



The Anchor

All Saints Rebuild

From the Fire to the Future



Good news for the forthcoming festive period and 2026.
See the news from the Church Wardens on Page 6.

From The Editors.

Happy Christmas to all in our congregation and congratulations on keeping the magazine going with your varied contributions. We have plenty to talk about and now have an end in sight, where we will be able to meet in our rightful home. Realistically speaking, this may be 2027. In this edition, you will find:

- A report on Remembrance Sunday.
- Reflections on our faith by Revd Wendy, Pope Francis, Paul Smith, John Smith, Jill Barr and Tom Murphy.
- Notices about Bible Study, Art Club, Mothers Union and Mainly Men.
- Stories about Christmas past.
- Overseas connections in Zambia, France and Sri Lanka.
- Fundraising events and news.
- From The Archives by Tony Ruffhead.
- Update on the Church Re-build.



The editorial team wish you all a Christmas full of joy and a happy 2026.

Next Edition: Theme School days remembered.

Deadline date: 14 January 2026..

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Editorial Team: Judy and Tony Eden and Hetty Ward.

Our intrepid Skydivers from Avon Reach.



From The Vicarage.

Advent

So, we have soaked up the summer sunshine. Crunched through the crispy (or soggy) autumn leaves in all their autumn glory. Watched the chestnuts fall, and the trees go bare as they lean further into their winter sparseness. And now suddenly realise that Advent is upon us, and the signs of Christmas are becoming ever more familiar when we venture out.

I wonder where you are in this. Are you longing for the lights, the Christmas markets, exchanging

gifts, and all the razzle dazzle tinsel that goes with it? Or would you prefer to curl up in the warm, safe away from the jostling of the noise and crowds? Perhaps you are already making all the preparations for family and friends to descend, planning the meals and making the mince pies. Or perhaps that will not be your Christmas this year, whether by choice or circumstance.

It can be hard some years to feel like we are a part of the Christmas season. Some years it all flows and is wonderful, other years perhaps not so. But that is if we only look to the expectations around us and in our media marketing world, and forget what Advent is really all about. Advent is about pause and preparation, but preparation of ourselves for what is to come, not just preparation of the turkey and stuffing! It is the time set aside starting from the fourth Sunday before Christmas day, to remind us that we have something to prepare for. Something to wait for. Something to watch for.

Inside of church and outside, the season fills up with celebrations and activities of all kinds. It can be hard to slow down. But if we can find some time every day through Advent, even if only a short while, and connect in with our Christian Christmas journey, we might be surprised at what we find.

We will find the noise and the jostling of crowds making their way through crowded streets, as they gather together in Bethlehem of Old for a census. We will see the busyness of the traders and innkeepers, and bakers and



craftspeople, as they respond to the sudden rush and influx of customers. We will hear the noise of sellers all shouting above the others to advertise their wares. And family members calling out to find each other in the crowds, excited to be together again. We will see some people waiting anxiously for others to arrive – are they OK? Are they having problems getting here? I hear some of the camels have been cancelled, will they be able to sort something out? Some people will be loving it. Others will just want it over and to be able to get back to daily life as normal, not knowing that what was normal before the census, is about to change in ways beyond their imagining.

And if we stay still and quiet long enough, we might just catch a glimpse of something else too. Something beyond the crowds, the noise, the busyness. We might just catch a glimpse of a young couple arriving. The woman near to birthing her child. The man desperately trying to find a place to stay, to provide for his wife, and the child on the way. We might be able to hear them being turned away, over and over again. Full up, no room, should have been here earlier, what was you thinking of leaving it this late, couldn't you have got here quicker?

I wonder, if you stay still and keep watching, keep waiting to see what happens, what you will see next. The noisy inns are too full. Too full of revellers who are not going anywhere else. No intention of making space for a family in the making. Even the streets are heaving. Nowhere to rest even for a little while. But the man does not give up. He sees his wife and her discomfort. He tries again. No, no room here either – but there is a space. It's not much, but it's safe and dry – and quiet. Without hesitation they both

say yes. It is not what they expected, but there is a peace about it. And it is far away from the crowds. They are shown in and left alone.

But what happens next?

Keep watching. Keep waiting. Listen well - we may hear some angels singing. And if you really want to know for sure what happens next, come and be with us on Christmas Eve at St Luke's, or All Saints and St Luke's on Christmas morning, and we can share how the story ends together!

With all blessings for Christmas and the New Year ahead.

All Saints Garden of Remembrance

Important Notice We are very close to beginning the works to rebuild our church building, and in the process of preparation to begin, it has come to our notice that the flowerbeds where we have previously interred ashes of loved ones have become contaminated as a result of the fire by lead and fire suppressant chemicals. In order to rectify this and make the site and grounds safe for future users, we regret that it will be necessary for us to exhume the ashes interred there, and to encapsulate them in a container, after which they will be re-interred at a deeper level in the same spot. We are sorry to have to do this, and we will, of course, conduct this in the most respectful way possible, and prayers will be said at appropriate times.

Please be in contact with us if your loved one's ashes are affected and you would like to know more about this. I can be contacted on 01202 129881, or by email on Kathy.vicar@rivermudechurches.uk.

The Rebuilding of All Saints Church

After more than three years since the fire, it is very encouraging to see that Randell Construction are now on site preparing to start the contract to rebuild our church centre. The contract officially starts on 8th December and is estimated to take 56 weeks, subject to unforeseen problems.

The Appeal – The generosity of many people to raise funds for the rebuild has been amazing and November was no exception. The Ball held at The Kings Arms Hotel on Saturday 15th November raised over £2,000. A cheque was presented to the church at the service on Sunday 23rd for £2,081 from

Avon Reach Care Home as a result of a Sky Diving challenge. A very generous donation of over £190,000 was received from Bob Eden in Australia. As a result of these donations for which we are extremely grateful, the PCC at its meeting held on 19th November decided that the fund raising would now concentrate on two aspects of the rebuild.

