

Chalfont St Giles

Parish Magazine



June—August 2025

The Parish Church of Chalfont St Giles

<https://csgparish.church>

in the Benefice of Chalfont St Giles with Seer Green and Jordans

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See back cover for details of other Parish roles

How to Contact the Magazine Team

Put your copy in the post rack at the back of church (in the slot "Magazine Articles")

Email your copy to: stgileschurchmagazine@gmail.com

Deadline for the next issue: Friday 15th August

Please send diary dates to:

Church - Parish Office at: saintgileschurch@gmail.com
or (01494) 258110

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Chalfont St Giles Parish Magazine is edited, produced
and distributed entirely by volunteers.

Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of the magazine. You will find a variety of articles and I hope you find some of interest. Please remember I am always grateful to receive material for the magazine on any subject.

As well as our usual pieces we have this time an account of Shirley Bedford's life, written by Bernie. I know many of us already know the main facts but it is a remarkable story and well worth retelling. Richard reports on the results of the survey and Kathleen on the success of Lent lunches.

There is publicity for various events to come and reports on what has happened, not least the celebration of Creation Sunday. You may notice that I have almost got the hang of using photos!

Finally a visitor to the church encouraged me to visit Pickering church, famous for its wall paintings and this in turn inspired me to write about the contrast between paintings in different churches.

The Editor

Magazine articles and photos are always welcome and can be emailed to: stgileschurchmagazine@gmail.com or placed in the pigeon hole in church, or the post box by the Plumb gate

The next magazine deadline is: **Friday 15th August**

Summer 2025



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Rector's Letter

Planted and Flourishing: A Word for Our Church and Community

At our Annual Church Meeting (APCM), I shared something of what I believe God is saying to us as a church family. It's a moment in our year where we take stock—not just of our activities, but of our direction. And this year, my heart was drawn to the opening words of Psalm 1:

Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.” (Psalm 1:1-3)

This ancient psalm opens with a simple but powerful idea: who we listen to—and what we live by—shapes who we become. It's easy to follow the crowd, to adopt the mindset of the world around us. But the Bible calls us to a different way—a life rooted not in shifting trends or self-interest, but in the unchanging wisdom of God. For us as Christians, that wisdom has a name. Jesus Christ. Jesus is not just a great teacher or moral example. He is God made known to us—the one who lived, died, and rose again to bring us back into relationship with our Creator. And through Him, we believe we find not only forgiveness and peace, but purpose, identity, and true life. That's the life Psalm 1 points us toward. Not one of isolation or rule-keeping, but of flourishing. And it starts by planting ourselves—not in religion, but in relationship with God through Jesus.

The psalm says the person who is “blessed”—that is, deeply fulfilled and in step with God’s design—is someone who delights in God’s Word and thinks about it often. Why? Because God speaks to us through the Bible. It’s not just an old book. It’s His voice to every generation. It shows us who He is, what He’s like, and how life truly works when we walk with Him. That’s why our church places the Bible at the heart of what we do. Sunday services, small groups, children’s work, one-to-one conversations—we want the Word of God to shape everything. Not to box people in, but to set people free. Because when we learn to trust God’s voice above all others, we begin to live with clarity, courage, and hope.

One phrase in Psalm 1 really stayed with me: *“like a tree planted by streams of water.”* It’s a powerful image. Trees that are planted deeply draw on hidden sources of life. They’re not swayed by every storm. They endure. They grow. And in time, they bear fruit. We live in a world that often encourages us to keep moving—physically, emotionally, spiritually. But God invites us to go deeper. To stop just skimming the surface of faith and to plant our lives in Him. To trust Jesus not just for an hour on a Sunday but in every part of our lives. As a church, we want to be planted. Firm in our faith. Secure in Christ. And deeply rooted in our community—not here just for ourselves, but for the good of others. Because just like a healthy tree gives shade and bears fruit, a healthy church blesses the world around it.

There’s a hidden truth in this psalm: the life-giving “stream” it speaks of isn’t just Scripture—it’s the Spirit of God, made available to us through Jesus. In John’s gospel, Jesus said: *“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”* (John 7:38) In other words, when we come to Jesus, we don’t just get a new belief system—we receive a new source of life. A stream that never runs dry. He gives peace in the storm, strength when we’re weak, and joy that the world can’t give or take away. So, this year, whether you’re a long-standing church member, new to faith, or simply exploring—my charge is simple: plant yourself in Christ. Let your roots go deep in God’s Word. Let your life be nourished by His grace. Let His love shape your relationships, your work, your decisions. And trust that in due season, you will bear fruit. Because when we walk with Jesus, even the hard

seasons are never wasted.

You are always welcome to explore this life with us—whether you're curious, searching, or ready to take that next step. We don't have all the answers. But we know the One who does. And we'd love for you to meet Him.

Music and Prayer at Nightfall

On Sunday April 6th there was a service of Compline at St Giles with the music of the St Giles Consort. Compline is the last service of the day in Christian tradition, a service of quiet contemplation before retiring to rest.

As ever the contribution of the Consort enhanced the beauty of the setting and the words. The music ranged in time from settings of the psalms and the liturgy by 16C and 17C composers through to music composed by the Consort's director, Dominic McGonigal.

It was an inspiring experience. The retiring collection raised £300 for music in the church, which goes from strength to strength. The only possible improvement would have been to have the church lighted by candles, though safety issues would probably rule that out. Thanks as always to Cathy Langdale, Dominic McGonigal and all the singers.



Churchwarden's Corner



Another APCM has been and gone and Richard and I are, for better or worse, still your churchwardens. We have a year under our belts now but I would hesitate to say that we fully know what we are doing. Although we continue to learn as we go it is also nice to know that things are also changing as we go. Our church is growing and with that will come new adventures and challenges. We might need to buy new running shoes so we can keep up!

