

Parish News

St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

St John, Little Walden and St James, Sewards End

Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry



November 2025

FREE



Harvest Festival 2025

Harvest Festival took place on 28th September. Our pictures show the display on the chancel steps. Photographer—Gill Caswell.



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PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1st Sunday of the previous month. Hence, the deadline for the **December-January 2026** issue is

Sunday 2nd November 2025.

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The Rector's Letter

From The Rev'd Jeremy Trew

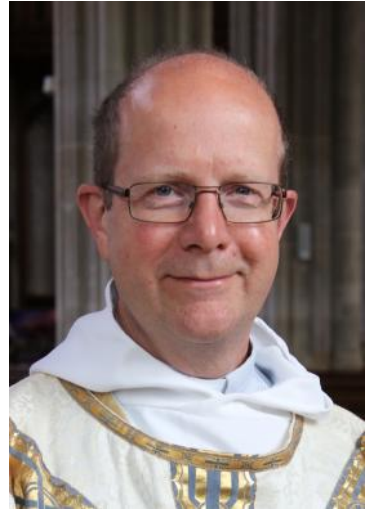
Jeremy writes...

November is a month of great contrasts. It starts with two commemorations, both of which cause us to look back. The first, right at the start of the month, is the twin festivals of All Saints and All Souls, where we remember the saints of the church, and all those loved ones who have died and gone before us. The second is Remembrance Sunday, when we recall all who served and gave their lives in service in the wars of the past century and more.

The “saints” are not just those great saints who appear to us in stained glass and statuary, but that broader and truer meaning of the word: all who have trusted in God, that mixed bag of God’s people. The “souls” are all we have known and loved, both saints and sinners, whom we remember before God, and trust that nothing that is good can ever be lost. God’s idea of redemption is greater than ours, thankfully. And in “remembrance”, we recall the service given by others out of patriotic duty, out of political belief, as an act of faith, or, for the great majority, simply because they had to. Human motivation is rarely a precise thing, and great trust is required on our part that the service was given in a just cause.

Both of these commemorations cause us to look back on lives and events past. But they also cause us to look forward; both with the historical imperative that, if we do not learn from the past, we are doomed to repeat it; and, with the hope kindled by faith that this life, and the value we see in it, is not all there is, but that human life and meaning continues beyond the confines of the grave. That is the great hope of faith, certainly of the Christian faith; that we are loved and valued so much by God that God comes to us as we are and accepts us as we are, knowing what we were created to be.

All of this leads us to the end of November, when we celebrate the beginning of Advent, that time of preparation for the celebration of Christmas and the unveiling of God’s most audacious and irreligious plot: to step down from the greatness and glory of whatever heaven may be like and to be born to peasant parents in an unruly backwater of the Roman



Empire; to live a fully human life, and to accept the worst that humanity can do to a person, all born out of love. November takes us on a journey that moves us meaningfully towards Christmas. If we try to understand that journey, then we will truly be in a place to celebrate it.

Best Wishes
Jeremy

Hannah's Mass

Those of us lucky enough to be able to come to choral evensong on Sunday 5th October were privileged to hear the inaugural performance of a mass setting composed by our SMMA correspondent, Philip Sunderland. *Hannah's Mass* was written for Phil's sister, Hannah, who died from secondary breast cancer in 2019. The Kyrie, Gloria and Sanctus were written in the aftermath of Hannah's death; the Agnus Dei was rewritten this year. The aim of the composer is one of celebrating life and the release from pain. It is constructed around a 'Holy Trinity' of notes, the major second, sharpened fourth and major seventh. It was intended to be performed by a choir and orchestra, who had clearly enjoyed rehearsing this piece, which ranged from gently contemplative and reverential to joyful and triumphant. A retiring collection was taken to be divided between Hospice in the Weald and St Mary's Church.

