials in front of their surnames, whereas Players' names were the other way round. The team captain was always an amateur.

For centuries, women have played cricket, using a smaller ball, but it wasn't until 1976 that they were allowed to play at Lords, where schoolboys from Eton and Harrow had played for years. Twenty five years later, Ebony Rainford-Brent became the first black woman to play for her country, and was subject to racist abuse. "As soon as I walked into the world of cricket the comments started", she said.

In the early days, a few Indian cricketers who were members of noble families, played for English counties and even for the national team. But by and large the game in England was played by white people. Class distinction was accepted without question. In church, they were still singing,

*The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate;
God made them, high or lowly
And ordered their estate.*

Although the Bible acknowledges distinctions between rich and poor, employers and workers, kings and their subjects, it gives priority to the poor and powerless, and places grave responsibility on those who are wealthy and wield power. No reference is made to their skin colour. Adam and Eve are presented as non-ethnic and non-national because they represent all people of all ethnicities.

One outstanding cricketer, who lived by these biblical themes, was David Sheppard. He captained England, both before and after he was ordained in the Church of England. He chose to minister only in the most downtrodden areas, wrote *Bias to the Poor* as part of his campaign for social justice and refused to play against South Africa when their team was controlled by apartheid. All sports need players of principle like him.

Clocks

It is told of the great preacher C H Spurgeon that after preaching at length one Sunday he said: "I don't mind people looking at their watches, but I do dislike to see them holding them to their ears, to see if they are still going."



Canon Paul Hardingham considers spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith.



Spiritual Disciplines: Generosity

'It is more blessed to give than to receive' (Acts 20:35).

What does generosity look like for us? The practice of generosity is about more than finance, as we recognise that everything we possess belongs to God (Ps 24:1). We are stewards of all our resources, including time, possessions, gifts, as well as our love and compassion for others. God enables us to be generous, because of all that He has given us:

'You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.' (2 Cor 9:11).

Here are some practical ways of practising generosity:

Give consistently: Planning our financial giving ensures that it isn't an afterthought, but carefully considered (2 Cor 9:7). We can offer time to volunteer in church or in the wider community. We might open our home to others for a meal or coffee.

Give spontaneously: God often brings opportunities across our path where we can respond spontaneously. This might be prompted by a text from a friend in crisis or giving a neighbour a helping hand. Acting spontaneously reminds us that God is working in and through us.

Give sacrificially: Being generous also involves making sacrifices with our time and priorities, as we help others, share our possessions, or use our gifts. How can we simplify our busy lives, in order to free up space to practise more life transforming generosity?

To engage in generosity is an invitation to experience more of God's provision in our lives:

'Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you' (Luke 6:38).

The Revd Dr Jo White continues her series on finding faith in the fabric of our church buildings.

Reflecting Faith—Remembering Our Loved Ones

For the last couple of months, we've been looking at seating in the church building.

Perhaps you've noticed that on the more 'special' items there are dedication plaques to the person who donated the money to buy the item or in whose name the item was purchased.

In some churches, pretty much everywhere you look you will find such labels, whilst in others they are much rarer.

Of course, many people donate financially and give specific items in their own name or in memory of someone else without wishing for this to be publicly noted. But often when folk donate something they do like it made clear.

A couple of centuries ago people would leave money after their death for a mass to be said for their soul. In some rich cases this would be every day for a year or even longer.

The 'very' rich paid for a new altar to be placed in the church building or even in an extension to the building – a chantry. This is where their personal mass would be conducted each day. In these cases, a stipend would also be paid to cover the cost of a separate priest to do this task, rather than the rector or vicar having it as an extra daily task.

A room would often be provided for that priest above the chapel.

This all stems from the belief that we have sinned and will be punished in purgatory or hell but can 'buy' time off through prayers.

Today our theology has moved back to a more biblical understanding, that Christ is the one who bore our sins on the cross, and we can't earn our way to heaven; we can only get there by faith in Him.

But we still love and think about the people whom we loved, even though they are dead. Some Christians believe that, as we prayed for them in life, why should we stop just because they are dead?