For those of you who weren't able to come to the APCM you missed out on Richard's presentation of the survey results. Never fear, you will find a survey summary within these pages. There are also copies of the slides floating around church and Richard is always keen to have a chat about results if you see him. Many thanks to Richard for orchestrating this initiative and the hours he spent tallying the results.

In March we had the first in a new series of Women's Breakfasts. It was lovely to have so many women fill the Reading Room and enjoy their time together with coffee and breakfast. Nikki Walker-Williams spoke on the theme 'An Ordinary Girl. Extraordinary God'. It was inspiring to hear her personal testimonies how God has used her to further his kingdom here and abroad with Wheels to Heal, YWAM (Youth with a Mission) and even the streets of Chalfont St Giles. The next Women's Breakfast is the 14th June. The speaker is a friend of mine, Hilary-Rose Hendrix. Hilary-Rose has an amazing testimony and a great passion for the Lord. There is a sign up in the back of church and a donation of £5 per person is requested to cover costs.

Thanks to our Church Watch volunteers the church is open for several

hours, six days a week this time of year. Why not visit during the week and really look at the beautiful space we have for worship. In a building that is over 800 years old wouldn't it be grand if the walls could talk? Well thankfully for us, considerable research has been done on the church and the history comes alive through stories and interesting bits and pieces that our amazing Church Watch group can share. Rachel has written an article on the wall paintings to whet your appetite to learn more. Thank you to everyone who volunteers their time to help with Church Watch and the study they have done to share some of the history with visitors from around the world who visit during spring and summer.

Finally, the church is once again hosting two of the Bucks Art Week's artists for three weeks in June. Jacki Lowry and Cécile Gallina will exhibit their artwork which is a mix of acrylic and mixed media in contemporary designs. Other artists can be seen in Merlin's Cave and Galleria on the Green. Be sure to come and see all the beautiful artwork and support our local artists.

Janelle Stevenson



Visit our lovely, village church, built in the 12th century

Hours open for visiting
Tuesdays to Saturdays
10am-4pm
Sunday afternoons
2pm-4pm

Visit our website
www.csgparish.church



The Church Survey

A huge thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the church survey, the results of which were presented at the APCM on the 11th May.

The survey achieved a very satisfying 73% response rate as 97 of you completed the survey (for the three of you, who were going to, but did not, I wish you had as my percentages would have been much easier to calculate!) The survey has provided much food for thought and need for action - something the PCC will be paying close attention to.

Here, I can only give a taste of some of the results, but we have provided colour copies of the charts presented and they are available at the back of the church.

The first thing to say is that although there is strong agreement on certain things there is a wide range of views expressed throughout the survey. In addition to the answers to the questions, there are around 150 verbatim statements covering a multitude of elements.

What do we (mostly) agree on?

Over 75% agree that

- they come "often" to church
- their purpose is to praise and worship God
- they know God exists and have no doubts that the Bible is the highest authority for what they believe; and they believe both in miracles and that prayers are answered.
- they would definitely recommend this church

If we then analyse the kinds of things the majority of us agree on we see the following; that they:

- are happy with the timings of the services
- come to hear the Gospel and apply His truth
- take Holy Communion
- want to hear people's journeys in faith
- believe that God counts a person righteous not by works but only by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

Some other standouts are that the best things about the church are:

- the warmth and friendly welcome
- the fellowship
- the wonderful choir and musicians
- Rev Dan and the clergy

There is, however, much to address. These include the lack of families and volunteers, the desire to introduce sermon series teaching and personal testimonies, that we engage more with the community and, particularly, address our poor facilities, most notably in the Reading Room. This very much links with the desire to improve our facilities and resources for children's teaching.

If there is anything further you would like to know please do not hesitate to contact me. The lucky winner of the prize draw was number 101 - Kate Southworth. John was very happy to carry home the gift pack from Chiltern brewery!!

Richard Silman



Women's Breakfast

Saturday
14 June 9:30AM

Reading Room
£5 donation requested

Please RSVP by
QR code



or emailing:
saintgileschurch@gmail.com



Special Guest Speaker
Hilary-Rose Hendrix

God DOES speak!

Dear Friends,

“Do you hear from God?”

Also, “HOW do you hear from God?”

These were the first words of Dan’s page in the last Parish magazine. As I read those words in April I was stunned. I had just delivered two sermons a month apart at Harebreaks Gospel Hall in Watford. The first one was titled, “HOW does God speak?” And the second, “How God seems to have spoken to me.”

In short, the first question was answered by Elihu in Job 33:14, and everyone will remember that Job was a man who did not hear from God. Elihu said, *For God does speak—now one way, now another—though man may not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night ...*

Peter’s quote from Joel in Acts 2 closed with, “*And you shall prophesy,*” which means you shall speak out God’s word, and Jesus clearly expects us to hear him because he said, “*My sheep hear my voice.*” Of course we must test everything, particularly against Scripture, but a major step for me was first of all to come to believe that God DOES speak, even to little me.

In fact the entire Bible is a record of God speaking to mankind. More than a thousand times we read, “*The word of the Lord came ...*” or “*God said ...*” And God speaks from his Word whenever we read the Bible. I believe that God has spoken to each of us more than we have perceived. For a start, why do you come to church, or small group, or serve in any way, or read this? Surely the Holy Spirit has led you, although you may not perceive it.

Stephen Gaukroger, my pastor at Gold Hill for 15 years, taught “Remember your own experiences.” These boost your faith. Yours are true, other people’s may be exaggerated!

