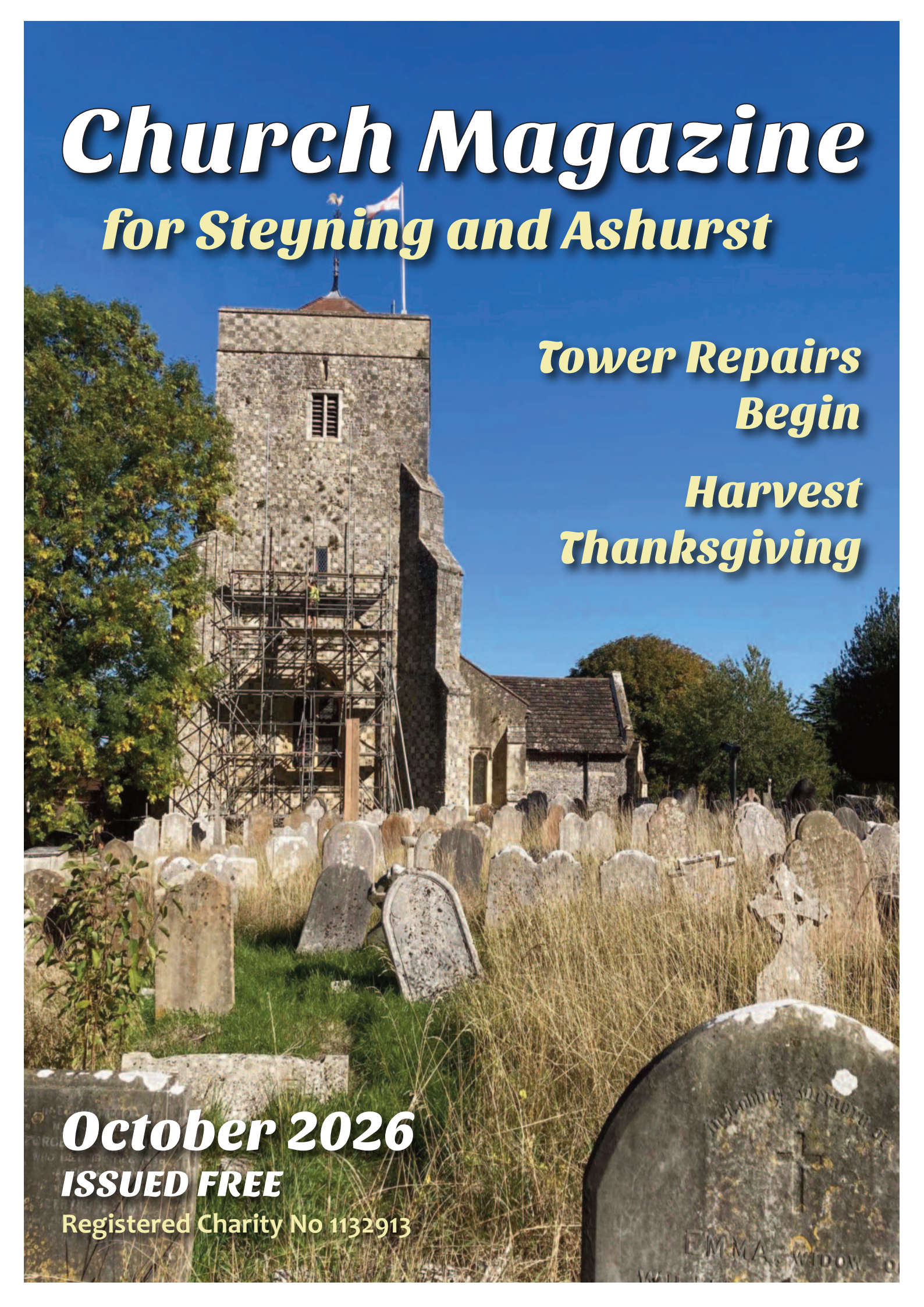


The background of the magazine cover is a photograph of a church with a prominent stone tower. The tower is partially covered in scaffolding, indicating ongoing repairs. A flag flies from the top of the tower. In the foreground, there is a cemetery with numerous gravestones of various shapes and sizes, some of which are partially obscured by tall grass. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Church Magazine

for Steyning and Ashurst

***Tower Repairs
Begin***

***Harvest
Thanksgiving***

October 2026

ISSUED FREE

Registered Charity No 1132913

THE RETURN OF THE MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA!

In Aid of Family Support Work

Featuring
Steyning Parish Church Choir and Music
Group, together with members of
Steyning Primary School Choir as our
special guests

Saturday 3rd October
4pm - 5.30pm
Steyning Parish Church

Tickets £8 (children under 16 free)

Includes refreshments.

Payable on the door (cash if possible) and in
church after the 9.30am service during September



CANDLELIT TAIZÉ

On 4th Sunday of the month

at 6pm. (lasting about 40 minutes)



Meditative chants, prayers and silence
fostering a spirit of peace,
reconciliation and faith.

Next Taizé – 25th October

**St Andrew & St Cuthman
Parish Church, Steyning**

Join us for breakfast
on
Saturday, 3rd October
9-10.30am (Doors open 8.45)
at The Hub
19, Church Lane
Upper Beeding, BN44 3HP

Parking is only available onsite
for those with limited mobility



The Sussex Charity for Children
Since 1890

Tickets £6

from: The Hub Cafe
Steyning Bookshop (cash only)
The local churches
Or Contact: events@sdct.org.uk



Michelle Stokes

Our speaker works for **FSW** which supports families across Sussex. Locally Michelle assists with Positive Play at the Hub. She also works in the Storrington and the Petworth Deanery supporting families who have various needs. This is mainly by home visits, supported meetings, telephone calls and supported activities. She also runs a toddler drop in and visits a primary school regularly.



SDCT

Ashurst, Bramber, Buncton,
Steyning & Upper Beeding

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Cover Picture: Work begins, as we close for printing, with erecting the scaffolding for the tower roof repair at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's. Pilbeam, our contractor, will be working until December.

Magazine Donations

If you enjoy this Church Magazine and would like to make a donation towards the costs, we would be very grateful.

BACS transfers with reference 'Magazine Donation' can be made to: Sort Code 30-99-93, Account 03220862. If you are a UK tax payer and fill in the Gift Aid slip, we can recover an extra 25p for every £1 you donate. Thank you.