As C.S.Lewis wrote;

"I pray because I can't help myself. I pray because I'm helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn't change God. It changes me."

This month

As you remember your loved ones whom you see no more, hold them close in ways that make sense to you, and reflect your faith in God's loving grace and mercy.



*...his constant droning from the pulpit
is really getting on my nerves!*

Looking at the CHURCH Worldwide

Israel-Gaza Conflict – UK faith leaders condemn antisemitism and call for solidarity between British faith communities against the backdrop of war between Israel and Hamas.

The Archbishop of Canterbury was joined recently by Muslim and Jewish leaders at Lambeth Palace to condemn the sharp rise in antisemitic incidents over recent days, and to call for unity between British faith communities against the backdrop of war between Israel and Hamas.

Archbishop Justin Welby, Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra (a scholar and imam from Leicester, and a former Assistant Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain) and Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg (the Senior Rabbi of Masorti Judaism UK, and Rabbi of the New North London Synagogue) stood together to deliver statements calling for solidarity and unity between communities in the UK, and rejecting any form of hatred or discrimination.

Archbishop Justin Welby emphasised how they were all profoundly concerned by what is happening in Israel and Gaza – ‘here at Lambeth Palace we are praying constantly for all those who are caught up in this war that has already brought so much suffering to so many people’, he said.

He introduced the two religious leaders, welcoming their solidarity. They spoke for their own communities and networks, and out of their particular friendship, as a Muslim, and as a Jew.



Photo: Neil Turner/Lambeth Palace

Sheikh Ibrahim Mogra emphasised how British Muslims and Jews, although deeply pained by what is happening in Palestine and Israel, have found some comfort and hope in friendships that have been built over many years. ‘British Muslims and Jews have much in common and there are many personal ties between us’, he said. ‘We have celebrated happy

times together, and stood together in solidarity during difficult and challenging times. We have, and will sometimes be on opposite sides, but we live together as neighbours in peace and harmony, disagreeing with each other respectfully, without resorting to hate or violence. We share deep concern for the welfare of everyone. We are determined to do our utmost to prevent violence and intimidation across our country, whether on the streets, in places of worship, in schools, in universities, or in any other institutions’.

‘It is deplorable and wrong that our Jewish community here has been the target of hate crimes. It is unacceptable that synagogues and Jewish centres have been targeted. There has been a 500% rise in antisemitism. I condemn these attacks and call on all fellow citizens to stand up and speak out against all and every form of hate’.

And he prayed for an end to this war and all wars. ‘I pray for the innocent caught up in the carnage, I pray for the safety of everyone, wherever they are’.

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg appreciated the solidarity of Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra in standing up and speaking out clearly against all forms of antisemitism at this most deeply painful time.

‘The Jewish community, has long condemned all racism directed against Muslims, from whatever source. As leaders in the British Jewish and Muslim communities we respect the importance of maintaining our relationships in troubled times’ he affirmed.

‘As leaders in the British Jewish and Muslim communities there are many friendships between us, and we have stood together through both peaceful and challenging days’, he said. ‘We sometimes have different loyalties, yet it is essential that we live together across the United Kingdom as neighbours and fellow citizens in peace and with respect’.

‘I share your prayers for an ultimate end to war. My prayers, too, are with all the innocent people caught up in this horror, for all those who are hurt and who grieve, and all who long for the safety and wellbeing of their loved ones’.

‘We are both on the side of life. We share deep concern for the welfare of everyone and pray for a better future for all’.

Archbishop Justin Welby thanked them for the important signs of friendship and solidarity, echoing what had been said about the importance of

maintaining relationships, even in this time of deep crisis. 'We cannot allow the seeds of hatred and prejudice to be sown afresh in our communities, and at this time especially, we cannot allow the cancer of antisemitism to spread in our nation. I pray that we remain united against all forms of discrimination, and for our Jewish neighbours and all our communities to know that they are an essential part of our country' he said. 'And I offer my prayers, as the whole of the Anglican world is doing today, for all the people of the Holy Land'.

This conversation is available for you to watch on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqbsWk49nvM&t=5s>



The vicar got a little carried away with the church's new state-of-the-art PA system



From the Dragon's Den

'Who built the Ark?'