Firstly, donations will be very welcome for the furnishing of the church, the hall, the upper room and the office. Peter Neale has already received contributions for some of the church furnishing and he would welcome more contributions. Please contact Peter directly if you would like to purchase an item of furniture or furnishing. As an example, the purchase of a chair for the church would be very welcome.

Secondly, as the church is being rebuilt, we need to plan for the mission and outreach of the church as we extend our activities in the community. Funding for this work is essential and will be welcomed. The Revd Kathy is leading a working party in the new year to set out our vision and plan for the church in the years to come as we seek to spread the Good News of Jesus to more and more people in our local community.

Keep watching this space!

Tony Eden and Chris Green - Churchwardens

Revisiting St. Francis Hospital in Zambia –

Tony Eden



Each week in our prayers at All Saints Church, we remember the work of St. Francis hospital which is in a remote part of eastern Zambia. It is now 7 years since I last visited the hospital but since then we have continued to sponsor students as they undertook studies to become nurses, doctors or teachers. This was an opportunity to see what improvements have been made to the hospital and to meet some of these young people to see how their careers were progressing.

Just after I arrived with my friend Tim, we attended the graduation ceremony for the 600 or so nurses who were receiving their graduation certificates. The ceremony was held in the open and the guest of Honour was the Government Minister of Health. The whole ceremony was on a grand scale and a very formal occasion for the nurses, parents sponsors and the lecturers. St. Francis hospital has a training school on site which was where the ceremony was held. There were two other schools who sent graduates to the ceremony. All the nurses, midwives and public health staff entered the arena dancing in formation and led by “Florence Nightingale.” They were all beautifully attired in their white uniforms and many hours had been spent on their hairstyles, fingernails and many wore lace like gloves. One of the nurses that we sponsored is called Avilass. My friend Tim looked after her daughter all through the ceremony and she was as good as gold! This was the highlight for many of these young women and men and I am sure their parents and supporters felt very proud of them. The whole ceremony was reminiscent of a colonial style event. Even though it was very hot (30 degrees) the organisers were dressed in full suits, ties and waistcoats!

Sadly, less than one in five of these students will get a post as a nurse as the Government cannot afford to expand the health service due to lack of funding. Nursing and teaching are about the only two professions for a trained woman in Zambia. Many have to work in whatever way they can to earn a living and support their families. As they have been trained for their profession, many find it very difficult to adapt to the commercial world.



Over the first weekend we visited several students that we had sponsored over the years to see how they were progressing. This was a very mixed picture. On one visit we went by taxi to Chanita, a town on the border with Mozambique to visit Beatrice. Some of you may remember that All Saints Church had sponsored her in 2018 in her final year of a teaching degree. Fast forward to this year and after 7 years she has just secured her first post in a private school for 3 to 5 year olds. We met the owner of the school and together they seem to make a good partnership as they plan the expansion of the school. Beatrice's mother cooked us lunch and we had the opportunity to talk to her three children. Life has been incredibly hard for her. After a number of setbacks, Beatrice married and



had their first child together, but her husband died a few days later. This left her with three children, no income and the husband's parents forced her to leave the house. Somehow with our help she managed to keep going until she was offered this post. It is remote from where she used to live but she is making the best of it and I believe she is a very good teacher. Her eldest boy called Favour is 9 years old and is very bright. They have 2 rooms in the school which is their home and no electricity. As with

many households, they charge their iphones using solar panels. I hope and pray that Beatrice will make a success of her teaching at the school, and it was lovely to see her again after 7 years.

On the Saturday we travelled to Petauke, a town about an hour and a half away and met Gerald who we had sponsored and graduated 2 years ago. He has not been able to find a post as a nurse and is living with an uncle and helping him run a pharmacy.

On a more successful note we met Alick who graduated 2 years ago and is now working as the senior midwife in a remote clinic close to Chadiza about 30 miles from the hospital. The lack of drugs is a real problem and he was delighted to be given our supply of paracetamol and ibuprofen. Many kind

people from our church had been collecting these drugs for me to take and he was delighted to receive them and thanked everyone who had supplied them. I asked him where he went to church. He told me that in his village there was no place of worship and he and his wife travelled about 4 miles to Chadiza where there was a Catholic church. As the rainy season was starting while we were there, travel across the bush is becoming very difficult, so it may not be long before he cannot use his motorbike to get to the next village. Alick is a delightful person, full of hope and faith and gratitude for everything that people have done for him. He married last year and his wife is a trained teacher. At present she is helping at a primary school as a volunteer.

I spent part of the second week looking at the improvements to the hospital. These are very impressive and that is thanks to the dedication of the Senior Medical Superintendent, Dr, Lalic Banda. Not only is he in charge of the hospital, but he is also a paediatrician and an Anglican Lay reader. He helped with the service on Sunday morning. The hospital has now been upgraded to level 3 which is the highest in Zambia and as a result Dr. Banda has been able to attract extra funding, There is now an air conditioned burns unit, (very important as most people cook on open air charcoal burners, a new CT scanner which is a joint project with an Indian company. The images from the scanner are sent to a hospital in Goa and they receive the results in about 30 minutes. The CT scanner is powered by solar energy and is therefore independent of the many power failures. Recently a new oxygen making plant has been installed which now supplies all the hospital's needs for oxygen and the surplus is sold to other hospitals. This plant also operates using solar power. The most recent development has been the installation of a kidney dialysis unit, again a joint venture with an Indian company. The Indian consultant, Lloyd Vincent, is training the local staff in the use of the equipment. Currently there are 6 patients undergoing dialysis treatment, but he told me that there are many more patients being diagnosed with Kidney failure. There is a new physiotherapy unit with the sort of equipment that you find here in the UK.

What I found most moving was that although I have not been to the hospital for 7 years, many people remembered me and greeted me like a long lost friend! Elizabeth who runs the Lodge where we were staying welcomed me with the words, Tony, I have put you in your usual room (no. 4)! The people

who work at the hospital made me feel very much at home amongst them. The Nurses Christian fellowship which meets regularly in the hospital chapel invited me to give the address on the Saturday evening. I chose as my theme: The walk to Emmaus. Their singing and worship is inspirational and it is a privilege to worship with these young people.