I wish to Gift Aid my donation to 'Steyning Parochial Church Council' to help meet the expenses of the Church Magazine. We suggest an annual donation of at least £12

Title Surname Forenames

House No/name Postcode Date

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income Tax and /or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Please notify Steyning Parish Church if you / cancel this declaration / change your name or home address / no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

Registered Charity No: 1132913

Prayer Diary for October

4 October, Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy.

11 October, Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts.

18 October, Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty and everlasting God, in Christ you have revealed your glory among the nations: Preserve the works of your mercy, that your church throughout the world may persevere with steadfast faith in the confession of your name.

19 October, Luke, Physician and Evangelist (transferred from 18 October)

Almighty God, you called Luke the physician, whose praise is in the gospel, to be an evangelist and physician of the



soul: by the grace of the Spirit and through the wholesome medicine of the Gospel, give your church the same love and power to heal.

25 October Last Sunday after Trinity

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

28 October, Simon and Jude, Apostles

Almighty God, who built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ himself as the chief cornerstone: so join us together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you.

A Harvest Prayer

Loving creator God, the whole earth proclaims your glory. Everywhere we look we see your handiwork. Help us to enjoy the earth gently and to work so that all may be fed. We pray for those who work the land both nearby and in different countries. May they receive a just reward for their labour and may their work both as food producers and stewards of the land be honoured. In Jesus' name.

Do not forget

25 October sees the end of British Summer Time when the clocks go back by one hour. Remember to adjust your clocks.

Pastoral Letter

I am old enough to remember when the only 'fast food' was fish and chips. Fast food isn't necessarily bad for you, if part of a balanced diet, and I'll admit to consuming my fair share over the years. But however quickly a burger or whatever can be assembled, the contents still have to come from somewhere.

A typical hamburger for example contains salad, eggs and oil, as well as all the ingredients of mayonnaise and tomato sauce, not to mention the wheat flour and all the ingredients of the bread roll that holds it all together. Even fast food does not appear by magic. The ingredients come from innumerable sources - whether animal or vegetable, farmed on land or fished at sea.

Fast food is one thing: fast eating is another. It is so easy nowadays to find ourselves eating or drinking in too much of a rush, so eating becomes more like re-fuelling. Often, we don't even stop. Public places are full of people stuffing food into their mouths 'on the go'. I remember the good advice that if you don't want to put on too much weight you should put your knife and fork down between every mouthful. That is also a great way to stop and savour a meal. There is a lot to be said for sitting down at a table and eating properly.

There's much to be said too for pausing and saying grace before we eat. It's a chance not only to say thank you that we have anything to eat at all (and to remember that so many people don't have enough), but also to call to mind all the effort that goes into getting food to our tables, especially as we prepare for our Harvest Festivals at Steyning and Ashurst.



Fr Mark

Friends of Steyning Parish Church

AGM and QUIZ

**Saturday 10 October
In the Penfold Hall**

6pm Annual General Meeting
6:30 for 7pm Quiz
(by Derek Vine)

*Wine and soft drinks available
by donation. Cash preferred,
card reader available
Please bring a snack for the
interval.*

Harvest Thanksgiving Services 2026

At St Andrew's & St Cuthman's, Steyning:

Sunday 4 October

9:30am Sung Harvest Festival Eucharist
4pm Family Harvest Thanksgiving
6pm Reflections for Harvest (see p6)

At St James's Ashurst:

Sunday 11 October

10:30am Family Harvest Festival Service

Please remember your non-perishable harvest
gifts for Family Support Work (see p15)

FROM THE EDITOR

As I write this, voting begins for the new Church of England General Synod. This is the church's governing body, responsible for making important decisions over the next five year period.

The General Synod authorises worship, debates matters of religious and public interest, and approves the budget for the work of the whole Church. Important topics for the new Synod include safeguarding, clergy well-being and 'Living in Love and Faith' (i.e. matters of gender and sexuality).

If we are to be an inclusive and progressive church, we regard all of these as areas of great importance. We acknowledge the wide diversity of opinion and seek for all to be fairly represented, and free to express their views and practice according to their conscience.

The Diocese of Chichester elects six clergy and seven lay members. All nominated candidates have published addresses which can be found on the Chichester Diocese website. Votes can be cast by members of the deanery synods – lay members vote for the lay seats, while clergy vote for the clergy candidates. Although we will be voting according to our own preferences, we are conscious that we need to reflect the views of our congregations. So if you have any strong views or preferences, please let one of our lay deanery synod representatives (John Edwards, Penny Warner, Wendy Francis or me for Steyning; Deborah Hanson or Susie Fischel for Ashurst) know before mid-October, so we can take all views into account.

Sunday Notices

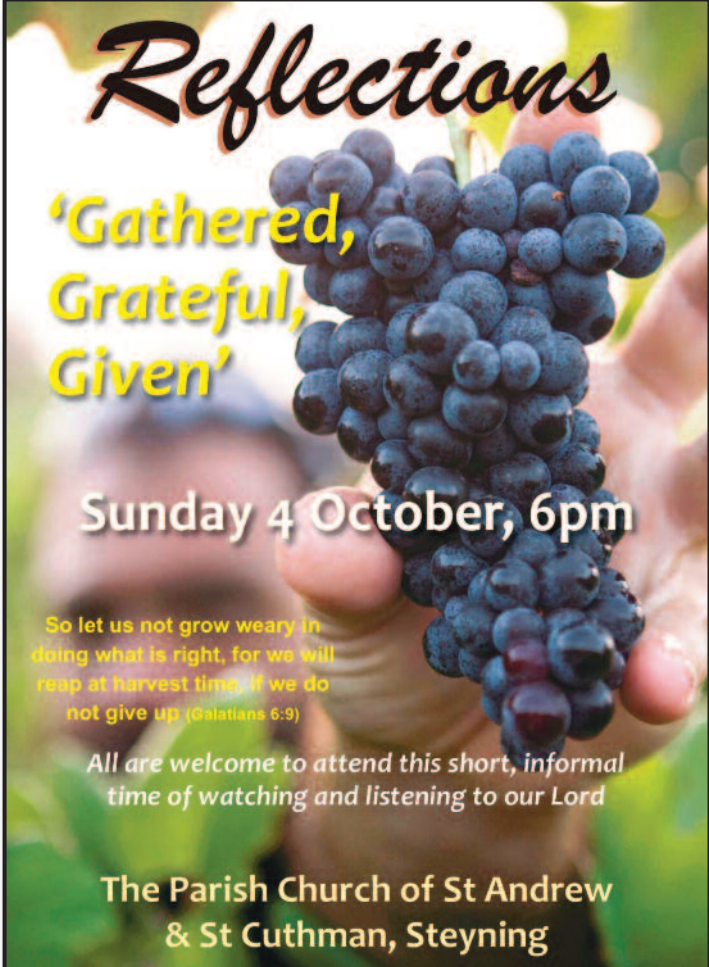
The weekly notice sheet, sent from the parish office every Saturday, gives all the information about services, news and events. There is also the list of those needing our prayers. If you would like to receive this sheet please contact:

