

**I will tell
of the decree
of the Lord:**

**“You are my son;
today I have
begotten you”.**

Psalm 2: 7



News from Farleigh Hospice



Light Up A Life Services and Appeal

Everyone is welcome at Farleigh Hospice's special Light Up A Life services to remember and celebrate loved ones who are no longer with us. For information on all of the nine services, go to www.farleighhospice.org/lightupalife.

You can also donate to Farleigh's Light Up A Life Appeal in memory of a loved one and have their name added to the charity's Book of Remembrance. Please visit the website to give a donation or call 01245 457351.



Buzz in the City 2025 Art Trail: summer 2025

Next summer, Farleigh is bringing the 'Buzz in the City' sculpture art trail to Chelmsford. 40 large, colourful bee sculptures will be installed outside places of interest around the city centre for 10 weeks and are expected to attract thousands of visitors.

The charity is looking for businesses to sponsor the bees and artists to design and decorate them. Schools, youth organisations, care homes and community groups can also have their own 'mini bee' sculpture to design, decorate and name.

To find out more, contact Farleigh now - email arttrail@farleighhospice.org or visit www.buzzinthecity.co.uk

Letter from the Wardens

As we prepare this letter, we are mindful of a busy church and full with folk marking Remembrance Day. For this Christmas season we have done much to retain the patterns of recent years. We have a Carol Service, Beer and Carols and a Crib Service, all much as in previous years. You will see the times on the centre page of this magazine. There are two exceptions. We are not planning to have Christingle Service this year and we concluded that we would not have a service at 'midnight' on Christmas Eve/ Christmas morning. There is such a service, certainly in Danbury. On Christmas morning we are looking forward to welcoming the Bishop of Bradwell, Bishop Adam Atkinson to take our service at 10:00 am.

We feel remarkably grateful to see how many people continue to be a part of the fellowship and trust this will continue.

A question that is sometimes asked takes the form of, "Is there any hope? Will we be getting a new priest soon?" That is two questions and two separate questions! We will try to address both.

"Is there any hope?" Some years ago, I recall reading a book called "Naught for You Comfort" by Trevor Huddleston. In it he

describes his experience of challenging the apartheid system in South Africa. He says he could see no hope of change. But he qualifies that by saying he meant he couldn't see anything happening himself but emphasises that he knew that in God there is indeed hope. And we have to be clear what we are hoping for. Are we meaning, in the way the 2 original questions are put, that the hope is in having a new priest? Or do we have some other, possibly more significant, hopes in mind? Naught for Your Comfort is described by one commentator as, "One of my favourite books about the struggle against apartheid, told beautifully and movingly by a humble Christian minister passionately committed to justice." Might a wide commitment to justice by the people of Sandon be a hope? And let us make that bigger. What about a wide commitment to and love of Jesus, his teachings and people. One significant mission organisation that sends people to other parts of the world has a wonderful few words, "With Jesus, with others, to the edges." Dare we hope that, in due course, someone or some people from Sandon might go to another part of the world having been envisioned and called to speak and live for Jesus in a foreign land? Or are we getting carried

away with this?

A few weeks ago, when Revd Hugh Dibbens was leading the communion service, we read from Isaiah chapter 49. Hugh, to whom we express much gratitude for leading our services on the first Sunday of the month, observed a wonderful aspect of the dialogue there. In verse 4 we see the author expressing both frustration and trust. "But I said, 'I have laboured in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing at all. Yet what is due to me is in the Lord's hand, and my reward is with my God.'" It is astonishing that God in verse 6 is recorded as saying, "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth." Arguably this is just what Jesus has done. But it also suggests a generosity far greater than we can imagine. Hope is to be found in the Lord, and the Lord alone. It is a real challenge not to accept other forms of hope.

There will of course need to be an appointment of another priest. The PCC have had several meetings about this. We have met with the Archdeacon, both as wardens and as a PCC. We have met with the wardens and PCC of

Boreham. The firmest decision made thus far is to proceed in preparing what is sometimes called a Parish Profile. That is work that will proceed as the PCC work to gather round one document and work to appoint 2 from amongst its number to represent it for the purposes of appointing a new minister. Two points are clear. We are most unlikely to see a priest with the vigour of Revd Terry Brown and there will be an increase in our parish share, ie what we pay regularly to the diocese. The latter is impacted by having to make a contribution to housing a priest which we did not with Terry because he was housed by his wife and her priestly accommodation. We will be doing well if there is a priest in place by next summer.

