



November
2025



REDDITCH BAPTIST CHURCH – NOVEMBER 2025

I'm currently re-reading Harry Potter, and seeing (again) just how well-written and well planned they are (even if the later books are a tad too long) – and how true to the real world they are (apart from the magic, obviously). They portray human emotions and foibles in a very realistic way, including the weaknesses of the main characters – and the divisions they face among themselves.

Yes: unlike the Narnia Chronicles where things are more black-and-white – the good guys are basically good and the bad guys bad – the Harry Potter saga illustrates in an almost painful way just how easy it is for the good guys to fall out and fight each other, when they should stand firm and be united against the enemy.

Sometimes it's personality clashes, sometimes simple misunderstandings; sometimes it's just hormones or bad timing; but sometimes it's more than that: inability to believe bad news, refusal to forgive, failure to see past one's own experience and the fact that even the good guys can be arrogant and badly behaved – all conspire to make the good guys unable to work together against the Dark Lord.

Now, this is only fiction; but one purpose of good literature is to help us understand the world around us, and sadly the same things keep happening in church: the followers of Jesus are seriously divided and fighting each other – to the point of refusing to recognise each other as fellow believers.

There are Christians who sincerely believe that borders should be open and people be allowed to live where they want; there are Christians who sincerely believe that God created the nations and appointed them territories where they are meant to live permanently.

There are Christians who sincerely believe that we should use taxes to feed the hungry; there are Christians who sincerely believe that all charity should be voluntary and the state not involved at all.

There are Christians who sincerely believe that we should impose our Christian ethics on the secular world around us, aiming for a Christianised nation; there are Christians who sincerely believe that the church should stay away from politics and focus on converting individuals.

But however much we disagree on such matters, we mustn't divide to the point of refusing to work together – we have to agree to stand against our common enemy.

In another fantasy classic, the Lord of the Rings, J R R Tolkien (who was a Christian) makes a statement that is just as true about church as about the fellowship of the Ring:

Indeed in nothing is the power of the Dark Lord more clearly shown than in the estrangement that divides all those who still oppose him.

Sad but true... and our divisions, our suspicions, our refusal to listen to each other – it all just plays into the hands of our enemy.

And I don't really have an answer, other than the perennial plea: seek the Lord's wisdom in the Bible, in prayer and in open conversation with each other. You may be absolutely baffled by some of the positions outlined a few lines earlier; rest assured that somebody else will be equally baffled by yours! This doesn't mean that you have to be mortal enemies, or that only one of you is a true disciple of Jesus – it just means that you interpret the world and the Bible differently.

3 We may not find true unity before Jesus returns; but we can at least try not to accuse each other of being apostates and false disciples just because we see the world from different angles!

David

November		
Monday 3 rd	8.00pm	Prayer Course
Tuesday 4 th	10.15 am	Little Fishes
Wednesday 5 th	8.00pm	Zoom Prayer Meeting. Meeting ID:619 679 7453 Passcode: Jesus
Thursday 6 th	11am– 2pm	Harm Reduction with Shower Box. Please don't park!
Thursday 6 th	2.30pm	Prayer Course
Sunday 9 th	10.55am	Worship Service – Remembrance Sunday so we start early for the 2 minute silence
		LOOKING AHEAD
Saturday 15 th	7.30pm	The Big Quiz – come along for a fun fund-raising evening!
Sunday 30 th	5.00pm	CTiR AGM (here)
Sunday 30 th	6.00pm	CTiR Advent Service (here)
December		CHRISTMAS PROGRAMME
Friday 5 th	8.00pm	HARK! A Nativity Story
Saturday 6 th	3.00pm	“ “ “
Saturday 13 th	5.30pm	Carol Café – fun, interactive, Christmassy!
Sunday 14 th	11.00am	“Be a Star”! Pop up nativity – come and participate in the Christmas story!
Sunday 21 st	6.30pm	Carols by Candlelight
Thursday 25 th	10.30am	Christmas Celebration

