

# SPOTLIGHT

Offington Park Methodist Church Magazine



October 2025

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### Cover Picture - Autumn at Winkworth

Winkworth Arboretum is a National Trust site of about 110 acres of rolling hillside, woodland, and garden nestled in the Surrey Hills a few miles from Godalming.

Winkworth was founded in 1937 by Dr. Wilfrid Fox, a dermatologist turned horticulturist, who acquired the land next to his home in the Thorncombe Valley. Here, he strategically planted species known for their vibrant foliage - maples, liquidambars, oaks, and azaleas - to "paint" the landscape across the seasons. Dr. Fox gifted part of the arboretum to the National Trust in 1952, and later expanded it with additional land. The Trust now cares for the whole estate.

Whilst Autumn is the standout season at Winkworth, with fiery displays of maples, liquidambars, hickory, tulip trees, and berries reaching peak colour from mid-October to mid-November, its vibrant woodlands, serene lakeside views, and natural play areas are all splendid in any season.



Dear Friends,

As the crisp air of autumn settles in and the trees begin to trade their green leaves for vibrant shades of red, orange, and gold, we are reminded that change is part of God's design. Each falling leaf speaks of a Creator who brings both beauty and purpose to every season of our lives.



Autumn is a season of harvest — at our recent Harvest service, we gathered the fruits of our labour in the form of gifts for Turning Tides, gave thanks, and reflected on God's goodness.

As Autumn rolls on, just as farmers reap what they have sown, we are invited to consider the spiritual seeds we've planted over the past months. Have we cultivated kindness, patience, and gratitude? Have we drawn closer to the Lord in prayer?

This season also gently teaches us about letting go. The trees release their leaves not in fear but in faith — trusting that new life will come again. In the same way, we are called to release our worries, regrets, and burdens to God, believing that He is preparing something new within us.

As the days grow shorter, let's use this season to draw near to one another. Invite a neighbour to a church event, share a warm meal with someone in need, or simply take a quiet walk and thank God for His creation. Autumn is not just a time of endings, but of preparation — a reminder that God's promises are faithful through every season. This Autumn, let's embrace change and renew our trust that the same God who paints the leaves with such beauty is at work in our lives, too.

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." – Ecclesiastes 3:1*

**The Eds**

## Concert and Afternoon Tea

in aid of the Methodist charity **Action for Children**

**Sunday 19 October**

**2:00pm – 4:00pm**



- **Entertainment from Offbeat singing**  
*Songs from the Shows*
  - **A special afternoon tea**  
*Sandwiches, Scones and Cakes (and tea of course!)*
  - **Songs of Fellowship**  
*A chance to join in with some of your favourites*

**Please do come and enjoy this joyful mix of food, music and fun ... whilst supporting this wonderful charity.**

***Tickets £12.50 (available from Steve or Karen Clayton)***

## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



### THANK YOU FROM RUTH K

A big thank you to everyone who supported our recent cancer research cake sale. Combined with my coffee morning, the total we raised for this worthy charity was £320.65p.

### PRAYERS PLEASE

Please remember in your prayers those of our membership and local community who are not well at the present time.

### OFFERTORIES

Month	Cash & Cheques	Standing Orders
August	<b>£389</b>	<b>£5,518.33</b>

## THE LIGHTHOUSE @ OFFINGTON PARK

the lighthouse  
@ Offington Park



SOFT PLAY AND CAFE

As the nights draw in, we start to look forward to winter events in the Lighthouse, starting with the regular half-term events in the last week of October. We will be offering Autumn-themed craft sessions with our resident crafter Gill, drumming with Dominic and dancing with Vogue.

Looking beyond half-term, we enter what the songwriters call “the most wonderful time of the year” and this Christmas we are offering an opportunity to celebrate the season by sharing a magical meal with Santa himself!

Why not join us for one of our special **Breakfast and Lunch with Santa** soft play sessions filled with festive fun, delicious food, and joyful memories. From the moment you walk in, you’ll be greeted by the sights and sounds of the season. The tables will be decked with holiday cheer, the aroma of freshly prepared meals will fill the air, and the star of the show - **Santa himself** - will be waiting to hear every child’s Christmas wishes.

### What to Expect:

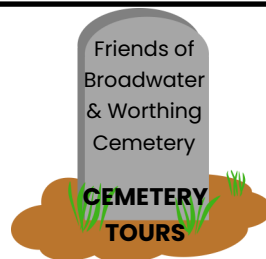
- ◆ A hearty holiday breakfast and lunch menu, crafted to please both kids and adults.
- ◆ Photos with Santa - perfect for holiday cards and memories.
- ◆ A special gift for every child who attends.
- ◆ Festive holiday music and cheerful décor to set the scene.
- ◆ Fun family activities to keep the holiday spirit alive.