But let us put our trust in God and dream for the unimaginable. And thank you too for all the support we have received, from our wives, from the PCC and from so many in the congregation and beyond. It has made the impossible possible.

Oh! And apartheid was dead before Trevor Huddleston which was his prayer.

Richard and Andy
Church Wardens

Mouse Makes

"The child to be born will be called H _____, the _____ of _____" **THE GREATEST GIFT**
 Luke 1:35 "She will bear a son, and shall call his name _____ for he will save his people from their sins."
 Matthew 1:21

"For unto you is born this day a S _____ who is _____ R _____ the _____ R _____" **THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL!**
 Luke 2:11 "Jesus said, I am the _____ Y _____ and the _____ U _____ and the _____ I _____." **THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL!**
 John 14:6 "Jesus said, I am the _____ and the life."
 John 11:25

EMMANUEL • MESSIAH REDEEMER • KING OF KINGS • WORD
 SON OF MAN • EVERLASTING • SHEPHERD • PRIEST • PROPHET • TEACHER
 LIGHT • BREAD • VINE • DOOR • LAMB • COUNSELLOR • CHRISTMAS • GIFT

Find the words from the Bible verses too! Dec24 © deborah noble @ parishpump.co.uk

Harvest Festival Flowers

The flowers were arranged for the Harvest Festival in October at St Andrew's.

We used British grown sunflowers 'Helios Flame', gladioli and Solidago (Golden Rod), Amaranthus, some grasses and foliage from our own gardens. Everything was arranged as always in water using sustainable mechanics including mesh cages and wire frames.



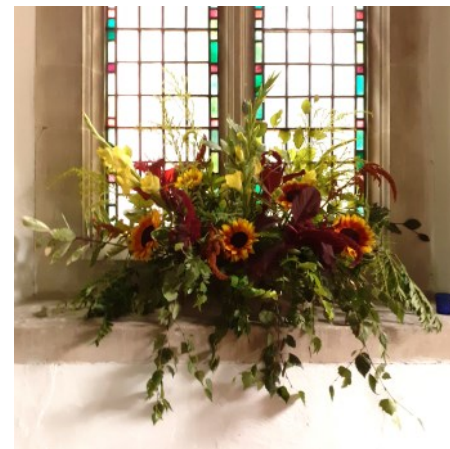
We have been arranging more sustainably for 3 years without using floral foam (Oasis). You may be wondering why? Floral foam is a single use plastic. It has a cellular structure which easily crumbles into microscopic particles. Some of these microplastics are released into the water when it is soaked or discarded where they enter the aquatic environment via the wastewater system into the rivers



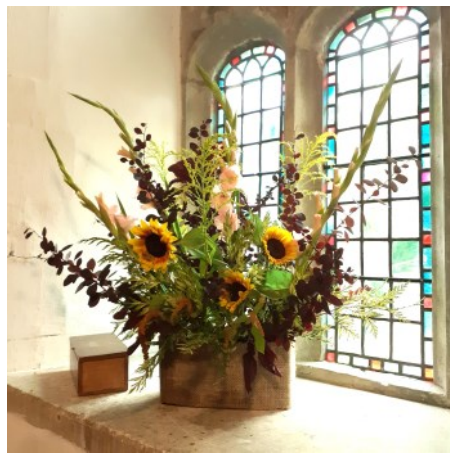
and sea. Microorganisms ingest the particles and they pass through the food chain. Floral foam is not biodegradable. It can exist for an indefinite period of time. The only way to dispose of it is via landfill. It is not environmentally friendly to incinerate due to its chemical composition. The new, updated Eco-Church survey has a new requirement which states 'Our church



recognises that worship resources have an impact on the climate and nature, and chooses those that are as sustainable as possible, for example local/seasonal flowers, foam-free arrangements...' As Flower Arrangers at St Andrew's, we are well on our way to achieving this aim as we head for our Gold Award. For more information about sustainability when arranging



church flowers, visit www.uschurchflowers.com. November and December will a busy time for sustainable seasonal Christmas workshops and festive arranging for the Christmas services. If you are interested in our workshops or joining our team, please contact Lesley (see Church Contacts). Why not follow us on Facebook 'St Andrew's, Sandon Flower Arrangers'. *Lesley Worboys*



1750 years ago, on 25th Dec 274 the Roman Emperor Aurelian founded the cult of Sol Invictus as an official religion. He erected a temple and declared 25th December a national holiday, to be known as the Feast of the Unconquered Sun. In 336, after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, 25th December began to be celebrated by the church in Rome as the birthday of God's Son.