office@steyningparishchurch.org
or ring 01903 813276

To add any new prayer requests contact:

prayers@steyningparishchurch.org
or ring 01903 813276

Reflections Service



Reflections

**'Gathered,
Grateful,
Given'**

Sunday 4 October, 6pm

So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up (Galatians 6:9)

All are welcome to attend this short, informal time of watching and listening to our Lord

**The Parish Church of St Andrew
& St Cuthman, Steyning**

'Reflections' is a quiet contemplative time of about 40 minutes, with readings, prayer and music built around a 10-12 minute period of silence.

Taizé Services at Steyning Parish Church

We have been holding a regular Taizé Service at Steyning Parish Church, with occasional gaps, on the fourth Sunday of the month at 6pm since the first one in November 2024.

Taizé itself is a small village in the east of France. It is, and has been, the home to an ecumenical Christian monastic community of brothers since the late 1940s.

It was started in the aftermath of the Second World war and set out to establish itself as a community of spiritual reconciliation and harmony. Nearly 80 years later it is still welcoming thousands of mainly younger visitors each year.

The Taizé community is probably best known for the incredible body of song in the form of chants which, according to Cynthis Bourgeault, an American episcopal priest, emerged virtually spontaneously as the community began to reach out to the world's youth. The words of the chants are often short lines from the Bible that speak of God's love for us and our longing for him, put to music. They are sung over and over again so that they become embedded in our hearts.

Worship in the style of Taizé is a simple service with the chants, Bible readings and often silent prayer. Our service at Steyning follows that pattern.

We have three or four Taizé chants followed by a short Bible reading which is usually the short reading from Taizé for that day. The reading is followed by a period of silence for reflection,

meditation and prayer and after the silence we have more Taizé chants, with another, much shorter, silence before the last chant. The service lasts between 35 and 40 minutes.

From my own experience, what I like about our Taizé service is that it is a form of prayer which encourages a stillness and calmness in the presence of God

through the listening to or participation in the Taizé chants and using the silence to connect with God through reflection, prayer and meditation.

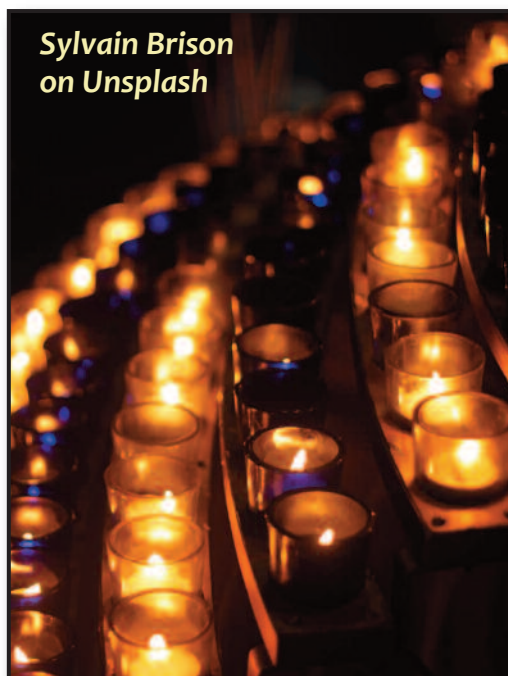
At Steyning we have a Taizé team who select the songs and reading for the service and prepare the Church in readiness, using candlelight and soft lighting as much as we can to create an atmosphere of welcome and calmness. We ask people to leave silently if possible to maintain that sense of peace and stillness until outside the church.

We hope to welcome you at a Taizé service.

The dates for the rest of the year, all at 6pm are:

- Sunday 25 October;
- Sunday 22 November.

David Littlejohns



Saint of the Month

JAMES HANNINGTON, BISHOP AND MARTYR (1847-1885)

James Hannington was born at Hurstpierpoint in Sussex in 1847, the son of one of the owners of Hannington's department store in Brighton.

He was an indifferent student and left school at fifteen to work at the store. At the age of twenty-one he decided to be ordained and studied at Oxford, obtaining his BA in 1874. He was ordained deacon in that year and was priested in 1875.

After a curacy in Devon, Hannington became priest in charge of St George's Chapel, Hurstpierpoint until 1882 when he volunteered to serve as a missionary in East Africa, influenced by hearing of the deaths of missionaries in Buganda (now part of Uganda). A long trek was needed to reach his mission station and Hannington was taken ill with fever and dysentery, twice being given up for dead.

On his return to England the Church Missionary Society Medical Board ruled that he should never return to Africa. However, in 1884 a new diocese was created for Eastern Equatorial Africa and Hannington, now fully recovered, was asked to become the first bishop. He was consecrated as bishop by Archbishop Benson at Lambeth on St John the Baptist Day 1884.

In January 1885 he again sailed for Africa and began by visiting his clergy in the coastal region. One commented that "he was beloved by every missionary. He could be so firm and, at the same time, so kind and considerate."



In July 1885 he prepared to visit his flock in inland Buganda. The ruler, Mwanga, was no friend of European missionaries and Harrington was told that they had

suffered at his hands. As a result the new bishop decided to visit them as soon as possible and, ignoring advice, he travelled the quickest route taken by Buganda's enemies including German imperialists.



Memorial to James Hannington in Holy Trinity Church, Hurstpierpoint

The Bugandans seemed unable to distinguish between different nationalities of white men. On entering the region, the bishop and his party were detained by the local chief, who sent messengers to Mwanga for instructions as to what he should do with his prisoners. The answer came that they should be put to death.

The chief carried out the instruction and Bishop Harrington and his party were speared to death on 29 October 1885. As a result, the Christians in the country were persecuted, many being killed or sold to Arab slavers.

