



Remembering in the Silence

The national two-minute silence from the Remembrance Sunday ceremony at the Cenotaph in London was first broadcast in 1928. Almost a century later, we carry on the tradition. We too join in the silence. Individually and respectfully, we cease our activity, we pause our conversation, we quieten our hearts and we still our souls - all to remember and acknowledge the sacrifices made by countless people in past conflicts. This year, in the midst of the pandemic, the ceremony at the Cenotaph will be much smaller in scale. Many Remembrance ceremonies at local cenotaphs across the country (including here in Runcorn) are cancelled. But we will still feel the need to individually fall silent for two minutes on that day.

At funerals, a time to be silent offers us the opportunity to connect and commune with God as we remember and miss the person we mourn. We're able to recall memories or regrets of the past; we're allowed to linger in the utter sense of loss and overwhelming pain of the present and sometimes, on occasion, we can even dare to hope and ponder on the possibilities of the future.

In those silent times, we're invited to quietly, privately and inwardly express to God the jumble of memories, pains and emotions that we simply cannot put into words. In those silent times, we're reminded and comforted that the Holy Spirit *"helps us in our weakness"* and intercedes on our behalf *"with sighs too deep for words"* (Romans 8.26). As one writer comments...

"It isn't that the Holy Spirit gives us the words to say. No, it's that the Spirit steps in for us with wordless, unspeakable sighing."

And if tears come, they are to be welcomed and allowed to flow. When we weep at the loss of loved ones, we must remember and be comforted that God weeps with us. There's an expression often used at times like these... *"when tears come, God's not usually far away."*

But in that time of falling silent, of connecting and communing with God, we often overlook one important point.... it's a two-way process! As we commune with God, He communes with us in ways that are equally beyond words. All we have to do is be still, be silent and to listen. Yet in the depths of expressing our pain, our worries and our sadness we forget or feel unable to simply listen. So, let me share with you a trivial but useful fact that I find helpful. If you're a crossword fanatic, you'll already know that LISTEN is an anagram of SILENT.

So whenever and however you choose to fall SILENT in this season of remembering, remember to LISTEN. What is God conveying to you in your heart? How is the Holy Spirit touching your soul?

And if tears come, welcome them and let them flow.

With every blessing, Karen

NOVEMBER CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday 1st November (All Saints Day)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Morning Celebration



Wednesday 4th November

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 8th November (Remembrance Sunday)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday 11th November

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 15th November (23rd Sunday after Trinity)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion
3.00pm Service of Remembrance and Hope

Wednesday 18th November

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 22nd November (Christ the King)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion



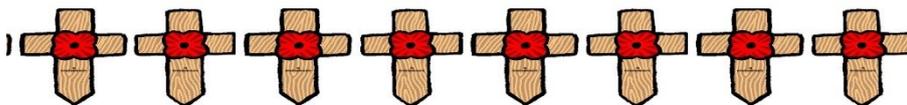
Wednesday 25th November

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 29th November (1st Sunday of Advent)

8.30am Holy Communion
10.00am Holy Communion

Please note any of these services may be cancelled at the last moment due to Coronavirus



War and Peace

War is not a new thing
It's been here from the start,
When Cain slew brother Abel
And their lives were torn apart.

Brother still fights brother
And nations go to war,
It seems these things will never end
Perhaps we need to ask 'what for?'

Man has chosen his own path
Where might and power tell,
But God desires a better way
Where harmony and peace can dwell.

And so a time will come at last
When all man's rule will cease,
Emmanuel will come to reign,
Our Lord and Saviour, Prince of Peace.