John Pickthorn. Photograph by Martin Hugall



Selective summary from draft minutes of a PCC Meeting on 10th September 2025

1647 Project: The Saffron Walden Heritage Development Group 1647 Project is focused upon events in Saffron Walden during the British Civil Wars. In May of 1647, soldiers of the New Model Army, headquartered in the town, met in the St Mary's Church. The proposal is to erect three life-size figures in the churchyard: a male parliamentarian, an elected male individual and a woman pamphleteer. The piece would be made of bronze approximately 3 metres square. The PCC noted that there is no cost to the church as the project is being fully funded by the SWHDG. The PCC supported the proposal and agreed that a faculty application should be made. An event will be held in the church on 25th October to raise awareness of the 1647 meetings and the statue project.

External notice boards: A local firm has been approached to carry out work on the external notice boards. A List B application needs to be made to the DAC. Thanks are due to Jim Butler for his assistance with this project.

Music report: In July the choir performed a new motet by Brian Moles with words by Paula Griffiths, The Sparks Motet, in memory of Chris Ferland. It is from a series of motets about light and life. Other motets from the series will be sung in due course.

We now have a new organ scholar, James Razzell, who has risen through the ranks of the junior choir/choral scholars.

In October Philip Sunderland will organise the singing of a new mass set by him in memory of people who have died, including his sister.

In December, Radio 3 will be using the church to make a broadcast for the choir of Gonville and Caius.

There is a new chair of the organ committee, Lisa Brooks.

As Kate Beare will be moving away from the area, Helen Counsell will be taking over Joyful Noise. She is attending sessions at the moment to assist with a smooth transition.

Plans are underway for a choir residential to Norfolk next summer. The Junior Choir is to sing at St James, Swards End in September.

Children and Youth: Julie Lester has accepted the combined role as Children and Youth Leader. She is enthusiastic and has already started. At her request, the hours for the post were reduced to 28 per week which has left funding for Hayden Rocks to be given an internship.

Lighting update: A £3,000 grant and funds received from CofE Decarbonisation Scheme will pay for the supply and installation of lighting to the entrances to the church i.e. south entrances and west door. Work is proceeding ahead of schedule. Plans are to work in the North and South aisles in the autumn and the chancel in January. The choir will be unable to sing from the choir stalls during

January.

Quinquennial Inspection: Various repairs to the church, mostly repointing on the roof, need doing urgently at a cost of £20,600. The same contractor, Keystone, we used for the Vergers Cottage will be used.

Finance: The general fund is down as payments have been made for the cracked bell, otherwise all expenditure is routine. The Fabric Fund is up by £9,306 after receipts from Essex Community Foundation, the Archbishops Council, gift aid and donations for the lighting project.

A discussion took place about the possibility of a mobile card reader. Hannah Razzell said that having one had increased giving for SMMA functions.

Safeguarding: It was agreed that signs would be put up before weddings asking people not to take pictures of the choir children.

Home Group: The PCC approved the formation of a further Home Group, to be held in the house of Vivian Falk, under the leadership of Gill Caswell.

Market Stall: The PCC agreed to the church having another market stall to promote our Christmas Services. This will take place at the Winstanley Late Night Shopping event on Friday 5th December.

Daughter churches

St John's, Little Walden: Easter activities including Easter eggs and hot cross buns had gone well. The brickwork has now all been funded. Quotes were accepted for the installation of new heaters. St John's Energy Footprint Tool was submitted for PCC information.

St James': Hymns and Pimm's had been a successful event to mark the 30th Anniversary of the naming of St James. Harvest Supper would be on 4th October followed by Harvest Festival. The church feels very positive and thankful.

Future events Next PCC meeting: 12th November 2025

Martin Hugall and Clifford Want

A Prayer for November

In November, a month of Remembrance, may we spend time reflecting on our lives and how we have been touched by those we have known.

May we live our faith as an inspiration to others.

Amen

Provided by the Prayer Team



www.hundredparishes.org.uk

LOCAL WILDLIFE

Recently, I was privileged to watch two bats flying around my garden. They were so quick and acrobatic it was difficult to keep them in view. Bats and their roosts are legally protected so must

not be disturbed. Bats are mammals, giving birth to live young. It reminded me of how lucky we are in The Hundred Parishes to have so many wild mammals in our mainly rural area.