125 years ago, on 5th Dec 1899 Henry Tate, British sugar merchant and philanthropist, died. He established the Tate Gallery in London.

Also 125 years ago, on 16th Dec 1899 Noel Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives*, and *Blithe Spirit*.



What do you think?

C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) perhaps better known for his 'Chronicles of Narnia' was a respected Christian Academic at Oxford and Cambridge. For most of his life he was single until, in 1956 he fell in love and married Joy Davidman. She died of cancer just four years later.

Lewis set out his thoughts in a short book entitled 'A Grief Observed' in which his argument centred around the question: "Where was God in all this? Just when He was needed, the lights go out and the door was bolted, double bolted and he (Lewis) was alone."

Some of you might possibly know that I have just come home from hospital (renal failure but still alive — just). It was an exhausting time but alone with my own thoughts in hospital during the early hours of long nights I found my thinking reflecting something of Lewis. Annie (my wife) was at home without anyone; how long was I to be away? From her point of view alone, she was suffering from the effects of a stroke as well as Leukaemia. Meanwhile, I couldn't even stand up let alone be there for her! So, my thoughts too — "where was God in all this just when He was needed?" Where indeed?

A few days later when a somewhat wobbly communication was set up and I could just about manage to speak to Annie, she told me that on that first night, at her very worst and feeling alone, there was an unexpected ring at the doorbell. There, stood S, our next-door neighbour. She had heard, what could she do? Another ring, R, another neighbour, from across the road. She would do whatever shopping Annie wanted. The following day, Tuesday, Annie was due at St. Bart's in London (not a journey she could make alone) but her friend P had phoned; she would take her to St. Bart's, bring her home and then stay overnight with her to ensure everything was in order.

And very quickly this little group of four or five neighbours and friends collected tightly around her. S even came in the early morning just to ensure Annie was up and about and was OK for the day. S, yes, another neighbour, brought a meal in to share. They would turn up just for a quick visit to make sure she had company especially when things were getting a bit complicated for me at the hospital.

A call from R & J at St. Andrew's said they would gladly take Annie up to Broomfield to see me (Annie had no means of self-transport) — and so it continued.

Advent Course

*The Sermon on the Mount
A New Way to Look at the World.*

At the centre of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus invites us to make his story our story. St Andrews Room at 10:45 am on Tuesday 19th, 26th November, 3rd, 10th and 17th December at 10:15 am for coffee.

And each week repeated again in the St Andrew's Room on Wednesday 20th, 27th November, 4th, 11th, 18th December at 7:15 pm for coffee.

The course will have brilliant cartoon video teaching from the Bible Project team. We do hope you are able to come.

They are all still there for Annie mainly because, at the moment, I am not much use to anyone and things like shopping and cleaning need still to be done — but we are moving on. Thankfully I am back home now trying to get the show back on the road with a vast range of drugs etc to help progress. But let's come back now to Lewis' anguished cry; "Where was God just when you need Him?" Certainly my question was, perhaps, not quite so despairing as his but I have to admit I wasn't so far short at one stage. So where was God for me? Where was He for Annie just over four weeks ago? I turned and



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looked. There was S, there was R, there was P. And all of the others — none saw anything exceptional in what they were doing — they just 'did' because. My friends, "where was God?" I could only cry tears. (I really did) He was there alright, but I couldn't see too well and perhaps I was looking the wrong way. I reflected afterwards;

Brother, Sister, let me serve you,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may I have the grace
to
Let you be my servant too.
Richard Gillard (1953)

Revd Geoff Griggs

The Power of a Name

I feel pretty confident in saying that the majority of us, as humans, are carrying some negative words and names in our hearts! It may be from negative comments or from someone behaving in a way that communicates negative feelings about us. These moments can embed themselves and become names or 'truths' that we speak over ourselves, or that we assume others say of us. Often we take on these names from people who shouldn't have had that power over our lives.

For example, a school friend may have encouraged you to wear make-up so you could be pretty like other girls and from that moment on, in the back of your mind, you've taken on a name: 'I'm ugly.' Or maybe you compared yourself to a sibling who was stronger, more outgoing or cleverer than you and, over time, you've logged anything that backs up the suspicion and it's left you with a name: 'I'm weak' or 'I'm too quiet' or 'I'm stupid.' Perhaps you have taken on a name from your sin. It could be your lust, anger or selfishness – whatever it is, maybe you've allowed that sin to name you and in the back of your mind you say, 'I'm not good enough' or 'I'm too broken.'

I wonder what names you carry in your heart? Those names that, when you are having a bad day, you say over yourself – those names that bring you down.

