A large tree in full bloom with pink and white flowers, set against a clear blue sky and green foliage.

**BISHOP'S HULL PARISH
MAGAZINE MARCH 2026**

**A THRIVING VILLAGE COMMUNITY IN
THE HEART OF SOMERSET**

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MAGAZINE SUPPORT TEAM

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Magazine Cover:

Photographs by
Bob & Penny Coombs & Bob Winn

Articles relating to all aspects of our village and community
are always welcome.

Final date for acceptance: Mid-day on 12th of the month.

Please help to make the magazine interesting by contributing material.

**When reading your free online copy or one of the the hard copies
available in church please remember to support the few remaining
advertisers whenever possible**

*It is emphasised that the views expressed in this magazine are not
necessarily those of the magazine editorial team, unless attributed,
or those sent in by identifiable contributors.*



Cafe & Bar

Now serving Coffees,
Hot Drinks & Breakfasts from
8.30am Tues-Sat
Lunches, Dinners & Sunday Roasts
£5.50 Senior Citizen Meals
Tribute Acts and Events
at the Weekends
Ask us about Functions & Wakes
01823 802877

Bell Ringing

We are very proud of our Bell Ringing team and our bells! There are 6 bells in the tower and ringing is done from ground level.



The Bell Tower is accessed on the North Side of the church. Ringing happens for the main service on Sunday (usually ringing starts at 09.15am and rings until the service starts at 10am). Practice night is Wednesday at 7.30pm. Quarter peals (50 minutes) may be attempted up to twice a month at 11.30am, usually on Tuesday or Wednesday. Our Tower Captain is Giles Morley and he can be contacted on 01823 430710



**AWARD WINNING
FAMILY RUN BUSINESS**

Shop and Post Office

Open Monday – Friday 6.45am – 6pm

Saturday 8am – 6pm

Sunday 8am – 12pm

Tel – 01823 279168

Butchers

Open Tuesday – Friday 8.00am – 3pm

Saturday 7.00am – 2pm

Sunday and Monday Closed

Tel – 01823 337497

The Frank Bond Centre

84 Mountway Road, Bishop's Hull.

A place for the over 50s to meet new friends

Contact Carolyn 01823 283941 /Nadia 07958 246046

Come along to FBC Coffee morning on a Friday morning
10:00-12:00 and discover what activities could lie in store
for you.

The cafe is open to members and non-members.

The centre is centrally heated and open 10:00-16:00

Monday-Friday

Weekly Activities:

Monday - The Painting Group 10:00-12:00,

Whist Club 1:30-4:00

Bridge Club 1.30-4:00

Wednesday – Flexercise & Tai Chi 10:00-12:00

Thursday - Bridge club 10:00-12:00-Beginners

welcome,

Croquet 2:00-4:00

Friday - Pétanque 10:00-12:00,

Friday - The FBC Coffee morning 10:00-12:00

Monthly Activities:

1st Monday in month Family History 2:00-4:00

2nd Tuesday in month Parchment 10:00-3:30

3rd Wednesday in month Games 2.00-4.00

4th Wednesday in month Music Appreciation 2.00-4.00

2nd & 4th Thursday in month Mahjong 2:00-4:00

NO MONTHLY LUNCHES

Annual membership £25 Find us on Facebook (& 'Like' us)

Prescription Time Frame



To help us provide an efficient, safe and effective service to our patients, we ask that you follow the guidance below:

- Use the table below to work out when your prescription will be ready for collection,

- Order early for bank holidays, or if you are going on holiday,
- Let us know in advance, if you require our prescription delivery service

Due to permanent closures of some pharmacies in the area we are experiencing high volumes of prescriptions. We offer text message and a phone call service to let our patients know when their medications are ready. Please ask a member of staff about details.

We are a small but very busy pharmacy, so be prepared to queue. Please sign the back of your green paper prescription on arrival and tick the exemption box if it applies to you (there are pens available on the counter). Our waiting time for a walk-in prescription is usually up to 20 minutes, but it can reach to one hour depending on how busy we are. We are always extremely busy before bank holidays, so please order your prescriptions earlier and be prepared to queue.

Prescription Ordered	We normally receive	Ready for collection
Monday	Thursday	Monday
Tuesday	Friday	Tuesday
Wednesday	Monday	Wednesday
Thursday	Tuesday	Thursday
Friday	Wednesday	Friday
Weekend	Thursday	Monday

When you enter the pharmacy please turn right in order to join a queue or otherwise feel free to browse the shop. Whilst waiting for your prescription to be prepared please wait in the pharmacy, if you leave at any point, please queue again on arrival and ask the member of staff if your medications are ready. We apologise for any inconvenience and thank you for your understanding.

These are the expected days when your prescription will be ready, however sometimes delays occur due to medication queries, items out of stock and increased workload. Please be aware that this guidance is for regular repeat medication. Please collect your medications after receiving your text message or phone call. Prescriptions that are urgent from the GP surgery can be dispensed when needed.

Opening hours: Monday- Friday: 9:00- Saturday: 9:00-13:00

Sunday: Closed. Bank Holiday: Closed Tel. 01823 256 056

Address: 2 The Comeytrove Centre, Pitts Close, Taunton, TA1 4TN

Vicar:	
Reverend Philip Hughes , The Vicarage, Bishop's Hull Hill, Bishop's Hull, TA1 5EB 01823-336102	Tim Venn (Church Warden) John Perry (Church Warden)



“When does spring start?” You may well ask. Well, it is here!

Blooming daffodils, warmer weather or the Sun's position in the sky – how do we actually define the beginning of spring?

The first day of spring in the UK astronomically occurs on the vernal equinox, 20 March 2026. But did you know there are actually three main definitions for the season coming from astronomy, meteorology and phenology?

The spring months: meteorological spring

For most of the northern hemisphere, the spring months are usually March, April and May, and so by this definition spring starts on 1 March. This is because meteorologists tend to divide seasons into periods of three whole months based on average monthly temperatures, with summer as the warmest and winter as the coldest.

The official start of spring

In reality there are no hard and fast criteria to determine the start of each season; the onset of spring, for instance, could be the date on which the first daffodil flowers or the first birds make their nests. The dates of these are not only extremely difficult to determine but also vary quite dramatically through the United Kingdom, let alone the rest of the world.

Because they are well-defined dates, the equinoxes and solstices are probably as good as any other criterion, although just as many people prefer the simple use of three calendar months for each season, with spring being March, April and May.

Equinoxes and solstices: astronomical spring

Astronomically, the arrangement of the planes of the orbit of the Earth and its equator are such that the planes intersect at two times, the Equinoxes, when the length of the day and night are equal. Mid-way between these are the solstices, when the Sun is at its highest and lowest in the sky at mid-day. These times can be determined very accurately and, as they occur near the times when the seasons are changing, have been used to indicate the start of each season.

Thus for us in Europe:

Spring is deemed to start at the Vernal Equinox (near 20 March)

Summer at the Summer Solstice (near 21 June)

Autumn at the Autumn Equinox (near 23 September)

Winter at the Winter Solstice (near 22 December).

WELCOME TO OUR SPRING.

The Vicar Writes



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*As we march into March, the air carries that distinctive "in-between" quality. The crisp chill of winter still lingers, yet the brave snowdrops whisper of the spring to come. It is a season of transition, and in the Church, it marks our steady walk through the holy terrain of **Lent**.*

This year, our journey is guided by the most familiar words we possess. Our Lent Group meets on a Tuesday evening at 7pm to explore the Lord's Prayer. It is so easy to recite these words by rote, but when we slow down to truly ask for "our daily bread" or seek the grace to "forgive those who trespass against us," the prayer becomes a radical invitation to change. Whether you are a lifelong regular or haven't stepped through our doors in years, please know there is a spare chair, a warm mug of tea, and a very sincere welcome waiting for you.

Beyond our parish boundaries, many of us have been captivated by the Winter Olympics. Seeing athletes navigate the ice and snow with such perseverance is a wonderful metaphor for our own spiritual lives; some days we glide with grace, and others we simply need the grit to get back up after a tumble. Both are part of the race.

March also brings a rich tapestry of days to mark in our diaries:

1st March: *We begin with **St David's Day**, a joy for our Welsh friends.*

15th March: Mothering Sunday. *A beautiful, and sometimes poignant, day to celebrate all who have nurtured us.*

17th March: St Patrick's Day, *remembering the light of faith in Ireland.*

29th March: Palm Sunday, *as we wave our branches and enter Holy Week.*

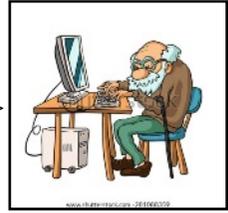
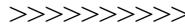
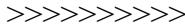
Please do remember that the clocks go forward on the 29th as well! We may lose an hour of sleep, but we gain the promise of longer, lighter evenings. May this month be one of steady growth and quiet peace for you and your loved ones. My door is always open should you need a chat or a prayer.

With every blessing,

Your Brother in Christ,

Phil Hughes

Vicar, Chaplain to Taunton College and a Motorsport Chaplain



Editor Bob

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I know how expensive it is to send a letter so I would be happy to receive an email instead.

Editor Bob.