Over my nearly 80 years I can recall five dreams that I think came from heaven, and also numerous God-incidences, like the above – reading Dan’s questions just after I have addressed them. But I would rather

share a biblical God-incidence. I love Jeremiah 32:6, where Jeremiah said, *"The word of the Lord came to me: Hanamel son of Shallum your uncle is going to come to you and say, 'Buy my field ...'"*

This made no sense at all after 31 chapters of preaching that exile was coming – for 70 years. *"Then, just as the Lord had said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guard and said, 'Buy my field ...'"* And so Jeremiah could then say, *"I knew that this was the word of the Lord."* This was Jeremiah's confirmation, a beautiful example of a God-incidence. And so he burst into joyful praise with words we used to sing:

"Ah Lord God, thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power,
Thou has made the heavens and the earth by Thine outstretched arm.
Nothing is too difficult for Thee ..."

Tony Reynolds

Lent Lunches 2025

"Judging by the chatting in both the dining area and the kitchen, a good time was had by all". How good to be able to write that when you are aiming to raise money for charity!



Sorting out orders

On the six Fridays in Lent, Lunches were held in the Reading Room. Between the first (7th March) and the last (11th April), the weather changed greatly. We began towards the end of the long, wet, dreary winter and ended in Spring sunshine. Both members of the church and of the wider village community not only made the soups but also helped in the kitchen and with serving and delivering to shops each week. A total of



Stirring the soup



More stirring

thirty soups were made. Helpers, some of whom have worked at the lunches for many years, ensured the events ran smoothly. We were also so pleased to welcome some who had not helped before and hope they will be willing to join us in future years.

The tasks are various: setting up, soup stirring, meal making, waitressing, clearing up and delivering to shops and business, so, if you would like to join us in future years, watch out for details and dates early in 2026.



Despatcher and waitress have a break

We are extremely grateful to all those who attended and the businesses and shops who participated. We are pleased to say that the charities we supported (the Reading Room and Age Concern GX Plus) will receive a 50:50 share of the total profits: just over £2500.

Kathleen Martin

St Giles Consort

directed by Dominic McGonigal

SOMER IS ICUMEN IN !

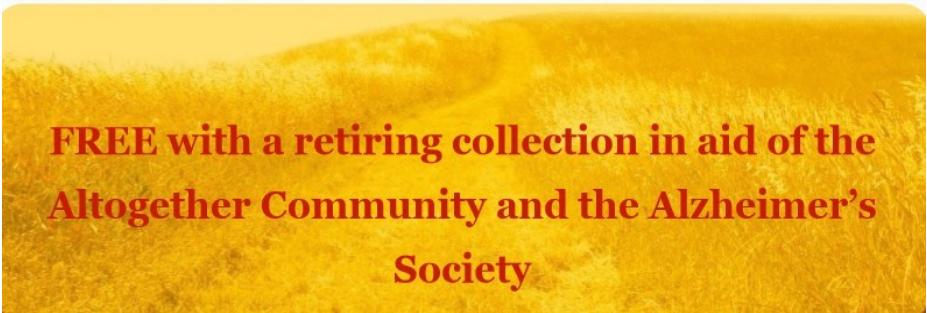
Saturday 28th June 2025 at 6.00pm

*Come and enjoy an hour of choral music
to lighten the heart on a summer's
evening, with madrigals, folk songs and
arrangements of familiar tunes.*

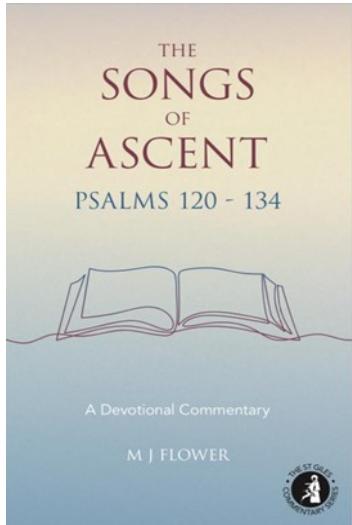
Pimms and Strawberries



Chalfont St Giles Parish Church



**FREE with a retiring collection in aid of the
Altogether Community and the Alzheimer's
Society**



In this issue, we have an extract from Mavis Flower's commentary on Psalms 120 - 134, known collectively as *The Songs of Ascent*, which is due to be published later in 2025. This passage reflects on Psalm 123.

Previous titles in the *St Giles Commentary Series* - *Paul's letter to the Galatians: A Devotional Commentary*; *The Acts of the Apostles: A Devotional Commentary* and *The King and the Kingdom: A Devotional Commentary on Matthew's Gospel*, are available on Amazon, from book retailers, and copies can be found in church.

Psalm 123. The pilgrimage of servanthood.

To Thee, O Lord I lift up my eyes, O Thou who art enthroned in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, and the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till He have mercy upon us.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, for we have had enough of contempt. Too long our souls have been filled with the scorn of those who are at ease, the contempt of the proud.

Psalm 122 was dominated by the figure of David, and not only as he prayed for his people and encouraged them to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, but it also had the futuristic aspect of the Davidic dynasty in view, a concept which was so important to the Israelites as they looked forward to a Messianic King.

Psalm 123 is not ascribed to King David, but it has about it the worshipful attitude towards God which was a feature of David's life: his desire to build a 'house', a temple to the Lord to replace the tabernacle which in all their wanderings had accompanied the children of Israel (2 Samuel 7:2); his determination not to offer to the Lord that which cost him nothing as he buys the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite on Mount Moriah, as the site for the new temple (2 Samuel 24:24, 1

Chronicles 21:18); his heartfelt contrition and repentance after he had sinned with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite (Psalm 51).

But whoever the author of Psalm 123 is, whether David or some other pilgrim on his way up to Jerusalem, the psalm points away from David as king, *to God as king. God is enthroned in the heavens, and to Him the psalmist lifts up his eyes.* (verse 1). The psalmist, if we assume him to be David, prophetically looks towards the fulfilment of the dynastic promise in His Son in Psalm 110:1. 'The Lord said unto my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand till I make your enemies the footstool of your feet'. God reigns and shares His throne with His Son. God has fulfilled His promise to Israel in part with the gift of a son, Solomon, to David, a king to reign over his people, to succeed him; but also prophetically, to His later people, the people of the New Covenant, in His Son. Grogan is emphatic that this is the deeply reassuring and comforting evidence that God keeps His word (Grogan p 185).