'Noah, Noah!'

'Who built the Ark?'

'Brother Noah built the Ark!'

..... we all sang lustily at a recent Little Dragons meeting, as Mr. & Mrs. Noah and all the animals set forth in our lovely wooden Ark. Little Dragons were all relieved to know that all was well eventually and were happy to join in with more songs and actions following the worrying time that Noah and his family had experienced.

Here's hoping that all life's difficulties that may occur in the lives of these little people, can be solved with a song and a smile.

Joy to everyone ... from Val, Frank, Marion E, Marion W,
Pat, Caroline

and from we three

George, Uncle Sam & Idris



Died in the services

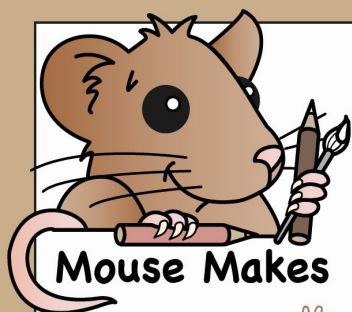
Little Alex was staring up at the large brass plaque that hung on the side wall of the church. The plaque was covered with names, and it seemed to fascinate the seven-year-old. "All those names," he said to the minister. "Who are they?"

"Well, they were people who used to go to this church," explained the minister. "This is a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the services."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque.

Little Alex's voice was barely audible when he asked,

"Which service, the 9 o'clock, or the 11 o'clock?"



"Do not be anxious about anything,
but in every situation, by
_____ and _____

with thanksgiving, present your
_____ to God."

Philippians 4:6-7 NIV

"The _____

is _____

to all who _____

on him in _____"

Psalm 145:18

"For where two or three _____

in my name, there
I am with them."

Matthew 18:20

SAY SORRY

PRAY FOR OTHERS

PRAY FOR YOURSELF

THANK GOD

FOR MY FAMILY

PRAY FOR FRIENDS

PRAY FOR THE NEEDY

PRAY FOR THE SICK

PRAISE GOD

PRAY FOR THE CHURCH



Look up the
Bible verses,
fill in the
blanks then
find them in the
word search

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

Find these
words too:
APPROACH
MEDITATE
HEAR • LISTEN
BLESS • PRAISE
FORGIVE • NAME
CRY OUT • AMEN

" _____
aways, _____
continually, _____
_____ in all circumstances."
1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Therefore, _____
your sins to one another and
_____ for one another,
that you may be healed."
James 5:16

" _____
yourselves
to prayer, being
watchful and
thankful."
Colossians 4:2

Deanery of Pontesbury

DEANERY NEWS

Rural Dean: **The Revd Bill Rowell**

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

A prayer for world peace

O God of the nations,
as we look to that day when you will gather people
from north and south, east and west,
into the unity of your peaceable Kingdom,
guide with your just and gentle wisdom all who take counsel
for the nations of the world,
that all your people may spend their days in security, freedom
and peace,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



The Gathering

An evening of Praising and Worshipping God

"Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" 1 Thessalonians 5.11

Everyone welcome

car park
refreshments from 7pm

28th November
7.30pm start



Marton Village Hall



From Fiona, the Archdeacon of Ludlow

Each year, the Royal British Legion's Remembrance Festival focuses on a different aspect of honouring those who have served the Crown and country in the armed forces. This year the theme is Service, not just of those deployed on active service, but the unseen service of those who love them. We're encouraged to remember the impact that their absence, and their homecoming, can have not just on the service personnel but on their loved ones.

Those are the hidden costs of serving in the armed forces. Those at home, whether they be parents, partners, spouses, or children, carry a load of anxiety for their loved one. There's the weight of managing without them and then of re-shaping lives and routines around them when they return. If they return, of course. If not, there's the burden of grief which will be carried life-long.

If they do return, they're forever changed by what they've experienced in combat or on peacekeeping duties. They may carry physical and mental scars, and not know how to express them except among their comrades, who don't need words because they just get it, because they've seen and heard and smelled the same things. That can have an impact on loved ones too.