29 Mar 2026 - Daylight Saving Time Starts

Sunday, 29 March 2026, **01:00:00** clocks are turned forward 1 hour to

Sunday, 29 March 2026, **02:00:00** local daylight time instead. Sunrise and sunset will be about 1 hour later on 29 Mar 2026 than the day before. There will be more light in the evening and less light in the morning.



St Peter's & St Paul's Church

Bridge Coffee Mornings

The **Bridge** is what we have called the Welcome Area.

The Church has opened **the Bridge** for the return of the Monthly Coffee Mornings to be held on the last Saturday of each month and the next one is in March 2026. We would like to extend a warm welcome to all at the next coffee morning on

Saturday 28 March 2026 From 10am till 12noon.

Come along to have a Coffee/Tea and cakes, with a friendly chat **and** SWAP a book.



Church and Vicarage 1962





Bishops Hull Belles WI

Bishops Hull Belles is a group of friendly women with meetings held on the 4th Thursday of the month (except August) at 7.30pm at the Bishops Hull HUB

- These monthly meetings have a speaker or other activity together with business items
- Topics for future meetings will be published here each month.
- Lunches and coffee/brunches are organised monthly.
- Additionally there is a walking group arranged fortnightly (except mid winter and August) and a scrabble group meets on a monthly basis.
- A day trip usually takes place in August.
- Why not come along to one of our monthly meetings where you will be warmly welcomed. The cost is £4 per visit (up to 3 meetings) which is then deducted from the annual subscription upon joining.
- Further information can be obtained from Heather Blackmore the group's secretary. Tel:01823-283884 mob 07963834365

Bishops Hull Belles WI

Next Meeting at The HUB

Thursday 26th March at 7.30

Guest Speaker - Ken Trowbridge

1960's Music Night

Bishop's Hull Parish Council News

The Parish Council meeting for January was on 22nd January (after this edition had gone to print) so a full update will be added to the February Community News.

Parish Council meeting information including full minutes can be found on the website <https://bishopshullparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

Next meeting date: Thursday 5th March, 7pm at the HUB, all welcome to attend.

Please note there was no meeting in February.

Message from the Chair

I would like to wish Bishop's Hull residents and businesses a belated safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Speed Indicator, Devices SID Data

As you may be aware, the parish has two Speed Indicator, Devices (SIDs).

The accompanying data, toward the end of 2025, shows the majority of incoming traffic along Silk Mills Road adheres to the limits but there remains a dangerous minority which requires further investigation.

Incoming traffic

<= 40 Mph : 1,545,035 - (91.53 %)

41 - 45 Mph : 17,657 - (1.05 %)

46 - 50 Mph: 13,669 - (0.81%)

51 - 55 Mph : 12,530 - (0.74 %)

56- 60 Mph : 12,194 - (0.72%)

61 - 65 Mph : 11,008 - (0.65 %)

66 - 70 Mph : 10,962 - (0.65 %)

71 - 75 Mph (and more) : 62,173 - (3.69 %)

With the addition of weekly Speed Watch sessions at Silk Mills Road and Bishop's Hull Road, these measures clearly demonstrate how beneficial these units are. As with Speed Watch, the SIDs offer a visual reminder to motorists to be aware of their speed.

As much as we would like to see a regular police presence in the parish, it does mean we are deemed a safe area to live and work with a reduced fear of speeding vehicles around.

As there is -always a limit to what "engineering" can achieve in persuading ALL drivers to adhere to the limits; it is you, as the driver who is in charge of your driving behaviour so please watch your speed at all times.

Thank you. Tony Taylor, PC Chair.

Update — Netherclay Footbridge 4704

In 2022, I met with Somerset Council's senior rights of way officer and was able to confirm to you all that "not only will this historic footbridge be repaired, it will be renovated back to its former glory. Initial preparatory work begins today with the removal of excess vegetation. The rest of the renovation has a reasonable chance of completion by the end of the year." Since then there have been many 'reasons' for the project grinding to a halt, with the bridge being closed to the public throughout.



In December, I received the following from the council officer: "In terms of a project at the site, I am afraid this will be severely delayed as we do not have the staff resource within the Service to progress one at this time."

Following receipt of this negative news, I met with the Chair of both the Friends of Netherclay group and our Parish Council, to update them on current position.



From that on-site meeting, I have requested the following information from Somerset Council:

- ~ An update on exactly where we are with the project?
- ~ Is the money still ringfenced for the complete renovation, if so, how much?
- ~ Is the bridge still at No.1 on the list of bridges to be

repaired/replaced?

I suggested that having "noted your current staffing issue, we wondered if there was anything we as a community could do to assist you in progressing this project?"

Please contact me

john.hunt@somerset.gov.uk for updates. John Hunt



Bishop's Hull HUB

Youth Club Support - Our Bishop's Hull Youth Club have run since Sept 2023. We meet only once a month on the 3rd Saturday of the month in the Hub from 7:15-9:15 p.m.

Claire Plumbly (who currently co-ordinates it alongside volunteer helpers) is looking for an extra adult who can support her to organise it. This is a low-commitment but enjoyable role, only two hours per month which allows the 11-16 year olds in our village a time to enjoy hanging out in the hall with games and a tuck shop. Fun and safe parent-free time which isn't linked to goal-based activities like other clubs and other activities.

Please email Claire.Plumbly@hotmail.co.uk if you'd like to chat about helping with this.

Traffic Regulation Order Notice — full details available on <https://bishopsullparishcouncil.gov.uk/> - under news section

SCHEDULE — 30 MPH SPEED LIMIT EXTENSION

A38 Wellington New Road, Taunton. A38 Stonegallows, Taunton

A38 Wellington Road, Taunton From a point 30 metres west from Wellington New Road Roundabout in a south westerly direction to the junction with the A38 Stonegallows. From its junction with the A38 Wellington New Road in a south westerly direction to its junction with the A38 Wellington Road

From its junction with the A38 Stonegallows in a south westerly direction for a distance of 500 metres

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR PROPOSING TO MAKE THE ORDER
For avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising. The speed limit extension is a request from Bishops Hull Parish Council and Taunton Town Council to promote a safe environment throughout the route, particularly to encourage and facilitate pedestrian and cyclist movements along those parts of the road.



BISHOP'S HULL IN TIMES PAST



1 00 years ago

A very successful whist drive was held in the Village Club, in aid of a local case of sickness. Despite the inclement weather, the large room was filled to its utmost capacity, there being 28 tables in play. The arrangements were carried out by Mr F Burford, whist Misses Durban and E Merson made the arrangements for the refreshments, which were very much appreciated by all. The prizes were won by the following:- Ladies: 1. Mrs E Pring; 2. Mrs EC Cocks; 3. Miss LT Langford; consolation Mr EA Anning

(playing as lady). Gents: 1. Mr W Reason; 2. Mr E Clarke; 3. Mr EA Wilkins; consolation Mr E Oaten. Highest score first half Mr Sydenham. There was a mystery parcel given by a visiting friend, which was put up for auction, and caused some amusement by the hot and sharp bidding, and was ultimately knocked down to Mr Fry, the parcel realising in all £3.5s. The prizes were then distributed by Mrs EC Cocks.

The large room at the club was filled to overflowing when a social gathering was held by the Women's Conservative Association, of which Mrs Leslie Fox is chairman and Mrs Watts the hon secretary. The first part of the programme consisted of a musical entertainment, given by Mr Stephens' concert party. Mr GU Farrant occupied the chair, and the programme was as follows:- Duet, 'Plus Fours' Messrs Stevens and Archard; songs, Mr R Stevens, Mr J Archard, Miss D Thorn; duet, 'Ow do yer do' Messrs Stevens and Archard; song, Mr J Archard; recitation, Miss R Thorn; duet, 'Bingo Farm' Messrs Stevens and Archard; song Mr J Archard; song, 'Out come mother and me' Mr H Trego; song, Miss D Thorn; duet, 'Practically True' Miss Thorn and Mr J Archard; duet 'Clerical Errors' Messrs Stevens and Trego. The concert was followed by a dance, for which Mr Trump acted as MC.

During the evening refreshments were provided and served by a band of lady helpers. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening and great credit was due to Mrs Watts and her helpers for the way in which they

worked to make the social such a success. Mr Farrant thanked Mr Stevens and his talented friends for giving such an enjoyable concert, and added a special word of thanks to Miss Thorn for providing the music for the dance. Messrs Durban, Taylor and Payne gave assistance and Mr Turner kindly erected the stage.

50 years ago

Members of the Good Companions Club , meeting at the United Reformed church schoolroom, heard Mrs P Davey give a talk on flower varieties, and especially on her visit to Holland to see the tulips. She was thanked by Miss Newcombe. At the following fortnightly meeting, with Miss Newcombe presiding, birthday honours were accorded Mrs Rolls. Miss Newcombe informed members that if any of them found difficulty in walking to meetings, she would arrange transport if early application was made. Mrs Luckes entertained members with a description of her visit to Canada. The meeting closed with tea and coffee.

At the meeting of the Women's Institute, held in the village school, the Rev AJ Stevens gave a talk, illustrated with slides, on his visit to Australia. A competition prize was given by Mrs More and won by Miss Whittall. The tea hostesses were Mrs Chandler and Mrs Ireland.

