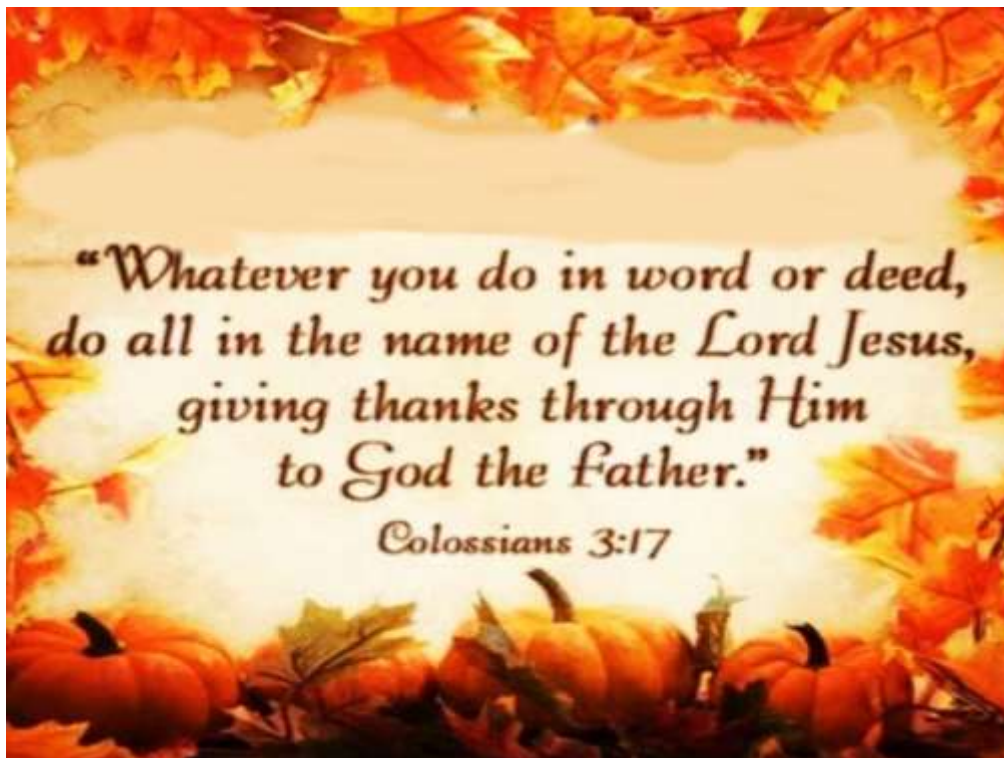


**ST TERNAN'S SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL
CHURCH MUCHALLS**

October 2025



Sunday Service 10.30am

Prayer & Chat Wednesday 11.00am

The church is open for private prayer during daylight hours

From our Minister



October is upon us! A time for transition and writing this on the 18th of September I, although I regularly look skyward have yet to see a skein of geese begin their migration south. October, the autumn or the fall, as I am still want to call it, are times for transition.

Transition, change, is they say never easy, but yet we mark changes in so many different ways. Including birthdays, and so may I express thanks for the many birthday surprises, greetings and treats I received on my 70th birthday at the beginning of September.

I expect that many of you already know that I will be retiring at the end of November...the time has come they say to move on from my role as your priest. I was initially installed to St James and St Ternan's for three years as a transitional minister or as it is sometimes referred to interim ministry.

Ah....there is that word again.... transition. The notion was that, as you had been without a resident priest for a goodly period of time that I would support the church congregations in imagining their future. Now, although my role is about the local, it is important to remember that our churches, our communities, our nation etc. etc. exist within a wider world. I believe it would be fair to say that the rate of change we have experienced in our lifetime, and especially since may I say 'the covid era' are unprecedented. I find it difficult to pinpoint the moment when everything changed...I remember growing up in a community where on a Sunday it seemed everyone went to church, and there was no way that you would be allowed to 'play out', some aged aunt even told me that if I sewed on a Sunday I would have to pick every stitch out with my nose in hell.... Regardless of the how and why of it all we must acknowledge that change has happened throughout our society and within our churches, both locally and nationally.

I know I have said more than once that the Church undergoes a reformation every 500 years; if we do our maths that means that that reformation is due, if not overdue, at our present moment in history. I believe that that is what we are witnessing now. Even 20 years ago when I began my ministry and my two boys were very involved in church I don't think any of us realised the change that we were about to witness. The proverb 'It's an ill wind that blows no good' perhaps is relevant in our current situation. There are moments when we shake our heads with despair and wonder where is all this heading. That proverb written in the 16th century and even quoted by Shakespeare is as valid today as it was 500 years ago. That proverb was born out of human experience different but not dissimilar to our own situation. We I believe, are in the fortunate position that we can look back over the centuries and observe the history of the Christian Church and we can see that even though church has changed perhaps

beyond recognition, that belief in God, belief in the Trinity is still a force within our world's societies. It actually doesn't really matter whether we sing old or modern versions of the 23 Psalm, or say the Lord's prayer in a multitude of ways, God is still present. Change is hard to embrace, it can discombobulate us all, especially as we may have become creatures of habit.... but!!!???