I often tell the story in Remembrance services of a man I knew in my home church who had been a prisoner of war in Burma during World War II. He'd seen and experienced unimaginable things but would nev-

er talk to his wife about them. He didn't want to. He didn't want those images to be spoken of in his home back in England. They weren't to invade that precious space, that haven. But that didn't mean he'd forgotten, or that those memories didn't trouble him. He and his wife learned to live with them, and with the fact that some things just remained unspoken.

Perhaps in this year's season of Remembrance, as well as remembering and giving thanks for the sacrifice of those who fought and died in service of our nation and of peace, we can also remember to pray for those still serving now, for those who love them and support them, and for healing of the seen and unseen scars of war.

God of healing and of peace, in whose service is perfect freedom, we hold before you those who serve our nation in His Majesty's Armed Forces, and those who love them.

We pray that during times of separation you would protect their relationships.

We pray that during times of reunion you would ease the transitions and be present in homecomings.

We pray for healing of bodies, minds, and spirits broken by experiences of combat, and for healing of grief for those who will never return.

Hold and guard all who serve on behalf of others, and their loved ones, we pray.

Amen.



**Come in and pray today.
Beat the Christmas
rush!**



Church to host all-Wales climate summit, announces Archbishop of Wales

The health of Wales's waterways and landscape will be the focus of an all-Wales climate summit hosted by the Church in Wales next year.

The two-day event will bring together academics, activists, pressure groups and stakeholders to discuss the impact of industry, agriculture, and homes on the environment.

The summit was announced by the Archbishop of Wales, Andrew John. Wales, he said, had "the opportunity to redesign our approach to energy, water, land use and the sustainability of food supply and at a local level," and the Church in Wales was well placed to bring people together in "good conversation and partnership".

Archbishop Andrew said plans were in progress for "an intelligent and honest conversation about one of the great challenges we face". He said the event would allow key people to "find not only a common language but agree broad principles that allow policy and direction to emerge."

It was the Church's role, he said, to bring people together: "Church must mean much more than prayers and gathering on Sunday... our commitment to justice, to the creation, to the poor might take us into uncomfortable places..... Our ability to bring people together in good conversation and partnership should never be underestimated."

The summit will take place in the second half of 2024. More details will be published nearer the time.

Meanwhile, the Church in Wales has made progress in its response to the climate emergency, said Archbishop Andrew. "It is now two years since we divested from fossil fuels - a major achievement and act of public witness.

"We've set ambitious goals and have made some early good progress. The Governing Body also voted for our net zero ambition. We have a 10-Point Plan to spur us into action and a carbon calculator, the Energy Footprint Tool, to guide our plans."

He called on churches to use the [Energy Footprint Tool](#), challenging them to complete it by Christmas. "This is an easy action for churches to take but a vital one as it shows us where we are and how we can get to where we want to be," he said.

Looking at the wider COMMUNITY

Our police and soldiers are at the forefront of a national debate this autumn on the use of firearms. David Pickup, a solicitor, encourages us to pray for them, people committed to doing a difficult job.

A good soldier

Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer. (2 Timothy 2:3,4)

I went to Israel last year and one of the things you notice straightaway is there are young people everywhere in military uniform. We do not live in a society where you often see service people. When the police service was formed in Britain in the 19th century, it was established as a civilian force, not a branch of the armed services. And personally, I always feel uneasy when I see police officers armed with guns, even though I know they are there to protect me.

Of course, in New Testament times it would be commonplace to see soldiers. John the Baptist preached to them and told them to be fair, and not to take advantage of the public. Some service people supported synagogues and even became followers of Jesus. Jesus had a good encounter with a Centurion.

St Paul also would have been familiar with the military. There was often public disorder which the troops dealt with, and of course he himself was under house arrest and in prison. While in prison, he prayed for the prison guards.

St Paul even used soldiers as an example to the early Christians – encouraging them to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ: obedient, willing to serve, disciplined and trained.

This month let's remember to pray for our police and our soldiers. They have devoted their lives to doing a very difficult job, in often challenging circumstances. Let's do all we can to support their efforts to protect citizens from harm, and to keep the peace.