There are several kinds of deer locally, mostly Fallow, Roe or Muntjac. Larger herds are usually Fallow deer which have “palmate” antlers, shaped like the palm of a hand. The smaller Roe deer may be seen in smaller groups – they have a white rump and no visible tail. Muntjac are smaller still and tend to be solitary; they have horns and “tusks” - downward-pointing canine teeth.

Out enjoying our latest walk, number 188, my wife and I surprised two hares who disappeared at great speed when they spotted us. They can run up to 45mph over short distances.



We regularly see foxes in our garden, usually courtesy of our inexpensive night vision camera. In the spring, we enjoyed watching the young cubs playing. Foxes seem to be a more common sight now, even during daylight, and regularly venture into built up areas. The camera occasionally spots a badger; he is usually looking for peanuts.

Anyone lucky enough to see hedgehogs in their garden should look after them as their numbers are in decline. They are nocturnal, so at dusk we should put out a shallow bowl of fresh water (not milk as it is bad for their digestion) and perhaps some dog or cat food. They may repay you by eating slugs and insects although our experience has been that they prefer commercial hedgehog food like Spike's Dinner.

Enjoy them all.

Ken McDonald, Secretary



Radwinter Road Cemetery, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HU

Are you looking for a final resting place for a loved one? The Cemetery at Radwinter Road is an oasis in the town which is open 24/7 and there is tranquillity within.

Further information on burials is available from The Cemetery Officer at Saffron Walden Town Council, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HR Telephone: 01799 516501 or email enquiries@saffronwalden.gov.uk

Our local Cemetery is a peaceful space which offers a natural environment for all types of wildlife and as a result is an important nature conservation resource in the town. Daily maintenance and gardening are carried out which ensures the space is both clean and tidy, where residents and visitors can visit for peace and reflection.

The Cemetery is divided into different areas; Lawn cemetery, Traditional area, Garden of Remembrance, scattered ashes, and areas for children and young people. There is also a separate section for War graves which is cared for by The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A small well-appointed Chapel is available to hire.

<https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/services/cemetery/>



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What's in a Name (11)?

I have chosen the three street names 'Loompits', 'Limefields' and 'Claypit Piece' to explore this time. All three streets are on the outskirts of the town. Loompits Way and Claypit Piece (off Ross Close) are to the south of the town, whilst Limefields is to the north, off Little Walden Road. They were developed at different times, the two to the south being built in the second half of the twentieth century, whilst Limefields did not appear until the twenty first century. Nevertheless, they have similar origins.

Claypit Piece is probably the easiest to explain. Saffron Walden lies on a boulder clay plateau and so there are many pockets of clay which were exploited over the years for use in brick making. There were brick kilns in the Saffron Walden area dating back to the time of the Romans. It is possible, for example, that there was a Roman brick kiln in the gardens of Audley End House (see *The Pottery Kilns of Roman Britain* by Vivian Swan, <https://romankilns.net/>).

Where possible, clay was dug locally to make the bricks needed. It is therefore very likely that the piece of ground on which Claypit Piece was built had contained a pit from which clay had been excavated at some point.

Loompits and Limefields both make reference to lime. Spreading lime on the earth was a common practice in the past which helped to neutralise the acidity of the soil. It was particularly important if crops such as wheat were to be grown. The lime had to be burned to form calcium oxide or quick lime and this was then mixed with water to produce slaked lime (calcium hydroxide). Sometimes chalk was used in the process and it seems likely that this was the case in the Saffron Walden area where chalk but not lime was available. Perhaps Loompits makes reference to where the process was carried out and Limefields where it was used.

There must have been supplies of slaked lime readily available in the area as it was an important ingredient used in producing the breathable mortar used in the local decorative plasterwork known as pargetting, a fine example of which is The Old Sun Inn in Church Street.

Hilary Walker



Saffron Walden Lions Club – Appeal for volunteers

The Lions run an Appliance Loan Service from a store behind the Radwinter Road hospital, whereby those in need can hire wheelchairs, rollators, walkers, commodes etc for periods of up to 2 months. Borrowing this equipment is free, but donations are welcomed so that we can support other local charities.