This event is about creating magical memories that last a lifetime, so whether you choose to join us for a cosy breakfast or a cheerful lunch, you’ll leave with full hearts, full bellies, and the joy of the Christmas season.

This is going to be a very popular event (as are our half-term sessions) and spaces will be limited, so be sure to look out for our adverts and **reserve your spot early**. Bring your little ones, your holiday spirit, and your wish lists - Santa will be waiting to see you!

**"PUB CRAWL" TOUR**  
**Saturday 4 October 2025**  
**@ 11:00 am**

You are invited to join the FBWC team for a "pub crawl" around Worthing!!



We're not actually going to visit the pubs, or partake of their choice of beverages, but we will be learning something of their history and their landlords over the years.

This tour (the last of the year) will take a selection of pubs from three previous tours and will include some that have long since disappeared from the town, such as the Engineers Arms. We'll also cover more recent closures like the Clifton Arms and those with a long history that are still going strong today, like The Cricketers in Broadwater.

The tour starts at 11 am by the Chapels in South Farm Road. Hot and cold refreshments (including delicious cakes) are available for a small donation towards cemetery upkeep. Please help the environment by bringing your own cup.

Thank you.

We invite anyone, grumpy or not, to join us at 10:00am on **Tuesday 14 October** when we will have a visit from the



**NHS Prevention Assessment Team**  
**We will be covering safety in the home and offering routine tests such as blood pressure checks**

We'll be meeting in the Quiet Room (after coffee and cake in Zach's Café). Do come and join us at this event.



# PUPPETEERING WORKSHOP

Calling all aspiring  
puppeteers!

Hands up if you'd like a  
**FREE** fun afternoon  
learning a few  
puppetry skills



**SATURDAY**  
**11 October 2025**



**2:00 PM–4:00 PM**



**Offington Park**  
**Methodist Church**

**Suitable for ages 10 – 99**

We're looking for new people to join our puppet team the **Offington Proclaimers**. Puppets provided, but bring your own if you have one.

**For more information or to book your place**

**Call 01903 205722 or email: [offingtonparkchurch@gmail.com](mailto:offingtonparkchurch@gmail.com)**

## PROTECTING OUR WILDLIFE THROUGH THE WINTER

Imagine stepping into a summer garden alive with colour - clouds of small tortoiseshells drifting across the lawn, a brimstone pausing on a buddleia bloom, and the delicate dance of common blues among the grasses.



Sadly, for many of our butterflies, this picture is fading. Across the UK, numbers have fallen sharply as wildflower meadows shrink and pesticides take their toll.

That's why **A Rocha's Target 25 initiative** is so important. Among the 25 species it aims to protect are butterflies on the edge of survival. A Rocha invites us not only to notice what is being lost, but also to join in restoring hope. And the good news is...

...we can begin right at home even as we move into autumn and winter. Every garden, however small, can become a sanctuary. A patch of unmown grass can shelter caterpillars. A corner of nettles or bird's-foot trefoil may host the next generation. A scatter of wildflowers can provide nectar through the seasons. Each of these small acts weaves together a tapestry of life across our community.



Leave fallen leaves, hollow stems, and log piles undisturbed through the colder months. Many butterflies, such as the small tortoiseshell and peacock, hibernate in garden sheds, woodpiles, or leaf litter. By resisting the urge to tidy too much, you create safe shelter where butterflies and other pollinators can overwinter - ready to re-emerge when spring arrives.

When we garden with butterflies in mind, we do more than keep a species alive - we help weave back the beauty and abundance that makes creation sing.

On the next page are two Top Tips for a butterfly-friendly garden.



## **Top Tips for a butterfly-friendly garden**

### **1. Grow for every stage of life :**

Plant nectar-rich flowers like scabious, knapweed, and buddleia for adult butterflies, and don't forget host plants such as nettles or bird's-foot trefoil for caterpillars. Supporting both stages helps butterflies complete their life cycle.

### **2. Let your garden go a little wild:**

Leave a patch of long grass or a sunny corner untended. These wilder areas provide shelter, breeding spots, and a safe haven away from pesticides. Sometimes, the best gift for butterflies is simply giving nature space to breathe.

### **JC's LITTLE NUGGETS**

#### **Rescued and Rejoicing**

(based on 1 Peter 2: 21-25)



While I'm writing this, torrential rain is battering at the window. We may rejoice at the rain as our gardens really need it, and those in the midst of raging wildfires would likely rejoice with us. But those at risk of flooding will fear the rain. And it's not just those two extremes: many other situations, such as earthquakes and landslides, put people in fear and danger and often in need of rescue.