The funeral of Miss Hilda Blanche Ward of Holyoake, Bishops Hull was held at Taunton Deane crematorium. The service in the chapel was conducted by the Rev B Kirk. Cremation followed and the ashes were later buried in the family grave at the Deane cemetery. The Co-operative Funeral Service of Priorswood Road made the arrangements.

The annual meeting of the Labour Party was held in the New Inn.

Reports were given on the state of the Party, and the past year's activities by the chairman, secretary and treasurer. Officers elected were: chairman, Mike Perry; vice-chairman, Allan Payne; secretary, Sybil Gwyther; treasurer, Jim Fox. Delegates were appointed to Taunton Constituency Labour Party and the Bishops Hull Village Hall and Playing Field Association. Discussion took place on the forthcoming borough and parish elections and a programme for the next year.

John Hamer

BISHOPS HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD BEAT TEAM (from village WEB site)

PCSO Tony Wearmouth 8413 - 07889 655312
tony.wearmouth@avonandsomerset.police.uk

PCSO Catharine Richards - 07710 026191
catherine.richards@avonandsomerset.police.uk
PCSO Catharine Richards - 07710 026191

We're trying to identify the rightful owners of suspected stolen jewellery.

Officers seized the mostly boxed items in Bristol on Monday 10 November, but enquiries to date have yet to confirm ownership.

Please see the attached file for more information.

Attachments:

seized-jewellery.pdf

We're appealing for witnesses and any dashcam footage after a collision in Taunton on Saturday (24 January).

Emergency services were called at 7.15pm to reports of the three-car collision on the Wickes Roundabout connecting the A38, A358 and Obridge Viaduct.

It involved a silver Seat Leon, a red Citroen C1, and a Nissan Qashqai. Officers attended, but thankfully no serious injuries were reported.

A man aged in his 50s was arrested at the scene on suspicion of driving while unfit through drink. He has since been released under investigation and the investigation continues.

If you witnessed the collision or have any other information or footage which could help our investigation, please call 101 using the reference number 5226021853.

We're encouraging motorcyclists across the Avon and Somerset force area to sign up for our Raise Your Ride advanced riding courses, with new dates now confirmed for 2026.

Delivered in partnership between Avon and Somerset Police and Somerset Road Safety, the scheme is led by police-trained advanced riders and is designed to build skills, awareness and confidence in a real-world riding environment.

Courses are planned over the coming months in Bristol, Taunton, Wells and Cheddar, with opportunities for small groups to arrange bespoke dates to suit their availability.

Please see the attached PDF for more information.

Attachments:

advanced-motorcycle-courses.pdf

Crime Prevention Advice

Residents are reminded to take the following precautions, particularly when selling vehicles or high value items:

- Secure gates and garages with high quality, closed shackle padlocks and reinforced hasps
 - Use ground anchors, chains, or additional locks for motorcycles and off road bikes, even when stored in garages
 - Ensure garages and outbuildings are well lit, ideally with motion sensor lighting
 - Install or maintain CCTV or video doorbells, covering access points such as gates and driveways
 - Avoid advertising exact locations in online sales listings and do not leave vehicles on display once advertised
 - Be cautious when sharing information on social media and verify buyers before arranging viewings
 - Report any suspicious behaviour immediately rather than waiting until later
- Being alert and taking simple security measures can significantly reduce the risk of theft.

Any information, CCTV images, please contact the Police on 101 quoting reference number: 5226029019 stating NHW. Or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. Thank you for your support.

We are urging residents and businesses to be vigilant following reports counterfeit £20 notes are in circulation in Taunton.

Officers have received reports the counterfeit notes have been used in separate transactions at two outlets and are now issuing advice on how to spot them.

The first incident was reported at a filling station on Priory Bridge Road at around 7.30pm on Thursday 29 January and at a retail outlet in East Street at around 10.35am on Thursday 5 March.

Similar incidents have occurred in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, and we've also received reports counterfeit notes have been used to purchase items which have been advertised for sale on social media selling sites.

PC Luke Elliot, officer in the case, said: "We are aware a small number of counterfeit notes have entered circulation, and we want to warn businesses and the public to remain vigilant and follow our advice to prevent more people becoming victims of fraud.

"A full and thorough investigation into how these notes have entered circulation is being carried out, and we are issuing advice so people can be confident they're accepting genuine payments for goods and services they are providing."

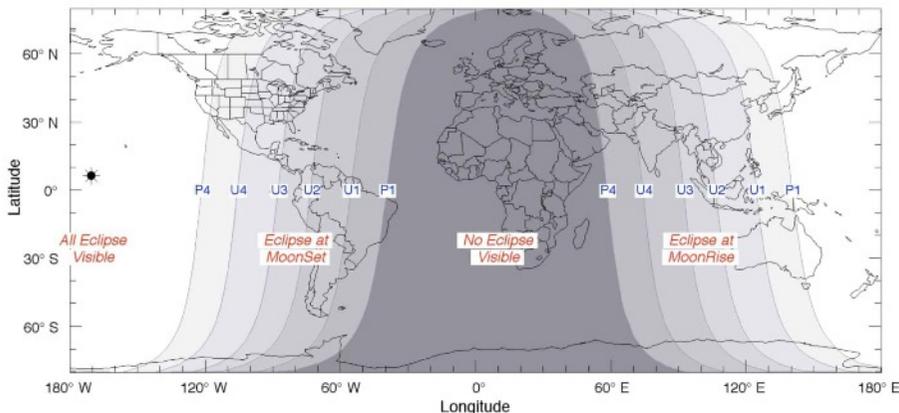
If cash transactions are necessary, please follow the advice in the attached PDF.

Attachments:

counterfeit-money.pdf

3rd March - Full moon and total lunar eclipse

Total lunar eclipse, March 2-3, 2026



On Tuesday 3rd March, a total lunar eclipse will take place as the Earth passes between the Sun and Moon. The Earth will cast a gigantic shadow which will turn the Moon a deep reddish orange.

The lunar eclipse will be total in eastern Asia, Australia, and then on across the Pacific and in North, Central and far western South America. It will be partial in central Asia and most of South America. Sadly, it will not appear at all over Africa or Europe.

Earth Hour 2026 – a time to turn off your lights

The Earth Hour 2026 takes place on Saturday 28th March, when at 8.30pm in their local time millions of people worldwide will turn off their non-essential lights for one hour.

Organised by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the 20th anniversary of this global initiative will aim to raise awareness of the earth's climate crisis, and to encourage environmental action through sustainable, actionable lifestyle changes.

The first Earth Hour was held in Sydney, Australia, on 31st March 2007, and has since become a global movement. The 2025/26 theme is 'Giving an Hour for Earth' is encouraging people to adapt sustainable habits in their daily lives. And while our lights are off for an hour, Earth Hour will encourage us to spend the time in nature, or stargazing, or engaging in environmental, educational, or sustainable activities.

More info at: <https://www.earthhour.org>

15th March - Mothering Sunday, 4th Sunday in Lent

There is an old Jewish saying: God could not be everywhere, and therefore He made mothers.

Mother Church, Mother Earth, Mother of the Gods - our human mothers - all of them have been part of the celebration of 'Mothering Sunday' - as the fourth Sunday in Lent is affectionately known. It has been celebrated in the UK since at least the 16th century.

In Roman times, great festivals were held every Spring to honour Cybele, Mother of all the Gods. Other pagan festivals in honour of Mother Earth were also celebrated. With the arrival of Christianity, the festival became one honouring Mother Church.

During the Middle Ages, young people apprenticed to craftsmen or working as 'live-in' servants were allowed only one holiday a year on which to visit their families, which is how 'Mothering Sunday' got its name. This special day became a day of family rejoicing, and the Lenten fast was broken. In some places the day was called Simnel Day, because of the sweet cakes called simnel cakes traditionally eaten on that day.

In recent years the holiday has changed, and in many ways now resembles the American Mother's Day, with families going out to Sunday lunch and generally making a fuss of their mother on the day.



Share the Easter story – with an Egg

Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.

There are six types of eggs to choose from. Each Real Easter Egg comes with an Easter story in the box, the stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book versions. So, buy a 2026 edition Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.



The 2026 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk or by calling 01925 877004.

Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal 2026 – as it celebrates 40 years



Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will be holding its annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life.

And one chance for you to help give care that makes all that possible. Care that protects someone's dignity – instead of leaving them alone or in pain. This Great Daffodil Appeal is that chance.

Now in its 40th year, the appeal raises vital funds to help Marie Curie provide end of life care and support in homes, hospitals and hospices across the UK. By donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the illness.

Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

Whether it's taking part in a fundraising challenge, organising a bake sale or volunteering your time to collect donations, every penny will help Marie Curie deliver quality care to those who need it most.

The Great Daffodil Appeal only happens once a year. This is your chance to make it count. For information and to donate visit:

Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil

How many words does it take?

Pythagorean Theorem - 24 words

Lord's Prayer - 66 words

Archimedes' Principle - 67 words

Ten Commandments - 179 words

Shakespeare's 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy – 260 words

Churchill's speech 'We Shall Fight on the Beaches'- 308 words

US Constitution with all 27 Amendments - 7,818 words

EU regulations on the sale of cabbages - 26,911 words

Put things into perspective, doesn't it?