Finally, on the second Friday we met the new Bishop of the Eastern Province, Bishop Dennis. He told us of his plans to ensure that all clergy would receive a monthly stipend and a pension. Until now clergy only received a salary if their church could afford to pay them. He plan to use some of the Diocesan land in Chipata to create commercial offices which would support the finances of the Diocese. I felt that we at All Saints Church might be able to help him in some small way with this much needed venture.



For me, this was a very worthwhile visit, and helps to maintain our links with St. Francis hospital and the Eastern Diocese. Thank you for all the support that you gave me

Goodbye Little Saints

Little Saints, All Saints' Toddler group which was based in the old church, has closed its doors. After taking over the running of Little Saints toddler group for five years, we have had to close due to staff shortages. It's a sad decision to have to make, but we could not find replacements willing to commit on a regular basis. We were also finding in the last two years that many toddlers now move on to play school at age three which impacts the make up of the group and recruitment. If there is going to be provision for the under threes in the rebuilt church it may have to take a different form as many options for that age group now exist locally, including an under- fives Kung Fu group!



Little Saints started with Jill, Janice, Heather and Joan post Covid. Joan was always reliable and we loved her sense of humour. Heather often turned up early and did the lion's share of furniture shifting. After a

lifetime of looking after children, Heather noticed things about the children's body language and was an invaluable member of the team.

Janice was good at noticing things that I had missed and was very helpful at marketing and including toys in the rhyme time. With her previous teaching experience, she helped me to plan Little Saints and was my right-hand person. Jilly joined and brought her skills of working with adults and training dogs. (Being firm !)

Important friendships were forged during this time between mums and children often resulting in playdates and ongoing friendship. Here's what some mums said about Little Saints:

"Thank you for all the fun, friendship and sharing"

"Thank you all for all you did for the kids"

"This Toddlers group was a godsend when my grandson was small and I was on my knees with moving. Thank you all so much for your support and companionship. So sad it won't be available to others...."

Carers also valued being made welcome, as being a carer can be an isolating experience.

The Panda became our mascot after Heather brought in a giant panda toy. It was much cuddled. Sadly, we lost it in the fire. Our plastic slide, however, which the Flower Arrangers allowed us to store in their cupboard, miraculously survived the fire. It was covered in soot but washed up a treat.

After the fire we were homeless. Several local churches said they were unable to accommodate us, but Jill and Janice found *Godfirst* the evangelical church in the business park off Somerford Road. *Godfirst* were not only prepared to hire us a room at a modest rate, but were also



happy to share their toys with us. We owe them a huge debt. We started every session with the team saying a prayer together and I don't feel it's an exaggeration to say that God heard us and provided.

We offered a song and rhyme time at the end of each session, accompanied by the ukulele. Our rendition of 'Music Man' had to be heard to be believed with each child frantically playing an instrument! Through 'Hello all the boys, hello all the girls' the children learned each other's names and felt included when they heard their names being sung by everyone.

During the last year Sally Hill joined on an occasional basis and added some imaginative craft and action songs. I'm sure they still remember 'Five Currant Buns in a Baker's Shop' which featured real buns.

Goodbye Little Saints. We're going to miss the fun, the sharing and the privilege of seeing children grow up under our eyes.



Perhaps the last word should be given by the Rev. Kathy:

Huge thank you to the whole team at Little Saints for your time and efforts running this group. It's lovely to hear how much of a blessing this group has been to many of you. We really do hope to be back in our rebuilt church by Easter 2027 at the latest so we hope to be able to warmly welcome many of you then.

NB For those not familiar with All Saints there is another regular Toddler Group *Little Stars* run by the church in Somerford and *Messy Church* is also run by All Saints in two different venues. Details on the website.

The Journey of Life

The Holy Spirit is our guide on the journey

Of our lives' sometimes difficult mile.

When we are obstructed by the devil's fence

Don't despair, our prayers have given us a stile.

Tom Murphy



1966– An Unusual Christmas Holiday.

Autumn 1966, just finishing my first term at Reading University, reading Engineering. I had met Ann during this first term,

We both planned a home Christmas break. However in October my Dad, a BOAC airline pilot, told me he and my mother had accepted a 3 month posting to Sydney, families included. Free tickets there and back for summer sunshine –so a quick acceptance.

So mid December, I boarded a BOAC Boeing 707. Air travel then involved shorter legs and some longer 2-3 hour stops allowing temporary disembarkation to a transit lounge. First stop Dusseldorf (Germany), then Beirut, Lebanon. Slight hitch, storms in Lebanon led to unscheduled stop



at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus. Next stop Karachi (Pakistan) for visit to lounge and a few purchases, next Calcutta (India) and a final leg to Singapore for a change of aircraft. The next aircraft was being flown by one of Dad's colleagues who, knowing I had a light aircraft pilot's licence, let me ride in the 'Jump Seat' behind the captain for the next two landings and take-offs. First Darwin, then Brisbane and finally in Sydney. Total journey 36 hours so I was exhausted. I fell off to sleep on the ferry across the harbour from Circular Quay (by the Opera House) to our flat in Manley at the harbour entrance (Sydney across the harbour in the image background)



After a solid 12 hour sleep I awoke to a beautiful hot sunny summer's day in Australia – the other side of the world both West/East and North/South. We were joined by Pauline, one of my two Aussie cousins, about the same age as me. I had not seen her since my father's sister and family had emigrated over 12 years earlier.

We did all the normal tourist trips – ferry ride across the harbour, visit Sydney Opera House and Gardens, beach days in Manley (a short walk away). Lots of swimming - watching for shark alerts on the shore. Had a boomerang demonstration and bought one. Broke it at home so made my own, still have it and fly it. Drove Dads' hire car and learned the very different rules of the road – giving way to the right at intersections as well as roundabouts.