A lie that I carry in the back of my head is: 'I'm unlovable.' It is a deep-seated lie, which the devil draws to the surface time and time again. I have many wonderful friends and family, whom I love dearly and I know they love me dearly. My head knows that it is true, but my heart often forgets. And I can easily spiral into that lonely place, where I speak over myself: 'Mairi, no one loves you.'

It is in these low moments that learning to speak the truth of scripture over myself has transformed my life.

Discovering God's names for you
Recently when I noticed my mind was starting to spiral, I managed to open the Bible App on my phone. I read a few verses and, by what I can only describe as the power of the Holy Spirit, I felt comforted and my spirits were lifted. I was able to shake off some of the lies because what I was reading reminded me that the names I had been speaking over myself were not of God. The Holy Spirit reminded me in that moment that I am a dearly loved child of God ... and whether I feel like that or not just now, it is a truth that I

can hold onto. This truth remains the same no matter what my circumstances; it's a truth that I did nothing to deserve. I was able in that moment to receive that identity, receive that name that God speaks over me, that says, 'Mairi, you are loved.'

No matter what lie you believe of yourself, God wants you to receive the identity that he gives you – his own names for you. As we look through scripture, we see there are so many to pick from, but here are just a handful of names that God calls you:

FORGIVEN: 'But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.' (1 John 1:9, NLT)

HEALED: 'He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed.' (1 Peter 2:24, NLT)

BLAMELESS: 'Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.' (Colossians 1:22, NLT)

LOVED: 'But God showed his great love for us by sending

Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.' (Romans 5:8, NLT)
I don't know what you think when you read these verses... Maybe you think they are not for you, that this is not how God sees you. In some ways, they are mind-blowing statements for any of us to take in.

But the good news is this: these things are true of us and they are not based on anything that we do or what we have earned. This identity is freely given to us through Jesus; we only need to accept it.

Speaking truth over lies

I have been a follower of Jesus for a long time and still I find that it's a daily battle to speak God's truths over the devil's lies. Yet, God has graciously been showing me that the more I do this – the more that I practice the discipline of speaking God's names for me over my life – the more that he brings freedom over these lies. Practically, scripture memory is a helpful practice for me. The more I know the truths and promises of God, the more readily I can bring those truths to mind. Also, being in community with other believers. It is such an encouragement to have friends who can speak these truths of scripture over my life.

(Continued on page 14)

Danbury Church Lunchtime Concerts

Fridays at
12:15 pm

13th December
An Advent
Reflection

Lunch will be
available from
11:45 am or bring
your own.
Entry is free.

30 years ago, on
9th Dec 1994 Sinn
Fein held its first
formal talks with
the British
government. This
eventually led to
the IRA ceasefire,
the Good Friday
Agreement, and
the establishment
of the Northern
Ireland Assembly
in 1998.

(Continued from page 13)

God wants to name you. He
wants you to lay down the
negative names you carry in your
heart and replace them with
names he has for you, which offer
life and freedom – names that are
yours to claim because of Jesus.

Rosemary's Carol

Our God he came that Christmas night
in human form in humble birth.
His might and power he set aside
for love of people here on earth.

How can we dare to look on him?
We can but bow our heads and kneel
to praise and thank him for his love
which comes to bless, to teach, to heal.

And in the end, his love so great
that on the cross his life he gave.
Yet not the end, he rose again,
thanks be to God, our lives to save.

Tart Thinking

I think I manage really well for seventy-eight,
I'd manage even better if I weren't so overweight.

But Gerald he makes tarts and cakes of such de-
licious taste
It really would be such a sin to let them go to
waste.

Afterthought :
But that's exactly what they do-
Go to waist, and hips and tummy too!
Rosemary Taylor

Are you ready to take this step
with me?

*Mairi Martin, First published in
Discipleship Weekly by
Navigators UK
(www.navigators.co.uk/blog/)*

Farming Today

Drilling was finally completed on
30th October, a good month later
than normal. The first application
of spray for rye grass control has
been applied.

The rams, having done their work,
are now resting and being fed to
recondition them; they always
lose weight during the mating
season and this year several
have had shoulder problems too.
Seventy-two new lambs at £146
per head have been purchased
from an Oxfordshire farmer and
dealer who buys 3,000 north
country mules each year.
A mule sheep is a Bluefaced
Leicester ram crossed with a
Swaledale ewe. Eighty shearlings
(a sheep that is between the ages
of one and two years old and has
only been shorn once) from
Suffolk have been purchased, a
total of 375 will lamb on 27th
January.