Recently, I took my grandson to see his nephew, who gave him a complete set of Thunderbird toys. Those of a certain age will remember the original International Rescue puppet show, with its advanced science, call signs 'Thunderbirds are Go' and 'FAB', and stories of daring rescue missions.

Created in 1965, Thunderbirds celebrated its 60th anniversary last month and it's still going strong. OK, the fictional rescues made great TV, but tragically in the real world so many are being rescued by very courageous and professional rescuers.

But the greatest rescue of all time is Jesus rescuing us from sin and from ourselves by his courage in the cross. We rejoice at being rescued by our Lord, both then, now, and forever.

God bless you all.

**John C**

## BIBLE HEROES

### The Woman at the Well



*Broken relationships, unfulfilled longings, a bad-girl reputation and a deep desire for something more. The woman at the well seems an unlikely Bible Heroine. We meet her travelling to the well to quench her thirst.*

*Thirst is a natural human experience; and water is the way to satisfy it. But we all thirst for other things too: love, meaning, acceptance, purpose. Too often, we attempt to fulfil these longings with comforts like money, success, entertainment and romantic relationships. But they still leave us empty. That was the experience of the woman at the well – until she met Jesus!*

*Jesus spoke right into the deepest need of her heart; her longing for love and fulfilment. And He promised her something that would truly satisfy. Himself. He would be like living water for her soul.*

*She was one of the very few people Jesus spoke openly with about His identity. But why her?*

*Maybe it was her expectation that the promised Messiah was the answer. Or maybe it was her authenticity. Perhaps it was both. But Jesus certainly wanted to reveal Himself to some one who would tell others. Sit down with the woman at the well and discover how **faith finds lasting satisfaction in Jesus and shares it with others.***

## YOUGOV.UK?

A middle school in East Anglia decided that it wanted to change its mascot. Because the area was steeped in agriculture, the choice was between three animals and, being inclusive, they decided it should be female. So, they had three choices, a female sheep, a female goat, and a female deer. After a long campaign, a series of debates, and a day of students voting yes or no on each, the School Principal stood before his students and announced that, in a unanimous vote, the new school mascot would be a female sheep.

It seems that even after all the campaigning, debate, and division, the student body only had ayes for ewe.

## WHAT A SAUCE!!

Our BBQ after Harvest Festival last month was a great success, with over 60 people sitting down in the main hall (unfortunately the weather wasn't being kind that day) to enjoy some delicious food cooked in the open air, followed by an array of delicious deserts and tea or coffee. To entertain us, Adam provided a not-too-easy quiz (at least for me!) Pictured right is the trusty gang of condiment operators ready to splash the ketchup, brown sauce or mayo in whatever direction you wanted it.



At the time of going to press, we don't have the exact amount we raised for church funds, but it is expected to be over £350. Well done to everyone who helped in whatever way. **Ed**

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## MENTAL HEALTH IN THE BIBLE

This month in our series following the men and women in Scripture who battled with their mental health, we look at



### David

#### **the king who poured out his jumbled emotions to God**

How honest are we allowed to be with God? David's prayer in Psalm 22 is a swirling jumble of thoughts, emotions, desires and distress. But ultimately, he chose to pour out his pain, confusion, fear, anger – everything he was feeling – to God.

He cried out in anguish, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" In fact, even Jesus felt free enough to quote those same agonising words from the cross.

David freely poured out his pain to God. He describes being in anguish, suffering scorn and hatred, being surrounded by danger and being utterly helpless to save himself. He pleads with God to stop being silent and rush to his aid!

But David doesn't stop there. After telling God all about his circumstances, David takes time to remember and celebrate all the things he knows to be true about God. "You are on the throne." "You are my strength." "You are worthy of all praises."

It's okay to be open, raw and honest with God. In fact, this is an important step of healing when we are hurting deep inside where no one else can see.

When we're struggling, like David, we put our hope in God's goodness – even when we can't see it. In the end, we will all say with David, "God has done it!"



CHURCH PASTORAL AID SOCIETY  
MINISTRY AMONG WOMEN WORTHING



# THE UNSHAKEABLE KINGDOM OF GOD

A day of worship and teaching for women

FRIDAY 7 NOV 2025

9.15AM - 2.30PM

SPEAKER

*Bekah Legge*

**Cost:£7.00**

**Local Contact:**

*Church Office*

**Offington Park Methodist Church  
South Farm Road, Worthing, BN14 7TN**



## KNOCK ON WOOD

Knock, knock. Who's there? Maybe a woodpecker. While our three resident woodpeckers are not making as much noise now as they were in the early spring, listening out for them, and other woodland birds, is a good way to identify them.