Christmas lunch Aussie style was very different in temperatures in the high 20's, even by the sea. The picture shows our Christmas day picnic - cold turkey and trimmings followed by



luxury ice cream sundaes replacing Christmas pudding. Not a party hat in sight.

For my return flight, Dad suggested I accompany him first on his scheduled flight to Tokyo for one night then Honolulu (Hawaiian Islands) for 4 nights. Tokyo to Hawaii is 3900 miles, the maximum 9 hour range for a Boeing 707. You get an extra day crossing the international date line so



you can arrive the day before you left! All Honolulu arrivals were greeted with a lei – a neck garland with exotic, colourful, perfumed flowers. A 3 day stay overlooking the famous Waikiki beach – great for swimming and surfing. Visits to Pearl Harbour, site of the infamous Japanese WW2 attack and inland to see the lush tropical scenery.

The long final legs of the journey took me to Los Angeles, Washington then London - a weary 20+ hour journey of which I have little memory. A bit of a shock arriving back at a very wintry London Airport for a coach journey back to University.

Still difficult to realise that I had flown right around the world, a distance of 26,500 miles, just to have Christmas with the family. Run of the mill for my dad though, he flew over 8 million miles as an airline pilot, and passed away in 1990 in Mudeford.



Paul Smith.

BIBLE STUDY

The Thursday evening Bible study group meets at 7pm at 3 Minterne Road, where Judy and Tony Eden kindly welcome us to their home.

We will take a break during Advent and Christmas and the new Year, probably restarting on 8th January.

Newcomers are always very welcome.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Mary Thomas

Art Group

The All Saints Church Art Group now gathers behind Stanpit Village Hall, in both the Maberley Room and the Harbour View Room above it, on the fourth Saturday of every month from 9.30-11.30am.

We have a concession from the Club opposite to park in their forecourt. We must vacate it before midday please and they ask that we park towards the front.

This group welcomes everyone with an interest in sketching and painting, from beginners to those with years of experience. Pictures for inspiration will be provided, but people are welcome to bring their own photographs of any subject that interests them.

We do not hold a meeting in December.

The next meeting will be on Saturday 24th January 2026 at 9.30am

The subject is snow, both in the countryside and in the mountains

For more information please contact Mary Thomas

Christchurch Foodbank+

Thank you for your continued and faithful support, at Christmas time we need it more than ever. **Drivers needed:** We are delivering Full Turkey dinners and goodie Hampers out to those in our communities identified by local authorities on Monday Dec 22nd 12-2pm. If you would like to be blessed while delivering for us please call 07587371088 or email admin@christchurchfb.faith-works.org.uk. Thank you

Our needs this week are: Christmas goodies, UHT milk cartons, tinned ravioli and meatballs, tea and coffee. Thank you so much and blessings in advance Wrap up warm from Tracy, Sarah, John and the CFB+Team

Remembrance Service 2025

On the rather dull morning of 9th

November approximately 190 people gathered in the car park of The Mudeford Club for our annual service of



remembrance. We were delighted to see so many representatives of the uniformed organisations: Brownies, Guides, Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Sea Scouts.



The service was led
by

Revd Kathy and the All
Saints Band provided
the music for the
hymns, “Guide me, O
thou great Redeemer”
and “Make me a
channel of your
peace”.

Phil Randell played The Last Post and Reveille.

Christine Pickard read from “The Fallen” and James Saunders of the Sea
Scouts read the Bible passage, John 15:947

The service concluded with an Act of Commitment and the National
Anthem.

Vikki Miller



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House of Joy.

In 2014 Alf and I went to the House of Joy, a girl's orphanage in Sri Lanka, for 6 months missionary work. One of our duties was to teach these girls English. To help with this we decided to try and teach them to perform a Nativity play in English. Next door to the orphanage was a large hall with a stage. Alas, the stage was in a very poor condition, rotten and falling apart. In the grounds of the orphanage were many coconut trees so we arranged for some of them to be felled and approached the local sawmill who agreed to saw, prepare, cut into planks and treat the timber. We then used these to rebuild a new strong stage in the hall. By the time the stage was finished, most of the girls had learnt their lines to varying degrees. On December 18th the performance went ahead with the whole village and some dignitaries attending.



It was a wonderful occasion and the girls were brilliant. From recent photos, some of which are attached, it is good to see that the stage is still being used eleven years later.

In February 2015 we were asked if the girls would perform the Nativity play again at an Inter Faith Day which is held in Anuradhapura at this time every year. This is a day when all faiths come together to perform something related to their faith and share a meal. Our girls were chosen to represent Christianity: how proud we were.



It is so good to see the House of Joy is still performing shows on that stage, a lovely lasting legacy from All Saints church Mudeford.

Blessings Alf and Chris.

A recent letter from The House of Joy.

Dear Alfred Green and Christeen Green

Thanks for your concern over the children of the house of joy and for the help given during past years. Children of the house of joy are doing well in their education and in their extra curricular activities. They all are doing well and in their extra curricular activities. So dear Alfred and Christeen please please be kind enough to convey our sincere thanks to your members of the congregation. Our children are happy with their daily work and asked me to convey their kind regards to your family too. However I will send you some pictures of the children of the house of joy that are taken at different occasions. Give my kind regards to you and your family.

May God bless you and your loved ones.

Fr Jude .



Pope Francis reflecting from hospital:

"The walls of hospitals have heard more honest prayers than churches...

. They have witnessed far more sincere kisses than those in airports... It is in hospitals that you see a homophobe being

saved by a gay doctor. A privileged doctor saving the life of a beggar...

In intensive care, you see a Jew taking care of a racist...

A police officer and a prisoner in the same room receiving the same care... A wealthy patient waiting for a liver transplant, ready to receive the organ from a poor donor... it is in these moments, when the hospital touches the wounds of

people, that different worlds intersect according to a divine design. And in this communion of destinies, we realise that alone, we are nothing.