The whereabouts of the bishop's body were unknown for seven years until a follower of Mwanga disclosed it to a missionary. This led to the bishop's remains being re-interred in Namirembe Cathedral, Kampala.



Bishop Hannington Memorial Church, Hove

The Church of England commemorates the martyrdom of James Hannington on 29 October, the date of his death. His story became front page news in England and there is a memorial to him in Hurstpierpoint Parish Church as well as a parish church which was built in Hove in 1938/9, consecrated as Bishop Hannington Memorial Church.

Steyping Parochial Church Council

The PCC met again, in church, on 9 September. Following prayers, agreement of the previous minutes, a discussion on matters arising, and a welcome to Mary Evans, who has now joined the PCC, we received the regular reports. Financially, things are proceeding according to budget, but we still need to see increased regular giving. Giving to other causes direct from church funds was raised; we will carry on as at present with all money raised in church accounts used to support our own running costs, alongside 'red bucket' appeals, but when we get into surplus we will revisit the subject.

The churchyard path extra lighting has been successfully completed, which will make a real difference to the Shooting

Field entrance and pathway. The tower roof work was soon to begin, though start had been delayed by one week to 21 September.

As we were in Creationtide, we had identified a need for somebody to take on Eco-Church coordination with a view to upgrading our Silver award to Gold. This could possibly be handled by the churchyard team if a new volunteer does not come forward. It would mean more households signing up to the Creation Care initiative.

There was a further discussion on the proposed new worshipping community at Steyping Grammar School. The PCC still has many questions and cannot make a decision about supporting the proposal without full consultation.



Photo by seungju lee on Unsplash

It is a really lovely evening of games, hot chocolate and laughter that Gary, our Families and Children's worker, runs for all families in this community at Hallowe'en. All children should have fun with their carer or parent at this time and I think all adults love a cup of hot chocolate on a chilly evening! Do go and join in.

The Hallowe'en world that children inhabit today is one that I have watched grow and develop slowly through my many adult years, but I believe it all began way back, with Celtic festivals like Samhain, and then developed into the important Christian festival of All Hallows' Eve (the evening before All Saints' Day). Our saints are important, and remembered in churches, from large cathedrals to the smallest village church, because we learn from those who have walked on earth before us, and who have been able to live a life that is true to their faith, with their eyes fixed on Jesus.

I know this October I will again enjoy seeing the fields of pumpkins that are grown for all of us to try out carving a face and then, most importantly, to place a light inside, showing clearly the strength and power of light over darkness.

Children love to dress up at Hallowe'en. Dressing up generally, has changed greatly since my own time after the war, but to watch the firefighter, the princess, the skeleton, the lion or the ghost all having fun as their noisy characters, is real play that is helping to shape each individual's own identity, morals and character. There is something mysterious about dressing up at any time of life, about how it can change our identity. Actors tell us so.

In Colossians 3 Paul is writing to the people of Colossae because he is worried about them. He is encouraging them to take a long hard look at themselves and about the kind of lives they are living, their identity as

Christians. He uses the metaphor for Christian life as stripping off the negative and dirty clothes we all wear, and when proclaiming our love for Jesus we are then putting on something new. Paul gives examples of negative, dirty clothes as being fornication, greed and idolatry because that is what he saw the Colossians were like. Then he goes on to say that the new clothes Jesus would have them wear would be ones of compassion, kindness, patience and above all love.

That was Colossae in Paul's time. Has the world changed since then? Would you change the examples of dirty clothes people wear in today's world? Would you think the same new clothes are required for the world to put on?

What old or worn-out clothes would you like to strip off yourself? What new clothes would make a real difference to your life?

To me, this passage paints quite a lovely picture of an assortment of new clothes. I can then

peer in the wardrobe to take just one new piece of clothing, a large shawl this time, and wrap myself warmly in it and name it. Patience. Maybe not because the old wrap was completely thread-bare or covered-in-mud-dirty, but because I need to think about asking God to change me from the inside, not just what I look like from the outside. I truly believe that God changes our hearts and our spirits and it is then that we become even more loving, even more kind, even more patient and definitely more forgiving. Even if you are

seen by others to be all those things, God can help us, through his infinite grace and healing mercy to become more so. Who wouldn't want that? The decision is ours to make.

Many people do not remember their baptism. I don't, but I do love being part of other baptism services whether they be for babies, young people or adults. There is, for me, one part that is always so special. When the priest anoints the candidate with holy oil, I am so moved by the thought that this is Holy Blessed Oil and it will permeate through the skin, never, ever to be washed away, but stay working on the inside creating that new loving member of God's church here on earth. Cleansed on the inside and the outside.

I don't know how you feel in your clothes today – but inside, what does that feel like? Are there difficult

emotions, or temptations? A tiny chunk of the same old, or are we out there pretending to others perhaps? We

don't have to pretend to wear this designer-couturier perfect outfit, or for us to own jeans having the 'right' label, but it is the 'who we really are' label that truly matters. My 'more patient' shawl, I hope I will grow into.

Hallowe'en is an evening for imagination, for play and for trying on a new 'identity' costume, allowing that child inside me to dress up too, wearing something new that helps me to set my eyes on Christ ... it's your choice and it's my choice.

Chris Fitton

***It is the
'who we really are'
label that truly matters***

Flood hitting the Gyirong Port crossing on the China–Nepal border
(attribution unknown)

2026-08-26 10:59:53 星期三



The Nepal Landslide – God’s Responsibility? Our Response?

An African refugee friend posted recently that the Nepal landslide has severely shaken his faith. What is God up to? Good question. We sent our friend a book by Rabbi Harold Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. I hope it arrives and I hope it helps him. It is part of an answer, at least.

I decided a long time ago that it’s a mystery why God allows disasters. When anyone says that to me, I usually find it an annoying ‘cop out’, but in a sense it is true. I decided I will never work out the problem of suffering as a philosophical puzzle. If God is all good, all powerful and all-knowing, why do these things happen? If you find an answer to this conundrum, let me know. Rabbi Kushner in a wonderful last chapter says many wise things – including this: “God, who neither causes nor prevents tragedies, helps by inspiring people to help.” (pp165-6).

Further, I think if you believe in a God who could do something about major human tragedy, like Auschwitz or war or famine, but doesn’t, I would think about your theology again. I don’t believe God is cruel, incompetent or lazy. Maybe the world we live in already comes with some operating instructions. As my Dad used to say, “If at first you don’t succeed, check the supplier’s manual”. The operating instructions include the Bible, properly understood, prayer and reflection, but also trying to find out how the world actually works – especially with regard to climate change, injustice and war.

