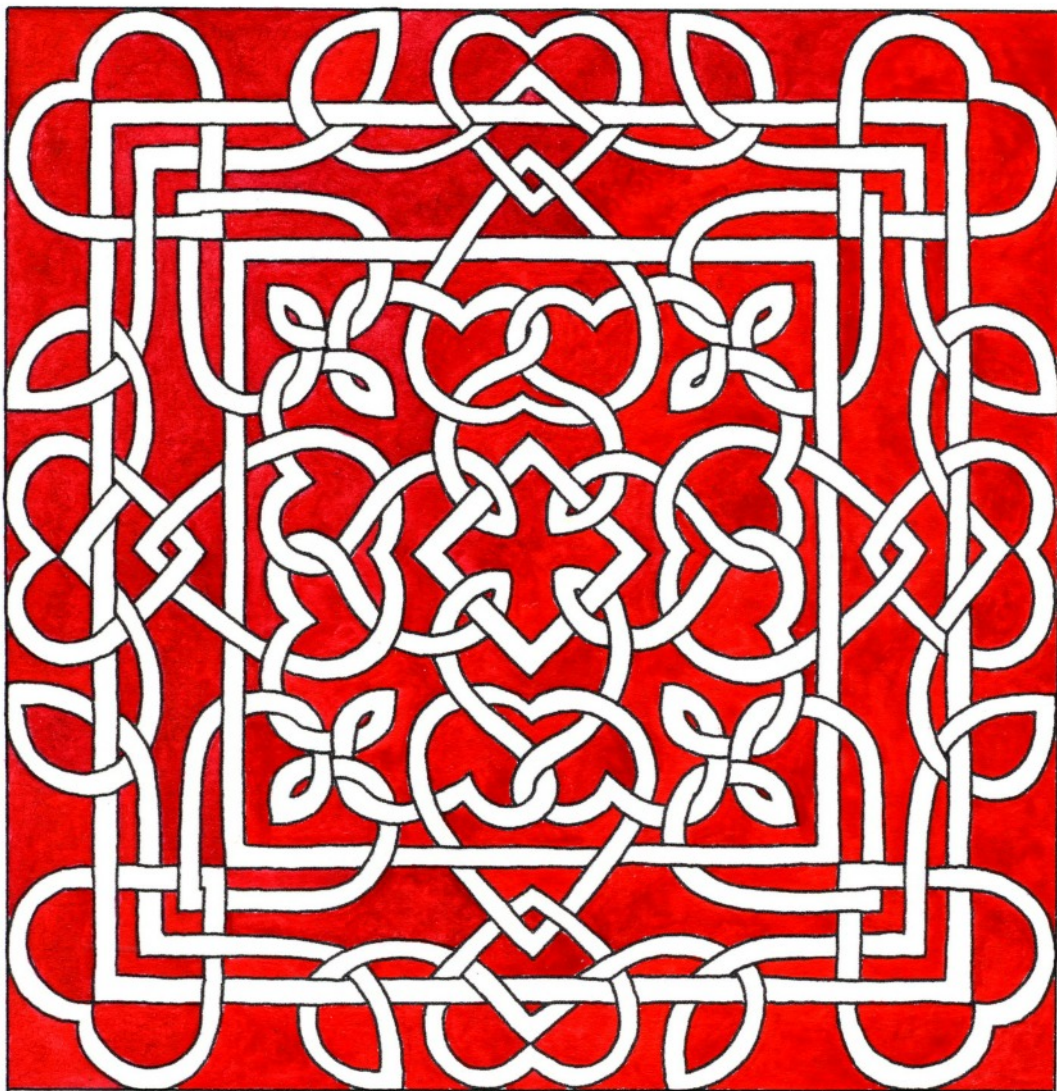




February 2025

Magazine



SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE (see also inside the back cover)

CLERGY

Reverend Paul Day

email: vicar@shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Tel: 0121 537 9672

Reverend Richard Haynes

email: curate@shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Tel: 07972 530161

Reverend Rich Brooker

email: richbrooker@shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Tel: 07922 564696