Like Psalm 120, the psalm begins with prayer as the psalmist lifts up his eyes to God, but this is not the cry of distress of Psalm 120. Psalm 123:1 is a cry of dedication, of consecration to the One who reigns enthroned in the heavens, while enduring the contempt of the scornful ones who are at ease, who are too proud to submit themselves as servants and handmaids even to such a One as the Heavenly King.

This king is not an earthly king but a king far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every Name that is named. For Christians, this position has been seen to be given to the Lord Jesus Christ by God, the Father of glory. (Ephesians 1:21). For the psalmist, this revelation has yet to come. Nevertheless, he has been given the understanding that God is a merciful God. All he has to do is to lift up his eyes, to see God enthroned in the heavens, to know that God who is above all, is his God, the one whom he not only worships but also has the privilege of serving as a servant to his master. The psalmist has come to him as a suppliant, constantly looking to the hand of his master for guidance as to how he may serve Him. 'Your will be done. Your kingdom come', is the prayer of his heart.

Hebrew has no word for slave. Motyer reminds us of the status of a servant within an Israelite family. Every male in a household must be circumcised so that he might come under the protection of the covenant.

He is brought into the covenant family and given all the privileges and protection of the covenant. (Genesis 17:13). He was to serve in the household for seven years after which he was free to leave. And if he came as a married man, he was free to take his wife with him, if she was prepared to go. (Motyer p 54)

But the servant may say, 'I love my master, I will not go out free'. (Exodus 21:5). Then his master will bring him to the doorpost and bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for life.

This psalmist has metaphorically had his ear bored through. His life is given to serving his master, his Lord, like a servant to his master, or a maidservant to her mistress. Dedicated to serving their master or mistress, they are waiting for that precious signal requiring them to do whatever the situation requires, their eyes looking to obey swiftly the slightest command. So also the eyes of these pilgrims look to the LORD till He is gracious to them.

In our English translations of the Hebrew scriptures, whenever we see the word LORD in upper case letters this stands for YHWH, the Name of the Lord as revealed to Moses at the burning bush, (Exodus 3:14), and all that is implied in the divine Name; YHWH, 'I Am that I Am', *the covenant keeping God*. This is the Lord to whom the psalmist lifts his eyes. This is the one to whom he appeals for mercy, for grace. So be gracious to us Lord, he says, (verse 3), for we are greatly filled with contempt. Our soul is greatly filled with the scoffing of those who are at ease and with the contempt of the proud. (verse 4).

The psalmist needs His mercy, His graciousness. Three times he appeals to the mercy of God, (verses 2,3) for His guidance and for His acknowledgement of his situation, for all around him is contempt; and the psalmist has had enough of it, says Motyer. (p 48). He is at the end of his tether, crying out to God for His mercy.

But the place of desperation is the very place where God meets our need. Looking up into His face, His servant, His handmaid, finds there His *chanan, (Hb) mercy, grace*, which means that they can consign all the contempt of others, and all the scorn which would overwhelm them to the God of all mercy and the God of all comfort. (2 Corinthians 1:3). He will take care of it. His mercy will come (verse 2). And meanwhile, they

can await His time, 'until He have mercy on us'.

Prayer is such a simple thing, just an upward glance to our Lord in the heavens, just an outpouring of what we know He will understand even if we do not know quite how to phrase it, just trusting in Him and His mercy, His compassion, His lovingkindness.

We look up to Him as the servant looks to his master or the maidservant to her mistress, wanting only to please her or him, their patient gaze fixed on the will of their master or mistress. Others may treat these servants as persons of no consequence, have only contempt for them, perhaps have ridiculed them, derided them, mocked them. Those people may have been people of some importance or even other servants to whom they were subordinate. Even though they too were servants, or more probably, slaves, they were arrogant, 'superior' people who looked down on them. But those who look to the Lord have a resource.

They are servants of an earthly master or mistress but they are also servants of the Lord enthroned in the heavens. In all their troubles, they may refer to Him and His love will sustain them, encircle them, console them. Though these arrogant people may still mock them, His servants may lift up their eyes to Him and know His peace. For the psalmist, this is what it means to be a servant of the Lord. Though life may not be easy, the psalmist knows that he has only to lift his eyes to the Lord, seated in the heavens to know His mercy, His compassion. And if this psalm is being read some hundreds of years later, those who read may know they can receive His word of encouragement: 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord! (Matthew 25:21,23).

References:

Look to the Rock Motyer, Alec, Inter-Varsity Press 1996

Journey. Psalms for pilgrim people Motyer, Alec, Inter-Varsity Press 2009



It is now ten years since the start of 'Thy Kingdom Come' which began as an invitation from the Archbishop of Canterbury to set aside the 11 days between Ascension and Pentecost for prayer following the pattern set in Acts 1 for the first disciples as they awaited what was to become the birth of the church.

'Jesus appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. He gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." The apostles returned to Jerusalem. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying.

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Since 2015, 'Thy Kingdom Come' has been embraced in nearly 90% of countries worldwide, across 85 different denominations and traditions and now unites more than a million Christians in prayer so that friends and family, neighbours and colleagues might come to faith in Jesus

Christ. Every person, household and church are encouraged to pray during the 11 days in their own way.

We also are invited to pray as we remember and anticipate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, that those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus Christ and His love for the world, will hear it for themselves and respond and follow Him.

We will be reminded to pray through those 11 days through the prayer diary and through four prayer stations in church. Thy Kingdom Come!