By Megan Carter



BIBLE READINGS FOR

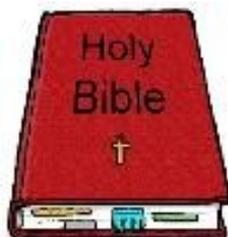
NOVEMBER

1st November

1 John 3: 1-3
Matthew 5: 1-12

8th November

1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
Matthew 25: 1-13



29th November

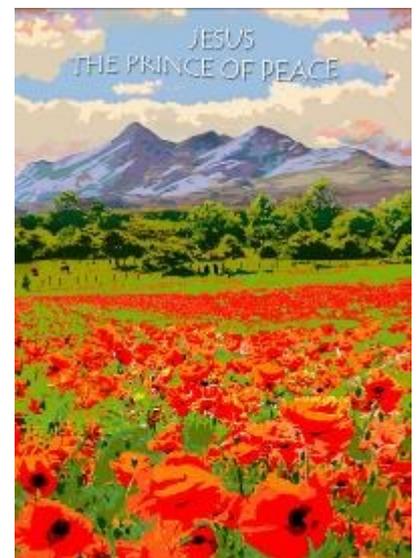
1 Corinthians 1: 3-9
Mark 13: 24-end

15th November

1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11
Matthew 25: 14-30

22nd November

Ephesians 1: 15-23
Matthew 25: 31-46



CHURCH SERVICES FOR DECEMBER

Wednesday 2nd December

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 6th December (2nd Sunday of Advent)

8.30am Holy Communion

10.00am Morning Celebration

Wednesday 9th December

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 13th December (3rd Sunday of Advent)

10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday 16th December

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 20th December (4th Sunday of Advent)

8.30am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

4.00pm **9 Lessons and Carols**

Thursday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

11.30pm Holy Communion

Friday 25th December (Christmas Day)

8.45am Holy Communion

10.00am Holy Communion

Sunday 27th December (1st Sunday of Christmas)

8.30am **NO SERVICES**

10.00am **NO SERVICES**

Wednesday 30th December

10.00am **NO SERVICE**

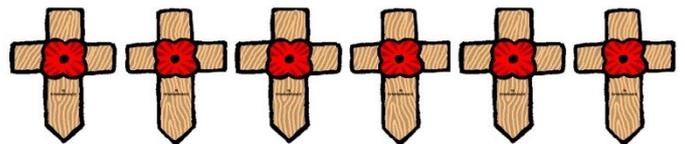
Please note any of these services may be cancelled at the last moment due to Coronavirus

Nurture your friendships

Lockdown has damaged our social life, so badly that many of our friendships may not be the same for up to a year after lockdown. And although Zoom is 'extremely good' at slowing down the rate of a friendship's decay, 'nothing on earth is going to stop a relationship quietly sliding away, if you don't once in a while meet up physically.' So warns an Oxford University academic, Robin Dunbar, who is an evolutionary psychology professor. He was talking to BBC Radio 4's *Today*.

How is your Christmas shopping going?

It seems that many of us started as early as September this year, aiming to spread our costs during the financial stress of the pandemic. As for amounts we intend to spend? According to research carried out by American Express, more than 25 per cent of us will spend less than we did last year, 60 per cent of us will spend the same as last year, 12 per cent of us will spend more than last year, and three per cent of us have not thought about it. Meanwhile, other research from MoneySuperMarket predicts that our overall average Yuletide spending will be down from £582 last year to £512 this year.



17th November Gregory of Tours (539 – 94) - charity and compassion in dangerous times

Danger of torture, assassination, lootings, floods, famines and epidemics... life in France in the 6th century was as turbulent and violent as many of the world's hot spots are today. In the midst of all this Gregory was born into a senatorial family who lived in the Auvergne. He grew up seeing how the Church responded to all this social chaos at first hand: his family numbered several bishops, as well as saints (the two are not necessarily the same thing!). In due course Gregory decided to devote his life also to the Church, and so was ordained deacon in 563 and elected bishop of Tours in 573. Gregory should be the patron saint of anyone who climbs to a powerful and privileged position – and then uses it in order to do great good. As a Bishop of Merovingian Gaul, he became an expounder and defender of the Christian faith and of public morality. He practised charity and compassion on a large scale. He repaired churches, including the great Tours cathedral, destroyed by fire, and built new ones. He restored the tombs of martyrs and saints. He visited monasteries and nunneries, and also founded schools. In addition to all this, Gregory was a prodigious author of books. His ten volume History of the Franks is his most famous work, but he wrote on saints as well. He had an advantage on other medieval historians such as Bede in that he had first-hand experience of the court-life of his time. Courts were treacherous places, and Gregory had to deal with four civil rulers of Tours during his 21 years as bishop. He must have earned their respect: he was sent on diplomatic missions to other Frankish kings. Gregory made the most of every opportunity he had to bring Christian standards of living into those dark days in France. He was greatly loved, and long remembered.