The secret life of a busy mother

Not many years ago lonely mothers would head for each other's homes or to the local toddler group for coffee, sympathy, advice and general camaraderie. These days, most also switch on the computer.



For many busy mums, parenting forums and communities have long been their best friend/mother-figure/health visitor/schoolteacher, all lumped into one.

One young mum explains: “I can log on to a parenting site any time – when the children are in bed or watching TV – and ask for advice or reassurance on things I’d feel stupid asking a health visitor or that my friend does not know the answer to. Or – I can just log on for a good gossip. It ticks all the boxes in terms of what I need.”

Some sites are getting millions of hits a month. Mums talk to each other through tonsillitis, homework, names labels that won’t wash off, teething, bed-wetting and even bullying. One mum admits: “Occasionally, when I read what others have written, I realise my life is not so bad after all.”

10 of the top UK parenting forums, communities, blogs and expert advice websites are:

Mumsnet: The UK’s largest parenting network, providing candid advice and active forums.

Netmums: A major, supportive community offering local listings, and expert advice.

NCT: Leading charity on pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood, with classes & workshops.

Parent Talk (Action for Children): Offers free 1-to-1 webchat with parenting coaches.

Family Lives: Provides a 24-hour helpline and information on all aspects of family life.

NHS Website: Highly trusted, evidence-based health information for children.

Honest Mum: A blog which covers lifestyle, food, and parenting.

The Mummy Bubble: A blog offering tips, hacks, and advice for new parents.

DADinfo: The go-to site for fathers, providing forums and advice.

Which? (Family): Trusted, in-depth reviews for buying baby and child products.

EAT WELL FOR LESS DURING MARCH (As in 1932)

NORWEGIAN PIE



1/2 lb. of cooked fish
1/2 oz. margarine
1 lb. of cooked potatoes
2 oz. of cheese, grated
1 teacupful of white sauce
salt, pepper, mustard and little
nutmeg

Beat the potatoes with a little milk and the seasoning. Line a greased pie-dish with three-quarters of the potato mixture, and fill the centre with the fish, sauce and a pinch of nutmeg.

Cover the top with the remainder of the potato and sprinkle with cheese and pieces of margarine.

Bake 30 minutes in moderate oven.

RISSOLES OF COLD MEAT



1/2 lb. cooked meat, minced
2 oz. of breadcrumbs
1/2 gill of stock
1 egg
1 small cooked onion
1 teaspoonful of chopped parsley
Seasoning

Soak the crumbs in stock, chop the onions, mix together the meat, soaked crumbs, onions, parsley, seasoning and beaten egg. Shake into small flat cakes, brush over with egg, toss in breadcrumbs, and fry on both sides in hot dripping.

These rissoles can be prepared, shaped and covered with egg and breadcrumbs the previous day, so that in the morning it is only necessary to fry them.

BRAISED STEAK



1 1/2 lbs. stewing steak
1 carrot
1/2 turnip
2 onions
Seasoning
Stock
Dripping

Cut the vegetables in thick slices and fry them in the dripping until lightly browned, add seasoning, and enough stock, to cover the vegetables; bring to boiling point and put into the bottom of a casserole or stewpan.

Place the meat on top of the vegetables and cover with greaseproof paper. Then put on the lid which must fit tightly, and cook gently until tender (2 to 2 1/2 hours), turning the meat over at the end of one hour. ####

GINGER SPONGE PUDDING



- 6 oz. of flour
- 1 teaspoonful of ginger
- 3 oz. of suet, chopped fine
- 1 teacupful of milk
- 1 tablespoonful of brown sugar
- ½ teacupful of golden syrup
- 2 teaspoonful of baking powder
- 1 egg

Warm the milk and treacle together. Well beat the egg. Mix the dry ingredients, adding the egg, milk and syrup. Beat well, then pour into a greased mould and steam for 2½ to 3 hours.

Serve with sweet sauce,

BANANA PUDDING

- 2 bananas
- 4 oz. of caster sugar
- 4 oz. of flour
- 1 oz. of butter
- ½ gill of milk
- 2 eggs



Cream butter and sugar well together, beat in yolks of eggs separately, stir in the flour, add the milk and bananas, thinly sliced. Whisk the white of eggs to a stiff froth, add them lightly to the rest of the ingredients.

Pour into one large or several small, well-greased moulds. Steam or bake a large pudding from 1 to 1½ hours, or small ones from 30 to 35 minutes. Serge with a fruit syrup or sweet sauce.

STRAWBERRY SANDWICH



- This makes one large jam sandwich .
- 1 lb. of strawberries
- Half a packet of red currant jelly
- ½ pint of custard
- Cream and sugar

Lay each half of the sandwich on a large plate, and pour over, very slowly, the hot, dissolved jelly. When this is cold, mash half the strawberries and mix with the custard, which should be rather stiff. Place this mixture between the two pieces of 'cake', and decorate the top with blobs of cream and the rest of the strawberries, which should be left whole.

If possible use all cream in place of custard.

When whipping the cream, beat with a fork till it is thick but not buttery, and then add the sugar.

(If sugar is added first the cream is inclined to go oily in hot weather.)

Icing Made with Dried Milk

- 4 dessertspoons sugar
- 4 dessertspoons water
- 4 tablespoons dried milk

Dissolve sugar in water.

Allow to cool, then whisk in powdered milk.

Flavour and colour to taste.



Dog walkers now face unlimited fines if pets chase livestock



As of the 18th of this month, The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025 will become law for England and Wales. This means that police officers can seize dogs which pose a risk of repeated attacks on farm animals. It also means that dog walkers now face unlimited fines if their pets chase livestock.

Up until now, the maximum fine for worrying sheep, cattle and poultry was £1,000. But the fine is now unlimited, and also now protects llamas and alpacas.

Baroness Coffey, the Conservative former deputy prime minister, said the change was necessary. "Livestock worrying has devastating consequences, both for animals and farmers, and it can be horrific, causing brutal injuries that are tragically often fatal," she said. Rachel Hallos, National Farmers' Union (NFU) vice-president, hailed the rule changes as "a huge step forward. This legislation will act as a real deterrent and will make a real difference to farmers and their livestock." Farm animals worth an estimated £2.4 million were severely injured or killed by dogs in 2023, up nearly 30 per cent from the previous year, according to figures from the insurer NFU Mutual.

Granny retired? You've got to be kidding....



The idea that grandmothers retire into an unburdened world of gardening and tea-drinking, golf and knitting is no more than a pleasant fantasy these days.

Instead, nearly 63% of grandparents provide some sort of childcare to their under-16-year-old grandchildren. That amounts to around seven million older people, aged mostly between 55 - 74.

As many as one in three is doing the school run. Nearly one in five is spending more than 10 hours a week giving other childcare.

America has a nickname name for them: the 'granny nannies.'

Granny nannies do it for good reason: to enable their own children to be able to work longer hours. But granny nannies not only care for their grandchildren, they may also be providing comfort for elderly relatives of their own – and hold down a part-time job at the same time.

Perhaps Super-Granny-Nannies is the correct name for them!

**

Afternoon tea, anyone?



Do you take afternoon tea? Ever wondered where it started? The custom seems to date back to the mid-19th century, and the seventh Duchess of Bedford, Anna Russell.

The Duchess got hungry at about 4pm each day, calling it “that sinking feeling”. As it was still four hours until dinner (at 8pm), she began to have sandwiches or a small cake with some tea. Her friends thought this was marvellous, and the idea spread quickly through (hungry) upper class circles.

Soon, it seems, everyone in England was looking forward to Afternoon Tea, and a great British tradition was born. Though, during the last century, the sandwiches and cake gave way to biscuits, still we reached for the teapot each afternoon. Not so much anymore, it seems. In the last five years, sales of tea and biscuits have dropped. Perhaps we are drinking coffee? The research was done by retail analysts Mintel.

**

Why big, wet licks from a dog can help a teenager’s mental health



Teenagers who kiss their dog or are occasionally licked by their pet are happier, according to a recent study. They have

even been found to have better mental health than those who do not have a dog.

Why should this be? It seems to all come down to the gut. Research has found that teenagers in homes with a dog have a specific gut bacteria constitution, known as the microbiome, which boosts mental wellbeing.

Gut bacteria samples from teenagers were analysed and the participants also underwent psychological assessment. Tests showed that those with dogs had healthier scores, and that their microbiome was rich in certain bacteria.

When the dog-influenced bacteria were injected into mice in a lab, even the rodents became more social and engaged more with other mice.

The study’s author, Prof Takefumi Kikusui, of Azabu University in Japan, said that although dog ownership provides a sense of security through simple interaction, “the most interesting finding from this study is that bacteria promoting prosociality, or empathy, were discovered in the microbiomes of adolescent children who keep dogs.”

Debt Awareness Week 2026 – 16th to 22nd March

Everybody seems to be in debt these days, from households across the UK, right up to the public sector.

Our household debt is a burden to us. As of April 2024, the total debt per household (including mortgages) averaged £65,143. Many households struggle with 'problem debt', ominously relying more and more on credit cards and payday loans to simply meet essential living expenses. This bleak situation, often called a 'debt trap', can ruin lives.