A new kind of Remembrance poppy

For the first time in 28 years, there is a **new kind of poppy** for Remembrance Sunday this year: **it is plastic free.**

Director of the Poppy Appeal, Andy Taylor-Whyte explains: “We are very proud to introduce the plastic-free poppy. It will not only enable people to support our

Armed Forces community but also continues the RBL’s commitment to sustainability.”

The new poppy has been three years in the development and making. The aim was to reduce the use of single-use plastic and to “be economical, sustainable, and less impactful to the environment.”

The new poppy design has a 40% smaller carbon footprint, and it made from “bespoke red and green paper.” The paper comes from a blend of renewable fibres, 50 per cent of which has been recovered from the waste used in the production of coffee cups.

The plastic-free poppy will be available alongside remaining stocks of the current poppy, to reduce any waste of poppies already produced. Poppies containing single-use plastic can be returned to Sainsbury’s stores for recycling.

Remembering the National Service – 60 years on

This year marks 60 years since the end of National Service. The Royal British Legion and the nation will be celebrating all that a generation of young men did for this country during those years, when conscription became just a part of growing up.

National Service drew in a staggering number of young men – more than two million of them were conscripted between the end of the Second World War and May 1963, when the last serviceman was demobbed.

Conscription had come about following the war, when there was a huge demand for military resources in Britain. Young service men were badly needed to retain the Empire, and to contribute to the occupation of Germany and Japan. Yet low birth rates in Britain in the 1930s meant there were fewer young men available for military service.

And so the 1947 National Service Act was brought in as a solution. It meant that young men aged 18 – 26 were required to serve in the Armed Forces for 18 months. They were sent to posts in the UK and to British garrisons around the world. Some fought on the front lines, and some worked as clerks. Some taught in the Education Corps, and some were on sentry duty.

For many of them, it would have been the first time they lived away from their family, let alone left the country. So the National Service made great demands on them – and left them with a wide range of experiences.

Remembering the first heart transplant surgeon

100 years ago this month, on 8th November 1923, Christian Barnard, the South African cardiac surgeon, was born. He made history when he carried out the first successful human heart transplant in 1967.

Barnard qualified in medicine at the University of Cape Town in 1946. After practising for several years in Cape Town, he moved to the USA in 1955, where he worked at the University of Minnesota, partly with the open-heart surgery pioneer, Walt Lillehei.

Barnard returned to South Africa in 1958 as head of the Department of Experimental Surgery at the Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. It was here that he established a successful open-heart surgery programme.

In 1967 Barnard led the team that performed the world's first human-to-human heart transplant. The heart of Denise Darvall, an accident victim, was placed into the chest of 54-year-old Louis Washkansky, who then regained full consciousness and could even talk easily. Sadly, he died 18 days later of pneumonia, probably caused by the anti-rejection drugs which had suppressed his immune system.

In all, four of Barnard's first 10 patients survived for more than a year, with two of them living on for 13 and 23 more years respectively.

Barnard retired as head of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery in Cape Town in 1983. He was only 61, but rheumatoid arthritis in his hands ended his surgical career. During his remaining years, Barnard established the Christian Barnard Foundation, helping underprivileged children worldwide. He died in 2001, aged 78.

Happy Birthday, King Charles!



King Charles was born 75 years ago this month, on 14th November 1948, at Buckingham Palace in London. He was the longest-serving monarch-in-waiting in British history and did not ascend the throne until he was 73, following the death of his mother in September 2022.

Charles was crowned in the first coronation in seven decades, on 6th May 2023. His current title is King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

But King Charles has also become head of the Commonwealth, an association of 56 independent countries and 2.5 billion people. For 14 of these countries, as well as the UK, the King is head of state. These countries are known as the Commonwealth realms. They are Australia, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, St Christopher and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

Remembering T S Eliot –from The Wasteland to Journey of the Magi

75 years ago this month, on 4th November 1948, an American-born British poet and playwright, T S Eliot, won the Nobel Prize for Literature. His influence on modern poetry was so profound that he has been hailed as one of the major poets of the 20th century.

T S Eliot was a poet, essayist, publisher, playwright, literary critic and editor. But it was as a poet that he made his name. He played a central role in the development of English-language Modernist poetry.