With the leaves still mostly on the trees in deciduous woods, it can be difficult to spot some of our woodland birds now the breeding season is over. Here are some top tips for identifying five resident woodland birds, plus one unusual migratory bird – the Wryneck.

Take a walk in the woods and see if you can find any this October.

### **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

No bigger than a sparrow, the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker is our smallest resident woodpecker. As well as being smaller than its cousin the Great Spotted Woodpecker, it is also less spotted, having declined in numbers rapidly since the 1980s.



**Now only found in England and Wales, it is on the Red List of Conservation Concern and in great need of help.** RSPB conservation scientists are trying to

understand why not enough chicks are surviving to adulthood. If you're in the right place at the right time, you could see one creeping along the underside of branches as it searches for insects. Listen for a short, sharp 'kick' call, similar to that of the Great Spotted Woodpecker. In late winter and spring, males drum on trees.



### **Great Spotted Woodpecker**

A fairly common visitor to gardens, this black, white and red woodpecker is probably our most familiar. Famed for its loud drumming on dead trees in spring, to attract a mate and declare its territory, at this time of year it will be making the most of nature's bounty in our woodlands, where it extracts seeds from pine cones.

With a bouncy, undulating flight, you might hear its short ‘chip, chip’ call as it flies to branches or the top of trees. About the size of a Blackbird, but more slender, if you see it up close, you’ll notice its red belly and red on the back of the head of males.

### **Green Woodpecker**

The largest of the UK’s woodpeckers, there are a few distinctive features of the Green Woodpecker that will help you identify it, but maybe its main characteristic is its voice. Sounding a bit like it’s laughing at you, its descending ‘yaffle’ call will leave you without doubt as to this bird’s identity.



With its green, yellow and red plumage, it’s a pretty bird. Ants are one of its favourite foods, and it laps them up with its sticky tongue. It is equally at home on grassland as it is in woodland. The Green Woodpecker is found across much of Britain, though it is absent from Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, together with much of the north-west of Scotland and the Scottish islands.



### **Wryneck**

As autumn arrives, look out for an unusual visitor. Wrynecks are members of the woodpecker family, just a little bit larger than a sparrow. They feed on ants on the ground, and whilst most are seen near the east coast, as they migrate from

Scandinavia to Africa, they have been seen inland in gardens.

An old name for the Wryneck is ‘snake bird’, which recognises the Wryneck’s remarkable ability to turn its head from side to side and back and forth like a snake, in a move they use to deter predators. Their brown patterning or cryptic colouration helps to camouflage the bird. Listen for its alarm, a series of ‘teck’ notes and a hiss if startled. Its song is a series of notes that sound like a bird of prey.

## WHAT'S ON - OCTOBER 2025

Thu	2	11:00am	Bible Fellowship	
		2:00pm	Knit 'n' Natter	
		7:30pm	Thursday's	Social Group
Sun	5	8:00am	Rev Dawn Carn	Holy Communion
		10:30am	Rev Dawn Carn	Café Church
Tue	7	12:00pm	Tuesday Lunch & Social Club	
Thu	9	11:00am	Bible Fellowship	
Sun	12	10:30am	Rev Dawn Carn	Holy Communion
		3:30pm	Messy Church Team	Messy Church
Tue	14	10:00am	Grumpy Old Men	NHS Prevention Assessment Team
		12:00pm	Tuesday Lunch & Social Club	
Wed	15	10:30am	Mid-month Communion	
Thu	16	11:00am	Bible Fellowship	
		2:00pm	Knit 'n' Natter	
Sun	19	10:30am	Breakfast Church Team	Breakfast Church
		10:30am	Mr Adam Cook	Morning Worship
Tue	21	12:00pm	Tuesday Lunch & Social Club	
Thu	23	11:00am	Bible Fellowship	
		2:00pm	Knit 'n' Natter	
Sun	26	10:30am	Mr John Carr	Morning Worship
		10:30am	Rev Dawn Carn	Fun Church
Tue	28	12:00pm	Tuesday Lunch & Social Club	
Thu	30	11:00am	Bible Fellowship	
		2:00pm	Knit 'n' Natter	

## OFFINGTON CAMEO

Friday 10 October:

CAMEO

**"If I cannot do great things,  
I can do small things in a great way"**

**Please come with some words that have inspired you, and  
a tale of a close shave or narrow escape you can share**

Friday 24 September:

**"A morning with David Gibbs"**

We meet in the Allan Fletcher Hall,  
10:15am for a 10:30am start

*Margaret H*



I hope you have started thinking about what you might put in your shoeboxes for Moldova!