The absolute truth of people, most of the time, only reveals itself in moments of pain or in the real threat of an irreversible loss. A hospital is a place where human beings remove their masks and show themselves as they truly are, in their purest essence.

This life will pass quickly, so do not waste it fighting with people. Listen, perfection does not exist.

A human being cannot attain it because we are simply not made to be fulfilled here. Here, we are given an opportunity to learn.

So, make the most of this trial of life—and do it now.

Respect yourself, respect others. Walk your own path, and let go of the path others have chosen for you.

Respect: do not comment, do not judge, do not interfere.

Love more, forgive more, embrace more, live more intensely!

And leave the rest in the hands of the Creator."

Daivid Williams found this and wanted to share it with everyone.

Memories of Christmas as a Hotelier

We managed 6 Christmases at our last hotel. I can sum them up in 3 words: elation, panic and relief. We had a coach and 30 private guests, so the hotel was full. They arrive on 23rd and leave on 27th. From the moment they come it is full on with 3 meals a day and a buffet Christmas night, not to mention entertainment each night, fancy dress on Boxing Day, endless cups of tea and

digging into our store of clothes to help make up a FD so that they didn't feel left out!! We also wore costumes to join in the fun.

We did have some moments of panic. I remember one Christmas Eve water poured down from the ceiling onto the bar and the prize cake. On another occasion the oven packed up again on Christmas Eve. Both were mended in time as it was Torquay and with many hotels there was always someone on duty to help. The relief is on the 27th when the guests go home and all has



Almost Christmas

The presents are bought,
the cards are writ,
the overseas cards are sent.
But what good are the wishes
if they're not sincerely meant?

Next it's wrap the presents,
order the turkey,
put up the Christmas tree;
and ponder while I'm doing so
what all this means to me.



Finally, with frayed temper,
up decorations go,
sparkling and twinkling above;
and Jesus' birth reminds us
of what matters : Faith, Hope, Love.

Jill Barr

gone well. I am just amazed we survived.

Helen Davies

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Meesons Solicitors in Ringwood and Spurlings Solicitors in Christchurch are very excited to announce the merger of their two firms. This will bring two long-established, and well-respected, solicitors' firms together, and enable them to provide an even better service to their clients in the Hampshire and Dorset area.

The merged practice will offer a comprehensive range of legal services, that can deal with all your legal requirements in relation to Wills, Probate, Family, Employment, Dispute Resolution and Residential Property. They will continue to operate from the existing offices in Ringwood, Christchurch and Mudeford, under the name of 'Meesons and Spurlings'. The Directors of the new alliance will be Edward Holmes, Ruth Lucas and Tamasine Whitbread (nee Spurling).

Tamasine will continue to practice in Christchurch and Mudeford with the added benefit of offering Dispute Resolution and Family services while Edward and his team will continue to be based in Ringwood covering all the surrounding areas.

Edward Holmes states "I am delighted that the opportunity has arisen to join together two firms with a common client-focused philosophy. We are all looking forward to the opportunities this affords us - not only to offer an even better service to our clients, but also to expand the range of legal services we can offer".



Directors' photo: Edward Holmes, Tamasine Whitbread and Ruth Lucas

Mission Pot for December



The Children's society was founded in 1881 by Edward Rudolf, a Sunday School teacher and civil servant who persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury to establish children's homes as alternatives to the large workhouses and orphanages common at the time. The name has changed over the years as have the objectives. From the beginning they were keen to encourage fostering and adoption and by the 1960s were one of the country's largest adoption agency. In the 70s and 80s they concentrated on supporting children and young people in their own families. They now focus on vulnerable children and young people aged 10 to 18-including those who have been sexually exploited, those in care and young refugees. The Children's Society strategy focuses on Risk (such as neglect, abuse, exploitation or violence), Resilience (capacity to respond to adversity), and Resources (family, social or financial support). This is what they say on their website:

'The current situation

The threats to teenagers' safety and happiness are ever-growing, and yet their needs are still being ignored. Too often, support only comes when the mental health challenges, exploitation, or financial hardship young people are facing have become overwhelming. This is unacceptable. The true scale of abuse and exploitation is largely hidden, with many more children at risk of harm, both online and offline.

The damaging discourse around refugees and migrants has exacerbated the risks faced by children fleeing conflict. These young people, already traumatised by their experiences, face further marginalisation and danger upon their arrival in the UK.

More and more families are struggling to make ends meet and too many children are worrying about money. With 4.3 million children living in poverty, families continue to face relentless financial hardships. Opportunities are being

stripped away and the simple joys of childhood are now luxuries many families can no longer afford.'

Particular concerns highlighted on their webpage this year are those of social media and 'toxic masculinity'. Social media like Tik Tok can have serious detrimental effects on body image and can become compulsive viewing. There has been a resurgence of beliefs that prioritise traditional male roles as protectors and providers, often at the expense of emotional openness, collaboration, and the safety and human rights of girls and women. Many of these young men see feminism as a threat, often fuelled by online communities that amplify sentiments of resentment and victimisation.

The work that The Children's Society does with teenagers is so important and could make a profound difference to their lives as they enter adulthood.

A very warm Christmas.



3 years ago John and I decided to go away for Christmas. We booked with Highcliffe Coaches to spend 5 days in an hotel in Torquay. We arrived the day before Christmas Eve. That evening we were joined at the dinner table by two other couples and the six of us began an enjoyable stay.

After the meal on Christmas Eve we were entertained and given a glass of mulled wine. We were beginning to feel really "Christmassy". It was now 10pm.



Then we realised the staff were not happy about something. We were told we had to go outside as there was a small fire in the kitchen. We were able to stay just inside the porch. We were joined by other guests who had already retired. They arrived in their night wear and some with bare

feet! We expected to be called back in fairly soon as the staff seem to be dealing efficiently with the fire.