Eliot had been born in St Louis, Missouri, in 1888 to a long-established family. His grandfather had founded Washington University in St Louis, and his father was a successful businessman. Eliot was an undergraduate at Harvard, studied at the Sorbonne, returned to Harvard to learn Sanskrit, then departed for Oxford University. Later he moved to England permanently.

Eliot's first marriage, in London in 1915, was difficult. Vivian Haigh-Wood suffered from serious mental instability, and the couple separated in 1935. She was finally committed to an institution, where she died in 1947.

Eliot began working at Lloyd's Bank in London in 1917. In the evenings he wrote reviews, essays, founded a critical quarterly, *Criterion*, and set about writing poetry. That same year his first major work, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, was published, to great critical acclaim.

His long, fragmented images and use of blank verse would influence many poets to come. His masterpiece, *The Waste Land*, was published in December 1922, and explores life in London in the aftermath of W.War 1. The poem gave "profound expression to the nihilism of his generation." Many other bleak poems, essays and reviews followed.

But then something unexpected happened: during the 1920s, Eliot's worldview was turned upside-down. He forsook his family's Unitarianism, and was converted to Christianity, becoming a high Anglo-Catholic in London in 1927.

Many of his literary friends were horrified – the Bloomsbury Set, and especially Virginia Wolfe, considered all religion to be anathema. Yet Eliot had made up his mind and would not be argued or mocked out of his new-found faith in Jesus Christ.

Instead, more poetry and plays followed – this time Christian -including *Journey of the Magi*, *a Song for Simeon*, *Ash Wednesday*, and *Murder in the Cathedral*.

Eliot lectured in the United States frequently in the 1930s and 40s. In 1957, he married his assistant, Valerie Fletcher. He died in 1965, having left an indelible mark on English poetry.

The Tale of the TWO BUILDERS



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE WAS ABOUT TWO MEN WHO
BUILT THEIR OWN HOUSES



THE FIRST BUILDER SEARCHED HIGH
AND LOW FOR A GOOD SOLID ROCK ON
WHICH TO BUILD HIS HOME.

AT LONG, LONG LAST HE
FOUND THE IDEAL SPOT.



SO HE BEGAN TO BUILD.

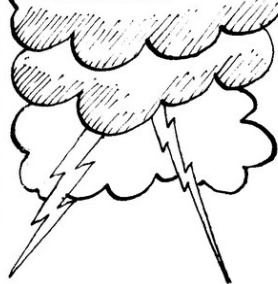


THE OTHER BUILDER
DIDN'T CARE WHERE HE
BUILT HIS HOUSE

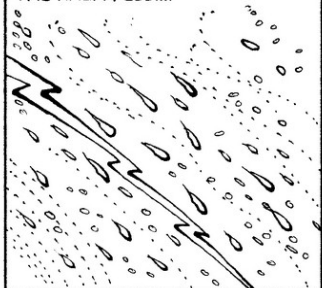
HE THOUGHT SOME NICE FLAT SAND
WOULD BE AN EASY PLACE TO BUILD.



BUT ONE DAY THE
STORM CAME...

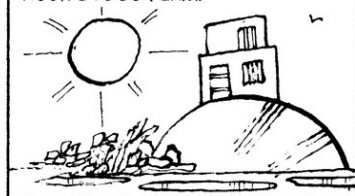


...AND THE WIND BLEW...AND
THE RAIN FELL....



...AND THE HOUSE ON
THE SAND COLLAPSED!

BUT THE HOUSE ON THE
ROCK STOOD FIRM.



JESUS EXPLAINED -
IT'S IMPORTANT OUR LIVES HAVE
A FIRM FOUNDATION!