At the same time, our national public debt is at record levels and rising. According to Goldman Sachs, it now stands at **101% of GDP**. At the end of 2024, our national debt was the third highest of European countries. And high interest rates and inflation have only increased the cost of servicing this enormous debt, which in turn puts pressure on public finances.

While the government struggles, hundreds of thousands of households are seeking personal help. Debt advice charities like *StepChange*, *Citizens Advice* and *CAP (Christians Against Poverty)* have reported a record-high demand for help. The strain of living with unmanageable debt can affect your mental health, reduce your productivity, and increase your reliance on public services.

So this year's **Debt Awareness Week** will encourage people to not be ashamed of their debt, but instead to seek free, confidential, and professional advice on dealing with it.

More info at:

CAP - <https://capuk.org>

Citizens Advice - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

StepChange - <https://www.stepchange.org/debt-awareness-week.aspx>



Our love affair with our phones

It was 150 years ago this month, on 10th March 1876, that the world's first telephone call was made. Alexander Graham Bell called his assistant and said: "Mr Watson, come here. I want you."

That phone call was the beginning of a worldwide addiction to phones. Phones spread quickly, constantly improved, and after more than 100 years of landlines, mobile phones arrived.

The first was introduced by Motorola in 1983 in the USA. The Motorola DynaTAC 8000X weighed nearly two

pounds and cost around \$3,995. The first smartph



one, the IBM Simon Personal Communicator, was released in 1994, combining phone calls with PDA features like email, fax, and a calendar on a touchscreen. It was so expensive it sold only about 50,000.

But by the late 90s, the BlackBerry had become a top favourite, with its popular email and messaging services beloved by Barak Obama, among many others.

Then in 2007, Apple released the first iPhone, informally known as the iPhone 2G, with an advanced multi-touch interface and app ecosystem. Fast forward nearly 20 years, and there are now about 7.5 billion active smartphones in the world. The total number of all connections (SIMs/devices) now even exceeds the human population of about 8.3 billion. ###

Contrails

*I see against the clear blue sky
The trails left by aircraft, high
White vapours, trailing, as they fly
So high up in the air.
I wonder of their hopes and dreams
Who fly before those cirrus streams,
Or what, indeed, their long-planned
schemes?
A dream, or a nightmare?
A man, besuited, he may feel
That he's about to clinch a deal
To set him up with finance, real
So he can make his name!
That couple – are they on their way
To a romantic holiday?
Upon a golden beach they'll lay
Beneath the solar flame!
But even as they sit and smile,
See! Sitting there, beside the aisle
A lady who for quite a while
Has simply sat and wept.
What troubles crowd upon her
mind?
At journey's end, what will she find?
Or is it what she's left behind
That means she hasn't slept?
A tiny dot, so small that I
Can barely see it with my eye
Tis but the vapours that belie
The aircraft high up there;
Up there, so high above the ground
So high that you can scarcely hear
its sound
But all life's stories can be found
Five miles in the air.*

by Nigel Beeton



G M TREVELYAN's - English Social History -
A SURVEY OF SIX CENTURIES Chaucer to Queen Victoria

Henry VIII had founded the Royal Navy. Under Edward VI and Mary it had been permitted to decay. Under Elizabeth it was revived. Yet during the first twenty years of her reign improvement in the royal dockyards was slow. Elizabeth inherited a bankrupt State, and she dared not lay heavy taxes on her impatient and obstinate subjects. Her proverbial parsimony, though sometimes applied in the wrong place, was as a general rule necessary to the bare survival of her government. Moreover, what money she was able to squeeze out for the navy was much of it grossly ill spent. Cecil and the vigilant Privy Council lacked not the will but the technical knowledge to detect and reform the traditional corruption of the shipyards. Then, in a fortunate hour (1578) Elizabeth put John Hawkins in charge of the building and upkeep of her ships. During the decade before the coming of open war, which the Queen had so long and so wisely postponed, Hawkins did as great a work in the dockyards as Drake on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts.

The Queen's money was at last honestly spent for full value received. But Hawkins did more than stop corruption. This great public servant, who in his trading and privateering days between Africa and Spanish America had had experience second only to Drake's, well understood what kind of ships he ought to build for the new kind of warfare. His critics, clinging to the ideas of an older school, clamoured for vessels with a high superstructure, impregnable to assault but difficult to manoeuvre, affording houseroom for crowds of soldiers who would consume the stores. Hawkins would have no more of such castles. In spite of protest he built the Queen's ships low, long in proportion to their beam, easy to handle and heavily gunned. Such a ship was the *Revenge*, destined many years later to justify her designers when she fought the Spanish navy 'for a day and a night.'

Note 1 . Hawkins and a long race of successors carried Negro slaves, crimped on the coast of Africa, to the Spanish colonies of America. But the English seamen as among themselves had the spirit of freedom. They always regarded with horror the use of galley slaves by French and Spaniards. That was not the English idea of the way in which a ship should be manned.

The English merchants, in seeking out more distant markets, were encouraged by the new potentialities of seamanship, and inspired by the adventurous spirit of the age; but they were also compelled along the new course by the closing of old markets nearer home. The loss of Calais,

where the wool Staple had functioned for so many generations past, occurred a few months before Elizabeth ascended the throne. It was a blow to English wool-exporters from which they never fully recovered, as the general trend of things was against them and in favour of their rivals, the manufacturers and merchants of cloth.

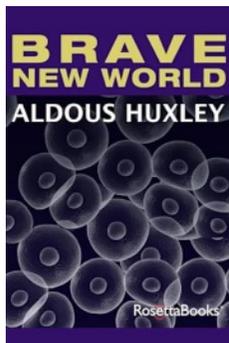
After the loss of Calais there still remained the yet more ancient trade centres of Bruges and Antwerp in the Netherlands, as marts of English wool and cloth. But in the next few years that opening also was closed. The quarrel of the young Elizabeth and her Privy Council with Granvelle, then governing the Netherlands for Philip of Spain, arose from a diversity of political, religious, and economic motives. English piracy in the channel; English friendship with the Protestants in the cities where they traded, encouraged by the magistrates and people of Antwerp; Spanish intolerance of heretical foreigners, all played their part in the breach. But no less important was the economic clash of the two mercantilist policies of Granvelle and Elizabeth. Each side believed that the other was at its mercy. Granvelle was sure that if the English were "forbidden to sell their cloth in the Netherlands they would not be able to sell it anywhere else, and must perforce be content to bring their raw wool to be wrought on the looms of the Netherlands. The English were sure that the Netherlands could not flourish without English trade.

The quarrel came to a head in the first decade of Elizabeth's reign, twenty years before actual war broke out between England and Spain. Excluded from the Netherlands, the English cloth merchants moved in 1567 to Hamburg as their port of entry into Europe, only to be driven thence ten years later by the mercantilist jealousy of the Hanse Towns.'

These changes of market caused much distress and periodic unemployment in the cloth manufacture at home, but gradually new markets were found farther afield. New trading companies were formed in London which successfully pushed trade into Russia, Prussia, the Baltic, Turkey, and the Levant. Persia was first reached by way of the Russian river system, and finally India by way of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1600 the old Queen granted a charter to the East India Company, destined to an economic and political future surpassing all the tales of romance. These new world-wide adventures rescued the trade of England from the otherwise inevitable consequences of the loss of her old markets on the coast opposite to her own shores. The change-over was rendered possible by the adventurous spirit of the capitalists of the City of London, by the quality of the new school of sailors and sea-captains, and by the enterprise of English explorers by land as well as sea.

BOOK REVIEWS

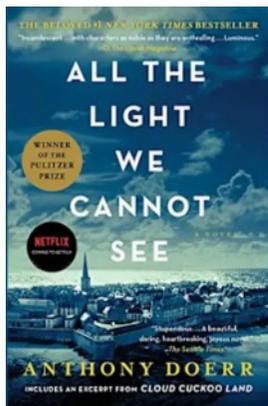
Brave New World Aldous Huxley



Half a millennium from now, in the World State, the watchword is that every one belongs to every one else. No matter what class of human you are bred to be—from the intellectual Alphas to the

Epsilons who provide the manual labour—you are a part of the efficient, well-oiled whole. You are nourished, secure, and blissfully serene thanks to the freely distributed drug called soma. And while sex is strongly encouraged, the old way of procreation is forbidden, eliminating even the pains of childbirth. But when a man and woman journey beyond these confines to where the “savages” reside, and bring back two outsiders, the cracks begin to show.

All the Light We Cannot See Anthony Doerr

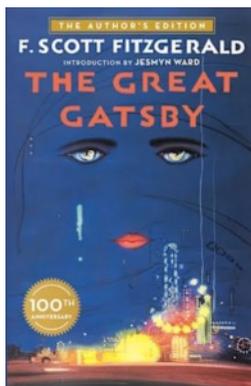


Marie-Laure lives in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where her father works. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris and father and daughter flee

to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure’s reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum’s most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In a mining town in Germany, Werner Pfennig, an orphan, grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find that brings them news and stories from places they have never seen or imagined. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments and is enlisted to use his talent to track down the resistance. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another

The Great Gatsby: F. Scott Fitzgerald

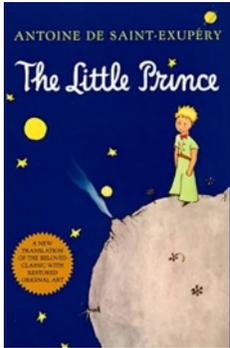


The only edition of the beloved classic that is authorized by Fitzgerald’s family and from his lifelong publisher. This edition is the enduring original text, updated with the author’s

own revisions, a foreword by his granddaughter, and with a new introduction by National Book Award winner Jesmyn Ward. The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s third book, stands as the supreme achievement of his career. First published by Scribner

in 1925, this quintessential novel of the Jazz Age has been acclaimed by generations of readers. The story of the mysteriously wealthy Jay Gatsby and his love for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan is an exquisitely crafted tale of America in the 1920s.