In a finite world and as finite people who will all die, some measure of suffering is built in. There is a traditional distinction between natural disaster and man-made ones – I prefer to say ‘humanly-created’ – but we humans do have to take most of the blame.

Maybe God gave people free will and can't or won't protect if powerful people are wilfully stupid, cruel and are determined to wreck the planet for us all. Empathy and intelligence are the key. An earlier generation of Christians, in a more confident age in 1910 proclaimed achieving the "evangelisation of the world in this generation." My motto is different – "stopping the vandalism of the world in this generation". What has this got to do with Nepal and the horrible landslide?

Some readers of this (I suspect quite a lot) will remember the Aberfan disaster over 60 years ago in Wales. The theologian, W.H. Vanstone reflected on this disaster in his wonderful book *Love's Endeavour, Love's Expense*. (It is worth trying get hold of a copy and [re]reading it. He was one of the few theologians I wish had written more). What happened at Aberfan was that the waste material from a coal mine had been piled up near the mine and near the place where many of the coal miners and their families lived. Heavy rain meant that the mountain of waste became unstable and slid down burying the village school, killing many children. Where was God? Vanstone suggested that God was not watching in detachment from above the top of the mountain, but was to be found at the bottom of the mountain suffering with the victims and their families and motivating the rescuers to help. I heard Jon Sobrino, a Jesuit whose community were wiped out by the military in El Salvador, give a reflection about 40 years ago in London on the Spiritual:

Were you there when they crucified my Lord? He said that the first job of the church is to be where people suffer – from that place, we can then begin to see what we can do to help.

There are wholly natural disasters. Most earthquakes are like that. (I think you could cause an earthquake by fracking, but that is another story). But I also think the distinction between natural disasters and those which are humanly-created is often not so hard and fast. Looking back, it is obvious that a mountain of unstable mine waste should not have been so near a school. Most likely the disaster could have been prevented by adequate health and safety provisions. Yes, there was a lot of rain but human decisions contributed to the disaster. The safety margins were not adequate.

The Nepal disaster has been many times worse, but has a similar message. I am writing only a few days after the disaster and I am not an expert, but I will tell you what I think I know. It was not an earthquake as first thought. It was not a lake up in a glacier breaking through the barrier holding it back. The best explanation seems to be that part of the glacier and part of the mountain broke off. The 'debris flow' was a huge amount of rock, ice, mud and water, which came down the mountain with such force that when it hit the valley floor it set off seismic monitoring systems as far away as the USA – just like an earthquake would. It then kept going at the speed of traffic on a motorway, down a steep-sided valley, carving out the riverbed, picking up mud and water. The effect was a wall of

rubble and ice, being pushed in a huge wall up to 30 feet high with a mix of mud and water like liquid cement propelling it.

Now some facts about Nepal and the Himalayas. They are not just big mountains to climb, but the origin of many of the great river systems of the world – the Yangtze, Ganges, Indus and the Mekong. The fertile valleys and river plains support and feed to up to two billion people – around a quarter of the total population.

In 2023 the Secretary-General of the United Nations called on the world to “stop the madness” and warned that a third of the Himalayan ice had melted in just 30 years because of humanly-created global heating.

The Himalayas are variously referred to as the ‘roof of the world’, ‘Asia’s water towers’ or the ‘third pole’ – each phrase giving expression to a different facet of their importance.

A landslide looks like a natural disaster. But if we melt the ice which holds the mountain together by burning fossil fuels, the mountains become more fragile and dangerous. Nepal has only been responsible for 0.1% of the global total of greenhouse gas emissions.

So far our government has sent some skilled emergency response personnel – good, but maybe we could do more.

We have sent a team to help try to track the British citizens who are missing and to support their families – also good.

The UK has given £5 million towards disaster relief. I hope that is only a first instalment. Many people probably feel that is a lot of money. Compared with a pensioner’s limited budget, it is. But when our annual welfare budget is over £400 billion and our health budget is over £200 billion, it is the small change of our national wealth. A billion is one thousand million. When it is us, we think in billions, but when it is poor people a long way away only millions are available.

I think that quickly giving this sum is absolutely necessary, but pathetic if it stops there. As school reports used to say: “Could try harder ...”

So, in summary – don’t blame God for stuff that humans are doing, keep trying to understand the mystery and

“Don’t blame God for the stuff that humans are doing, keep trying to understand”

complexity of God and the world. Don’t look backwards for an intellectual explanation, but try to see what we can do together to help now and in the

future. Push politicians to fund work on climate change and development adequately and explain why. Protect the vulnerable and shift priorities towards that goal.

This is what I know a few days after the event – by the time you read this more information will be available and maybe we will have given more to help.

As we expect and rely on, Christian Aid acted immediately; a search for ‘Christian Aid Nepal Appeal’ will take you straight there.

Roger Williamson

Recipe for October: Ginger Biscuits

Ingredients

100g salted butter, cubed
75g light brown soft sugar
1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
100g golden syrup
250g self-raising flour
1½ tbsp ground ginger
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
1small egg yolk, beaten

Method

Step 1

Heat the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Line two large baking trays with baking parchment. In a saucepan over a low heat, melt the butter, sugar, fresh ginger and golden syrup and leave to cool.

Step 2

Mix the flour, ground ginger and bicarbonate of soda together in a bowl with a wooden spoon. Gradually stir in the cooled sugar mixture and the egg yolk and knead briefly to make a dough.



Step 3

Roll the dough into 20g balls and put on the prepared baking trays with 3cm between each to allow for spreading. Bake for 8-10 mins until golden brown. Leave to cool on the trays for a min, then transfer to a cooling rack to cool completely.

Becky

FSW - Family Support Work

HARVEST FESTIVAL AT STEYNING GIFTS FOR FSW



The Sussex Charity for Children
Since 1890

At harvest time, our mission partner FSW always hopes to fill its baskets with your (non-perishable) food gifts, which help sustain families in need throughout the winter months.

Again, this year, any extra monetary gifts you can afford will be a great help with the enormous heating bills these families face.

These are the ways in which you can help:

- Bring your gifts of food or money to church on Harvest Sunday
- Donate direct to Family Support Work, online at familysupportwork.org, or by cheque to Garton House, 22 Stanford Avenue, Brighton BN1 6AA
- Cash or cheque made out to Steyning Parochial Church Council (with FSW written on the back) and posted through the Penfold Hall letterbox.