We are urgently looking to expand the team providing this important and much appreciated service.

Currently, our volunteers (either full members of the Club or Friends of the Lions) are “on duty” one week in every five. This consists of answering requests for help (on the dedicated Lions mobile), arranging to meet at the store and showing our stock. By expanding the rota, our volunteers will be on-call less frequently, which is why we are looking for community-minded helpers to step forward.

The paperwork is very simple, and you will be given appropriate training. If interested, please contact Pamela Mugliston
pjmteddybear@btinternet.com or 01799 521697

Message in a bottle

Lions Clubs ‘Message in a Bottle’ is a simple but effective way for people to keep their basic personal and medical details where they can be found in an emergency on a standard form in their fridge door.

The scheme helps emergency services personnel to save valuable time in quickly identifying an individual, and knowing if they have any allergies or take special medication.

Paramedics, ambulance crews and doctors support this Lions life-saving initiative and know to look in the fridge when they see the Message in a Bottle sticker inside your front door. The initiative provides peace of mind that prompt and appropriate medical assistance can be provided, and next of kin/emergency contacts can be notified.

You can collect a bottle, and sticker, from me at church every Sunday, or contact me, as above.

Spectacle collection

Thank you to all those who have contributed their glasses to this great cause. It is an ongoing project, and the box is on the water table near the servery.



FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH

The Friends of the Parish Church is a very active group and has been so for over 90 years. We are able to help financially with minor and major projects at St Mary's. They range from the new Advent candle which we have just purchased to a substantial sum to help the Lighting Project.

Almost 40% of our members have active and varied roles in the Church. We have a bookstand with an assortment of items on sale and next to that a dedicated noticeboard which will keep you up to date on our many activities. We are also on the Church website under "Groups" so do take a look.

If you would like to learn more, pick up a leaflet from the bookstand which also includes an application form to **join us**. Just hand it to any of the Friends' Council members or pop in the Parish Office letterbox. If you feel that you would like to leave us a legacy, there are forms available on the bookstand for this too.

Chairman: Denis Tindley, Secretary: Pamela Mugliston, Treasurer: Sandra Marsh

The Friends AGM 7th September 2025

Forty members attended the AGM held in the Parish Rooms. The current Officers were re-elected plus two new co-opted members to the Council. They are John and Alison Forster who have become Events Organisers for talks and lunches. Rebekah Auty has taken on the role of Minutes Secretary.

The Secretary advised the members that the uniform blue noticeboards that can be seen around the Church were funded by the Friends. We will be using them to advertise our events in future. On entering via the south door it will be apparent that the rather utilitarian table that greeted visitors is now covered in fabric, funded by the Friends, to match the entrance to the Choir vestry.

The Treasurer's report showed that we currently have a healthy budget and Denis explained that we have offered up to £60,000 towards the cost of the Lighting Project. Our donation, and funds received from other sources, help to ensure that this important improvement will be appreciated for many years to come.



care UK 

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No job too small or too odd!

The Calendar

This calendar is provisional. See The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information.

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service in church each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y]: details on the church website. Coffee is served after the Sunday 10.30am services.

Sunday 2 November—All Saints

- | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 8.00am | BCP Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Holy Communion [Y] & Sunday Club |
| 4.00pm | All Souls Service [Y] |

Thursday 6 November

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 10.00am | Silent Prayer in the Parish Rooms |
|---------|-----------------------------------|

Sunday 9 November

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 8.00am | BCP Holy Communion |
| 11.15am | Service of Remembrance [Y], following the 11.00am Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial |
| 4.00pm | Words, Music and Compline for Remembrance Sunday |

Thursday 13 November

- | | |
|--------|---|
| 2.00pm | Mothers' Union: Steve Hasler - Lighting Project |
|--------|---|

Sunday 16 November

- | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 8.00am | BCP Holy Communion |
| 10.30am | Holy Communion [Y] & Sunday Club |