In the olden days we kept our
own replacement female lambs
from a strong pair.
Essex is now in a Blue Tongue
zone. There are 639 cases in the
UK. This illness causes the face
and tongue to swell but usually
the animal will survive. Three
expensive vaccines are available.
Fly tipping, hare coursing and
gypsies continue to be a rural
problem. *Gillian*

Travellin' Light

One of the only benefits of ageing
and infirmity is the help provided
by airlines when boarding and
alighting aircraft and getting
through to customs control.

"Wait until everyone has left the
aircraft after landing and we'll
come and collect you" or "Present
yourself here close to boarding
time".

They're always true to their word
and I've been helped up steps,
raced through hordes of passen-
gers via buggies, used specially
adapted lifts, and whisked through
customs. All I have to do before-
hand is speak earnestly to airport
staff and point to the scar across
my chest!!!!

It works every time!!!! So there
you go. Get yourself through ma-
jor heart surgery and you'll be well
away!!!! *John Gruby*

Our Church is open!

The church is open for quiet
contemplation and prayer every
day from about 8:30am to
5:00pm (exact times will vary).

Church Services

St. Andrew's, Sandon

Services currently planned online via Zoom are shown in italics.

Also, we hope to say Morning Prayer in church at 8:30 am each morning Sunday to Thursday ie 5 mornings per week.

December 2024

Sunday 1st	Advent 1	
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist Revd Hugh Dibbens
Tuesday 3rd	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Carol Ball
Sunday 8th	Advent 2	
	10:00 am	Worship Together
Tuesday 10th	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Tim Ball
Sunday 15th	Advent 3	
	10:00 am	Agape Meal
	3:00 pm	Worship at Howe Green URC
	4:00 pm	Festival of Carols
Tuesday 17th	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Carol Ball
	7:00 pm	Beer and Carols in Crown
Sunday 22nd	Advent 4	
	10:00 am	Morning Worship
Tuesday 24th	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Tim Ball
	4:00 pm	Crib Service
Wednesday 25th	Christmas Day	
	10:00 am	Christmas Day Communion Rt Revd Bishop Adam
Sunday 29th	Christmas 1	
	10:00 am	Songs of Praise
Tuesday 31st	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Tim Ball
January 2025		
Wednesday 1st	8:30 pm	<i>Night Prayer</i>
Sunday 5th	Epiphany	
	10:00 am	Sung Eucharist Revd Hugh Dibbens
Tuesday 7th	9:30 am	Said Communion Revd Carol Ball
Wednesday 8th	8:30 pm	<i>Night Prayer</i>

Sunday 12th

Tuesday 14th

Wednesday 15th

Sunday 19th

Tuesday 21st

Wednesday 22nd

Sunday 26th

Tuesday 28th

Wednesday 29th

February 2025

Sunday 2nd

Tuesday 4th

Wednesday 5th

Sunday 9th

Tuesday 11th

Wednesday 12th

Sunday 16th

Tuesday 18th

Wednesday 19th

Sunday 23rd

Tuesday 25th

Wednesday 26th

We are in a vacancy and so some details will change. But please turn up!

Baptism of Christ

10:00 am Worship Together
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Mark Pape
8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

Epiphany 2

10:00 pm Agape Meal
3:00 pm Worship at Howe Green URC
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Carol Ball

8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

Epiphany 3

10:00 am Morning Worship
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Keith Anderson
8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

The Presentation

10:00 am Sung Eucharist Revd Hugh Dibbens
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Carol Ball
8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

Epiphany 4

10:00 am Worship Together
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Mark Pape
8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

4th before Lent

10:00 am Agape Meal
3:00 pm Worship at Howe Green URC
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Carol Ball

8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

3rd before Lent

10:00 am Morning Worship
9:30 am Said Communion Revd Phil Sheldrake
8:30 pm *Night Prayer*

Saint Andrew's Parish Church Contacts

Rector	Vacancy	
Church Wardens	Richard Cecil** Andy Horne**	224747 475279
PCC Secretary	Judy Cecil**	224747
PCC Treasurer	Nick Bobeldijk ⁺	471756
Safeguarding Officer	Alison Read*	474858
Electoral Roll	Liz Bobeldijk	471756
Bell Ringing	Mike Worboys	224612
Tiny Tots	Alison Read*	474858
Flower Arranging	Lesley Worboys	224612
Organist	Cathie Horne*	475279
Choir	Gill Haddington	529305
Magazine Editor	Richard Cecil**	224747
Parochial Church Council Members	as * above and Colin Bryan ⁺ , David Farrar ⁺ , John Gruby, Christine Mennie ⁺ , and Janet Terry ⁺	

Authorised to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion

As ⁺ above and Valerie Grimwood, Gill Hodge and Michael Puffett

Regular Events see pages 16 & 17 for full details of worship.