Reverend Wendy Carter

email: revwendy@sky.com

Tel: 0121 744 6315

Reverend Dr. Theresa Jones

email: theresaj1@btinternet.com

Tel: 0121 272 3366

Parish Administration Manager - Emily Ellis

Parish Office, Church House, Church Road, Shirley, B90 2AX

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30pm

Telephone: 0121 745 8896

Email: office@shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Parish Website: <https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk>

Social Media: [twitter.com/@ParishB90](https://twitter.com/ParishB90)

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FOR ANY ENQUIRIES ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE OR THE EDITOR -

Gill Hanton - Telephone : 0121 733 2347 or 07973 942145

Email : shirleyparishmagazine@gmail.com

Deadline for information and articles for next month's magazine: 12th of the month

Whilst every care is taken to ensure that the contents of the magazine are correct, the Parish cannot be responsible for any errors that may occur in the editorial or advertisements, nor for the actions of the advertisers.

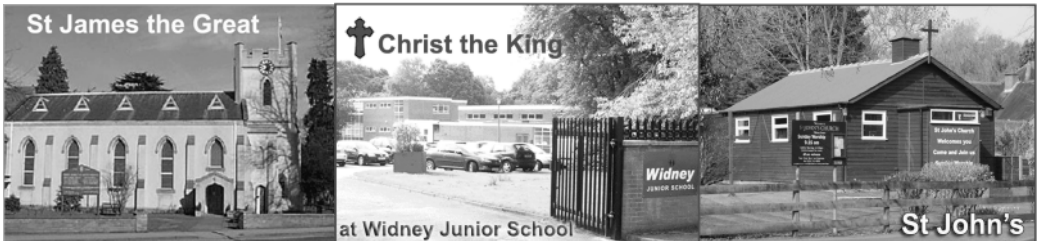
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OUR SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Date	Time	Service	Venue
Sunday 2nd Candlemas	10.30am	Parish Communion	St James Church
	3.30pm	Reflective Worship	St James Church
Thursday 6th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 9th	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Holy Communion	St John's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship	St James Church
	10.30am	Holy Communion	Christ the King Church
Thursday 13th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Saturday 15th	10am	Messy Church	St James Church
Sunday 16th	9am	Morning Worship	St John's Church
	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship	Christ the King Church
Thursday 20th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 23rd	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Holy Communion	St John's Church
	10.30am	Worship 4 Everyone	St James Church
	10.30am	Holy Communion	Christ the King Church
Thursday 27th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church

PLEASE CHECK FOR ANY CHANGES TO OUR SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES ON THE WEEKLY NOTICE SHEET, SOCIAL MEDIA OR ON OUR WEBSITE
<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk>

Copies of the sermons preached at our services can be found on our website -
<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/download-a-sermon>



THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

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THE WISE MEN (AND WOMEN) @ THE CRIB

A small group of unsuspecting volunteers led our Crib Service on Christmas Eve.

What a wonderful service it was with so many children and their families! The children's faces shining with the excitement of Christmas, and eager to join in with the carols sung and to play the many musical instruments. They brought a tear to all the adults eyes



when they stood around the manger with Mary and her real baby Jesus and sang 'Away in a Manger' so sweetly!

At the last minute, Reverend Richard lost his voice, so as official understudy I stepped in to be the Wise Man, complete with knitted beard from a previous drama production of 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' where I played one of the brothers, Naphtali. The script was disguised as a 'How to be a Wise Man' book and I think I got away with it!

Huge thanks and admiration goes to Kate Day who is an amazing playwright and director! Our dramatic interpretation of how the Wise Men (and Women) came to Bethlehem to welcome our Lord Jesus, grabbed the children's attention and held them mesmerised for the duration of the play.

Or maybe they were just trying to work out what I was wearing on my chin?!

Belinda Piasecki

THANK YOU!

Dear all,

Ruth and I wanted to say 'thank you' to all who gave us cards and gifts for Christmas.

All of the cards were read and put in our 'card tree'; the calendars are in use; most – definitely not all - of the food has been eaten; and the other gifts will be used throughout the year.

Thank you again for your kindness and generosity.