Psalm 122 and Advent

'I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord. Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem.' (Psalm 122:1,2). These words from Psalm 122 inspired Hubert Parry's great Coronation Anthem 'I was Glad.' As a Song of Ascent (Psalms 120-134), it was used by pilgrims going to the great festivals in Jerusalem. For the Jews this represented 'coming home' to worship at the Temple, the place of God's presence.

Our Worship of God:

As God's people today, we are also called to worship in praise and thanksgiving: 'That is where the tribes go up – to praise the name of the Lord' (4). Of course, currently our coming together in church to sing our praise to God is greatly restricted. We are a *scattered* rather than a *gathered* community. However, as individuals, we can still offer God the worship of our lives using the resource of psalms like this one.

Our prayer to God:

The psalm encourages the pilgrims to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure.' (6). The peace referred to here is more than simply an absence of conflict. Peace speak of wholeness of life in every aspect. This must be our prayer as we continue to struggle with the effects of the pandemic and as we seek the prosperity of the wider community: 'I will seek your prosperity' (9).

This month sees the beginning of Advent, the season when we affirm the hope of Jesus' return. As we pray for peace, we know that it is fulfilled in the coming of God's kingdom in Jesus. Despite living with so much uncertainty, we have the assurance of God's future purposes for our lives, churches and the world.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

On November 28th one of our congregation hits a milestone, it is her 80th Birthday.

So happy birthday Barbara Done



Does marriage make you happy?

It may. But then again, it may not. Research spanning 40 years has found that being married does not necessarily make people significantly happier than if they were divorced or single. Psychologists at Michigan State University found that, while married people showed a slight increase in happiness, the difference was still less than one percentage point. The findings are in contrast to a previous study by the Office for National Statistics, which found that being married or in a civil partnership was the third most important factor in happiness, behind only health and employment. One researcher observed that, if someone longed for a lifelong partner to build a happy life together, but that individual was not completely happy to begin with, then getting married would be unlikely to cause a dramatic change in the long term.

The Soldier's Prayer

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.
I asked for health, that I might do greater things,
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.
I got nothing that I asked for –
But everything that I had hoped for,
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.
I am among all men most richly blessed.

Soldier in American Civil War

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

November Birthdays



Congratulations to Kirsty Lowe who celebrates her birthday on **November 7th**, and to Timothy Aylett who celebrates his birthday on **November 10th**, to David

Walker who celebrates his birthday on **November 24th**, and to Lynne Corker who celebrates her birthday on **November 25th**, and to Sandra Fisher who celebrates her birthday on **28th November** and to Norah Gamon who celebrates her birthday on **30th November**.

Churches report rising food bank demand as a result of pandemic

Nearly 100,000 households sought food aid from the Trussell Trust's network of food banks for the first time earlier this year, as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Demand is surging further this autumn, as a result of the economic fallout from the virus. The research comes after food banks run or supported by Church of England churches reported rocketing demand during lockdown with some opening food banks for the first time while some opened new food banks after lockdown.

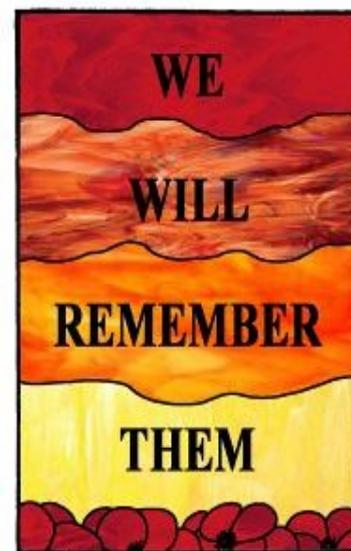
Just two examples:

Hackney Church in East London was distributing parcels with enough food for 1,000 meals a week at start of lockdown. This figure rose to 8,000 and 9,000 meals a week in June, after the church opened a second food bank. It has since served 120,000 meals.

In Co. Durham, the Shildon Alive food bank, founded by St John's Church, has seen demand surge by 500 percent during lockdown.