Jenny Tebboth

QUIZ CORNER

Congratulations this time to Mel and Chris who got full marks in the last quiz and to Kathleen Martin who came second.

Again the topic is English Castles.

- 1.Limb within the young man (8)
- 2.Bridge in Rome with part of a part. (10)
- 3.Tough though with a cry of pain included (6)
- 4.German major cured meat (6)
- 5.Water round Fiji (8)
- 6.Fair or square (4)
- 7.Fit for a dog (10)
- 8.Miss out weight (7)
- 9.A riot of fenland iris (11)
- 10.Heavy weight belongs to a clown from Verona (10)

Answers to the last quiz

- 1 .Corfe
2. Tintagel
3. Pickering
4. Rochester
5. Skipsea
6. Drogo
7. Carlisle
8. Kendal
9. Pevensey
10. Portland

FAIR TRADE : LIVING THE BIBLE THE MISSION IS STILL VALID AND THE WORK IS NOT FINISHED



WORLD FAIR TRADE DAY

May 10th was World Fair Trade Day. The theme for this year is “Be the voice of the Business Revolution” and the object of the day is to raise awareness about Fair Trade principles and practices. I didn’t see anything about this outside of my regular Fair Trade communications so I guess, what with all the trauma in the world, there were too many stories to give the day any publicity. Shame, but heigh-ho, as a Fair Trade Church we know those principles and practices not just because of Fair Trade but because of the words of Jesus and I hope you will continue to regard Fair Trade as an important mission of our church.

TRAIDCRAFT KENYAN TEA

I still miss Traidcraft and I know many of their products are missed too. Traidcraft tea returned last year following much hard work from Transform Trade, sold via True Origin, one of our suppliers. During that year 700,000 tea bags have been sold, far exceeding expectations and making a huge improvement to the lives of many tea growers in Kenya, so please continue to support them and spread the word on the principles and practices of Fair Trade.

GUSTO FAIR TRADE DRINKS

I know that many folks following the trade deal issues and other stuff with the USA are attempting to boycott goods made in or owned by US companies. So if you are trying to avoid Coca Cola, Pepsi and the like why not give the Gusto drinks a try? Gusto Organics Ltd are a climate

friendly company whose sustainability credentials resonate with their brand values. There are 6 amazing flavours: Ginger with jalapeno, Naturally Slim Cola, Real Cherry Cola, Real Cola, Sicilian Blood Orange and Sicilian Lemon with Yuza (a small bumpy citrus fruit related to the mandarin oranges). Each 275ml glass bottle costs £3.00. Gusto Organics Ltd's fair trade Agave Project pays local farmers more than twice the local agricultural rate and supports communities, and promotes workers' rights, gender equality and respect for indigenous peoples.

NEW PRODUCTS COMING SOON

Classic Cut Oat Cakes

Enjoy the wholesome crunch of Wish4 Fair Trade Classic Oat Biscuits (220gx12). Made with high-quality oats and ethically sourced ingredients, these biscuits are perfect for snacking or pairing with tea. A delicious treat that supports Fair Trade practices!

Fair Trade Lemon Cake Loaf

Traidcraft slab cakes were very popular and are missed so I am delighted that we now have this lemon cake loaf available. They cost £2.50 each and make a marvellous addition to your larder for when unexpected visitors pop in.

FOOD BANK

Supplies are still required by the food bank, demand remains high and we continue to supply them so please do not stop your generous donations.

A POEM BY WILLIAM GLADSTONE (slightly edited)

When the world is all at odds
And the mind is all at sea,
Then cease the useless tedium
And brew a cup of (Fair trade) tea.

There is magic in its fragrance,
There is solace in its taste,
And the laden moments vanish
Somehow into space

And the world becomes a lovely thing,
There's beauty as you'll see,
All because you briefly stopped
To brew a cup of tea.

“A poor man’s field may produce an abundant harvest but injustice sweeps it away.” Proverbs 13 v23

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Shirley Bedford

18th February 1936 – 28th February 2025



I have been asked to write about Shirley's life.

Sometimes we look back a short while in history and realise that some of our predecessors' lives were quite tragic. This is the case with Shirley. Her grandparents had six children - three girls and three boys. Her grandparents died when all the children were under the age of 18 and all the children entered the Barnardo's care system. The two eldest boys were shipped off abroad, one to Canada and one to Australia. When the eldest girl reached the age of 18 she was discharged into the world. Shirley's mother Laura Grace and her brother Stan being 8 and 10 years old remained in Barnardo's in the UK until they were 18. Laura Grace was found employment as a 'domestic' in Brighton. It's now 1926 and somehow in the next four years Laura Grace found her way to London and met Shirley's dad, William Corney. At last, some good

fortune! Married at 22 she falls pregnant and later gives birth to a daughter and names her Shirley Grace. Sadly Laura died two weeks after giving birth. As Shirley's father was still alive she didn't have to go into the Barnardo's care system. The first of what later Shirley referred to as a God incident.

Little is known of the following four years, but bombs were dropping on London and Shirley found herself on Paddington station with her dad, ready to be evacuated. Normally children under five were accompanied by their mother but of course she didn't have one. Shirley's dad saw a woman holding the hand of a girl Shirley's age and asked if she was going to Gloucester and would she take Shirley. Shirley says she grabbed the little girl's hand and would not let go. The other little girl was named Lucy Ambrosine, and the second God incident had just occurred. Lucy and Shirley eventually found themselves in a tiny village in the Forest of Dean called Flaxley. The next God-incident occurred when a childless couple, Edgar and Edith Brobyn, agreed to take both Shirley and Lucy in, resulting in Shirley finding a lifelong friend. Years later I remember them chatting for hours (not surprising to some of you as we know Shirley loved to chat!!) about Christmas parties and concerts at Flaxley Abbey, the ancestral home of the Crawley-Boevey family. The end of the war saw Lucy returning to her family with just occasional visits to Flaxley.