Then the fire Brigade arrived, and we were made to go outside where it was very cold and drizzling with rain. Our coach driver opened the coach, and we were able to sit in there along with many people who had come independently. They couldn't get in their vehicles as their keys were in their rooms. The hotel gave us duvets hoping these would help

to keep us warm.

By this time the fire had obviously spread extensively and it became obvious we wouldn't get back in the hotel for some time.

After about six hours in the coach at about 4am we were escorted by a fireman to our room to collect our belongings. Everything was just thrown into a suitcase and plastic bag. We were being taken to a Premier Inn for the remainder of the night. When we got near the Premier Inn it became obvious that the coach couldn't get up the road to the entrance of the hotel and they wouldn't have any food for us on Christmas Day.

The decision was made to return home. We arrived back in Mudeford at 8am. The driver told us he had two suitcases in his boot that didn't belong to his passengers. The firemen had put them in the coach.

We went to bed and slept for much of Christmas Day. Not quite the Christmas we had expected. The hotel remained closed for many months as there is the possible problem of carbon monoxide in the rooms after a fire. Also everything had to be redecorated etc.

We realised afterwards that we hadn't paid our bar bill!

Hetty Ward



JOHN'S NEW HYMN EASTER 1983

At the last Church in the Round, my part in the leadership included preparation of the prayers.

Usually, I can do this by keeping within the theme of the evening and lead the prayers relevant to the evening subject matter. However, this time, with the subject being based on the lives of famous people of God in the past, (the Wesleys this month) I just could not hear any words of prayer. By this time, getting desperately close to the Church in the Round service, I was casting around for some inspiration for prayer, when I found, at the bottom of my piano music stool, the one and only hymn I had written, in 1983 after I became a Christian in my 30's. It had never seen the light of day since I had written it and had certainly never had a public hearing or had music set to it. It seemed right somehow, and did seem to fit the evening.

I sang that song for the first time that night, in Church in the Round, without a clue where the next note was coming from, but God helped me through. And you know what the funny thing was, it was completely in tune with the evening theme, as after all, the Wesleys were hymn writers too!

John Smith

JOHN'S HYMN

CHORUS

Son, why did they leave me

I loved them but they couldn't see.

I offered them heaven, but they took the world

Oh Son, why didn't they see?

We made the world Son, we made it for them



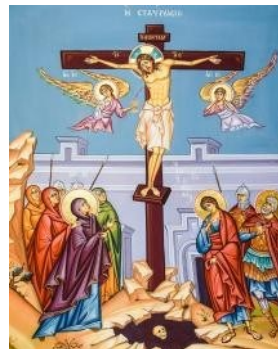
All things upon it, we put there for men.
We did it together, for only we could
We looked down upon it and saw it was good
Love couldn't hold them, they wanted much more.
They wanted knowledge, they thought they were poor
I was so angry, that they couldn't trust
I nearly disowned them, but love them I must.
It started so early, but things haven't changed
All through the ages, we've all been
estranged.
They drifted away Son, man's constant deceit
The murder, the killing, the lying deceit.



CHORUS

Son, why did they leave me
I loved them but they couldn't see
I offered them heaven, but they took the world Oh
Son, why didn't they see?
They had to know love Son, for this they had lost,
But how could I show it, and at what cost?

I only had you Son, to show that I cared
To hang on a cross Son, nothing was spared.
I couldn't give more Son, and this proved my love
Man's sin all forgiven, my gift from above
You died on the cross Son, for all men to see,
Our love for our people, for now they are free.



The Mothers' Union usually meets monthly at 3.30pm in the lounge of the Methodists' Church in Mudeford Lane, also weekly for prayers at 10am on the remaining Mondays. All meetings are open to anyone who is interested and would like to know more about this world-wide organisation. For more information, please contact Mary Thomas or speak to any of our members.



At the Branch Meeting on 1st December at 3.30pm in the Methodist lounge, we held our annual service of Prayers and Taize songs in support of activism against gender violence.

The 16 days of activism against gender violence runs from 25th November to 10th December.

It is an international period in which to call for an end to violence and abuse against women and girls worldwide.

We plan to hold an MU Branch meal out on Monday 5th January and will hold our branch meeting on Monday 12th January at 3.30pm, at which we will remember our diocesan links in a Wave of Prayer Service. On Monday 2nd February Rev Wendy will talk to us about Ruanda.

Mary Thomas

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From The Archives.

All Saints Priests in the Modern age

From 1900 until the present there are listed 31 priests. Taking away the two long serving, J H Pearson (1900-1911) and M J Clayton (1984-1995,) one can understand verger Alfred Bursey's comment on the number of priests he had assisted-23 in 48 years. It would be impossible to cover all. I pick out a selection on whom information is reasonably available.

Rev'd Walter Wynne Hall (1924-1932) was heavily involved in the formation of The Mudeford Club taking the role of President and other offices. He presided at the opening of the new club in March 1928. His speech gives a flavour of the time. The question of the suitability of licensed premises had been raised:

“The drink question is one which looms very largely on the horizon of everyone...I have had considerable experience of men and I can only say thisIf men develop and maintain a club with propriety that is the best discipline that I know of. I have never believed in any tyrannical authority which is detrimental to our free rights as Englishmen”.

In conclusion, he asked Captain Harold Wiggins to perform the opening ceremony and confessed that they had thought to ask Mrs Wiggins of Sandhills and a major supporter but “felt rather diffident owing to it being a men's club”!

Rev'd Hall went on to be vicar of Appleshaw near Andover from 1932-1948. His successor was Rev'd E Dixon (1932-1939) During these years the ceremony of Blessing the Waters was commenced but unfortunately it had to be abandoned in the war years.

The newspaper described Rev'd Dixon as “a well loved priest .He enjoyed mixing with the ordinary men of the village. He enjoyed a chat with the fishermen and the dustmen and it is probably out of one of these talks that the Blessing of the Waters was reborn”. He left to become rector at Exbury but sadly died suddenly some sixteen weeks later at the early age of 38.