Sundays	10:00 am	Morning Worship/Communion
Tuesdays	9:30 am 7:45 pm	Morning Worship/Communion Ringing Practice
Wednesday (Zoom) sandon-church.info	8:30 pm	Night Prayer resuming on 1 st January 2025
Thursday (Zoom) compasschurches.org.uk	8:30 am	Compass Churches Morning Prayer
Thursday	3:00 pm	Choir Practice

Zoom services links can be found at the websites just prior to the service.

St Andrew's, Sandon

www.sandon-church.info

Editor Richard Cecil
Advertising Claire Jefferies
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Copy for March's magazine by
10th February 2025 please.
magazine@sandon-church.info



Howe Green URC

We recently had our November coffee morning, where we were able to share coffee and cake, and fellowship. Please do join us for our next one which will be in the new year. We will release the date later.

Howe Green has its monthly service on Sunday 17th November, when the service will be taken by Gary Wilder. It will be at 3 pm followed by tea and cake.

We will have our December Service on Sunday 15th December at 3 pm.

Our annual Carols by Candlelight are on Thursday 21st December at 7:30 pm, when we will share the nine lessons and carols. This is a lovely community event, followed by refreshments. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Jane Clark



We commend to God's care:
Interment of ashes Eamonn John Gallagher 20th September
Funeral of Greta Margaret Watkins 13th November

We rejoice at the marriage of:
Ronnie Rodney Bull and Lucy Hubbard 31st August
Harry Christoher Zinopoulos and Jessica Jane Blakely 21st September

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Christmas - Time to remember Christians facing Persecution

This Christmas, there are about 360 million Christians worldwide who will not be celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.

They dare not do so.

That's because 1 in every 7 believers globally live in countries where they suffer oppression and discrimination for their faith.

So, instead of going to church and singing carols, they face violence and abduction, while others risk losing their jobs and livelihood. According to the latest World Watch List from Open Doors, there are 13 countries where Christians face extreme persecution, and 37 more where they face general persecution.

Fortunately, there are charities working on the frontlines to help these persecuted believers. You may wish to support one this Christmas, as a way of showing solidarity with our Christian brothers and sisters worldwide.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide <https://www.csw.org.uk/home.htm>

Help The Persecuted <https://htp.org>

Open Doors <https://www.opendoorsuk.org>

Release International <https://releaseinternational.org/>

Eco Church at St Andrew's

Well done to everyone who contributed to us achieving a silver award.

There is a small group who meet occasionally to see if we can make more progress with Eco-Church.

We plan to work towards some aspects of the gold award but will move slowly. It is more important to change how we do things and make a difference for the planet, than to tick boxes for another award. We hope you agree!

So, in the next months we plan to develop 3 projects, in addition to Lesley and the flower arrangers working hard to produce sustainable and non-oasis flower arrangements in church. (See separate magazine article on page 6.)

- 1 One or more litter picking sessions in the parish in areas not covered by the Parish Council litter picker. We are suggesting we go out on a Saturday morning 10 - 11:30 am in the New Year. The roads we might cover include, Mayes Lane and Butts Green; part of Woodhill Road; Molrams Lane; part of East Hanningfield Road. Any other suggestions are welcome. I will ask the Parish Council if they can help with litter pickers tools

and HiViz jackets. We will publicise a date after Christmas.

- 2 Survey of the birds in the churchyard – this will be on 24th to 26th January to fit with the Big Garden Birdwatch organised by the RSPB. People spend an hour observing birds. I suggest we meet at 10 am and then at 2 pm. Experienced bird watchers are especially welcome.
- 3 A Fairtrade event with coffee/tea/biscuits and time to learn more about Fairtrade. I suggest a Thursday evening in March at 7 - 9 pm. Maybe we will offer some Fairtrade wine too. More information will be in the March magazine.

If you are interested and/or can help, please get in touch with judy@cecil.family.clara.net

Judy Cecil

80 years ago, from 16th Dec 1944 to 16th Jan 1945 the Battle of the Bulge (Belgium) took place. German forces launched a surprise assault on the Allies in the Ardennes Forest – their last major counter-offensive operation of the war.

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Andrew's
Room on
second
Wednesday

of the month 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
so come along.