The Little Prince **Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**



Few stories are as widely read and as universally cherished by children and adults alike as *The Little Prince*. Richard Howard's translation of the beloved classic beautifully reflects Saint-

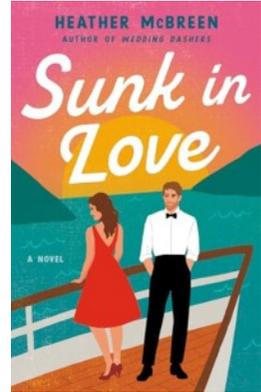
Exupéry's unique and gifted style. Howard, an acclaimed poet and one of the preeminent translators of our time, has excelled in bringing the English text as close as possible to the French, in language, style, and most important, spirit. The artwork in this edition has been restored to match in detail and in colour Saint-Exupéry's original artwork. Combining Richard Howard's translation with restored original art, this definitive English-language edition of *The Little Prince* will capture the hearts of readers of all ages. ##

Sunk in Love **Heather McBrean**

A second chance at love sets sail when a couple on the verge of divorce pretend they're still together for one last family trip, from the author of *Wedding Dashers*.

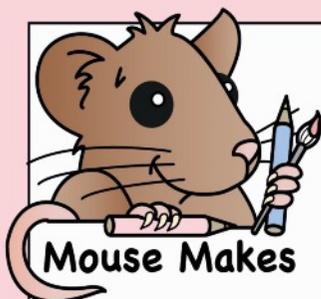
Roslyn and Liam met nine years ago and have been the perfect couple ever since. Through every up and down, every milestone—from Liam's residency to the publication of Roslyn's debut romance—they've been each other's rocks. Until now.

Pulled apart by the untimely death of Roslyn's mom and the undertow of grief, they're now navigating the final wave in their divorce.



Heartbroken and unsure how to tell her family she's called it quits with everyone's favorite son-in-law, Roslyn keeps the impending divorce a secret. But when Roslyn's grandparents ask if Liam can officiate their vow renewal ceremony aboard a Hawaiian cruise during their annual vacation, Roslyn needs to tell the truth or figure out a way to keep her secret. A week trapped at sea with her ex isn't ideal, but neither Roslyn nor Liam want to rock the boat, so they concoct a plan—they'll fake it.

After five years of marriage, they can figure out how to pretend for jungle hikes and mai tais, right? But when reality and make believe starts to blur, and old feelings begin to resurface, Roslyn and Liam have to decide whether it's sink or swim for their marriage.



The Bible has many stories of mothers who had great faith in God. With their love, care, encouragement and prayers their children grew up to be great people of God.



Who saved her baby by putting him in a basket in the river?

Exodus 2:1-3 and 6:20

Who was 90 years old when she had her son Isaac?
Genesis 17:19

Whose prayers for a child were answered by God?
1 Samuel 1:20

Who had two sons called Cain and Abel?
Genesis 4:1-2

Across

- 3. **Obed's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 4. **John's** mother
Luke 1:57-60
- 7. **Reuben's** mother
Genesis 29:32
- 8. **Joseph's** mother
Genesis 30:22-24
- 9. **Jesus'** mother
Acts 1:14

Down

- 1. **Boaz's** mother
Matthew 1:5
- 2. **Solomon's** mother
1 Kings 1:11
- 4. **Timothy's** mother
2 Timothy 1:5
- 5. **Ishmael's** mother
Genesis 16:15
- 6. **Jacob and Esau's** mother
Genesis 25:21-26



Answer the questions then put them into the crossword

Mar26 © deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk



Draw near this Lent

By Michael Beasley, Bishop of Bath and Wells

The Church of England's theme for Lent 2026 is 'Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent'. It's a very different way of thinking about the season. Often, we identify Lent as a time for prayer and fasting when we 'give things up'. More recently many have decided to adopt an opposite approach – of 'taking something up for Lent'. 'Draw near' has a much wider remit. Each week, it invites us to explore a different aspect of Christian discipleship – worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service and sharing the good news with others.

The 'Draw Near' approach fits well with how Lent began. During the Church's earliest days, those wishing to become Christians were known as 'catechumens', people who were learning to live as disciples of Jesus. Preparation was intensive. It took place particularly in the 40 days before new Christians were baptised on the Saturday night before Easter Sunday. Our season of Lent comes from this ancient practice.

When the Church began, it didn't have the trappings we're used to seeing around us such as buildings, hymn books, pews, or paid ministers. Church wasn't an institution. It was known as 'the Way'. Christians met in each other's homes and sought to work out how to follow Jesus in their every day lives. This wasn't so much about head knowledge, believing a particular set of doctrines. It was about the habits and practices that Christians constantly cultivated to help them draw nearer to God who is with us, in us, around us and beside us every moment of every day. 'Draw Near' comes out of this heritage. It's an invitation to make Lent a journey that brings us closer to God.

I invite you to make use of 'Draw Near' this Lent. It includes materials for adults, for families and for children, resources for schools and encouragement for churches. More information can be found at www.cofeio/DrawNear. As we approach Lent, let's draw near and join each other on the journey to God that is the Way.

Somerset Council needs our help to decide where to spend £3.78m it has received from the government, writes Phil Hill.

The war chest has to be used to expand the electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the county.

Residents are being asked to come up with suggestions for where new electric vehicle charge points could be installed.

Under the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, at least 1,606 low-powered public charge port sockets are going to be sited in on-street and car park locations.

A council spokesperson said: “These charge points will be designed for overnight and long-stay charging, particularly benefiting residents who do not have off-street parking and are therefore unable to install a charge point at home.”

A social media post by Somerset Council says: “We’ve already had lots of great suggestions - we’d love to hear more.”

The chargers could be fitted near homes, on local roads or in places that attract high footfall, but the land must be owned by the council.

The spokesperson added: “Suggestions will help the council prioritise sites based on real demand and ensure the county’s charging network meets local needs.”

You can submit a suggested locations online via Somerset Council’s electric vehicle charging page.

All suggested locations will be reviewed against initial assessment criteria such as pavement width, road safety and access to power supply. Cllr Richard Wilkins, Somerset Council’s lead member for transport and waste services, said: “Expanding access to electric vehicle charging is a vital step in supporting residents to make the switch to cleaner, greener transport.

“This investment will help ensure people across Somerset, particularly those without off-street parking, have access to reliable and convenient charging close to where they live.

“By inviting residents to suggest locations, we’re making sure new charge points are installed where they will make the biggest difference to local communities.”

The charging points are scheduled to appear across the county by early 2028 as part of a 17-year concession.

The units will be 3.5kw and 7kw and will be suitable for overnight charging and often integrated into lamp columns. ###

Gardening in March

What is the average weather in March?

March is the first month of meteorological spring and it arrives with the prospect of warmer weather to come. However, although winter is behind us, March can still produce a flashback of frost or snow. Statistically, you're more likely to see snow in March in some parts of the UK than December – the first month of winter.

For all the prospects of cold weather, the sun's rays are gaining in strength as the sun rises ever higher in the sky along with an increasing day length from now until mid-summer. Along the latitude of London, there are two hours more daylight at the end of March than the beginning, and in Edinburgh you can add a further 20 minutes.

We look at averages using the 30-year average data from 1981-2010. Using this we can see changes in temperature, rainfall and sunshine hours in March.

In a typical March, we expect to see around 15 days of ground frost, and on an average of just over seven days we expect to temperatures to fall to 0 °C or below, creating an air frost. These figures vary across the UK with England expecting six days of air frost and Scotland usually seeing around 10 days of air frost. These figures are lower than equivalent figures for February, but frost is still a significant threat for gardeners. Sunshine hours see a dramatic increase during March, when compared with February, with the UK on average seeing over 100 hours of sunshine in an average March,

helping to warm soils. This compares to under 70 sunshine hours during February. With more sunshine and with the sun reaching higher in the sky, the sun's influence on temperatures begins to have a far stronger effect, helping to lift the average maximum air temperature for the UK by over 2 °C to nearly 9 °C, when compared with February. The average maximum temperature for March approaches 10 °C in England. March, on average, has marginally greater rainfall than February.

England on average receives 64mm of rain, while Scotland receives more than double, on average, with 141mm.

Spring arrives.

Spring usually starts to arrive across the country in March, and the longer days provide the opportunity for an increasing range of gardening tasks. It's time to get busy preparing seed beds and sowing seed, and it's your last chance to prune roses.