Your PUZZLE for November

Across

1 'The Lord Jesus... took bread, and when he had given —, he broke it' (1 Corinthians 11:24) (6)

4 'He has taken me to the banquet hall, and his — over me is love' (Song of Songs 2:4) (6)

8 Surrey town that hosts the National Christian Resources Exhibition (5)

9 Also known as Abednego (Daniel 1:7) (7)

10 Liken (Isaiah 40:18) (7)

11 A son of Etam, descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:3) (5)

12 A part of the temple where the blood

of a young bull was to be smeared (Ezekiel 45:19) (9)

17 'They make many promises, take false- and make agreements' (Hosea 10:4) (5)

19 Roman province to which Paul returned after evangelizing it on his first missionary journey (Acts 16:6) (7)

21 Material used to make baby Moses' basket (Exodus 2:3) (7)

22 'And feeble as —, in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail' (5)

23 'The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep—to his voice' (John 10:3) (6)

24 Stalk carrying the sponge of wine vinegar given to Christ on the cross (John 19:29) (6)

Down

1 Elijah dug one round the altar he built on Mount Carmel and filled it with water (1 Kings 18:32) (6)

2 'I am not — of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes' (Romans 1:16) (7)

3 Buddhist term relating to belief in reincarnation (5)

5 Damascus disciple who, at God's command, restored the sight of the blinded Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:12) (7)

6 and 16 Horses: their sound (Jeremiah 50:11) (5) and their gait (Joel 2:4) (6)

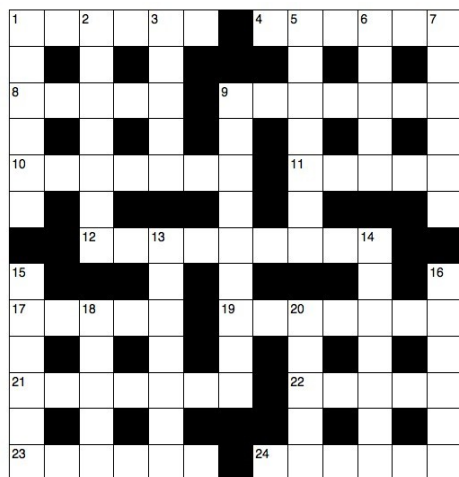
7 A three (anag.) (6)

9 Athenian council addressed memorably by Paul (Acts 17:22) (9)

13 Abide by (Galatians 3:5) (7) 14 Persian princes (Daniel 3:2) (7)

15 Force (Galatians 6:12) (6) 16 See 6 Down (6) 18 Paste (anag.) (5)

20 How the cedars of Lebanon are described (Isaiah 2:13) (5)



Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis chapters 41:46 - 45:28

Joseph: sold by his brothers, taken to Egypt,
now in charge of the stored food as famine
spreads through Egypt, and beyond...

Joseph's father sent 10 of Joseph's
brothers to Egypt to buy food.



To prove you are
not spies, you must
bring your other
brother to me...



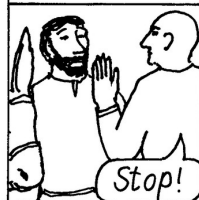
They needed more
food so they had
to take Benjamin
to Egypt.



Joseph gave them food...



Then as they
went home...



You have stolen my
master's special cup.



The servant
took them back
to Joseph.



You are a thief and
must stay as a
slave.



But Judah said



Joseph saw that his brothers had
changed.



I can look after you.
Come and live with me.



So all of Joseph's
family moved
to Egypt.



Here's the Wordsearch for the Bible Bite story...

s	j	u	d	a	h	e	a	r	t	j
t	e	o	s	l	a	v	e	b	q	o
h	g	r	b	r	o	t	h	e	r	s
i	n	f	v	n	s	l	s	n	s	e
e	c	o	a	a	d	i	f	j	o	p
f	h	o	m	m	n	t	b	a	l	h
a	a	d	j	g	i	t	e	m	d	g
t	n	m	o	s	k	l	g	i	b	p
h	g	c	i	c	e	e	y	n	u	c
e	e	d	a	n	a	n	p	c	k	f
r	d	s	p	i	e	s	t	e	s	t

little

changed

sack

sent

test

Joseph

brother

God

family

slave

cup

food

spies

Egypt

father

master

sold

Judah

famine

heart

recognise

Benjamin

servant

thief

God in the SCIENCES

Written by Dr Ruth M. Bancewicz, Church Engagement Director at The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion in Cambridge.