Please note that each shoebox should be specific to an age and gender - more information is on the leaflets which are out now.

Mustard Seed Relief mission will collect boxes by 7 November 2025.

Each box will need stationery, toiletries, gloves, hats, and a soft toy.

Thank you so much for your continued support for this much appreciated outreach project.

**Margaret H**

### LADIES THAT BREAKFAST

Saturday 25th October from 9:00am to 11:00am

Southwick Methodist Church Hall, Manor Hall Road



Enjoy a continental breakfast with tea or coffee and hear speaker

**Emily Ansell** talk about **F.E.B.A. Radio -  
reaching people in hard to reach places with the message of Jesus**

Minimum donation £5.

Contact Romy P or Mollie B for more information and to book

Alternatively, email **[breakfast.southwick@gmail.com](mailto:breakfast.southwick@gmail.com)**

## KICKING UP THE LEAVES

Autumn invites us to pause and notice God's handiwork in the world around us. The colours, the cool air, and even the sound of leaves beneath our feet remind us that change is part of God's beautiful design.



### Kicking Up the Leaves

Along the quiet, golden lane,  
I wander slow where leaves have lain.  
Each step a soft, resounding sound—  
A memory stirred, a prayer unbound.

The air is cool, the sky turns deep,  
The earth prepares for winter sleep.  
Yet in this hush, my spirit sees  
God's hand in all the falling leaves.

They rise, they dance, they drift away,  
As light and time both slip each day.  
Still hope is sown though branches grieve —  
For spring shall come, though now they leave.

So I will walk this autumn mile,  
And let the quiet make me smile.  
For even now, my soul believes—  
God walks with me, through all the leaves.

*"The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever." (Isaiah 40:8)*

### Reflection

The falling leaves remind us that each season carries both beauty and change. Just as the trees let go, we too can release our worries and burdens, trusting God's faithful care. Even when life feels uncertain, His Word endures and His love never fades.

This autumn, may the simple act of "kicking up the leaves" become a gentle reminder of God's presence with us in every step, and His promise of renewal in every season.



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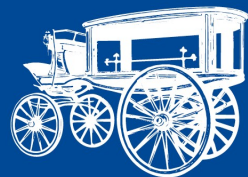


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## **HALLOWEEN—TRICK OR TREAT?**

Every year on October 31st, millions celebrate Halloween with costumes, sweets, and spooky fun. Yet, for many Christians, this event raises serious questions: should Christians take part in a festival rooted in pagan ritual and drenched in imagery of death and darkness? The debate has raged for decades. On one side, Halloween is defended as harmless fun and cultural tradition; on the other, it is widely thought to be incompatible with the Christian faith. Let's unpick this a little.



### **Harmless Fun?**

While Halloween has ancient Celtic and pagan roots, most modern celebrations such as trick-or-treat, dressing up and carving pumpkins are more about community and creativity than the spirit world. For Christians, participating in these cultural aspects does not necessarily equate to endorsing paganism. Halloween is a time when neighbours can actively interact. Children and parents go door-to-door, and there are often community events. Christians can use the event to show hospitality, generosity, and kindness – handing out treats or even offering words of blessing.

Just as Christianity transformed pagan festivals into holy days (Christmas and Easter have both absorbed local traditions), Christians today can “redeem” Halloween by emphasizing All Saints’ Day, dressing as positive figures, or hosting church events. We can reclaim the season for God’s purposes.

## **Glorification of Darkness and Evil?**

Halloween imagery centres on witches, ghosts, and death. Thessalonians 5:22 warns believers to “avoid every kind of evil” and taking part in an event that glamorizes fear and the occult risks dulling Christian sensitivity to evil. Death is a serious matter for Christians, being an entry point to eternal life, with non-believers facing an eternity separated from God. Halloween often trivializes death with skeletons, zombies, and gory costumes. Some Christians see this as undermining the solemnity of Biblical teaching about mortality and resurrection.

Halloween’s association with the supernatural and occult can also draw people toward unhealthy spiritual curiosities, which the Bible specially forbids. For believers, engaging with an event that is steeped in such associations may compromise their witness.

## **Good from Evil?**

The debate between Halloween and Christianity will likely never reach a conclusion that satisfies both sides. But it does reveal deeper tensions between cultural participation and spiritual distinctiveness. Supporters argue that modern Halloween is mostly secular, offering opportunities for fun, creativity, and outreach. Opponents say its dark imagery and occult associations make it incompatible with our faith.