We appreciate all you do for FSW throughout the year.

With our thanks - the Steyning FSW team

Families and Children

Hello everyone, this month marks the start of some new projects and the continuation of others. But October also brings the harvest season and as part of that we will be holding our family-friendly harvest celebration at 4pm on Sunday 4 October.



In September, we started the Dungeons and Dragons group which saw 12 young people come and join our amazing story tellers on a campaign to vanquish the monsters from the map and save everyone, great fun was had by all and we look forward to our next session on 10 October, meeting in the church. Please go to our website to sign up to attend.



Our new monthly Send Café launches on Tuesday 6 October from 9:15am to 11:15am in the Penfold Hall.

Join us at the Send Cafe to meet with other parents and carers of autistic and SEND children to chat, share, and connect with people who understand and are on a similar journey to you.

No diagnosis required, no pressure, just a free cuppa and a chat.

Although we understand childcare can be difficult, this group is designed as a child-free space to allow those attending to engage and share with each other freely.

We look forward to meeting you if you are able to attend.

Board Game Cafés

The afternoon Board Game Café, run in partnership with the Community Wardens, is OPEN TO ANYONE OF ANY AGE. This board game café runs once a month on the second Tuesday, 3:15pm to 5:15pm. The next session is on 13 October.

The Board Game Café evening edition will be starting again after its summer break. It will be on Monday 26 October, 6pm to 9pm. All are welcome.

Fire Pit Services

These are a different style from our normal services; they are a short service with time together at the end toasting



marshmallows and getting to know each other. Our next service is at 6pm on Sunday 11 October. Do come and join us – we would love to see you.



It is nice to be able to say that two amazing people have stepped forward to come and say that they can support Little Stars. This will help this group as this is the largest week-by-week outreach we have in our families work. It is building strong relationships.

Hallowe'en Pitstop

is being planned again for Saturday 31 October from 5pm to 7pm. So if you can help, we are looking for volunteers for this event. It is a busy two hours but a fantastic time to meet lots of people from around the community in a different environment. There is a sign up sheet in the church. Thank you in advance.

Steyning Primary School

As we build on our growing partnership with the school, we are happy and hopeful about launching two new activities in the school. Both hope to start this month depending on volunteers:



RBF Steyning (religious but fun) will be a new after-school youth group from 3:15 to 4:15pm weekly. We hope to launch after the October half term but we are looking for volunteers who could spare just over an hour a week on a

Wednesday to help Gary with this new group. All



prep and planning will be done; all is needed is someone to be with Gary to support him by being his second adult and getting involved as far as they are able to.

We are ideally looking for six people which would work out once each half term but if someone was keen to do more regularly than that would be great as well.



Rhyme Time is starting up in the Primary School library once

a month on the first Wednesday of each month from 10am to 10:30am. This is being run between Leia, the school librarian, with Gary in support. This is a great new partnership, so we do hope anyone with a pre-schooler can join us on Wednesday 7 October.

Blessings
Gary

Calling all knitters

Last year's angel drop at Christmas went down so well we would love to do it again this year. So if you're a knitter or crocheter and can make angels for me, we would love your help. The children, parents and staff loved seeing and receiving the angels. So if you can help, I would truly appreciate your support.



The Wounded Healer



There is room in the broken heart – and only there – for all the sorrows of the world. The broken heart – and only it – is curative, redemptive, of the wasteland around it. In addition, it is the very raw material necessary for a strange and important alchemy which has been described in the words “Your sorrow shall be turned into joy” (John 16:20).

Gale D Webbe, *The Night and Nothing*, p6

This I understand so long as the implication of ‘the broken heart’ is that it is one where God has been allowed into and become part of the brokenness of the individual. For there must be many who have ‘broken hearts’ to whom this Christian truth will not apply and neither would they wish it.

However, reversing the statement, it must be true that God is unable to work effectively and as he would wish through those who have not been broken; for if one thinks of the ‘heart’ as a pebble off a beach, how can God break through to get in? He can’t. He can only

surround that pebble and cover it with his warmth and his love. The only way ‘in’ is when the pebble is fragmented.

That is not to say ‘blown apart’, for it would then no longer be a pebble. No, its external shape must remain though now broken, its structure composed of variables of numbers of small pieces. God can now enter through the myriad cracks and channels, pouring in his love and compassion to surround the pieces. Slowly begins the long process of the ‘ego’ and the ‘I’ being dissolved into the presence of God. (This can only be completed at our death.)

I am uncertain about the number of times each individual’s ‘stone’ will need to be broken. Do we have any control over this by our response to each episode of ‘breaking’? Does God need to persistently say to us: “Sorry, you didn’t learn that time, I still can’t get in there, you resisted the cracking. I shall have to try again sometime because I need your broken heart — not only so that we can

know each other and love each other more, but because I need your broken heart to work through to further the extension of my work on earth; for the gathering of my flock and for the healing of the hurting ones through my curative and redemptive power, who are at this moment in the wasteland.”

Of course, curative might be better written ‘healing’ or ‘whole-making’ power, which adds a further breadth to the concept. Can one only ‘take the hand’ of one who is still in their own ‘wasteland’ and sow a seed of God’s curative and redemptive power by offering some of the broken bits of one’s own brokenness? Not in a literal sense, but in the sense that through our own brokenness has been wrought love and compassion at a depth hitherto unknown.

And would it be true to believe that there will be room in the broken heart for the ‘sorrows of the world’ only in direct proportion to the amount of our own brokenness?

And finally, “your sorrow shall be turned to joy” – is that the hardest part? Simply joy? Surely it can’t be joy in the being broken – such pain, such anguish, such resistance, such agony. Joy as the pain eases? That would be relief rather than joy.

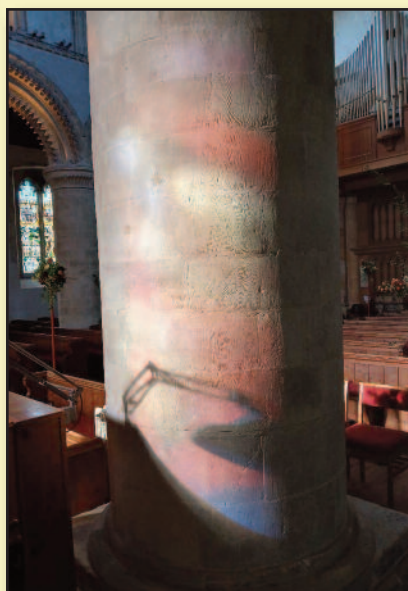
It must be to do with our relinquishment of the broken fragments of the ‘pebble’ (our heart) which has allowed God’s great love, which was there surrounding us, into those broken fragments. Is this something of what we are saying when we speak of the ‘wounded healer’?