St Michael and All Angels APCM

Normally the church's APCM takes place in April, but with the Coronavirus, this year it was postponed till October 18th. This year's meeting was different to how we normally proceed, it was part of the morning service. The first part of the meeting was the Annual Vestry Meeting this is where we vote in the churchwardens. There were two nominations, Colin Keam and Rosemary Lunt and they were elected for another year. The accounts for the Church and Maintenance Appeal Committee were presented to the meeting for 2019 and were accepted. There were various other reports presented to the meeting reporting on the events from 2019. This was followed by the election of PCC members. There were 4 nominations, one for 2 years Bryn Knott and three for 3 years Brian Lunt, Robert Withington and David Crowther and all were elected to the PCC. St Michael's have 2 Assistant Wardens and 2 people were proposed and seconded they were David Crowther and Vincent Whitehead and elected. The meeting finished with our vicar, Karen giving her report and vision for St Michael's. She said that she is still learning as she has only been in the job since June and looks forward to working with the churchwardens and the congregation.



Poppy Appeal 2020

Look out for the Poppy Appeal again this year, but not so much via street collections. Instead, the Royal British Legion will focus on contactless donations, as a safer way forward during the pandemic. One such method will be 'point of sale donations'. This means that when you shop at your supermarket and reach the till or online, you may be invited to round up your total to the nearest pound to help the Poppy Appeal. A spokesman for the Royal British Legion said: "The Poppy Appeal 2020 is very much still going ahead", but that "the safety and wellbeing of our volunteers, staff and members is paramount. This means that collectors who fall into the vulnerable category have been advised "not to take part in activity on behalf of the Poppy Appeal that would expose them to any additional risks while coronavirus is still present." And yet the need is still huge: "Members of the Armed Forces Community are suffering significant hardship as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak and we at the Royal British Legion will do everything we possibly can to support them."

Operation Christmas Child

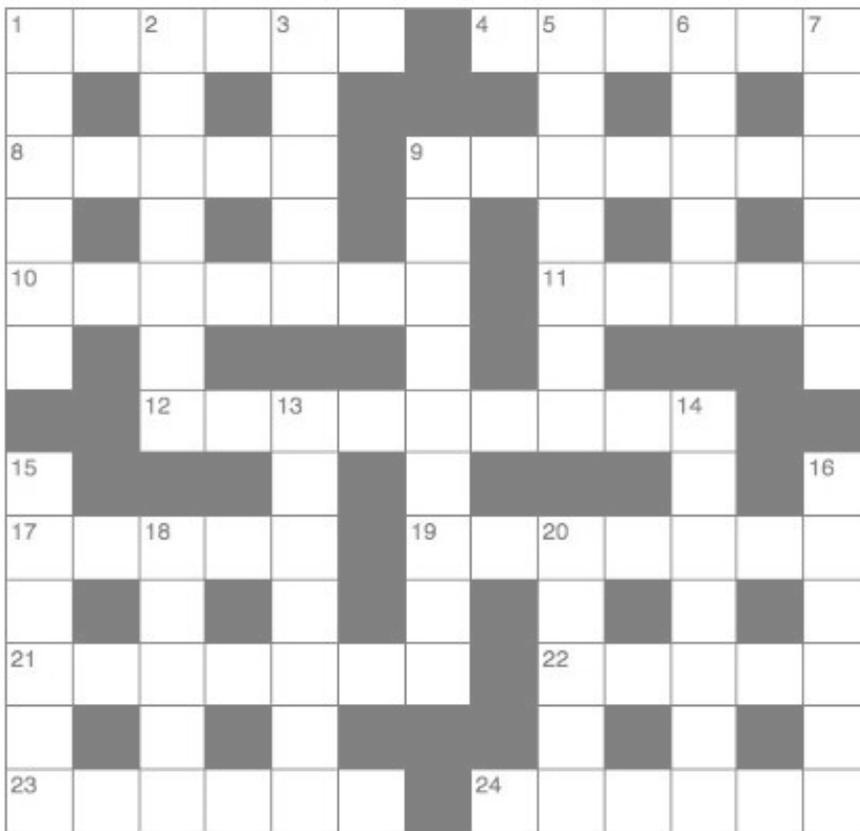
This year many churches are not taking part in Operation Christmas Child, but St Michael's has decided to take part. The boxes are now in church, if you want to take part. If you don't want to personally fill a box, you can donate the items into a box that will be at the back of church and we will fill it on your behalf.