Prune roses

How to prune roses: general tips

- When tackling roses bear the following in mind;
- Cuts should be no more than 5mm (¼ in) above a bud
- Bud and should slope downwards away from it, so that water does not collect on the bud. This applies to all cuts, whether removing dead wood, deadheading
- Deadheading
- or annual pruning
- Cut to an outward-facing bud to encourage an open-centred shape. With roses of spreading

habit, prune some stems to inward-facing buds

- Buds
- to encourage more upright growth
- Cut to the appropriate height, if a dormant bud
- Dormant bud
- is not visible
- Cuts must be clean, so keep your secateurs sharp. For larger stems, use loppers or a pruning saw
- Prune dieback to healthy white pith
- Cut out dead and diseased stems and spindly and crossing stems
- Aim for well-spaced stems that allow free air flow
- On established roses, cut out poorly flowering old wood and saw away old stubs that have failed to produce new shoots
- With the exception of climbing roses and shrub roses, prune all newly planted roses hard to encourage vigorous shoots
- Trace suckers back to the roots from which they grow and pull them away.

Flower Bulbs: planting

Bulbs make a fine display planted in containers or borders, especially daffodils, snowdrops and tulips in spring. They are one of the easiest and most rewarding garden plants to grow.

Bulbs are useful for adding colour to spring borders. Tulips come in all shades, from dark purple to white, and bloom at a time of year when many plants offer muted colours. Other bulbs, such as snowdrops and scillas, are some of the earliest

flowering plants in the garden, brightening up the short days of very early spring.

Planting summer-flowering bulbs such as lilies and gladioli can provide dramatic, tall blooms that are scented.

Autumn-flowering bulbs, such as nerines, can brighten up the late season with unexpectedly colourful displays.

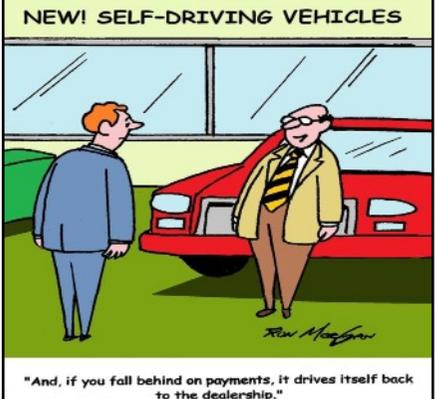
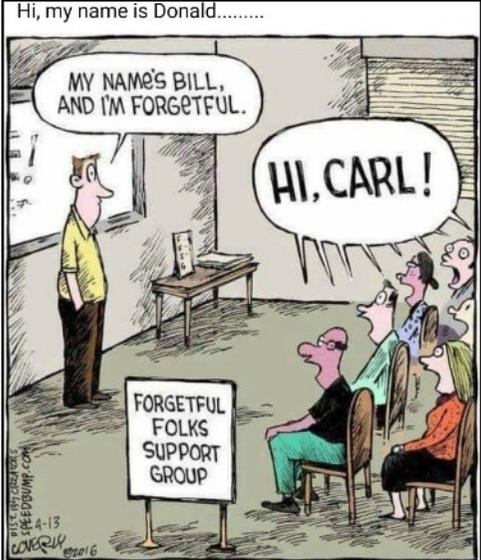
Plant Onions

Onions (*Allium cepa*) are an easy crop to grow, taking up relatively little space and giving reliable harvests that can be used in all kinds of dishes. The crop can be stored too, rather than having to be used straight away, so you won't find yourself overwhelmed by a sudden onion glut.

Onions are usually grown from small bulbs. Bulbs called sets, planted outdoors in spring, or sometimes in autumn. These grow quickly and reliably, with minimal maintenance. Onions can also be grown from seed, although this takes a little more time and care.

More jobs for this month

- Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials.
- Plant early potatoes
- Mow the lawn on dry days (if needed).
- Cut back herbaceous perennials and ornamental grasses that have been left standing over winter.
- Keep a few dandelions in your garden to support early bees, particularly pantaloon bees.
- Prune Buddleia to a low framework of stems to encourage new flowering growth. ##



SMILE LINES

At a wedding ceremony when the pastor said, "Speak now or forever hold your peace." The moment of silence was broken by a young beautiful woman carrying a child. She stood up and started walking slowly toward the pastor.

All hell broke loose.

The bride threw the bouquet on the floor and burst out crying. Then the groom's mother fainted.

The best man fidgeted, wondering how to save the situation.

The pastor said to the woman, "Why have you come forward? What do you have to say?"

There was absolutely thundering silence in the church as the woman replied, "We can't hear in the back."

How God works

A grandmother was taking her young grandson for a walk in the park. The daffodils were in bloom, and it was a beautiful Spring day. Wanting to encourage her grandson's spiritual understanding of the world, she said: "Doesn't it look like an artist painted this scenery? Did you know God did all this?"

Her grandson replied: "Oh yes, and God did it left-handed, too." In astonishment, the grandmother asked what he meant. "Well, He must have done," said her grandson, "because we learned at church last week that Jesus sits on God's right hand."

Adam and Eve's true nationality

A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian were viewing a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden. "Look at that garden they are

maintaining so well," mused the Brit.

"They must be British."

"Nonsense," the Frenchman disagreed.

"They're naked, and so beautiful.

Clearly, they are French."

"Ah, but no clothes, no shoes, no shelter," the Russian pointed out,

"they have only an apple to eat, and they're being told this is Paradise.

They are Russian."

How high?!

Winging his way to America from Ireland, Father O'Leary asked a stewardess, "How high is this plane, Miss?" The stewardess replied, "About 32,000 feet, Father." The priest's jaw dropped in amazement. "Who'd have believed it? And could you tell me how wide it is?"

**

Present

For the elderly minister's 75th birthday, the congregation at St Mary's decided to give him a present of a new suit. He was so moved by the gift that the following Sunday he stood before everyone and began his homily with a tear in his eye, saying: "Today I am preaching to you in my birthday suit."

**

Who'd be a mother?

Constant nagging didn't seem to provide any relief from having to clean up the bathroom after each of my three teenage children. After I cleaned it one day, I resorted to posting a sign that read: "Please leave the bathroom as you found it."

I noticed the bathroom was in the usual mess after my son used it, so I called, "Brian, how did you find the bathroom?" After a brief pause, he

replied, "Straight down the hall, first door on the right."

**

Naughty mummy

A mother asked her young son, as they waited for the bus, to tell the driver he was five years old, because then he would ride for free. As they got into the bus the driver asked him how old he was. "I am five years old," said the little boy proudly.

The driver had a son of his own that age, and so he smiled. "And when will you be six years old?" he asked.

"When I get off the bus," answered the boy.

**

Sent away

An irritated mother complained to her friend: "When I was a kid, my parents sent me to my room without supper if I misbehaved. But my son has his own TV, smartphone and computer in his room!"

"So how do you handle it?" her friend asked.

"I send him to MY room!"

**

Politicians welcome

At the pearly gates, St Peter greeted a church minister and member of Parliament and gave them their room keys. "Vicar, here are the keys to one of our nice single rooms. And for you, Mr MP, the keys to our finest penthouse suite."

"This is unfair!" cried the minister.

"Listen," St Peter said, "ministers are a ten a penny up here, but this is the first MP we've ever seen."

**

An MIT linguistics professor was lecturing his class the other day. "In English," he said, "A double negative forms a positive. However, in

some languages, such as Russian, a double negative remains a negative. But there isn't a single language, not one, in which a double positive can express a negative." A voice from the back of the room said, "Yeah, right."

After a prolonged drought when the rain came, all the animals in the forest were happy except the Kangaroo. When the others asked him what the reason was for such sadness, the Kangaroo revealed that the rain meant that all its kids would now be playing inside.

Mother's Day.

Two children ordered their mother to stay in bed one Mother's Day morning. As she lay there looking forward to breakfast in bed, the smell of bacon floated up from the kitchen. But after a good long wait she finally went downstairs to investigate. She found them both sitting at the table eating bacon and eggs. "As a surprise for Mother's Day," one explained, "we decided to cook our own breakfast."

Two crows were in a field when they noticed a figure that looked like a man in the distance. "See that over there? What is that?", says the first crow. The second crow takes a long look, "That's a scarecrow. Looks authentic, doesn't it." "How can you tell it's a scarecrow and not a person?", replies the first crow. "Look at it's hand. No cellphone", says the second crow.

*&***

What's the difference between ignorance and apathy? I don't know and I don't care.

Letter from St James the Least of All

Happily, the Church of England still retains some singular parish clergy. Take the parish of St James-the-Least-of-All, for example. Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained... by the Revd Gary Bowness.

On how to run a church council meeting

*The Rectory
St James the Least of All*

My dear Nephew Darren

Clearly, the sight of your vicar running out of the room halfway through your last church council meeting, saying he should have stayed as a traffic warden, where he was universally liked, has unnerved you. It would have unnerved me too, since a universally popular traffic warden is an exceptional creature.

But perhaps it is necessary to give you some advice for the day when you do have to chair your first church council meeting.