Maureen Jones

Lord, the Light of Your Love is Shining

Every Friday I go in to unlock the church and am staggered by the beauty of colours from our stained glass windows, being projected onto our wonderful building. So I just wanted to share a few with you. Can you recognise where the locations are?

Simon Knowles





Peace and Memories

As you will know, much is happening within our churchyard, some easy to spot, other things less so. Throughout the Autumn months, many tree works will be carried out, so that we can try and maintain them in the future. Some trees may be reduced or taken down due to the effect they may have on our retaining wall.

One area that is down for action over the coming months, is our ashes memorial. Much thought has gone into how we can make this into a place where you can find peace and bring back memories of loved ones. A formal garden would not suit, as there are headstones and a coniferous tree dominating the area.

So, gradually you will see changes happening. Already we have cleared the bed by the wall and planted four white lavender, plus a variety of narcissi to complement. Also, around the celtic cross, we have dug a circular bed, to link with the circular memorial stone. Planted there will be white and Munstead lavender with white narcissi, plus possibly two Ragossa roses.

In between these two sections will be wild flowers mainly from our Churchyard. This will soften the planting scheme and hopefully create the atmosphere we would like. In the future a bench will be placed, enabling everybody to sit, remember, pause and pray.

Text and pictures: Simon Knowles



Parish Registers

Baptisms –

30 August Ralph Andrew Willmer
30 August Iris Penny Golds
13 September Macey Anne Power

Weddings –

11 September John Anthony Mockler and Fiona Elizabeth Anne Hall (at Steyning)
12 September James Keith ('Jim') Strivens
 and Jessica Louise ('Jess') Pearce (at Steyning)

Funerals –

10 September Michael John ('Mike') Reed (d 22/08/26)



Wednesday Coffee

Do join us in the Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning, every Wednesday morning, any time between 10am and 12 noon.

We meet in the main hall for coffee, tea, biscuits, friendly chat and big smiles. Several of our visitors go over the road to church for the Wednesday morning 11:30am service, but you can stay on

chatting, too. No charge, but donations are always welcome.

Elizabeth Brown and the Coffee Team



**COME IN PLEASE, FOR A
COFFEE OR TEA AND A CHAT.
10-12 NOON IN THE PENFOLD
HALL WEDNESDAY MORNINGS**

Pastoral Care Team



Would you, or anyone you know, like a member of our team to:

- Offer a listening ear, or chat if you are lonely;
- Give a phone call to help ease a heavy burden;
- Be there just to listen to your concerns or worries?

Please don't hesitate to be in touch and feel free to email:
care@steyningparishchurch.org
or call 01903 813276.

Someone from the team is ready to be there at your side either by phone or in person.

Our next Grief Café is in the Penfold Hall on Friday 9 October from 2pm until 4pm. Please feel free to join us if you are in need of support following a loss of any kind. Tea and coffee and biscuits are served in safe surroundings.

*Judie Thomson ALM,
Pastoral Care Co-ordinator*

Steyning Art Group

Annual Exhibition at new venue: PENFOLD HALL

- **Saturday 3 October. 9:30am to 4pm**
- **Sunday 4 October. 10am to 3pm**

*Do come and meet the artists and view our artwork
in oils, acrylic, watercolour, pastel and mixed media.*

Refreshments available. Free Entry.



Celebrating Black History Month

This year, the Diocese of Chichester will mark Black History Month in October with a special programme of events exploring the theme *Black History in Church Spaces*.

The celebrations will bring together parish communities, and friends from across the diocese to remember, learn from and celebrate the stories of Black people whose lives, faith and contributions are woven into the history of the Church and wider British society.

The month will open with an exhibition at St Luke's Prestonville on Saturday 3 October 2026 at 2:00 pm and close with a commemorative service at St Mary's Slindon on Sunday 25 October 2026 at 11:00 am, after

which there shall be a dedication of the plaque of Roque Ferdinand at St Mary Magdalene Church, Madehurst. This event marks the historic memorial to Roque Ferdinand, a servant and formerly enslaved man whose memorial is one of the very few surviving 18th-century memorials to a Black man in a Sussex parish church.

Black History Month provides an opportunity to recognise the contribution of Black communities and to promote a fuller and more inclusive

understanding of British history. Within the life of the Church, it also offers an opportunity to remember how God has enabled Black women, men and children to use their God given gifts to enrich, strengthen and revitalise the Church.

Churches have always been places of memory. They tell stories through stained glass, memorials, monuments, plaques, paintings and even through the names and lives we choose to remember and honour. These spaces

speak to us about faith, sacrifice, courage, hope and community.

This year, the Diocese of Chichester is using its own local history and context to tell and celebrate the stories, witness and legacy of Black

men and women whose lives are woven into the history of our diocese and the wider Anglican Communion.

Places at the events can be booked through our diocesan website (search for Black History Month).

If you would like a lift to the event on 3 October, Tina Hobbs would be happy to take you - please contact her on 07762 240226 or by email at treasurer@steyningparishchurch.org.

Thanks,
Tina



Church Stewardship

As noted on pages 18/19 of the September magazine, we at Steyning have been generous to the church, enabling us to guarantee being able to employ Gary, our Families and Children's worker, for several more years. We are also in the fortunate position of being able to start work on the tower roof repair - see pg. And we are currently able to pay our full parish share to the diocese, meeting the full ministry cost – not too many churches manage this – as well as just about cover our running costs.

So you may think we are financially secure. Well, compared with some of the tales of woe we hear elsewhere, we probably are. But that won't last. We depend even more on the generosity of our congregation to continue to break even. For that reason we ask everybody to look hard at their giving.

Not everybody will be able to afford more, but remember you can give time and prayers as well as cash. If all of our regular givers added just £3 per month it would make an enormous difference. Or could you make that into £5 or £6 to cover those unable to pledge more?