God of the mountains, God of the valleys

Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone ... The earth takes shape like clay under a seal; its features stand out like those of a garment... Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep? (Job 38:4–7, 14, 16)

These verses from the biblical book of Job focus on the Earth, from the top of the highest mountains to the deepest valleys of the sea floor. Job used to have a very comfortable life, but lost everything: health, children, and much of his property. He can see no obvious reason for this terrible turn of events, so he demands an answer from God, asking “What have I done to You...? Why have You made me your target?”

There is no direct reply to Job’s question, but instead a long conversation with his friends who assume (wrongly) that he must be being punished for doing something very bad. When God finally speaks, He draws Job’s attention to his surroundings. The sun, moon and stars, the immensity of land and sea, the creatures that inhabit them, and the processes that produce weather are a wonderful display of God’s creative power. God is the origin and sustainer of all these things, and they are far beyond anything humankind could produce, fully understand or imagine – even today.

The things we do know about the processes described in Job can help us appreciate how marvellous they are. Mountains are produced by the movement of the Earth’s rocky crust over great periods of time. Erosion by weathering or glaciers then grinds down those rocks to produce the mineral component of soil.

Considering the wider perspective of creation can help restore our sense of who we are, who God is, and where we fit into His purposes. God speaks to Job in the midst of his suffering, lifting his eyes to the power and creativity of his Maker. Only after this theology lesson are Job’s practical needs addressed. What will life be like for us over the coming months? A constant check on our own thinking – reminding ourselves of the bigger picture of God’s plans and purposes – might be just what we need to help us keep going.

This article drew very directly on the writing of Prof Bob White in [New Daylight](#) (BRF, Sept-Dec 2020), and the input of a Bible study group based in Cambridge.

God in the ARTS

Michael Burgess continues his look at great works of Christian art. You can see the image described by googling 'wall paintings of Pompeii'.

'He gave us eyes to see them': Wall painting of Pompeii

Each month we have explored how art celebrates the wonder of our world – the seasons, the elements, animals and fish, flowers and fruit. They manifest the glory of God the creator. Irenaeus, the 2nd century theologian, went further and wrote that 'the glory of God is a living person.' He was echoing Psalm 8: 'What are human beings that you are mindful of them...you have crowned them and put all things under their feet.' Yes, the universe teaches of God the creator, but in becoming one of us, the Son of God has put human beings above all Creation.

The nobility of that vision is captured in this 1st century wall painting from Pompeii showing Neo and his wife. They lived at a time when St Paul was preaching and the gospels were being written. We don't know if those events made an impact on their lives. But we do know that St Paul was executed around AD67, and just twelve years later this couple were victims of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Their almond-shaped eyes are like windows into their souls. We sense the beauty, but also the fragility. They tell us that life is a gift to be cherished precisely because it is so easily taken from us. Neo's intense eyes look at us, while his wife looks beyond into the distance. She has the eyes of hopes and dreams that were cruelly shattered by the volcano.

Living men and women, like this couple, are tokens of the wonder of creation, but they also tell us of the transience of that very gift of life. 'Where can we place our hope?' we ask ourselves. The feasts of All

Saints and All Souls tell us that the end of life here is a door opening into a greater glory and a brighter light. There is wonder and beauty in life here, and with the eyes of faith we can look beyond to glimpse the wonder of eternity.



This picture is used with permission from *Naples National Archaeological Museum*.

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of song*
with



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Felix Ashley



Sadie-Beth Holder

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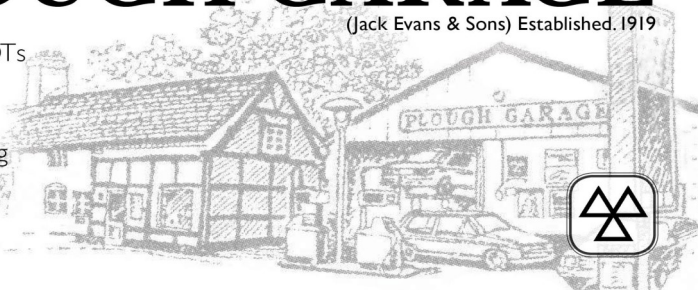
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