Further information

Contact: Alison 01245 474858 or
e-mail: tots@sandon-church.info

A Faint Mist

A faint mist quietly veiled the land.
Dawns fragrant scent it filled the air,
As Decembers pages turned a pace
Towards another Christmastide.
A time of year to think of those
Less fortunate, less well disposed?

A cold chill bit in the morning air
As a lonely trav'ler ambled by
On his back his home, his life
A hostel, he now hoped, nearby.

The last house lights now switched to off
As the morning light rose from in the east
The fam'ly breakfast routine to start
Children schooled and parents worked;
The clock of life, ticked ever near
That Christmas Day was almost
here.

Our lonely trav'ler walked through
the street
But no-one he passed he failed to
meet
No-one met his eye, his face
Their gaze only fixed on the
shopping space.

Our trav'ler we will never know
His childhood life, a tale of woe
A refugee perhaps from a war torn land
His hopes, his dreams
His loves, his plans.

14th December 2023

*Both poems
by Richard Simmonds*

Winters Dowdy Gloss

Winters dowdy gloss painted 'cross the land,
The ochred shades and hues, where I now
stand,
Are slowly changing, to a lighter green,
As natures brush overpaints what had been.

Slow, oh so slow, Springs promise now
unfolds
As Winter releases her gripped stronghold
And slowly daffs, crocuses do appear;
Painted oh so brightly, this time of year.

With saddened eye I look upon
How man has abused his guardianship,
Over natures canvas, tree and bough;
As brick and asphalt, has replaced,
The sight of the farmers plough.

Will not our children rail at us
Of the world hunger, soil now dust?
For climate change, for arctic thaw,
Of the evidence we did so ignore?
Of those things, we left undone,
And our leaders neglect, with silvered
tongue?
Oh, these things, we have left behind,
All because we were not so inclined,

Alas it will be too late for those, years hence,
The young, and those as yet unborn;
We leave behind a lasting inheritance,
Our actions, now on papers torn,
As though snow flakes, in a snowstorm.
Our bequest, writ in falt'ring words;
We failed to protect our land, our seas our
birds.

17th February 2024.

Tales of childhood

The dam at the bottom of the garden

You may recall a wandering couple of articles about my childhood, and particularly a certain model railway. Something a little different this time! A little delve into other mischief that went on in my childhood seemed likely to be more fun.

We moved to Chelmsford in 1963. Or at least everyone else did. I was left in a darkened room in Greenford, Middlesex being looked after by my Grandma because I had a nasty dose of measles. By the time I arrived in Chelmsford my brother was clumping up and down the uncarpeted stairs of our new home, with his leg in plaster. Well, not very new, because it was built in eighteen something.

The garden was quite long. To our joy the area beyond the trellis at the end of the garden was our domain. No-one seemed to see what we got up to and as time went on, we got up to more and more.

I remember one particular summer. We had been watching old war films both on TV and at the cinema. The Dam Busters springs to mind.

We had dug a large hole in our camp at the bottom of the garden. Part of the hedge at the side of the house was made up of a large

yew bush. We were allowed to prune it as much as we liked. Mostly, I suspect, to save my dad the trouble of doing it himself. Old bricks and yew branches made for a very well concealed camp at the bottom of the garden. As far as we knew no-one could see what we were up to.

During our excavations at the bottom of the garden to dig the hole that formed the main part of our camp we found more bricks together with other Victorian builder's detritus. Sand and cement were always readily available from my parents' garage. We had a large hole and materials to build so the "Dam Busters" film had to be relived in miniature. A dam was built across the hole. The next step was to fill it with water. Fortunately, the garden hose was long enough! There was then a debate about how to re-enact the Dam Busters raid itself. High pressure hose nozzles are wonderful things when planted in the base of a wall and turned on suddenly! Dam well and truly busted!

Our other escapades that summer are largely unprintable. We were adventurous children who had minor adventures all the time, some rather sillier and more dangerous than others! Somehow, we survived them all and so I am here to tell the tale!

Andy Horne



The poster features a dark blue background with a white, torn-edge banner at the top. The banner contains the text "Farleigh Hospice's Christmas Tree Recycling" in green and red. Below the banner are three decorated Christmas trees. An elf is climbing the rightmost tree. At the bottom, four more elves are shown: one on the left, two in the center holding a tree branch, and one on the right. The text "Register online" is in red, and "farleighhospice.org/trees" is in green. Below that, "Collections on 10, 11 and 12 January 2025" is in green. At the bottom left is the Farleigh Hospice logo, and at the bottom right is the FR Fundraising Regulator logo.