Or if you want you can go to their website www.samaritans-purse.org.uk. When you are on the website, click on Shoebox online and you can donate £20 (which includes the £5 project costs) and they will pack the shoe box for you, as it says 'PACK A SHOEBOX ONLINE'. If you do a box this way please let Wendy Sefton know so she can add it to our total boxes.

Can you please return your boxes by Sunday 8th November. They will be collected after the service on Wednesday 11th November

Wendy Sefton



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE

See how you get on with this crossword. There is no prize, but whoever gets it back to the Editor by November 22nd will be entered on a Roll of Honour in the next edition of *Growing Together*.

Across

- 1 'The Lord Jesus... took bread, and when He had given — , he broke it' (1 Corinthians 11:24) (6)
- 4 'He has taken me to the banquet hall, and His — over me is love' (Song of Songs 2:4)(6)
- 8 Surrey town that hosts the National Christian Resources Exhibition (5)
- 9 Also known as Abednego (Daniel 1:7) (7)
- 10 Liken (Isaiah 40:18) (7)
- 11 A son of Etam, descendant of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:3) (5)
- 12 A part of the temple where the blood of a young bull was to be smeared (Ezekiel 45:19) (9)
- 17 'They make many promises, take false — and make agreements' (Hosea 10:4) (5)
- 19 Roman province to which Paul returned after evangelizing it on his first missionary journey (Acts 16:6) (7)
- 21 Material used to make baby Moses' basket (Exodus 2:3) (7)
- 22 'And feeble as — , in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail' (5)
- 23 'The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep — to his voice' (John 10:3) (6)
- 24 Stalk carrying the sponge of wine vinegar given to Christ on the cross (John 19:29) (6)

Down

- 1 Elijah dug one round the altar he built on Mount Carmel and filled it with water (1 Kings 18:32) (6)
- 2 'I am not — of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes' (Romans 1:16) (7)
- 3 Buddhist term relating to belief in reincarnation (5)
- 5 Damascus disciple who, at God's command, restored the sight of the blinded Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:12) (7)
- 6 and 16 Horses: their sound (Jeremiah 50:11) (5) and their gait (Joel 2:4) (6)
- 7 A three (anag.) (6)
- 9 Athenian council addressed memorably by Paul (Acts 17:22) (9)
- 13 Abide by (Galatians 3:5) (7)
- 14 Persian princes (Daniel 3:2) (7)
- 15 Force (Galatians 6:12) (6)
- 16 See 6 Down (6)
- 18 Paste (anag.) (5)
- 20 How the cedars of Lebanon are described (Isaiah 2:13) (5)

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October Crossword answer

ROLL OF HONOUR

Two people got the crossword answer to me and they were Stan & Wendy Sefton & Jim & Shelagh Goffin

Helping people cope with loss

Bereavement at any time is hard. Bereavement during a period of isolation with restricted movement and limited contact with family and friends is so much harder. During the global coronavirus pandemic many thousands in the UK have faced the loss of someone they know. Loss and HOPE was launched just before the Covid-19 crisis to enable the Church to respond effectively with support for those who are grieving. This timely coalition between HOPE Together, Care for the Family, the Church of England and At A Loss, is developing support for the increased numbers of people who are bereaved at this time. The church-facing website lossandhope.org is gathering ideas from Christians across the country to help churches support the bereaved. Loss and HOPE is also connecting Christians who are experts in supporting people who are bereaved, to run the Bereavement Journey course. This tried and tested six-session course uses films and discussion, which help to guide people through the most common aspects of grief. It is for anyone who has been bereaved at any time, and it offers an optional session with the Christian perspective. To find out more about the course visit www.thebereavementjourney.org or contact projectleader@lossandhope.org for more information.