HEBA (Heart of England Baptist Association) have organised a Women's Conference in the spring and would like as many women to attend as possible, so they are giving plenty of notice. Ladies can register here: <https://heba-womens-conference-2026.eventbrite.co.uk/>

They also have a private HEBA Women's Facebook Group. Which you can join here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/hebawomen>

SPEAKER

ANNE LE TISSIER



Anne offers life-application bible teaching through books, bible-study notes, articles, blogs, and by speaking at Christian conferences, Sunday services, Church Away Weekends, and more. She has written seven books, her latest being *Dwell*, and writes regularly for *Our Daily Bread* among other publications.

Although she was born and brought up in Guernsey, Anne now lives in Worcestershire with her husband, travelling to Wales, when possible, to spend time with her daughter and grandsons. To relax, she enjoys reading, growing her own veg, hill walking, chatting to her chickens, and preparing special meals to relax over with friends.

You can find out more about Anne and her books at www.annele Tissier.com



St Andrew and football – by Canon Paul Hardingham

‘Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I don't like that attitude. I can assure them it is much more serious than that’ (Bill Shankley). When you replace the word ‘football’ with ‘mission’, this quote still has something to say! The apostle Andrew (we remember him on 30th November) demonstrates what the mission of the Church is all about (cf John 1:35-42). It's not unlike following your favourite football team!

When we support a football team, we make sure that we know all about them! When Andrew and his friend heard about Jesus, they wanted to find out more: *‘Look, the Lamb of God.’* (John the Baptist, v35). The first stage of mission is finding out more about Jesus, the One who enables us to be friends of God through His death and resurrection.

Secondly, when supporting a football team, we will spend time watching their games. Andrew asked, ‘where are you staying?’ and Jesus replied, ‘Come and you will see’ (v39). Andrew spent the rest of the day talking and listening to Jesus. As a result of this time, he had something to share. How much time do we spend with Jesus, reading His word and praying?

When our team wins, we want to share the good news! After meeting Jesus, Andrew's first action was to tell his brother Peter: ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ)’ (v41). Are we willing to tell others about Him too? Sharing with family and close friends can sometimes be harder than talking with strangers. However, we don't need to follow a football team to engage in mission. It's all about being excited to share Jesus with those we meet day by day.

‘Mission is seeing what God is doing and joining in’ (Rowan Williams).



FOOTPRINTS

One night a man dreamed he was walking along the beach with the Lord.

As scenes of his life flashed before him, he noticed that there were two sets of footprints in the sand. He also noticed at his saddest, lowest times there was but one set of footprints. This bothered the man, he asked the LORD, “did you not promise that if I gave my heart to you that you’d be with me all the way? Then why is there but one set of footprints during my most troublesome times?”

The LORD replied, “my precious child, I love you and would never forsake you. During those times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then I carried you.”

Author unknown

Gaza needs help. Tearfund is working there. Here are the details...

Tearfund's Middle East Humanitarian Appeal

The conflict in Gaza has caused devastating humanitarian need. Over 60,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and over 146,000 have been injured.

There has been famine in Gaza. Almost one in five children are acutely malnourished, and malnutrition levels among children under five have quadrupled in two months.

Homes have been reduced to rubble by airstrikes. Classrooms and hospitals are a dusty wreckage. More than 417 humanitarian workers have been killed.

In Gaza, more than 1.9 million people have been forced to flee their homes, and many have been displaced repeatedly.

Tearfund is currently working with local churches and partners across the Middle East. In Gaza, Tearfund's partners IHP and Anera can provide life-saving medicine and desperately needed supplies.

In the West Bank, Tearfund is providing emergency funding to local hospitals and schools, and is also distributing food and essential supplies to those affected by the violence.

In Lebanon, it is working through local churches to provide shelter and assistance to people forced from their homes by the fighting.