Sunday 23 November - Christ the King

- | | |
|---------|------------------------|
| 8.00am | BCP Holy Communion [Y] |
| 10.30am | Family Service |
| 4.00pm | Taizé service |

Saturday 29 November

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 10.00—1.00pm | Christmas Fair |
|--------------|----------------|



Advent Sunday 30 November

8.00am	BCP Holy Communion
10.30am	Team Communion Service [Y]
6.30pm	Advent Carol Service

Regular weekday services at St Mary's

Tuesdays

5.00pm	Evening Prayer by Zoom, see weekly bulletin for login details
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Wednesdays

8.00am	Morning Prayer downstairs in the Parish Rooms
9.30am	Holy Communion (with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing on the 1st Wednesday of the month) in the Parish Rooms

St James', Swards End

Sunday 2 November

10.30am	Holy Communion
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Sunday 9 November

3.00pm	Remembrance Service
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Sunday 16 November

10.30am	Morning Praise
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St John's, Little Walden

Saturday 8 November

Remembrance Service—start at War Memorial at 10.40am

Sunday 23 November—Christ the King

10.30am	Holy Communion
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St Andrew - first disciple of Jesus



Andrew, whose feast day ends the Christian year on 30th November, is probably best known to us as the patron saint of Scotland, though his only connection with the country is that some of his bones were reputedly transported in the 8th century to Fife and preserved at a church in a place now named

St Andrews.

In fact, there are so many legends about him all over Europe and the Middle East that it's safest to stick to what the Gospels tell us - though the strong tradition that he was martyred by crucifixion is probably true and is perpetuated in the 'St Andrew's Cross', the 'saltire' of Scotland.

The Gospels record that he was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and the very first to bring someone else to Christ - his own brother. Like many fervent Jews at the time, Andrew and an unnamed companion had been drawn to the desert, to be taught by the charismatic prophet known to us as John the Baptist. Many thought that he was the long-promised Messiah, but John insisted that he was not. 'I am the voice crying in the wilderness,' he told the crowds. 'Prepare the way of the Lord! One comes after me who is greater than I am.' So when one day John pointed out Jesus to Andrew and his friend and described him as the 'Lamb of God', the two young men assumed that the next stage of their spiritual search was about to unfold. So as Jesus made off, they followed him.

All the more strange, then (though, on reflection, very true to human nature) that when Jesus turned and asked them what they were 'seeking', all they could come up with was a lame enquiry about his current place of residence: 'Where are you staying?' The reply of Jesus was the most straightforward invitation anyone can receive: 'Come and see'. Come and see what I'm like, what I do, the sort of person I am. What an invitation!

The results of their response were in this case life-changing - for themselves, and for many other people. Andrew brought his brother, Peter, to Jesus. The next day Jesus met Philip and called him to 'follow'. Philip then brought Nathaniel. The little apostolic band who would carry the message of Jesus to the whole world was being formed. They came, they saw, they were conquered! And right at the front of the column, as it were, was Andrew, the first disciple of Jesus.

The Next Archbishop of Canterbury

On Friday 3rd October, King Charles approved the nomination of the Bishop of London, the Rt Rev'd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally, as the next Archbishop of Canterbury. The 106th Archbishop of Canterbury since Saint Augustine arrived in Kent from Rome in 597, Bishop Sarah will be the first woman to hold the office. She will be installed in a service at Canterbury Cathedral in March 2026.



Sarah Mullally has been the Bishop of London since 2018, (again, the first woman appointed to that role, she was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral on 12th May 2018) and before that was Bishop of Crediton in the Diocese of Exeter. Prior to her ordination in 2001, she was the Government's Chief Nursing Officer for England having previously specialised as a cancer nurse. Bishop Sarah is married to Eamonn and they have two children. She has continued her interest in the health service having been a non-executive director at The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust, then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.

The Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) for Canterbury nominated Bishop Sarah following a process of public consultation and prayerful

discernment that began in February this year. The Canterbury CNC was made up of representatives from across the Church of England, global Anglican Communion and the Diocese of Canterbury.