Richard and Ruth Haynes

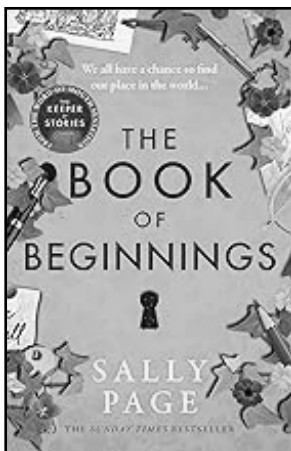
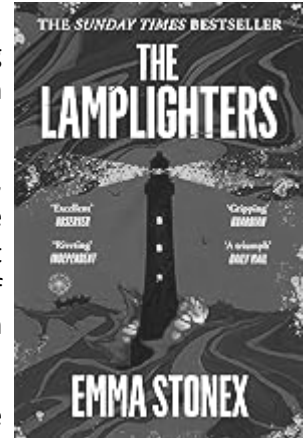
SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB

The Lamplighters by Emma Stonex

'... a whodunnit, horror novel, ghost story and gripping psychological investigation all rolled into one.' (The Guardian review, 2021)

This book created a difference of opinion within the Book Club, whilst some of us loved it and the characters and the descriptions of the sea and life in a lighthouse, others didn't take to it at all, either the characters or the narrative. Some of us liked the way the relationships between the women partners of the lighthouse keepers evolved.

It certainly made us all think about life on a lighthouse in the past prior to any automation, and how isolating this would be.



Tension seems to feature heavily in this novel, between the characters in the story and between the story and the reader. The three men who disappear from the lighthouse have lived lives dominated by unspoken tension between each other and with the sea. For more than twenty years after they have disappeared, an unspoken tension continues between the wives they have left behind. Just as the sea has mysterious depths so too do the lives of all the people in the novel. The lighthouse, the sea and the people are opaque.

The next book is **The Book of Beginnings** by **Sally Page**.

Our next meeting will be **Monday 10th February** in Church House.

Belinda Piasecki

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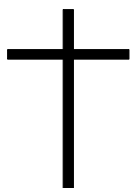
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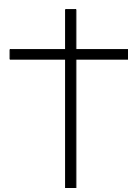


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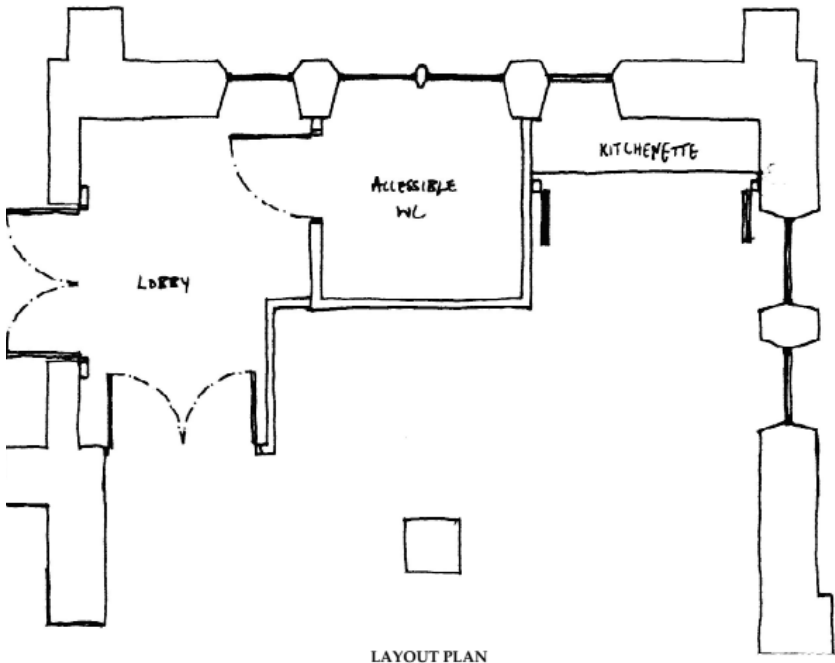
THE POD PROJECT

Sometimes things just don't go as we plan. A couple of months back we discovered that the original plans drawn up for the Pod in St James Church contained an error, and the design was not compatible with disability regulations for access to the toilet. The builders' preparations were put on hold as there had to be a new design which did meet all the regulations.

When we saw the new design, which involved dismantling the old internal lobby in the South Transept and building a new one from which there would be access to the toilet, we were both pleased and dismayed. Pleased because it was a design much improved on the original which would look neater and function better; dismayed because it meant we had to seek new permission from the Diocese which could delay the whole project for many months. The builders needed a decision almost immediately to keep to their proposed start date of 6th January.