At the end of the war Shirley was 9 years old and only home she could remember was the two-bedroom thatched cottage without electricity, mains water or main drainage that she lived in. She had lived with her evacuee carers for longer than her father and was only familiar with him through spasmodic visits throughout and after the war. In the deep snow of 1947 Edith and Edgar Brobyn changed from being aunty and uncle to mum and dad and Shirley's name changed from Shirley Grace Corney to Shirley Grace Brobyn. She never met her father again and had lost all contact with her biological mother's family. Life continued as usual with Shirley joining the church choir and developing a love of singing and attending the local school where she enjoyed sport and cookery but not much else and found maths a total mystery - a trait she passed on to her daughter but not her son!

She left school at 16 and went to a catering college in Cheltenham, passing the final exams. Work in a hotel beckoned but she discovered she was not suited to hotel work as she could not arrange flowers, was

hopeless at bookkeeping (maths), did not like being on reception and hated large scale hotel kitchen cooking. Looking for a different career path she joined the local electricity board as trainee demonstrator - she had found her career niche in life - standing up talking about and demonstrating electrical equipment. Electricity in the home at this time was evolving with the introduction of home refrigerators, cookers, toasters and vacuum cleaners. She completed her training and left the local electricity board and went to Cheltenham as a full-blown demonstrator. Embracing the opportunities of a large town she threw herself into social activities – she stood up and spoke in front of an audience for speaking competitions, joined a local amateur dramatics group and participated in beauty contests. She stayed in Cheltenham for 3 years before moving to Guildford in 1958, working as a demonstrator with the South Eastern Electricity Board .(SEE Board).

I had just finished my apprenticeship with SEE Board as an electrician and was sent to set up a local village hall for Shirley to demonstrate a new cooker and several small electrical appliances. I had just finished and was loading my car when the door burst open and this beautiful girl rushed in. “I’m late,” she said (later I learned this was quite normal), “can you help me unload the car?” What could I say! I helped unload the car - my eyes glued to this girl. Having got everything in place I was looking for an excuse to hang around, but she saved me looking for that excuse by shoving a bowl of cream in my hand and saying, “Can you whip this for me?”. I always say I have been whipping her cream ever since. I say this was another God incident as just over a year later we stood in Flaxley Church and Shirley changed her name for the third time and became Shirley Grace Bedford.

In a short time, we moved from our rented house and bought our first home for the princely sum of £4500. We went on our first of many foreign holidays and often went ‘home’ to Flaxley to visit her mum and dad. I left the computer company I worked for and joined Rank Xerox. Little did we realise how that would shape the next few years of our lives. In 1969 we were blessed with the arrival of our son John. I left my job as a field engineer and joined the London based training centre as a technical trainer that soon changed from anything but technical. The training centre moved from London to Newport Pagnell and we moved to Northampton. Within 12 months I transferred from the UK operating company to International Headquarters and immediately left Shirley in

Northampton while I went to Hong Kong, Australia and South Africa for three months. I came back in October and in January we were all on a plane to the USA for a two-and-a-half-year assignment. While in the USA we were blessed with the arrival of a daughter, Jenny. Shirley enjoyed the time in America but we both decided we wanted to come back to the UK. While on a short visit to the UK we managed to go to my brother's wedding, get Jenny christened and buy a house in a small village called Chalfont St Giles. While in the US Shirley decided she would like to try to find her biological mother's side of her family. On our return Shirley took herself off to Somerset house and managed to find her mother and father's marriage certificate. One of the witnesses listed was her mother's sister and Shirley wrote to the clergyman of the church, and he was able to give her an address for her aunt. We visited her aunt who said she would be able to die in peace now she knew that she was safe and happy. They had always wondered what had happened to her after she was evacuated. Shirley also visited her cousin and met her mother's brother who had been in Barnardo's with her.

Life continued as normal with me jumping on to planes leaving Shirley to run the home. At the age of 40 Shirley made the most important decision of our lives and became a born again Christian. Her total belief in Jesus and the resurrection was something to behold. While neither the children or I had the deep conviction that she did she instilled a belief of right and wrong in them that she and I are so very proud of. The next 20 years passed in a flash, me still flying around the world leaving Shirley behind, supported by her fantastic group of friends. She was never slow at holding a hand out to a stranger whether a Christian or not. Her Christian faith deepened, and she ran and attended house groups, and supported the church. Eventually I retired from my job at Rank Xerox and spent a couple of years in Czechoslovakia running a business - on occasions being joined by Shirley and Jenny. Eventually with my mother getting older and needing help I returned to live in Chalfont St Giles and my mother came to live with us. Shirley selflessly supported my mother who had dementia and me until my mother passed away. By this time John gone off to university to read mathematics (I told you she did not pass that on!). He graduated from Oxford and after short spell in the city decided he wanted to become a lawyer. He eventually left home and went off and joined the EU in Brussels. By this time Jenny had left school and became the usual

teenager; she worked as a nanny and then at Glaxo as an administrator and met a man called John which with two Johns in the family sometimes got confusing, so Shirley nicknamed him 'Jenny's John' or JJ for short. Jenny's love of children became evident when they married and presented us with two grandsons, becoming the wonderful mum she is perhaps because of the mum she had.

With the children gone we enjoyed a spell of travelling in Europe, visits to Brussels to visit John, holidays with Jenny and the children and me taking her to Hong Kong for her 70th birthday and John taking us to Istanbul for her 80th. By now we were slowing down and eventually Shirley's health began to decline and she became house bound and unable to visit church and house groups which was a great disappointment to her.