The most senior bishop in the Church of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury's ministry combines many roles including serving as the Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan, as well as *primus inter pares* – or first among equals – of the Primates of the global Anglican Communion, which consists of around 85 million people, across 165 countries. In the House of Lords, the Archbishop of Canterbury is one of 26 bishops who comprise the Lords Spiritual.

Following the announcement, the next stage of the appointment process is the Election by the College of Canons of Canterbury Cathedral, which will take place before Christmas. On 28th January 2026, there will be a Confirmation of Election at St Paul's Cathedral in London, at which Bishop Sarah will legally become the Archbishop of Canterbury. In March, there will be an Installation (sometimes referred to as an 'enthronement') at Canterbury Cathedral, which marks the start of the new Archbishop of Canterbury's ministry.

John Pickthorn. Photo: Neil Turner for Lambeth Palace

Gelio's Anthology of Obscure Proverbs.



This month, I have a few thought-provoking proverbs on the theme of endurance.

From England "*He that endures is not overcome*", and "*What can't be cured must be endured.*"

Then there is this Jewish proverb which says "*He that can't endure the bad, will not live to see the good.*"

In simple language, I suppose that is '*every cloud has a silver lining.*'



Muniments
Room

From the Archives

A monthly record of pieces of interest from
our past Parish Magazines

Compiled by our Archivist, the Rev'd Canon Chris Bishop

If you were a member of a Congregation back in the 1970s (I was in my first Parish) this piece from our own Parish News in November 1973 will no doubt bring back 'liturgical' memories.

'Your Editors are grateful to the Editor of the Church Times for his light touch on this troubled matter, but do not entirely agree with this contributors' conclusions.

"When Books of Common Prayer were rife
And Tudor Tongue no harm meant,
A loyal Cranmer's man was I
And so I got preferment.
And when they gave us Series One
Communion rite amended,
I loyally gave it a run
And said 'Why, this is splendid'

**For this is law that I'll maintain
Until my dying day, sir:
Whatever Series comes to reign,
I'll be the Vicar of Bray, sir.**

The next bombshell was Series Two
With all its innovations,
And loyally I made it too
Despite its limitations,
I gladly said 'Thy will be done
On earth 'instead of 'in' it
And promptly turned down Series One
All eager to begin it.
For this is law.....

Now Series Three has on us burst
With all its verbal changes,
And loyal 'Presidents' will thirst
To sample all its ranges,
Gone are words like 'Thee' and 'Thou'
We greet our God as 'You', sir,
And if you would be 'with it' now
You'll drop old Series Two, sir.

For this is law.....

In three years will come Series Four:
Oh please do not be vexed, sir!
And verbal juggling galore
Is what we can expect, sir.
Perhaps by then we'll all be taught
To call the Lord 'Old Chappie'
And, having then reduced to naught
All reverence, we'll be happy.

For this is law.....” ‘

The Rev'd Canon Chris Bishop. Archivist

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St Mary's Music News

The start of autumn has been busy for the musicians of St Mary's. The choral scholars' concert at the end of September was a showcase for the talents of our superb scholars and included some notable solo performances and ensemble singing, including a praiseworthy rendition of Antonio Lotti's

Crucifixus.

On 5th October, *Hannah's Mass* was given its premiere at an evening service of communion. The Rector preached a learned and thought-provoking sermon, and Hannah



Razzell and Vivian Falk both read with distinction. Accompanied by a first-class brass ensemble, organ and percussion, the service was a chance for us all to give thanks for the joyful memories we have of lost loved ones.

The choir performed Choral Evensong at the Abbey in Bury St Edmunds on October 18th, singing Stanford's immortal *Magnificat and Nunc Dimitis in C*, Sumsion's sumptuous responses and *If Ye Love Me*, a new work by the Leeds-based composer, Philip Wilby.

There are two notable dates for the diary in November. On Sunday 9th the choir will sing at two services. First the morning parade at 11.30am, including the introit 'For the Fallen' by Guest, and a repeat performance of the Philip Wilby piece; and secondly, at a 4pm Compline. This is a wonderful, contemplative service with readings, music and solos from members of the choir. Finally, on the 30th we look forward to the annual Advent Sunday Carol Service.