Kate Crocker got to work and made contact with the Diocesan authorities, stressing the importance of a speedy decision. We received the necessary permission just before Christmas but unfortunately this wasn't soon enough for the builders to hold our slot and we are now waiting for a new start date which we hope will be in February. The revised plans can be seen at the back of St James Church (an outline sketch is also below). Hopefully we will see the fruits of all this soon!

Reverend Paul Day



Mothers' UNION

COFFEE MORNING & JIGSAW SALE



Saturday 1st February
from 10am in Church House



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CANDLEMAS - SUNDAY 2nd FEBRUARY

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2nd February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So, where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.



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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS



Wednesday 5th February - 2pm in Church House

The Mothers' Union Prayer

Loving Lord, we thank you for your love so freely given to us all. We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life. Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus name. Amen



The Friends of St James
Tuesday 11th February
7.30pm in Church House



Everyone is invited to a
COFFEE MORNING

on Monday 10th February 2025
from 10.30am until 12noon



at St John's Church, Tilehouse Lane, Tidbury Green, Shirley B90 1PW

LOVE IN ACTION!

'Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.'
(1 John 3:18).

The writer Gary Chapman describes how love can be expressed in 5 different 'languages': words of encouragement, quality time, gifts, acts of service and touch. Do you have a preferred language of love? As we think about St Valentine during this month, let's consider how God's love language is expressed in the word *agape*. This is exclusively found in the New Testament and is uniquely defined by Jesus: *'This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.'* (1 John 3:16). Jesus' giving of His life on the cross provides the model for how we can demonstrate God's love in our relationships with others.

It is self-giving: are we ready to put the other person first, as Jesus did when He died for us in our place. Are we generous with our time, words, money and service, whatever the cost?

It takes the initiative: are we ready to show love to those who don't deserve it or who we find hard to love? Do we have eyes of compassion to see their needs and a heart to love and serve them?

It is intentional: are we ready to get close to those in need around us, irrespective of the time we have or how we feel?

The story is told of Jesus asking a little child, *'how much do you love me?'* The child replied *'lots and lots and lots!'* Then they asked Jesus how much He loved them. Jesus stretched out His arms wide and said *'I love you this much'*, as they nailed Him to a cross.



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ST VALENTINE'S DAY - FRIDAY 14th FEBRUARY

Saint Valentine's Day, many believe, was named after one or more Christian martyrs and was established by Pope Gelasius 1 in 496 AD. Valentine of Rome was martyred about 269, and this day usually 'belongs' to him.

The first recorded association of Valentine Day with romantic love (1382) is from Geoffrey Chaucer. He wrote, 'For this was Saint Valentine's Day, when every bird cometh there to choose his mate.' This poem was in honour of the first anniversary of the engagement of King Richard II of England to Anne of Bohemia. Valentine Day is referred to by Ophelia in Hamlet (1600-1601).

*To-morrow is St Valentine's day
All in the morning betime
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine.*

The modern mention of Valentine's Day can be found in a collection of English nursery rhymes (1784):

*The rose is red, the violet's blue
The honey's sweet, and so are you.
Thou are my love and I am thine
I drew thee to my Valentine.*



A PRAYER FOR FEBRUARY 2025

Dear Lord

February can be a trying month, but there are special associations too and we thank you for the hope they bring.

In February we remember how Jesus was taken, as a baby, to the Temple. Simeon took Him in his arms and by the power of the Holy Spirit, recognised Him as the Saviour you had sent as a light, to bring revelation to the whole world. And how this world needs your light and revelation in this new year, 2025.

Lord - as we notice more light in the lengthening days of this month, as we see the promise of the Spring in the bobbing heads of the beautiful snowdrops – help us most of all to recognise Jesus as our Light and to trust in Him as our Lord and Saviour.

Thank you, Lord, for the gift of each new day. In Jesus' name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

NATIONAL NEST BOX WEEK

14th - 21st FEBRUARY

Did you take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch in January?

Where can family-minded birds raise their young these days? As our gardens and parklands become smaller and tidier, too many natural nest sites – such as holes in trees, old buildings and unkempt hedgerows – are rapidly disappearing

No wonder that our sparrows, greenfinches and swifts are in precipitous decline, and that one in four of our UK bird species are now under serious threat.