Nevertheless, her belief in Jesus remained strong, only questioning how she would be in the afterlife and declaring that she would be disappointed that she would be in heaven and friends that did not believe would not be with her. She also said that she believed that God had had a hand on her from the moment she was born. With help from a lovely carer, we managed to get her to the church carol service in 2023 and 2024 which gave her great joy both with singing the carols and being given a warm welcome by her many friends.

She was promoted to be with her with Saviour in February 2025 - never losing her faith.

I was blessed to have her for 62 years and as we said at the funeral, "Goodnight sweetheart, I will see you in the Lord's good time".

PS when I was in charge of the Sunday school a long time ago, Shirley was invaluable because of her musical talents. We always opened with a selection of songs, most of which she had to teach me, so that she could go over to church for most of the service. She was like a ray of sunshine with her enthusiasm for the music and for the children. Whenever I hear "If I were a butterfly" I think of Shirley.
Rachel

Challenge for Churchwatchers!

This week I enjoyed conducting two thirty-minute tours of the church for some A Level English/ History students from a school in London.

We are fortunate to have so many artefacts within the church, each with a tale to tell. How on Earth do you restrict yourself to thirty minutes? I plumped for the twelve items below, in a clockwise order:

1. St Giles
2. Royal Coat of Arms
3. Skewed Chancel
4. 15th century Pews
5. Squints
6. Vache Crypt
7. Palliser
8. Fleetwoods- Thomas and George
9. Katherine Radcliffe memorial
10. James Meade plaque
11. Murals
12. Graffiti

We finished up in the graveyard by the south porch, looking at the graves designed to thwart grave robbers.

So the challenge is which artefacts would you choose, if you were doing the same exercise? What are your favourite artefacts? There is no wrong answer.

Do email me or call with your list and maybe I will compile and publish, perhaps in a future magazine. Or write your list on paper and leave it in the "F" pigeonhole at the rear of the church.

Happy Churchwatching!

Tony Ferguson

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Bucks Art Weeks 2025

CreativeHeArts

are exhibiting in Chalfont St Giles Parish Church
High St, Chalfont St Giles HP8 4QF
Sun 8 June - Sun 22 June 2025



Jacki Lowry
Studio 255
www.cornucopia.art



Cécile Gallina
Studio 254
www.cegalart.com

Opening times: Thurs to Sat 10am-5pm - Sundays 11-5pm

Bucks Art Weeks brings together the work of hundreds of contemporary artists and makers around Buckinghamshire. Each year in June, pop-up exhibitions appear in working studios, galleries, and other venues. Every type of work is on show – sculpture, glass, jewellery, painting, wirework, woodwork, photography, textiles, and more – for visitors to view, purchase or commission. Plus, it's a fantastic opportunity to meet makers and artists!

This year we are celebrating the 40th anniversary of this event which is now known far and wide and has been advertised on national television on several occasions.

For further information, log in to their website which is <https://www.bucksartweeks.org.uk/>

Cecile Gallina

Medieval Wall Paintings Compared

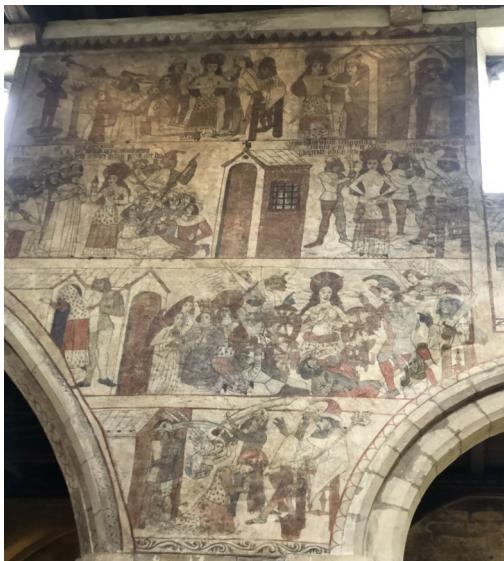
The medieval wall paintings are a big point of attraction for many visitors to Chalfont St Giles Church. Some come to the church specifically to see them and those that do not know about them are usually very interested and have plenty of questions to ask the church watchers. I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing people's reactions when they discover how old they are and their rather chequered history.

During my time church watching the wall paintings at Little Missenden have often been recommended – not surprising as they are only a few miles away. Then last year a visitor asked me if I had ever seen the wall paintings in Pickering parish church and suggested they were well worth a visit.

Pickering, for those of you who do not know it, is a small market town in Yorkshire and since we have been going on holiday to Robin Hood's Bay every Easter (almost) for the last fifty years and passing through the town I thought I knew it but I had never visited the church. So this Easter we broke our journey and did so. It was an amazing experience – they have “one of the most complete sets of medieval wall paintings in Britain”. They certainly take your breath away when you enter the building. They cover both walls of the nave above and between the arches that give onto the north and south aisles. They are vibrant in colour (the photos do not do them justice) and have few areas of loss. They are believed to date from the middle of the 15C. They were covered in the Reformation by a thick layer of plaster and then when they were discovered in 1852 they were covered up again with a coat of whitewash on the instructions of a vicar who did not approve of what he considered to be strongly Catholic imagery. (Not surprising considering their date!) It is also thought that some of the paintings



The martyrdom of St Edmund



The Story of St Catherine

have used more modern and less invasive techniques and a campaign is presently underway to raise money to give them a thorough clean.

The scope of the subject matter is wide. The north wall depicts the lives of the saints, George, Christopher, John the Baptist, Thomas Becket and Edmund. The south wall has St Catherine, followed by the cycle of Christ's Passion, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. The story of the Virgin Mary is divided between the two walls. Whatever you feel about the restoration the effect is stunning and I would recommend a visit if you are passing that way.

In the course of writing this article I also visited Little Missenden church.

in the chancel were destroyed on his instructions.