Revd. H M Brownlow was in post for much of the war period (1939-1943). Born in Shrewsbury to a clerical father, he obtained a London BSc as a medical student before changing to a BA and the church. He went on to be vicar of Highcliffe and I can claim personal knowledge of him. I went to St

Mark's School from 1946 to 1948. Revd Brownlow took a scripture lesson with us, I think once a week. I remember him as a tall gaunt man limping badly and relying on a stick. How he managed to get in and out of his prewar Austin Seven I do not know! He was softly spoken and complimented me on my singing. As wishing to be one of the lads I declined his invitation to join the church choir, to my regret, on reflection. I took a role in that choir nearly sixty years later!

Not really relevant, but illustrating the idiosyncracies of the Church of England, is his appointment to Highcliffe. The advowson or right to appoint to the living was linked to the ownership of Highcliffe Castle. The Stuart Wortley family sold the castle in 1950 but not the advowson, which reverted to the family head the Earl of Abingdon. He could not assert his right as a Catholic! In this case the University of Oxford should appoint but were unable to "find a priest to come there". It was left to the Bishop of Winchester to appoint Brownlow. Whether this was a case of shortage of manpower in the midst of a war or reluctance to move to an area almost a war zone is a matter of conjecture. Whatever the reason Brownlow was "in the thick of it" and moved up the road.

A number of curates followed Brownlow including Rev'd A. Jenner Noot (1954-1957}. He had seen war service in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the RASC with a further spell there in business. He came to All Saints after a time as a curate in St.Albans and left to be rector of St.Mary's Pembroke, Tobago. Four curates on, Rev'd Stanley Rycroft(1963-1967) led a DIY team with the active assistance of the verger and a team of volunteers to erect a new toilet block by converting the old one. This complemented the work of a team of professional builders building a new vestry.

The 1970s proved a difficult time. The Rev'd M.B.Beevor resigned early in 1973 "after a personality clash with some parishioners." Later in the year the newspaper was bewailing the continuing need for a priest in charge a situation exacerbated by the retirement of long term verger Alfred Bursey, ending a family tradition going back to the start of the church in 1869. The congregation battled on, even raising an increased amount at the Christmas bazaar . Normal services were maintained, in particular with the help of Rev'd Rex Holyhead from Christchurch.

Things seemed to looking up after an interregnum of nearly a year.

Rev'd E.H.Chevalier Ensor and family were welcomed with a party in Stanpit Village Hall in March 1974 on appointment from Teignmouth. However, by October he had returned to Teignmouth and early in 1975 resigned on doctors' orders.

Stability returned when Michael Hancock took up his duties.

He was born in 1933 and joined the civil service after school as a meteorological assistant, work which he continued in the RAF as a national serviceman. After three years at Lichfield Theological College he had a number of curacies widely in London and the South of England, joining All Saints from St.John's, Moordown. Married with one daughter he admitted to not being mechanically minded.

At the Mudeford annual meeting in 1977 the Vicar of Christchurch chairing the meeting commented that despite financial problems all areas of the church were to be congratulated and in particular he noted "record communion attendance, a thermometer of the church's spiritual life". A matter more down to earth was raised by Rev'd Hancock. The church needed redecorating the cost £750 to be raised by a flower festival and gift day. The previous year he had raised the condition of the parsonage, 5 Foxwood Avenue, which suffered from damp and the need to replace windows and redecorate.

Nevertheless, considering the periods without priest or vergers it is an incredible compliment to the curate and church community that Rev'd Morgan could speak in such glowing terms.

The next curate was Rev'd S E Hogben. He obviously made a considerable impression on parishioners and the conclusion of his ministry later at St Augustine's Bournemouth must have been a shock to many. It does highlight the mental stresses that can affect clergy as much as anyone.

The son of a Surrey vicar the Hogbens arrived from a parish near Heathrow. He was a keen motor cyclist including tinkering with it in the garden. His wife Sarah was a mother of two young children. The vicar of Christchurch acknowledged that "her specialised training as an infant teacher gave her the skill to bring young children and families to the church". He spoke of

Stephen Hogben bringing a vitality to worship and having a sensitive care for all individuals” Rev'd Hogben thanked the vicar, Fr. Basil, for “allowing me to exercise total freedom to exercise my priestly role at All Saints”. With possible future significance wife Sarah commented to the press on his motor bike, “He likes it for the sense of freedom it brings. His job can be difficult at times and to be able to roar off on his bike...is wonderful” A coachload of Mudeford worshippers went to see him established at St. Augustine's and handed over £300 to him.

Within a year he had left. The Bishop of Winchester revealed Hogben had been to see him “after many months of personal distress of mind”. The bishop continued to explain that he had not “given up believing in his religion but he became quite certain that he was not cut out to be a clergyman if he ever had been. Saying that he had kept his “ mental turmoil even from his father”, the bishop offered help from the clergy and asked for sympathetic understanding.

The succeeding priests are within living memory and I feel should be dealt with differently.

Tony Ruffhead

A Night to Remember

On 15th November the long awaited Parish Ball took place at the King's Head in Christchurch. There were over forty participants: the gentlemen looked smart in their dress suits while the ladies used the opportunity to wear their favourite dresses.

We assembled upstairs and, after a welcome prosecco or orange juice, settled down to enjoy a delicious three course meal with lively conversation.

The aim of the ball was to make money for the All Saints Building Fund and Sally and Paul made it fun as well. A bottle tombola was followed by the heads and tails game. This was why we had been advised to bring plenty of pound coins!



Another highlight and fundraiser was the auction, ably led by our own auctioneer, Alf Green. The catalogue of items for sale was extensive and included, amongst other things, a round of golf for four, several paintings, afternoon tea and a cut and blow dry. We are very grateful to all those who donated such a varied range of items.

As conversations continued around the tables the sound of disco music drifted up from the ground floor. This was also where coffees were being served so gradually the diners moved on down, either to drink coffee or boogie, or both.