This makes it more important than ever to care for our remaining birds. By feeding, providing water and putting up nest boxes we can give them a safe space to raise their chicks.



The National Nest Box Week initiative encourages bird conservation across the UK, and it's easy to get involved, whether you're a teacher, part of a local wildlife group, or just wanting to boost the bird numbers in your own garden.

Visit: <https://www.countryfile.com/wildlife/birds/national-nest-box-week-how-to-help-birds-in-your-garden> to find out more.

GETTING READY FOR LENT 2025

Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, is on March 5th.

The Church of England's Lent theme for 2025 is *Living Hope*.

In Lent we journey with Jesus on the difficult and thorny road that leads all the way to the cross on Good Friday – and beyond, to the transformation of Easter Day.

God invites us to bring to him our own journey through everyday life. In the disappointment of daily setbacks and the pain of deeper hurts, we discover that God is present with us. And God promises a future where all things are healed and made new.

Living Hope offers us the opportunity to deepen our hope in God and be part of what God is doing to bring hope in the world.

Come and join us for a
QUINGO EVENING
 ??????

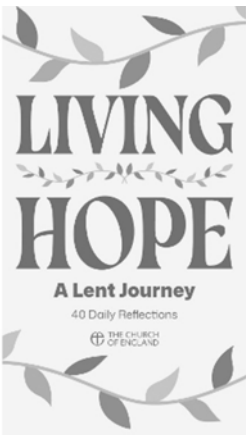
Saturday 22nd February 2025 at 7.30pm
in Church House

Tickets £7 - including supper
(bring your own drinks)

On sale at the Parish Office or from Gill Gough

LENT 2025 continued

The readings and reflections explore how we can have hope in times of frustration or uncertainty; the hope found in joining with others; the invitation to notice signs of hope around us; the courage to face reality and pursue a hopeful future; and the ways God transforms death into life at Easter.



The reflections have been written by Cathrine Fungai Ngangira and Belle Tindall – both contributors to *Wild Bright Hope: The Big Church Read Lent Book 2025* – together with Victoria Mason, Everyday Faith Editor for the Church of England.

These reflections will be available in a booklet and also in the Everyday Faith app.



LET'S BE HONEST ABOUT MONEY

How much money does it take to run Shirley Parish? Where does it come from?
What can we do about it?

A leaflet giving the answers to these questions is available in our churches, from the Parish Office or on our website -

<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk>

Information about ways to give is also on the website -

<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/giving>

Please contact the Parish Office if you would like any further information.

Thank you for all that you do!



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Saturday 8th March
at 10.30am
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A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY



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FEBRUARY WORDSEARCH

February opens with Candlemas – the naming of Jesus in the temple. Simeon and Anna praised God to see the promised Messiah, sent by a loving God to save his people.

February also celebrates the love between men and women: Valentine cards and wedding fayres abound.

'Love' as in social compassion is also remembered: Fair Trade fortnight, Holocaust Memorial Day, World Leprosy Day, Education Sunday and National Nest Box Week

Love is truly needed by everyone!



ANNA
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CHRIST
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LOVE
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ROMANCE
SIMEON
SUNDAY
TEMPLE
VALENTINE
WEDDING