At Halloween, we can either engage with or separate from society’s traditions. However, whether our approach is to recognise the day or ignore it, both reflect a commitment to living faithfully in a world where light and darkness are sometimes blurred.

## MONEY MATTERS



Whilst we at Offington Park no longer have a specific collection in our services, we do put out offering baskets at the end of the service.

Many of us now give by bank standing order, but a few continue to slip in a banknote or the occasional cheque. But when all the freewill offerings are totted up, the question remains: how much do we as churchgoers actually give to our churches? The answer is both practical and revealing, touching on generosity, priorities, and the health of our faith communities today.

Traditionally, Christian teaching has pointed to tithing – 10% of one's income – as the benchmark for giving and as a symbol of obedience to God and support for the local congregation. In theory, if every church member gave a full 10%, our churches would never struggle financially.

In practice, across the UK and indeed the world, most of us give far less than a tithe. Studies over the last few decades consistently show that the **average church contribution hovers between 2% and 6% of household income**. A small percentage of Christians do tithe faithfully, but the majority give occasionally, sporadically, or in much smaller amounts. Of course, this may be down to economic pressures such as rising costs of living, debts, and low wage increases, which leave many with little room to give. That said, there are still generational differences, with older generations, who were raised with stronger institutional loyalty, often giving more steadily than younger ones. Lastly, some Christians hesitate to give to their church because they want transparency about how funds are used or prefer giving directly to charities.

## Why we give (or don't)

We tend to give more generously when we feel **a personal connection to the mission of the church** – helping those in need, supporting local ministries, or funding youth programs. When giving feels like an abstract institutional obligation, enthusiasm drops. Conversely, some may give less because they believe their small contributions won't make a difference, or because they substitute volunteer service for financial giving – and whilst there's nothing wrong with that, a little bit of both would be best!

Our freewill offerings are needed to sustain the day-to-day life of the church: paying ministers and staff, keeping the lights on, maintaining buildings, and funding ministries. But the gap between ideal and actual giving has consequences. Many churches are struggling to maintain existing outreach programs, let alone invest in new initiatives. We only need to look at campaigns such as Children in Need to see that generosity is alive, but not always directed to the church.

The question of “how much” to give isn't just about numbers. It is also about values and discipleship. Churches that are driving outreach increasingly encourage **planned giving**, regular **automatic donations**, and **financial transparency** to help members see their giving as an act of worship rather than an afterthought.

The gap between expectation and reality challenges the church to inspire deeper trust, greater transparency, and a renewed vision of generosity. For generosity, whether large or small, becomes transformative when it is intentional and directed toward God's purposes.

***The Treasurer***



## HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OCTOBER?



Take a break, put your feet up and have a go at our fun October quiz. No prizes, just the satisfaction of knowing that you're a Smart Alec!

### General Knowledge

1. October was originally which number month in the Roman calendar?
2. With what birthstone is October traditionally linked?
3. Which two zodiac signs fall within October?
4. October 31st is Halloween – what Christian festival begins the very next day?
5. In the Northern Hemisphere, what season does October fall in?

### History

6. The October Revolution of 1917 led to the rise of which political system in Russia?
7. The Cuban Missile Crisis was in October. Which year?
8. Which famous English king died at the Battle of Hastings in October 1066?
9. In October 1929, the US stock market crash began – what nickname was given to October 29?
10. Christopher Columbus first landed in the Americas in October of what year?

### Science & Nature

11. What full moon is often closest to October and associated with harvest time?
12. Which migratory bird is traditionally said to depart England in October, heading south for winter?

13. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month  
– what colour ribbon represents this cause?
14. In October 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik 1.  
What was it?
15. Which meteor shower peaks in October, named after  
the constellation Orion?

### **Literature & Arts**

16. Who wrote the famous poem "*Ode to Autumn*, which  
is often associated with October?
17. The novel *Dracula* was partly inspired by October  
superstitions. Who wrote it?
18. Which horror writer, born in October 1947, is famous  
for novels like *The Shining* and *It*?
19. Pablo Picasso was born on October 25, 1881. In which  
country?
20. The Peanuts character Linus famously waits for what  
October figure in a pumpkin patch?

### **Pop Culture & Holidays**

21. What sweet treat is most closely associated with  
Halloween trick-or-treating in the US?
22. October 1 is the International Day of what, often  
celebrated with music and performances worldwide?
23. Some churches celebrate harvest festival in October.  
What orange vegetable is a symbol of the occasion?
24. Which American holiday is celebrated on the second  
Monday of October?
25. Oktoberfest in Munich begins in September, but runs  
into early October. What drink is it most famous for?