There are several ways to give. Best is the Parish Giving Scheme, where you can choose a monthly regular payment, this can be adjusted annually for inflation, and we can easily reclaim Gift Aid to help increase the value of your donation. Some people prefer a standing order from their banks. And of course there is the donation plate at church services, and the card machine in church. We will have many more calls on our finances in the coming months, so please help us to remain an active, growing, welcoming, prayerful community, a vital part of our town.

Church Flowers for October

3 October	Harvest
3 and 10 October	Sandra Dibb
17 and 24 October	Carol L & Sue C
31 October	Elisabeth Harden



Carol McKechnie

THE STEYNING SOCIETY

**Friday 16 October, 7pm for 7:30,
at the Steyning Centre**

**Chanctonbury Ring and other Roman
religious sites in Sussex, by David Rudling**

Two Romano-Celtic temples have been revealed by excavations inside the Late Bronze Age enclosure at Chanctonbury Ring. These discoveries will be discussed, together with other evidence for Roman-period religion in Sussex. David Rudling directed the rescue excavations at Chanctonbury in 1988-9.

Wine or sparkling elderflower on arrival
(monetary donations welcome);

Book stall

Free to members and £5 guests.
All are very welcome to attend.

Sparrow House



Male House Sparrow © Alan Price

I've just moved house, and there are some significant upgrades for me to marvel at. Dishwasher. Stairs. Letterbox. Some novelties may wear off, but I can't imagine I'll ever get over the little gang in the garden – this house comes with sparrows.

They wait in nearby bushes en masse, heads cocked, peering into the windows of my living room and my soul, until I give in and top up the mealworms. They descend in a flurry, teasing treats from above and cleaning up on the ground. They perch on the wobbly bird bath, perennially tilted by a clumsy wood pigeon, to take dainty sips, at odds with their otherwise boisterous behaviour.

In sparrow fashion they lord it over this tiny territory of brick and buddleia, a group of males, females and juveniles, the size of the males' black bib denoting their status in the apparent rabble. Despite best efforts, my eyes are dragged from my screen, hands stationary on the keyboard, transfixed.

This may be recognised by those who have a similar squad to window watch. House sparrows have historically been associated with humans and our homes, the last part of their Latin name, 'domesticus', translating to 'belonging to the house'.

Sparrows have learned that we grow, and drop, delicious snacks. Their varied diet of seeds, berries and insects is supplemented by offers in the crumb department. One once landed on my mate's pub garden plate and crammed in a stodgy beak full of cauliflower cheese.



Female House Sparrow © Nigel Symington

Sparrows appear ubiquitous, found in rural and urban areas, farmland, gardens, parks, hedgerows, train stations – you name it. But despite their apparent abundance, they’ve suffered a whopping 70% decline since the 1970s and have been on the UK Conservation Red List since 2002. The usual suspects of overdevelopment, agricultural intensification, climate change, habitat and food loss, historical persecution, and predation by pet cats all feature in their population plummet.

You can help your own charismatic crew. Grow native plants for a buffet of seeds and insects, or provide hanging feeders of mealworms or fat balls from May to October, including seeds and nuts from November to April (cleaning



feeders regularly, and no flat feeders, to prevent the spread of disease). Water is a lifeline for wildlife all year round.

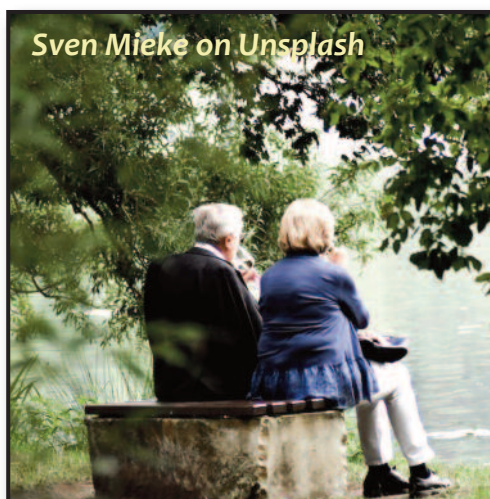
And if you are lucky enough, as I now find myself, to have even a little outdoor space – keep it wild. Your neighbours will thank you.

*Kerry Williams – Communications Officer,
Sussex Wildlife Trust*

Finally ... Challenges We Meet as We Get Older

Retirement for most of us is something we look forward to, especially at the early part, enjoying the new experience of freedom to do all those things that you have not managed to achieve because of work and personal commitments.

As the years slip by, quality of life begins to change; what used to come naturally is not so easy to do now. Health issues are usually the first thing you notice; past aches and pains are beginning to become more problematic. Visits to the doctor become more frequent. Funerals have taken over from weddings. Technology is more difficult to handle, inflation bites



into the pension, and in general negative issues take over from the positive ones.

Prayer in our younger days was usually centred around the family and work; now in later life prayer is asking the Lord for guidance dealing with illness and bereavement of a partner or sibling.

Faith helps us to deal with life, especially with the world’s order becoming unstable where sadly love is being overtaken by hate.

Jim Lang

Note: Writing this piece was very much out of character for me, something just drove me to put pen to paper.

STEYNING PARISH CHURCH - Services for October

Every Sunday

- 8am Holy Communion Service (traditional language)
- 9:30am Sung Eucharist each Sunday with choir, except on Sunday 18 October, with the Music Group: a simpler communion service, for all ages.
On 4 October - Harvest Thanksgiving
- 4pm On 4 October - Family-friendly harvest service
- 6pm Evening service:
First Sunday (4 October): Reflections, a quiet, peaceful evening service, entitled 'Gathered, Grateful, Given'
Second Sunday (11 October) Firepit service (outside the South porch, inside the porch if wet)
Second Sunday (11 October):
said BCP / 1662 Evening Prayer service
Third Sunday (18 October) Choral Evensong, BCP / 1662, with augmented choir and organ
Fourth Sunday (25 October) Taizé service

Every Wednesday

- 11:30am Said Holy Communion (Common Worship)
(Last Wednesday of the month; with prayers for healing)

ST JAMES'S, ASHURST - Services for October

Sundays

- 11am First Sunday (4 October) Zoom Matins
- 10:30am Second Sunday (11 October) Family Harvest Thanksgiving
Fourth Sunday (25 October) Holy Communion

VICAR OF STEYNING ST ANDREW'S & ST CUTHMAN'S AND RECTOR OF ST JAMES'S ASHURST

The Revd Mark Heather LLB BA , Tel: 01903 879877

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