If you would like to support this work, please go to:
<https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/middle-east-emergency-appeal>.



A grace for Sunday lunch

God of goodness, who blessed our food,
Keep us now in pleasant mood.
Bless the cook, and all who serve us.
From indigestion, Lord, preserve us. Amen

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

If any of our readers enjoy holidays in Wales, this may be of interest...

Mid Wales church offers unique autumn stay for walkers

Walkers looking for a new way to explore the Welsh countryside this autumn can now book overnight stays at St Gwrhai's Church in Penstrowed, Powys — one of only two “champing” sites in Wales.

Champing, a blend of ‘church’ and ‘camping’, offers exclusive overnight access to historic churches no longer used for regular services. St Gwrhai's, built in the 1860s on a site with Christian heritage dating back to the 6th century, sits beside the River Severn and provides access to walking routes across Mid Wales.

The church accommodates up to four guests and includes a fully equipped kitchen in the adjacent hall, an indoor toilet, and secure space for bikes. Dogs are welcome. Most guests stay for one or two nights, with solo travellers, small groups, and families all booking during the first season.

Located an hour from both Aberystwyth and Shrewsbury, the site is well placed for exploring the Cambrian Mountains, which lie 20 minutes away and include nine Dark Sky Discovery sites. The Severn Way — a 215-mile walking route to Bristol — begins nearby, and guided walking groups operate in the area.

The initiative is run by the Bro Arwystli Ministry Area. Guests have exclusive use of the church during their stay. For more info: champing.co.uk.

November seems to be a time of year for sombre reflection on life, and of our need for God's protection, both during life, and at its end...

The Compassing of God

The compassing of God and of His right hand
Round my form and frame, protecting may it stand;
High King's compassing and grace of Trinity
Round me abiding ever eternally,
Round me abiding ever eternally.

The Three's compassing my shield in my life-means,
The Three's compassing my shield through this day's scenes,
The Three's compassing my shield this night throughout,
From hate, from harm, from act, from evil about,
From hate, from harm, from act, from evil about.

An ancient Celtic prayer

For how many minutes can you concentrate?

Most of us can watch television for only about 15 minutes, or read a book for about 14 minutes, before we lose our concentration. Most of us blame our social media notifications as the reason.

A recent survey by Perspectus Global for Lingo by Abbott, found that Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and message alerts were named as the main culprits.

Overall, it seems we can focus for only 11 minutes on a virtual work call, or 13 minutes in a face-to-face meeting, or 12 minutes writing a work email.

We even seem to lose concentration at family gatherings, after only 14 minutes. Overall, four in five of us say that we get distracted easily, and that we lose our focus around eight times each day.

What about you? Why not take up the challenge, and 'time' your losses of concentration for a day?

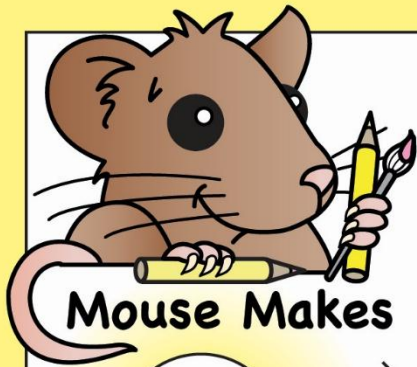
Leaf some green stuff in the garden (!)

The clocks have gone back, and we are putting our gardens to sleep for the winter. But this autumn, when you tidy up, do not tidy away too much. Many insects and wild creatures will be relying on some ground cover or hideaway to call 'home' for the winter. Several piles of twigs or pruning, left around your garden in discreet places, will provide a great winter 'snugs' for toads, grass snakes and other small garden inhabitants. 'Spent' seed heads provide cover and food for birds over the winter. Above all, before you light any bonfires on 5th November, take care there are no hibernating hedgehogs inside!

Put together a Memory Book

Do you have grandchildren? Then this winter, during those long dark days, why not spend some time putting together a sort of scrapbook of memories to pass on to them?