Philip Sunderland

Photograph of the composer of *Hannah's Mass*, Philip Sunderland, at rehearsal by Patrick Li. See also page 5.

From the Registers

Baptisms

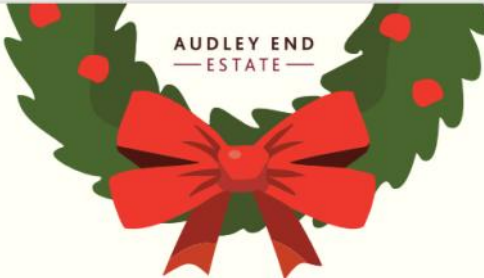
Weddings

5th September	Courtney Nixon and Harry Rudd
6th September	Diana Mamonova and Nicholas Church
19th September	Isabella Murray and Max Dodd-Noble
20th September	Rachel Croker and Alex Hall
27th September	Eliza Walter and Hugh Acland

Funerals

19th September	John Eric Ringer Rowell (St John's, Little Walden)
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We Pray for Peace.....

.....and our world is in such a distressed state currently that there are 122 million people worldwide forcibly displaced due to conflict, violence and persecution (according to UNHCR).

Please support all efforts to stand up for Peace and wear a White Poppy with your red (or on its own) – and above all pray earnestly for peaceful solutions to the world's zones of conflict.

The Red poppy came about following Canadian Dr John McCrae's poem 'In Flanders fields the poppies blow, between the crosses, row on row' - adopted by the Royal British Legion (RBL) in 1921 to remember the dead of the British Armed Forces and support their families. 5 million served in WWII; there are just 8 thousand now alive and RBL say that fewer than 300 will be alive to mark the 90th anniversary of VE and VJ Days in 2035.

In 2018 RBL issued Khadi cotton poppies to acknowledge the Indian contribution in WWI, supporting the British Armed Forces, and their 1.5 million dead

The White poppy came 12 years after the red, to remember ALL victims of war, including civilians and to symbolise hope and a lasting commitment to Peace.

The Blue poppy or 'Bluet de France' is France's symbol of remembrance in connection with French soldiers' blue uniforms in WWI.

The Purple poppy (now a paw) was created in 2006 in response to historians re-examining the part played by some 8 million animals in war and their deaths in service. This symbol is intended to be worn alongside others.

The Black poppy was created in 2010 to honour the African, Black and Caribbean communities and their valuable contributions to war efforts and to honour their 350 thousand dead – to highlight 'largely untold historical legacies'.

The Digital poppy is available in Canada – an online donation produces a poppy image with a veteran's name on it.

RBL states that 'choosing to wear a poppy – of any variety – is a highly personal choice, reflecting a person's individual experiences, memories and heritage'.

White Poppies will be free and available in church from 1st November – please help yourself.

In the name of Peace.

Diana Hoy

Lighting Installation – Progressing Well!



By the time that you read this in early November, the majority of the new lights will have been installed in the north and south chapels, the north and south aisles, the nave and the west tower under the various ceilings. The rest will be installed in the first half of November and those in the aisles and nave, at least, will be switched on for Advent and Christmas.

Good progress has been made during September with the installation of the new lighting on the north side of the church, the north chapel and north aisle, and as I write, the installation of the south chapel lights is well underway and the work in the

south aisle has started. During September, new cabling was installed in the south porch ready for the new lighting and the aim is to have all of the new lights at the church entrances installed and working before the contractors leave us for December.

Why, if the new lights are now fixed, aren't we using them? Before they are switched on, the contractors will go up to the ceilings once again, when the lighting designer is present, to make sure that they are pointing in exactly the right direction and that they are focussed correctly. Focussing involves adjusting the fittings at ceiling level so that the light we see on the ground or in our pew is either a narrow spotlight or a broad "wash" of light. We will also have a temporary control unit on the welcome unit on the north side of the nave at the back of church before the end of November.