- 1. Consider every agenda issue carefully beforehand and decide what you would like to do. Then, at the meeting, consult widely, listen to every opinion, weigh all the arguments, and then do precisely what you had decided before the meeting ever took place.*
- 2. Never, ever, let council members discuss hymns, which avoids getting blood on the carpets.*
- 3. Arrange the seating in rows, all facing the front, so that everyone must respond directly to you. The last thing you want is for council members to be able to discuss matters freely with one another.*
- 4. Start smoking a pipe. At those times when you are faced with an issue when you really are unsure of how to respond, taking out your pipe, dismantling it, searching for a pipe cleaner, squinting down the stem to see if it is clean, mopping out the goo in the bowl, searching for your tobacco pouch, filling the pipe, tamping it down, asking if you can borrow matches and attempting to light it several times over, will give you more than sufficient time to formulate a reply. Once you have perfected the routine, the silence will have been so protracted, that most of the committee will have long forgotten what the question was anyway.*
- 5. If someone is talking too long, consult your diary, noisily and obsessively, about next month's appointments, or write a note to a committee member who is at the back of the room and get it passed to him. The speaker should soon get the message.*

These are the simpler techniques of committee management. The advanced procedures must wait until you are strong enough to bear them.

*Your loving uncle,
Eustace*

Regular weekly events

MONDAYS

10.00-11am Nia (Dance fitness) HUB
10.00-12noon Painting Group FBC
1.30-4.00pm Whist Club FBC
2.00-4.00pm Bridge (except 1st
Monday) FBC
6.15-7.15pm Zumba HUB
7.30pm Tone Big Band (1st & 3rd
Mon) HUB

TUESDAYS

6.15-7.00am Group Fitness Training
HUB
10.30-11.30am Qigong HUB
1.30-2.30pm Tai Chi HUB
10.00-4.00pm Board Games FBC
7.00-8.00pm Yoga HUB

WEDNESDAYS

10.00-11.00am Pilates for Everyone
HUB
10.00- 11.00am Flexercise FBC
11.00-12noon Mum and Baby Pilates
HUB
2.00- 4.30pm Short Mat Bowls HUB
6.00- 7.00pm Tae Kwon Do HUB

THURS DAYS

6.15-7.00am Group Fitness Training
HUB
10.00-12noon Baby Badgers HUB
10.00-12noon Bridge Club FBC
2.00-4.00pm Croquet FBC

FRIDAYS

8.30-1.00 pm Star Bubs HUB
10.00-12noon Pétanque FBC
10.00-12noon Frank's Café FBC
4.45-8.15pm Martial Arts HUB

SATURDAYS

6.30-7.15am Group Fitness Training
HUB
9.30-11.30am Hub Gardening Club
HUB
9.00pm Bingo Con Club

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

YOUR SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

John Hunt (Independent)
07880 794554
john.hunt@somerset.gov.uk
Cllr Caroline Ellis 07473 119425
cjellis1968@googlemail.com

Your Member of Parliament

Gideon John Amos Lib/Dem

SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR RESIDENTS

Taunton Citizens advice - 0808 278
7842

Village Agent - 01823 331 222

Mindline, a 24/7 phoneline available
to support people of all ages offering
a listening and advice service for
wellbeing. You can call Mindline on
01823 27689. Information about
childcare [http://www.
childcarechoices.gov.uk/](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/)

Taunton Foodbank
[https://taunton.foodbank.org.uk/get-
help/](https://taunton.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/)

Free support and advice about:
Money, food, home, health and
wellbeing, domestic abuse, problems
with drugs and alcohol and
parenting visit:

[www.connectsomerset.org.uk/help4
all](http://www.connectsomerset.org.uk/help4all)

BISHOP'S HULL FACILITIES

BH Parish Council - Helen
McGladdery 07518144614
clerk@bishophullparishcouncil.go
v.uk

BH Pre School - 07928 950230
BH Primary School - 331624
Castle School - 274073
Spring Nursery - 793506

Community Room & School Hall
Rick Moon 354908

Frank Bond Centre - Nadia 07958
246046

Neighbourhood Beat Team

PCSO Lyndsay Smith & PCSO
Marshall Bernhardt
Call 101 or 999 in emergency
lyndsay.smith@avonandsomerset.police.uk
marshall.bernhardt@avonandsomerset.police.uk

Robin Close Hall - 356389

St Peter & St Paul Parish Church
Rev. Phil Hughes 336102

BISHOP'S HULL ORGANISATIONS

BH Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Show
- Amanda Gallacher 337720

Bishop's Hull HUB -
booking: bhhubbookings@gmail.com
General enquiries and events:
bishopshullhub@gmail.com
Bishops Hull Hub cafe -
bishopshullhubcafe@gmail.com

BH Short Mat Bowls - Alan Chapman
01823 630641
bhsmbc@yahoo.com

BHVH & Playing Fields Trust -
Paul Bulbeck 283941

BH WI — Sue Hazelwood 01823
323986

British Martial Arts and Boxing
Association Tae Kwon Do
alecmhay@aol.com

Brownies - Sheena Grinter 331184

Community Woodland Volunteer -
David 272415

Nia (Dance Fitness) - Jackie
07949735139

FBC Activities - Carolyn 283941

Infinity Martial Academy - Jon 07736
714370

jonakkc@hotmail.co.uk
Pilates - Larissa
lapilates7@gmail.com / larissa@lapilates.com

Somerset Hills Chorus - Brenda
Palfrey 07857 244272

Tae Kwon Do - Sebastian Morey-
Weale 07900 517767

Tai Chi - Bev Fernandes 07880
555984

Zumba - Felicity 07939 580327

REFUSE / RECYCLING
/GARDEN COLLECTIONS

Dates below taken from Somerset
Council Website.

Please note new day for recycling and
refuse collections.

**Recycling: Every Thursday - all
areas**

BISHOP'S HULL, SHUTEWATER,
UPCOTT & BARR

Refuse: Thursday

Garden: Monday

RUMWELL

Refuse: Thursday

Garden: Wednesday

STONEGALLOWS

Refuse: Thursday

Garden: Monday

BH COUNCIL PRIVACY
STATEMENT AND POLICY

[http://www.bishopshull.org.uk/
Parish/BHPCprivacyNotice.pdf](http://www.bishopshull.org.uk/Parish/BHPCprivacyNotice.pdf)

[http://www.bishopshull.org.uk/
parish/BHPCprivacyPolicy.pdf](http://www.bishopshull.org.uk/parish/BHPCprivacyPolicy.pdf)

SERVICES AT ST PETER & ST PAUL MARCH 2026

Sunday 1 March Lent 2	Holy Communion Holy Communion	8:00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	Will Osmond	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17 (1131); John 3:1-17 (1065)
Wednesday 4 March	Holy Communion	10.00 a.m.		
Sunday 8 March Lent 3	Holy Communion Holy Communion	8.00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	David Ager	Romans 5:1-11 (1132); John 4:5-42 (1066)
Wednesday 11 March	Holy Communion	10.00 a.m.		
Sunday 15 March Lent 4	Holy Communion Holy Communion Mothering Sunday	8:00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	Sue Martin	Ephesians 5:8-14 (1176); John 9:1-41 (1075)
Wednesday 18 March	Holy Communion	10.00 a.m.		
Sunday 22 March Lent 5	Holy Communion Holy Communion	8:00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	Sally Adams	Romans 8:6-11 (1134); John 11:1-45 (1077)
Wednesday 25 March	Holy Communion	10.00 a.m.		
Sunday 29 March Palm Sunday	Holy Communion Holy Communion	8:00 a.m. 10.00 a.m.	TBA	<i>Special readings for Palm Sunday</i>



CHURCH DIRECTORY (01823)

Church web site: www.stpeterandstpaul.org.uk

Vicar:

Rev. Philip Hughes

336102

(Usual day off - Friday)

phil2overflowing@gmail.com



Rev Philip Hughes

Church Wardens: Tim Venn John Perry

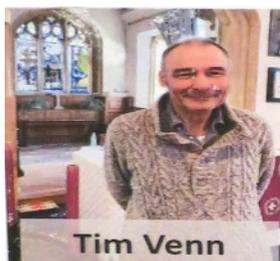
Treasurer Rachel Horder

Electoral Roll Officer Hilary Harper

Safeguarding Officer: Beverley Keitch

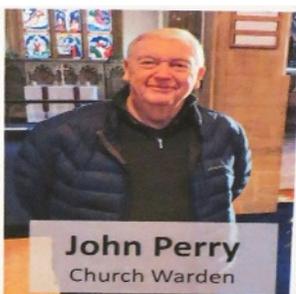
Other PCC Members - Rachel Horder. Mark Dakin

Sue Martin Hilary Harper . Lillian Priest



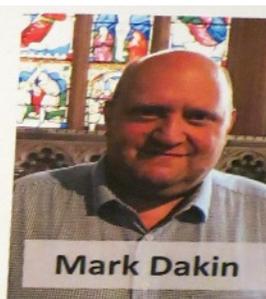
Tim Venn

Church Warden



John Perry

Church Warden



Mark Dakin

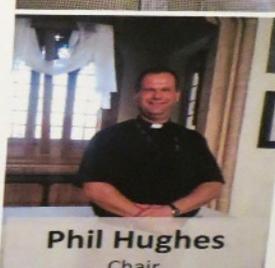


Sue Martin



Rachel Horder

PCC Treasurer



Phil Hughes

Chair



Hilary Harper

Electoral Roll Officer



Beverley Keitch

Parish Safeguarding
Officer



Lillian Priest