Things you might like include could be: where you lived when you were a child; what your school was like, what games you most enjoyed, who your best buddies were, what pets you had, what your first job was, and how you met your partner. What was your first car, and where was your first home as an adult? Add a selection of photographs that you have from the past.



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

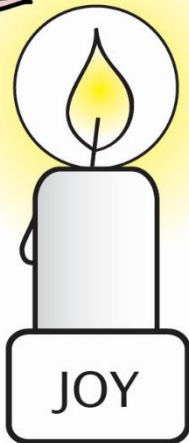
Advent Sunday this year falls on 30th November.

ADVENT is a time to celebrate the ARRIVAL of Jesus, God's Son, our Saviour.

We look forward with HOPE, we give thanks for God's LOVE and the PEACE and JOY we have in Jesus.



Read:
Isaiah 40:5
What shall be revealed?



Read:
LUKE 2:10-11
Who is 'God's news of great joy' for?



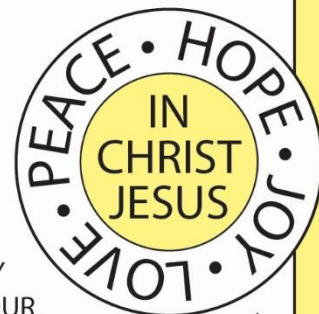
Read:
John 3:16
How did God show He loves us?



Read:
Romans 5:1-2
Through who do we have peace with God?

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

ADVENT • ARRIVAL • HOPE • JOY • LOVE • PEACE • GOD • GLORY
MESSAGE • PROMISE • PROPHECY • FORETOLD • JESUS • SAVIOUR
CHRIST • GIFT • GOOD NEWS • RETURN • CANDLE • LIGHT

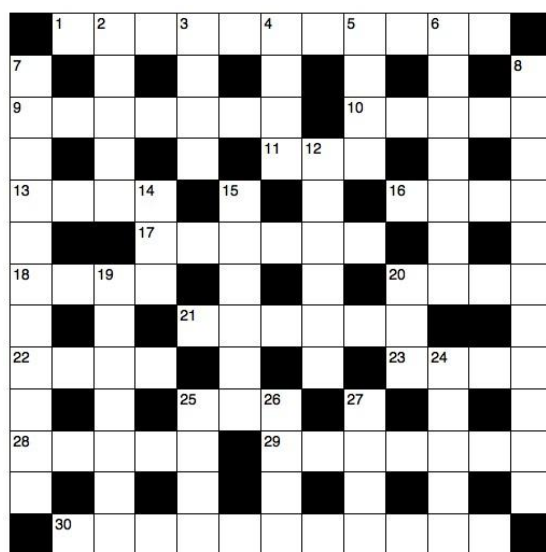


Across

- 1 The sixth disciple (Matthew 10:3) (11)
- 9 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the — — ' (Matthew 6:13) (4,3)
- 10 Love intensely (Song of Songs 1:4) (5)
- 11 From Mt Carmel to Jezreel, Elijah — all the way (1 Kings 18:46) (3)
- 13 One of the Midianite leaders who was captured and killed after Gideon's victory in the valley near Moreh (Judges 7:25) (4)
- 16 Metallic element (4)
- 17 At line (anag.) (6)
- 18 'Cursed is everyone who is — on a tree' (Galatians 3:13) (4)
- 20 Where Samson killed a thousand Philistines with a donkey's jawbone (Judges 15:14) (4)
- 21 He succeeded Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 22 'When he saw him, he took — on him' (Luke 10:33) (4)
- 23 'For — is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction' (Matthew 7:13) (4)
- 25 'The god of this — has blinded the minds of unbelievers' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (3)
- 28 Fear or terror (Psalm 31:22) (5)
- 29 'We, who are many, are one body, for we all — of the one loaf' (1 Corinthians 10:17) (7)
- 30 Assyrian ruler assassinated by his sons while worshipping his god Nisroch (2 Kings 19:37) (11)