Fire in church

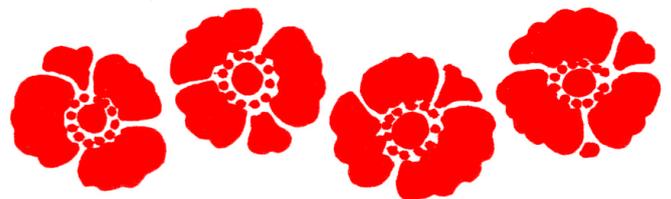
The town's fire prevention officer was conducting a health and safety course at the local church. The officer said to the minister: "Now imagine this: it is a Sunday morning and you have a number of people, spread socially distanced, throughout your church building. Some are in the choir stalls, some are in the kitchen, and some are in the nave. Suddenly, a big fire breaks out. What are the first steps you would take?" The minister thought carefully for a moment. "Really big ones," he said.

The congregation

A minister was considering a move to a busy town-centre church, and wanted to know what the congregation was like, and especially the church council. So, he rang the minister who had just retired from that church. The retiring minister hesitated a moment and then replied: "Some of them are wise; some are otherwise."

Spare a thought for your furry friend

Many dogs have struggled to adjust to the changes that Covid-19 has brought to their owners this year, according to the Dogs Trust. For one thing, coronavirus has meant greatly reduced walkies for many dogs, more people around the house all day, less quiet for rest, and little or no contact with other dogs. No wonder that the Dogs Trust has reported that 82 per cent of owners have reported an increase in barking or whining.



The Church is the only society in the world that never loses any of its members, even by death.

– John Blanchard

There is little good in filling churches with people who go out exactly the same as they came in; the call of the Church is not to fill churches but to fill heaven. - Fr Andrew SDC

When life goes wrong for us

Where is God when we are hurting? When we are sick or a loved one is sick, why doesn't God always answer our prayer for healing? If He has not answered us, how do we know that He is even there at all? The words of Alister McGrath* are helpful;

"Experience cannot be allowed to have the final word... the theology of the Cross draws our attention to the sheer unreliability of experience as a guide to the presence and activity of God. God is active and present in His world, quite independently of whether we experience Him as being so. Experience declared that God was absent from Calvary, only to have its verdict humiliatingly overturned on the third day. "So – where does that leave us? As with the Cross, it may be that our personal darkest hour may be also God's finest moment for us. It may be there that He does His greatest work in and for us, albeit unseen by us at the time. Thus, instead of letting circumstances consume us, we are to be consumed with God. To that end, we should pray without ceasing, trust in His sovereignty, and find comfort in His love and hope."

* *Mystery of the Cross* (Zondervan, 1990)



November
2020



"Given the state of our heating system, you'd think the vicar would be all for it!"

ARTICLES

News or articles for the next edition of *Growing Together* should be given to Colin Keam by November 22nd. I am looking for articles for the newsletter like people's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversaries, praying for people who are sick or in hospital or any interesting or funny anecdotes.

THANK YOU

INFORMATION

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Mobile: 07419820864

e-mail: revkarenbrady@gmail.com

Churchwardens

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Rosemary Lunt 01928 569863

e-mail: warden@runcornstmichaels.org.uk

If you want to book a wedding, baptism or funeral please phone this number

07722470940

and ask for Robbie



Please Pray



Please remember the following people in your prayers throughout this month.

Stanley Sefton

José Colley

Liz Adams

Graham & Nicola Aylett

Norah Gamon

Robbie Littler

If you would like us to pray for someone close to you please let the Vicar know. Or if you would like the Pastoral Care Team to visit someone at home don't hesitate to let them know.

....and the recently bereaved, especially any families known to you

John Patten

Maureen Holden

Eunice Davies

All Saints Parish Church Runcorn

Bell Restoration Appeal

The bellringers of Runcorn are appealing for your help in the full restoration of the eight 1851-cast bells.

The overhaul will cost around **£75,000**.

The ringers have already raised (and spent!) nearly £2000 on new pulleys, but this will only help in the short term. The bells will fall silent in just a few years if they are not rehung by specialists, so your support would be much appreciated.

Contact Us

If you would like more information or to make a donation, please contact either:

Rich Westman (Ringing Master):
27 Dale Street, Runcorn, WA7 5PF
rich.westman@gmail.com,

Bill Allman (Tower Captain)
10 Curzon Street, Runcorn, WA7 4PG



(Please make cheques payable to Runcorn Parish Bell Ringers)

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at www.facebook.com/runcornrestoration