## A NEIGHBOURLY PLEA

For some of us, Offington Park church is our spiritual home. For others, it is a place where they can socialise at Zach's or let the kids burn off some energy while they enjoy a relaxing coffee and cake at the Lighthouse. Yet for our neighbours, the story can be very different.



We are situated in a residential area and blocked driveways, or too much noise can turn what we see as a joyful occasion into an ongoing frustration for our neighbours. Being considerate to nearby properties when using the church is not just polite – it's essential to our maintaining good community relations.

We are fortunate to have a large, private car park, but there are occasions when spaces are at a premium. Our Harvest Festival last month was one such occasion. We know that not everyone could get a space and had to park in neighbouring roads.

For our neighbours, inconsiderate parking is more than an inconvenience. Cars left blocking driveways can prevent families from leaving their homes, and tightly packed or dangerously parked vehicles can obstruct the emergency services. When this happens repeatedly, it creates unnecessary tension between the church and those nearby.

We rely on the goodwill and support of our neighbours, but when visitors to the church act without consideration for the properties around the church, it risks souring this relationship. A little courtesy, by contrast, helps ensure that we can continue to grow and thrive without creating resentment.

When using the church, (whether or not you use our car park) , please respect our neighbours by parking/using the church and surrounding areas considerately. Just follow these simple rules:

### **Check for Restrictions**

Look for signs indicating resident-only parking zones, time limits, or no-parking areas.

### **Respect Driveways and Access**

Never block entrances, garages, or access lanes. Even a small overhang can cause real disruption.

### **Avoid Grass Verges and Pavements**

These are part of someone's property (or that of the local authority) and parking on them can cause damage.

### **Use Designated Parking First**

If you can use our car park, and we have about 34 spaces, please do so rather than overflowing into residential streets.

### **Walk, share or use public transport**

Fewer cars means less congestion and more goodwill.

### **Think About Noise**

Once you have parked nicely, please arrive and leave quietly, especially if it is after 6:00pm. Be a truly considerate guest.

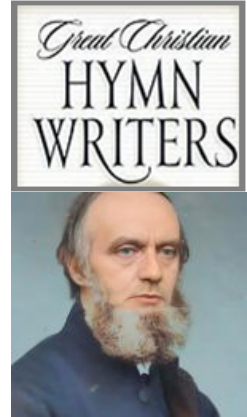
You may think that this is 'teaching granny to suck eggs', but it can be a real issue if you live near any venue that has traffic and regular visitors and the message bears reinforcing.

For our part, we will review our signage around parking and entering/leaving the church to see if it is effective, and revisiting how and what we tell our members and guests. Residents need to know that their concerns are heard and acted on. The events and gatherings we hold at church bring life, joy, and connection to our local community and they are a valuable lifeline for some. But their success depends on respect for the people who live nearby.

By parking thoughtfully and minimising disruption, we can ensure that we remain a good neighbour to those who call the area home.                      Thanks for your co-operation.

## HENRY ALFORD

**Come, ye thankful people, come,  
Raise the song of harvest home;  
All is safely gathered in,  
Ere the winter storms begin;  
God our Maker doth provide  
For our wants to be supplied;  
Come to God's own temple, come,  
Raise the song of harvest home.**



Henry Alford was born on 7 October, 1810, in Bloomsbury, London, into a long line of Anglican clergy: his grandfather and father were both parish priests, and from an early age Henry seemed destined to follow the same path. Yet even as a child, he showed unusual gifts. At the age of ten, he was already writing poetry, a talent that would stay with him for life.

Alford's formal education was at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied classics and theology. He developed a reputation as a sharp-minded scholar and promising poet, publishing verses even before he graduated. After completing his studies, he was ordained in the Church of England in 1833.

His first years of ministry were spent in parish work, and in 1835 he became Vicar of Wymeswold in Leicestershire. Alford poured himself into the life of this rural community, serving faithfully there for nearly two decades. He was known as a diligent pastor, committed to preaching, teaching, and the ordinary rhythms of parish life. Yet he never abandoned his love of literature and scholarship. Evenings often found him working on poetry, sermons, or other great academic projects.

In 1857, Alford's abilities were recognized with his appointment

To the prestigious post of Dean of Canterbury Cathedral, a role which brought him into the heart of ecclesiastical life. But he carried into it the same pastoral warmth and scholarly devotion that had marked his earlier ministry.