Down

- 2 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made — ' (1 Corinthians 15:22) (5)
- 3 'After supper he — the cup' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (4)
- 4 The request of a man of Macedonia in Paul's vision: 'Come — to Macedonia and help us' (Acts 16:9) (4)
- 5 He disobeyed his father Judah by refusing to impregnate his dead brother's wife (Genesis 38:9) (4)
- 6 I veto me (anag.) (7)
- 7 Fourth king of Judah (1 Kings 15:24) (11)
- 8 Priest of God Most High, who blessed Abram (Genesis 14:18) (11)
- 12 'I have made you — — for the Gentiles' (Acts 13:47) (1,5)
- 14 Implore (1 Samuel 15:25) (3)
- 15 'Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the — , something sweet' (Judges 14:14) (6)
- 19 'I am the most ignorant of men; I do — — a man's understanding' (Proverbs 30:2) (3,4)
- 20 'Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under — , but under grace' (Romans 6:14) (3)
- 24 Native of, say, Baghdad (5)
- 25 The last word in the Bible (Revelation 22:21) (4)
- 26 Heroic tale (4)
- 27 'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you — ' (John 8:32) (4)



ACROSS: 1, Bartholomew. 9, Evil one. 10, Adore. 11, Ran. 13, Oreb. 16, Zinc. 17, Entail. 18, Hung. 20, Lehi. 21, Joshua. 22, Pity. 23, Wide. 25, Age. 28, Alarm. 29, Partake. 30, Sennacherib.

DOWN: 2, Alive. 3, Took. 4, Over. 5, Onan. 6, Emotive. 7, Jehoshaphat. 8, Melchizedek. 12, A light. 14, Beg. 15, Strong. 19, Not have. 20, Law. 24, Iraqi. 25, Amen. 26, Epic. 27, Free.

A Lighter Side – Wise sayings from New Zealand:

- 1 Give God what's right, not what's left!
- 2 "Pray" is a four letter word, you can say it anywhere
- 3 Man's way leads to a hopeless end. God's way leads to an endless hope.
- 4 A lot of kneeling will keep you in good standing.
- 5 He who kneels before God can stand before anyone
- 6 To be almost saved is to be totally lost.
- 7 In the sentence of life, the devil may be a comma, but never let him be the period.
- 8 Don't put a question mark where God puts a period.
- 9 Quit telling God how big your storm is. Tell your storm how big God is.
- 10 Are you wrinkled? Come to church for a facelift.
- 11 When praying, don't give God instructions – just report for duty
- 12 God doesn't want shares of your life. He wants a controlling interest.
- 13 'Don't wait for six strong men to take you to church.
- 14 We don't change God's message, His message changes us.
- 15 The church is prayer-conditioned.
- 16 When God ordains, He sustains.
- 17 WARNING: Exposure to the Son may prevent burning
- 18 Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.
- 19 Most people want to serve God, but only in an advisory position.
- 20 Suffering with truth decay? Brush up on your BIBLE.
- 21 Exercise daily. Walk with the Lord.
- 22 Coincidences happen when God chooses to remain anonymous.
- 23 Wisdom has two parts – (1) having a lot to say (2) not saying it
- 24 Never give the devil a ride. He will always want to drive.
- 25 A clean conscience makes a soft pillow.
- 26 Nothing else ruins the truth like stretching it.
- 27 Compassion is difficult to give away because it keeps coming back.
- 28 He who angers you controls you.
- 29 Worry is the darkroom in which negatives can develop.
- 30 Give satan an inch and he'll be a ruler.
- 31 Forbidden fruits create many jams
- 32 Be ye fishers of men. You catch them. He'll clean them.
- 33 God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies the called.
- 34 Read the Bible. It will scare the hell out of you.
- 35 If God is your co-pilot, swap seats.