About twenty years after they were first discovered they were uncovered again. At this point the plot thickens. They were quite heavily restored by Edward Holmes Jewitt, an associate of the Pre-Raphaelites and a noted designer of stained-glass windows. He filled in some of the missing details in a Pre-Raphaelite style and brightened the colours so that in his opinion they resembled the original paintings. This, by modern standards, is a controversial restoration. Later work on the paintings in the 20C

St Christopher Little Missenden



The church is much smaller and older than Chalfont St Giles and some of the paintings are also older. They have been dated from about 1200 to about 1400, as they were added to at different times. They cover, in a fragmentary state mainly, a large area of the walls but were not discovered until 1931. A wide range of subjects is covered. The most notable is an almost complete representation of St Christopher, together with a series of drawings of the life of St Catherine and a Doom painting on the chancel arch which was only recently discovered during conservation work. The most recent cycle of conservation added a new technique for displaying some of them. Images of what the paintings of



St Catherine, Little Missenden, with projected image

Catherine and the Doom probably looked like when they were new have been created and at the push of a button these can be projected onto the faded and damaged images so that visitors can “see” the originals without compromising what is left. This is not as spectacular as Pickering but certainly has more integrity.

And finally our own paintings which you all know well. They are interesting and varied and though some of them might benefit from the digital projection technique, some are very clear as they are, though the colour has faded. My favourite remains Salome (though she is not named in the Bible) with her limbo dance and her head of John the Baptist on a platter. I am very proud to show them and explain them to visitors. But do visit Little Missenden if you have not done so already.

Rachel Leonard

PARISH OF CHALFONT ST GILES
DEANERY OF AMERSHAM

RESULTS OF ELECTIONS

At the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and Annual Parochial Church Meeting of the above parish held on 11th May 2025.

The following were elected as **churchwardens**:

Janelle Stevenson Richard Silman

The following will continue as **Lay Members of the Deanery Synod (2024 to 2026)** having been elected last year.

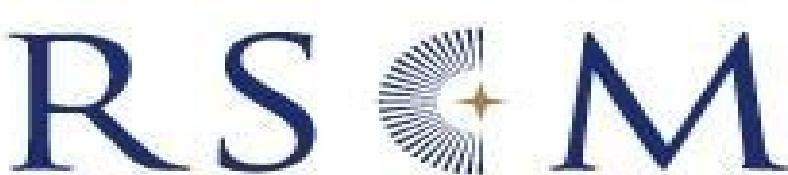
Margaret Carey Marion Miles Peter Miles

The following were elected as **Lay Members of the Parochial Church Council**:

Marc Seagrove (2025 to 2028)
John Dugdale Bradley (2025 to 2028)

Previously:

Michael Baldwin (2024 to 2027)
Laura Chapman (2024 to 2027)
David Jessel (2024 to 2027)
Tom Boundy (2024 to 2027)
Jennifer Wilson (2023 to 2026)



THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC

Music Sunday 6th July 2025 Chalfont St Giles Parish Church

We are planning a Sunday especially dedicated to the place of music at the heart of our worship. We shall showcase and fundraise for the fantastic work of the Royal School of Church Music, which works internationally to support church music in all Christian denominations and styles of worship.

We pay an annual subscription of (£145) and benefit particularly from the training schemes and the music planning.

What we plan.

9.30 A lively service with the congregation's top 3 hymns, communion hymns accompanied by instruments, and a beautiful anthem by the choir.

11.15 till 12 Coffee Concert-with your coffee and cake, a music session to include a new hymn for all, a song from our trebles, music played by members of the congregation and a couple of choir anthems to finish, including Zadok the Priest.

4 pm Messy Church, we could have Messy Music!

6 pm BCP Evensong

What YOU can do: from 8/6 there will be forms to fill in at the back of church and to be returned by 29/6 to a labelled box.

1 Submit your favourite three hymns, one old, one recent AND one 21st C one which you'd like us to sing more often.

2 If you play eg flute, clarinet, violin, could you play along with a hymn that day? We'd invite you to our Friday practice.

3 If you play or sing, any style, would you like to take a 3 min spot at coffee time, (all ages welcome)? Mail Cathy Langdale at csgchurchchoir@gmail.com

Rogation and Creation Sunday

On May 18th in celebration of Creation Sunday (also known as Rogation Sunday) members of the church family were invited by Jonathan and Laura Chapman to a barbecue at Bailey Hill Farm, where they raise cattle and sheep to the highest ethical standards. Before lunch we toured the farm to bless the animals and praise God for the abundance that He provides for us. Here are some photographs of the occasion.



Jonathan giving us the tour



Lunch



Jenny with assistant Ryan



Contented cows



Bella and friend



Parish Directory

Parochial Church Council

(area code: 01494)

Chair	The Rector	
Hon. Secretary	Peter Miles	872465
Hon. Treasurer	John Southworth	581130
Electoral-Roll Officer	Kathleen Martin	870 704
Stewardship Recorder	Chris Neville	873 457
Pastoral-Care Co-ordinator	Margaret Carey	762 341
Chatterbox organiser	Marion Miles	872465
Messy Church Co-ordinator	Dan Beesley	211 738
YZone (group for 11-15s) Co-ordinator	Dan Beesley	
Church Watching	Tony Ferguson	07769 361 795
Reading-Room Bookings	Richard Silman	07786194695
	Janelle Stevenson	07771423553
Church Choir	Cathy Langdale	581 385
Bell-Ringing Master	John Davidge	873 325
Flower Guild	Sylvia Morrison-Moore	07798766322
Traidcraft	Margaret Dykes	874 511
Friends of the Parish Church	Claire Long	875 445
Safeguarding Officer	Victoria Neil victoriacneil42@gmail.com	
Parish Magazine	Rachel Leonard	872791



**Loving People
Transforming Lives
Glorifying God**