Alford's most enduring contribution to hymnody is ***"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come,"*** penned in 1844 while serving in the parish of Aston Sandford. At first glance a simple harvest hymn, it weaves together themes of gratitude for God's provision and anticipation of the final "harvest of souls" at the end of time. This dual vision of the hymn – both earthly and eternal – gave it a depth that ensured its lasting popularity. Today, it remains one of the best-loved hymns in English-speaking churches, especially at harvest festivals and Thanksgiving services.

Alford was a man of many talents: poet, theologian, artist and musician. Those who knew him described him as industrious, devout, and deeply committed. In his personal life, he married Fanny Levick in 1835. She stood beside him throughout his years of parish work and later at Canterbury. Friends of Alford said the home was hospitable and encouraging, a place where scholarship and faith were interwoven.

Henry Alford died on January 12, 1871, at the age of 60, after serving nearly 14 years as Dean of Canterbury. He was buried at St. Martin's, Canterbury, the oldest parish church in continuous use in England – a fitting resting place for a man who valued both the deep traditions and the living witness of the Church. Today, Alford is remembered by worshippers for that stirring harvest hymn that continues to be sung with joy and gratitude each autumn. His legacy endures, uniting the worlds of learning, worship, and faithfulness to God's service.





# OCTOBER SERVICES

## **Sunday 5 October**

8.00am **Holy Communion**

Rev Dawn Carn

10.30am **Café Church**

Rev Dawn Carn

## **Sunday 12 October**

10.30am **Holy Communion**

Rev Dawn Carn

3.30pm **Messy Church**

## **Sunday 19 October**

8.00am **Breakfast Church**

10.30am **Morning service**

Mr Adam Cook

## **Sunday 26 October**

10.30am **Morning service**

Mr John Carr

10.30am **Fun Church**

Rev Dawn Carn

3.00pm **Annual Memorial Service**

Rev Dawn Carn

## A SERVANT'S MEMORY OF THE WEDDING AT CANA

I remember that Cana wedding vividly. It was the kind of feast that brings the whole village together. The air was heavy with laughter, music, and the smell of roasted lamb. My arms ached from carrying platters and jugs back and forth, yet the joy in the room made the pain bearable.



But then the whispers began. The wine was gone. I saw the anxious looks of the bridegroom's family. Running out of wine was more than a mishap - it was a shame that could stain a family's honour for years. It was then that a woman, gentle but commanding, approached her son. She spoke to him quietly, but I caught the words: *"They have no wine."* He answered her in a way I did not understand, yet when she turned to us servants, her instruction was clear: *"Do whatever he tells you."*

The man - Jesus, they called him - looked at the six great stone jars used for purification. "Fill them with water," he said. We stared at each other. Water? At a time like this? Yet something in his eyes—calm, steady, expectant—moved us to obey. We hauled bucket after bucket until each jar brimmed full, while he watched with quiet assurance, as though he already knew the ending to a story we had not yet begun.

Then came the moment that changed everything. He told me, "Draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." I dipped the ladle into the jar, expecting the cool, tasteless splash of water. But as I looked down, a rich fragrance rose up that made me pause. I looked down, and my breath caught. The liquid was dark, shimmering, alive. Wine.

I carried the cup to the master, my hands trembling so much I feared I would spill it. He drank, and his face lit up in astonishment. "This is the best wine yet!" he declared, praising the bridegroom for saving such a vintage until now. The guests cheered, unaware of what only we servants knew.

My mind raced. Water had become wine - not by trick, not by chance, but by a word. I had seen it with my own eyes, felt the weight of the jars, smelled the transformation, heard the steward's praise. The ordinary had become extraordinary in a moment, and it was done quietly, without show. That day I realized something I could not yet put into words: this Jesus was more than a guest at the wedding. He was a guest in the world itself, and if he could turn water into wine, what else might he transform? Could he take a weary servant like me - ordinary and overlooked - and make something new, something alive? Even now, when I lift a cup of wine to my lips, I remember. And I wonder.

## NEXT EDITION

*Copy Deadline*

*Publication Date*

*Sunday 26 October 2025*

*Friday 31 October 2025*

Please submit material for the next edition  
to the Editors at:

**offingtonspotlight@gmail.com**

A Primary School teacher decided that, during the Religious Education lesson, he would tell the class the story of the Prodigal Son.

As he told the story, he put a lot of emphasis on the elder brother and how resentful he was about his younger brother's return.

After describing the rejoicing of the household over the return of the wayward son, the teacher said that there was one who, in the midst of the festivities, failed to share in the jubilant spirit of the occasion.

"Can anybody in the class "tell me who this was?", he asked,

Eight year old Olivia had been listening sympathetically to the story. She put her hand in the air. "I think I know!" she said falteringly.

"Was it the fatted calf?"



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