Our thanks go to Sally and Paul Clifford whose hard work made the evening a success. Those present had a very enjoyable time and over £2,000 was made for the building fund.

Vikki Miller



Seasonal Greetings from Mirepoix and the Pyrenean foothills

Life on the whole has treated us well in spite of numerous medical appointments. We have not been far from home this year. We have a new car, a hybrid Clio, but have not been far yet which pleases the cats who don't like going into kennels.

We are fairly safe here while not some 50 km away, gendarmes continue to intercept narcotics and tobacco traffickers on their home track from Andorra. Stray bullets from a boar hunter can injure or even kill a rambler, or a bear can maim or kill sheep.

Agricultural workers can demonstrate against Mercosur, the open market conglomerate of 3 South American countries, to their dismay. Esperanto, our English-Speaking Church that meets in a back Chapel behind the Cathedral and Cancer Support France keep us busy.

Pam celebrated her 76th birthday on the 10th of October when we went as far as a small hamlet between Tarascon and Aix les Thermes, and I shall be celebrating my 82nd locally in an upmarket hotel restaurant in Mirepoix on the 19th of December.

Once more we wish you a very merry Christmas and happy new year

Pam and Trevor



Mainly Men

An invitation to join an open group within the life of All Saints Church.

Mudeford Methodist Church

11.30am on 30th January 2026

Himalaya Revisited

By

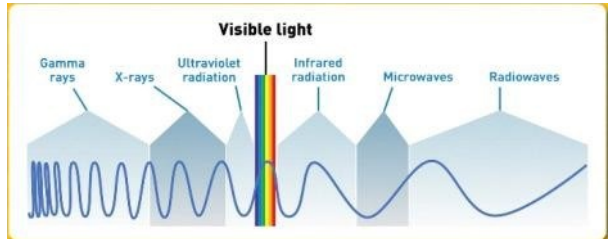
Sue Rigden

The talk will be followed by a Bring and Share lunch: finger foods only, please.

In Praise of Creation

Thinking of Creation made me realized how much I praise god for Light – or more exactly about brain's ability to see the light and colour of our wonderful planet. Have you ever thought 'do I see what another person sees?' if so read on.

We get our energy from the Sun, in the form of electromagnetic wave radiation as shown in the diagram. The visible light spectrum is just one range of



wavelengths which the eye can detect as our sunshine.

At school in your science class a teacher might have shone a beam of white light into a prism which split white light into its constituent 'rainbow' colours each with a different wavelengths. These can be remembered as **ROYGBIV** "**R**ichard **O**f **Y**ork **G**ave **B**attle **I**n **V**ain" – Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet. Red has the longest visible wavelength, Violet the shortest.

So how do we see? Light that enters our eye falls onto a mosaic of receptors of four types. Three are colour 'cone' receptors – one for Red, one for Green and one for Blue. The fourth 'rod' type just measures light intensity. The optic nerve sends the receptor input to the human brain which merges them magically into the light and colour image we see. Everyone of us is slightly different and seeing is probably the same but how would we tell? Doctors do colour blindness tests and can identify those who cannot distinguish red from green – called 'colour blind'.

We understand animals see differently to humans – based on their different colour receptors. We know insects see into the ultraviolet spectrum and see flowers very differently as shown in the diagram. Dogs



have no red receptors so see in shades of blue, yellow, and grey, unable to distinguish reds and greens. For them a red ball and green grass look the same colour, however with more rod receptors so can see much better in the dark.

Everyday situations change the balance of light – towards yellow or blue.

Colour is measured by Colour

Temperature –standard daylight is

5,500 degrees Kelvin for

photographers. When you buy

lightbulbs you can pick the best colour

temperature for your situation as

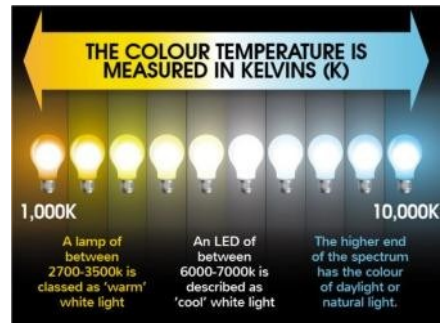
shown in the diagram . However the

brain is clever – whichever bulb you

choose the brain will show you a sheet

of white paper as white. A camera does the same when ‘auto

white balance’ is switched on.



Everyday weather alters the light and colour we see. For instance the blue sky is simply daylight with the red part of the light spectrum removed by the atmosphere. Water and clouds absorb the red/yellow part of the spectrum making everyday objects look colder and greyer and even makes ice look blue. And the eye and brain compensate for change of light brightness. On a sunny day, the difference of brightness in open sunshine can be eight times that in deep sun shadow areas. This is why photos seem to accentuate dark/light areas whereas the brain compensates.

So there is more to light than meets the eye! We just enjoy it though scientists, photographers and a few others continue to be intrigued by things like polarization, lasers, radio telescopes, Infra red Photography etc.

Finally a question for you - does white light exist or is it just a perception of the human brain?

Paul Smith



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Church website: allsaintsmudeford.org



**Another
successful
Christmas Fayre.
Thanks to Paul
Smith for the
photograph.**



Our Vision for Mission:

This Parish seeks to be inclusive in extending God's kingdom, by encouraging the whole community to grow in the Christian faith through prayer and worship, and to care for others through pastoral and practical support.

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Little Stars	Tony & Judy Eden	01202 473003
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Rachel Nash email: admin@rivermudechurches.uk.		

All Saints Services

Mudeford, Christchurch, BH23 3HS

Sunday: 10am at either Stanpit Village Hall or St Luke 's, Burton.

Wednesday: 10am at St John's, Purewell.

First Sunday in the month Church In the Round, an informal service at 5-30pm at High Cross Church, Somerford.

4-30pm in the winter.

On the Internet.

See Church web-site or notice board for all details.

www.allsaintsmudeford.org.

Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/parishofmudeford/>

YouTube at; All Saints Mudeford You Tube Channel.