Farleigh Hospice's
Christmas Tree
Recycling

Register online
farleighhospice.org/trees
Collections on 10, 11 and 12 January 2025

Farleigh Hospice
It is because you care that we can
www.farleighhospice.org
Charity Registration No. 284670

Registered with
FR
FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR

Annual Bike Ride 2024

This year's bike ride took place on the 7th of September and in good weather. Six of us set off from Sandon heading towards Galleywood from where we cycled downhill to the old Chelmsford bypass at Margaretting. From there we went on to Fryerning and 'the Cricketers' for lunch. The first 8 miles had gone well



with only one minor accident; I toppled off my bike on arrival at the Cricketers. We had an excellent lunch and some 90 minutes later set off towards Writtle where we stopped at The Rose and Crown at the upper Green for some light refreshments.

Some little time later we embarked on our last and longest stage finding the River Chelmer near Writtle and going along cycle route number 1 through central Chelmsford, past the Records Office on to Sandford Lock and then up to Brick Kiln Road and the Crown.

The riders were Guy and Dessi Speakman, Charlotte and Simon Fletcher plus Amanda Reid and David Farrar.

We naturally celebrated completing a total of 21 miles, and the fact that I survived even though I managed to topple off my



bike (while at a stop) three times! More practice is needed plus saddle height adjustment!

David Farrar

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40 years ago, on 3rd Dec that the Bhopal disaster took place in India. A poisonous gas leak at a Union Carbide pesticide plant killed thousands of people and left at least 120,000 with long-term health problems.

Also 40 years ago, on 19th Dec 1984 that the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed by Britain and China. Britain agreed to return Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty on 1st July 1997.

Our Twin

I contemplated trying to write a piece about the location depicted in this picture. Not much work is required to say that it is at a place called Yolde-Plate in Yolda South in Nigeria. The picture is in the toilet in church. And it is part of a twinning

program undertaken by Tear Fund to provide improved levels of hygiene in many parts of the developing world. When Terry Brown retired he donated it to the church. I have been unable to find out very much about this part of Nigeria. But as I write this I realise that Judy and I have received

a letter from a group called HART, Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust, a charity founded by Baroness Caroline Cox. They support work that many other agencies are unable to. They write that a full scale humanitarian crisis is unfolding in Central Nigeria.

I know little more than that and have heard nothing about this from other sources. Some of you may have heard of Mina Smallman. She has been in the news on occasions recently following the death of her 2 daughters some years ago.

Before all that she led a group on a pilgrimage to Lindisfarne. During that she spoke privately about a trip on which she accompanied Baroness Cox on a trip to Nigeria. Mina spoke about how she was offered some specially prepared fish, as she recalled it in her childhood,

growing up in Nigeria. When it came she realised she could not face it! So out of gratitude Baroness Cox ate it. And was quite ill for a few days afterwards! Mina spoke most highly of Caroline Cox's generosity.

Richard Cecil



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Yolde Pate, Yola-south

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Soup & Sandwich Lunch at St Andrews Church

1st Tuesday of the month
The next Lunch is
3rd December
Future dates
7th January
4th February
4th March.

Join us for lunch, for fellowship (and food of course!!)
We would love to see you.
No charge but donations gratefully received.

Time: 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm
Contact Judy Cecil for more details on 01245 224747

Also 25 years ago, on 31st Dec 1999 the London Eye – the world's tallest Ferris wheel at the time, was officially opened on the banks of the River Thames. It opened to passengers in March 2000.

Roast parsnip and apple salad

Serves 4

Ingredients:

500 g parsnips,
1 tablespoon sunflower oil,
500 g eating apples cut into eighths,
salad leaves,
50 g toasted walnuts,
hazelnuts or pecans.

Dressing:


2 tablespoons sunflower oil,
1 tablespoon lemon juice,
½ clove crushed garlic,
1 teaspoon English mustard,
2 teaspoons honey,
salt and pepper.

Preheat oven to 190 Celsius or gas 5. Peel parsnips and quarter lengthwise. Chop into 2 cm pieces and put in a large roasting tray. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and trickle over the oil. Toss together and roast for 20 minutes, then stir them and add the apple pieces and return to the oven for another 10 mins until soft and coloured.

Whisk all dressing ingredients together and season to taste. When vegs are cooked tip into a dish and cover with the dressing, mixing well.

To serve place the salad leaves on a platter, top with the still warm vegs and top with the nuts.

Narelle Arnold



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