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Answers are
on page 20

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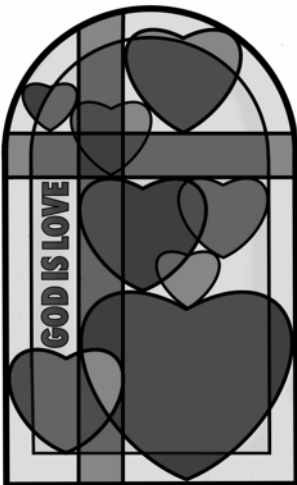
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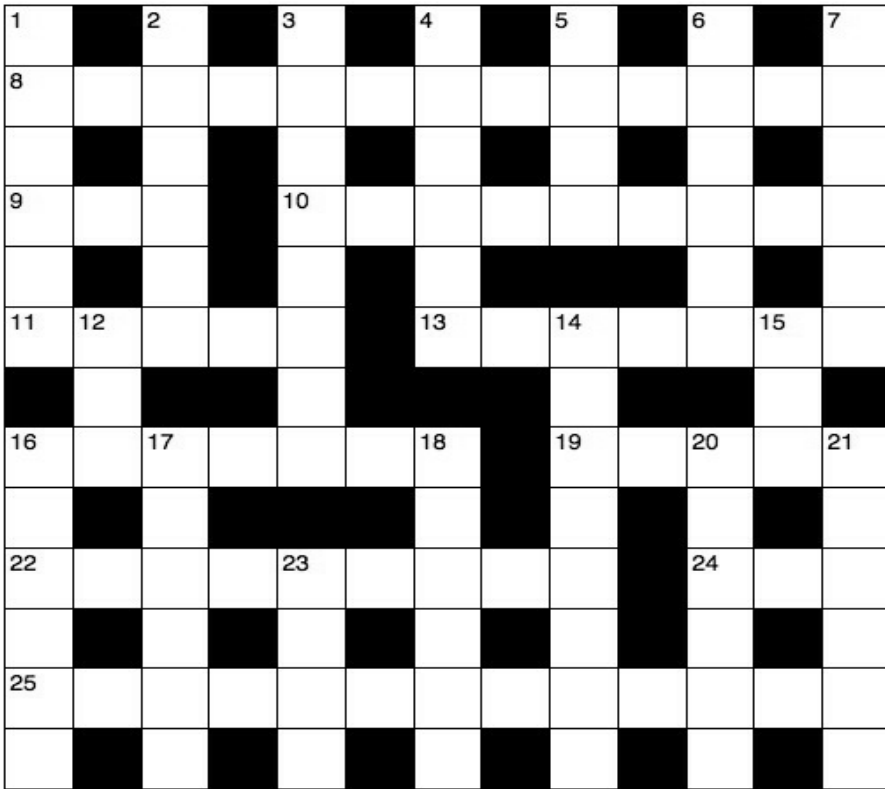
FEBRUARY CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

Across

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)
 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)
 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)
 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)
 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)
 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)
 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)
 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)
 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1)
 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

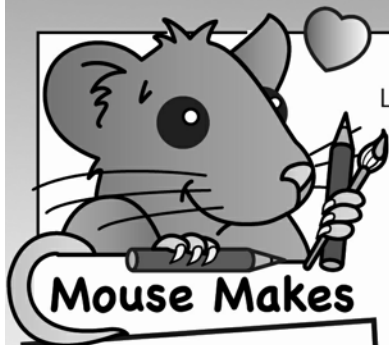
Down

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)
 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)
 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)
 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)
 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)
 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)
 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)
 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)
 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)
 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)
 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)
 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)
 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)
 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)
 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)
 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)



		1		6		8	
8			5			7	2
		9	2	4		3	
	5						
		3	7	1	5	2	
						5	
		8		7	9	5	
2	9				6		8
	3			2		7	

Answers are on page 25



Mouse Makes

"Love is

love is _____,
 it does not, _____,
 it does not _____,
 it is not _____,
 it does not _____.

others, it is not self-

it is not easily _____,
 it keeps no record of _____.

Love delights in _____.

it always _____,
 _____,
 _____.

from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The steadfast **love** of the Lord never _____;
 His _____
 never come to an end;
 they are new every _____.

Lamentations 3:20-23



I pray... you will understand... the greatness of Christ's love,

how _____
 and how _____
 and how _____
 that **love** is.
 Ephesians 3:18-19

God is **love**.

whoever _____
 in **love** _____
 in God, and God _____
 in them.

1 John 4:16

Give _____
 to the Lord, for He is _____,
 his steadfast **love**
 endures _____.

Psalms 136:1

HOW DOES
 GOD **LOVE** ME?

God sent me a saviour:

He sent His one and only
 Son into the world so
 that we might have
 eternal life through Him.

1 John 4:9

God gave me His spirit:

He has given you the
 Holy Spirit to fill our hearts
 with His **love**.

Romans 5:5

God called me His child:

See what great **love** the
 Father has for us that He
 would call us His children.

1 John 1:3

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus told us to:
LOVE the Lord your God with
 all your **heart**, all your **soul**
 and with all your **mind**.

Matthew 22:37

LOVE your neighbour the
 same as you **love** yourself.