So far, there has been little need to string up some temporary lighting because Tom Flynn (TFE) and his team have left our existing lighting in place until the replacement lights are switched on. They will remove our current lighting when they go up to focus the new fittings. We do have temporary lighting in the clergy vestry and, as mentioned last month, at the west

entrance and in the west tower. However, it is clear that we are only just in time with this project, all of the downlights in the nave on the north side (the left when facing the high altar) failed about 20 minutes before one of our July weddings and they haven't worked since. The downlights on the south side of the nave have flickered on and off recently too!

In mid-October, we have Bakers of Danbury on site to help TFE run a new cable across the steps between the west tower and the west end of the nave. Bakers are the contractors who installed the servery, toilet, all the associated cupboards and welcome units back in 2017-18 and we are using them for all the "Building Works in Connection" with the lighting installation. This will be the first of a few visits from them. In due course, they will fit out the tall cupboards at the back of church, which now have some lighting control gear in them, once the rest of the control gear is in place. I will look to get the cupboard on the north side, used to store tables, back into use as soon as possible but this relies on fitting it out to ensure that the tables cannot lean on and damage the control gear. The tall cupboard on the south side, which is used by Tinies, will be ready for their return to the church, which will most likely be in early March 2026.



I mentioned earlier that TFE will leave us for December. The last day when they'll be working inside the church will be on Thursday 27th November and they will take away all of their equipment under the blue tarpaulin and put the missing north aisle pews back before they leave. They'll be back in very early January to work in the chancel and sanctuary but more about that next month.

Finally, I have sought to ensure that there are notices in the Grapevine and emails are sent to relevant persons when parts of the church will be inaccessible for a few days. **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, do take notice of these and do not seek to enter an area which we have communicated as inaccessible.** These warnings are being sent for your safety. If the contractors mistakenly drop a light fitting on you when you are below them, the result will be extremely serious. The notices are giving sufficient information to allow you

to re- schedule your visit, please do so.

Steve Hasler
8th October 2025



The photograph on page 32 shows the north aisle lights, which will also illuminate the north side of the nave.

The photograph on page 33 shows work commencing in the South Chapel (choir vestry).

The photograph on this page shows the new lights for the north aisle and the area below the chancel steps.

Photographs by Steve Hasler

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- Please be aware when submitting articles that 400 words fit comfortably onto a page and any articles over 800 words may need to be edited to ensure readability.



The Friends visit to Canterbury Cathedral 3rd October 2025

What a surprise and a privilege to be in Canterbury Cathedral the day that the new Archbishop was announced. It did mean that some parts of the Cathedral were closed to visitors, but there was a lot to see during our 90 minute guided tour and we all felt that we would like to return for yet more investigation.

A few of our group actually caught up with Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York (and former Bishop of Chelmsford) for a chat and a blessing. We enjoyed a lunch together at Ask and then, in 3 groups, we took a trip on the river Stour to learn more historical facts of interest about how the river was used and the surrounding buildings. Despite light rain, we all enjoyed the 45 minute cruise.

Photograph : Martin Hugall

Friends of St Mary's: Dates for Your Diary

The next **Cathedral trip** will be in the spring of 2026, more details will be available in the next Parish News.

Remember we have a **Talk** booked for January 26th 2026. This is based on experiences whilst walking the Camino De Santiago pilgrimage by Julie Kendall and her husband Mark Vernon in May 2024. This will be in the Parish Rooms as usual. We look forward to seeing you all. John and Alison will be in touch very soon.

I will endeavour to get the **Recipe Book** published in time for the Christmas Fair but a few issues are still slowing that down at the moment. I will keep you posted. Thank you for all your contributions which sound delicious.



St Mary's Church Saffron Walden Christmas Fair

Saturday 29 November 2025

10am – 1pm

Stalls to include:

Refreshments, cakes

Mulled wine and mince pies

Christmas gifts

Handicrafts and children's stalls

Tombola and Grand Draw

Visits to Bell Tower

Christmas music

Special guest, Father Christmas

Free admission, wheelchair access