Matthew 22:39

P T Y D E B P O P T E L T
 E R D L N M A Y R F D G R A
 A U G O D J T H O P E F U L
 C S K V U U I K T S F L T O
 E T P E R S E V E R E S H Y
 K I N D E T N B C S N L F A
 M N I Y S L T W T S D M U L
 I G R A C I O U S E S K L I
 H U M B L E S E L F L E S S

GOD • LOVE
 PATIENT • KIND
 GRACIOUS • PEACE
 JUST • TRUTHFUL
 TRUSTING • LOYAL
 HOPEFUL
 PERSEVERES
 ENDURES
 HUMBLE
 SELFLESS
 PROTECTS • DEFENDS

PUZZLE ANSWERS

3	2	1	9	6	7	4	8	5
8	4	6	5	3	1	9	7	2
5	7	9	2	4	8	3	1	6
7	5	4	6	9	2	8	3	1
6	8	3	7	1	5	2	9	4
9	1	2	4	8	3	6	5	7
4	6	8	1	7	9	5	2	3
2	9	7	3	5	6	1	4	8
1	3	5	8	2	4	7	6	9

O	H	I	E	O	O	A						
C	R	O	S	S	E	X	A	M	I	N	E	D
E	P		L	H	A	S						D
A	S	H		A	P	O	C	R	Y	P	H	A
N	N	M		R						E		L
S	C	I	F	I		T	Y	P	I	C	A	L
	B		S			L				W		
V	I	S	I	T	E	D		O	F	F	E	R
A	T					A	T			U		E
N	O	A	C	C	O	U	N	T		R	A	C
I	R		U	B		I				R		E
S	O	V	E	R	E	I	G	N	L	O	R	D
H		E		E		T		G		W		E



Join us for
our next
events

care UK 

Blossomfield Grange care home, Solihull

Dementia café

Monday 3rd February , 10:30am - 12 noon

Aimed at those living with dementia and their loved ones, you'll have the opportunity to meet other people, share experiences, take part in our fun activities, and get advice and support.

Friendship café

Last Monday of every month, 11am - 12 noon

Join us for our monthly friendship café where you can meet like-minded people in the community for a chat, over a complimentary hot drink and freshly baked treats, prepared by our talented Head Chef.

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PARISH REGISTERS - DECEMBER 2024

Baptism

1st Lee Mann



Funerals

6th Janet Wilson

12th Mavis Wiggins
Ann Sylvia Hustwayte

20th Stephen Brigden

PRAY WITH US



Give to us your people, living God,
A renewed faith and a bold vision
that we may proclaim
the Good News of your Son
with faith that your kingdom will come,
with hope for our community
and with love for Him
who died and rose again
to save us, Jesus Christ our Risen Lord
Amen



God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,
and in service to our local community.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen

SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE *continued*

READERS

Kate Day

email: kate_day@me.com

Tel: 0121 537 9672

Gill Gough

email: g.gough@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 0121 603 2636

Sarah Penfold

email: sarahpenfold@blueyonder.co.uk

Tel: 0121 681 1525

Denise Smith

email: deesmith1181@hotmail.com

Tel: 07815 193892

CHURCH WARDENS

Parish WardensLinda Pitt Tel: 0121 744 6777
email: lindaalisonpitt@gmail.comGill Hanton Tel: 0121 733 2347
email: gill.hanton@btinternet.com**Deputy Wardens - St James the Great Church**Kate Crocker John Richards
Tel: 07562 664163 Tel: 07941 634971**Deputy Warden - Christ the King Church**Denise Smith
Tel: 07815 193892**Deputy Warden - St John the Divine Church**Linda Alford
Tel: 0121 430 4785**SAFEGUARDING**Sue Harries
Tel: 07977 012753 or 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)

***As you all know we are a parish that takes safeguarding very seriously.
Everyone who comes to our churches deserves to feel included and
very importantly, safe.***

***If anything is concerning you, please talk to Sue Harries, Safeguarding Co-ordinator,
or Paul Day, Vicar.***

We must all look after one another.



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Nurture, Learn, Achieve

Principal - Mrs H Lynch

For details about the school contact the PA to the Principal - Mrs G Giles

Tudor Grange Primary Academy St James, Halifax Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2BT

Phone: 0121 744 7897 office@stjames.tgacademy.org.uk www.stjames.tgacademy.org.uk

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