I say over and over again, and I believe it, that our God is faithful, our God is with us and will see us through. Seasons change but life continues, it is in the demonstration of love, not necessarily in the maintenance of traditions that we truly experience God's love. Things will change but God's love and our callings to abide in and demonstrate that love remain.

STOP PRESS!!! I have just paused to hang out the laundry and stepping outside the back door I was greeted by the rhythmic honking of the first skein of geese.....!!! What more can I say...as if on cue! Blessings



Mary

The Friend at Midnight - Canon Paul Hardingham

As we remember St Luke this month, let's note that one of the major themes in his gospel is prayer. Jesus tells the *Parable of the Friend at Midnight* (Luke 11:5-8) in the context of teaching His disciples to pray (1).

Pray Shamelessly:

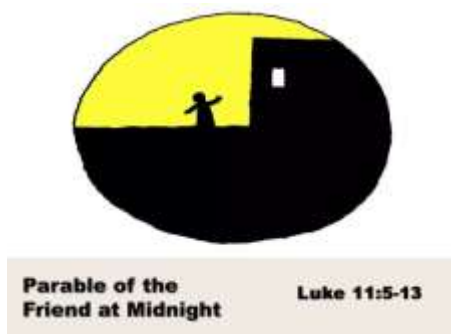
In the parable a man approaches his friend at midnight and asking: '*Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him*' (5-6). Despite the hour, the rules of hospitality mean that this is not an unreasonable request. Jesus says, '*though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will rise and give him whatever he needs*' (8). Jesus is telling us to approach our heavenly Father in '*shameless boldness*' with our needs. As adopted children we should have no hesitancy in coming to talk with our Father. It is not God who is reluctant to answer, but we to ask. Do we pray with shameless boldness?

Pray Persistently:

Like children we should be persistent in our requests: '*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*' (9). All three verbs indicate a continual habit: '*Keep on asking...seeking...knocking*'. We will not be content simply to ask once and then move on. Jesus tells us to bring our prayers to God persistently. Do we give up too easily in prayer?

Pray Expectantly:

'For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.' (10). Are we expectant in our prayers, believing that God delights in meeting our requests? Why not begin this adventure of prayer today!



Prayer for October 2025 *By Daphne Kitching*

Dear Lord,

In this autumn season, when the harvest is gathered, we thank You for Your provision for us. We have so much, and yet we see terrible images of starving children on our televisions and smartphones and in our newspapers.

Lord, prompt us to do what we can to change things, whether that is by writing a letter or email to someone with influence, or by contributing in some way to aid agencies.

Lord, we ask You to touch the hearts of those leaders of nations whose decisions cause such hunger and suffering. Soften those hard hearts, Lord. Fill them with Your compassion. May there be a new harvest of love - and a kinder world.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Lucas was a Star!

On Sunday, 14th September, St Ternan's witnessed the first performance of a New Star when Lucas shared the stage with his mum Laura to talk about MACS, the charity we have chosen to support this year.

As Laura found it quite hard to pronounce what MACS stands for, I will write it in full here – Microphthalmia, Anophthalmia & Coloboma Support – a charity supporting people born without eyes or with underdeveloped eyes.

With rare illnesses such as these it is very, very important that support groups exist and provide everybody affected be it patients, relatives or even physicians themselves with clear practical advice on how to care for patients, on likely prognosis and even likely causes so that proper care can be provided.

The sight of cheerful and obviously fun-loving Lucas competing with his Mum to get the opportunity to use the microphone on the Lectern to "say a few words" to us all must

have melted many hearts. I'm sure Laura might have appreciated a few moments of peace to get her points across but for those precious minutes it was enough for us all to watch them both trying to get a word in edgeways. Laura, you have a star in the making!!!

I'm pleased to be able to say that you all raised the Grand Total of £675.00, which also includes Richard's fee for playing the music which he kindly donated as well, and includes the funds raised from the Soup and Sweet lunch. The Charity should be able to claim Gift Aid of up to a further £168.75 so they should benefit by a total of £843.75.

On behalf of Laura and Lucas, thank you everyone.

Geoff Bell

Abiding in Jesus

This is the time of year for many churches to hold their Harvest Festival services. No doubt, there will be displays of food, some bought with others grown in gardens and allotments. While gardeners can have pleasure growing fruit and vegetables it can be hard work tending to them and dealing with pests.



Jesus knew about the care given to vines. In John 15:1-8 Jesus compared Himself to a vine and referred to God as the gardener. These verses are both challenging and reassuring. In this parable, God is responsible for pruning the vine. He sees what parts are useful and what parts are useless. The unproductive parts are cut away, so that growth is encouraged. Jesus is telling us that God will prune our lives, not to harm us, but to encourage our spiritual growth. God's pruning cuts away wrong attitudes and wasteful behaviour, all of which serve no useful purpose in our lives. This pruning is required so that we become more fruitful. And the fruit God wants is love, joy, patience etc. (see Galatians 5:22-23) These holy qualities are intended to influence the world to change it from the bad to all that is good.

To encourage its growth, a vine has to be regularly cut back. The effect looks drastic, but essential. When God cuts away the dead wood in our lives He does it because He knows how our lives can grow. The pruning knives are in the hands of our Father God who only desires the best for us. This pruning process can be painful, but Jesus says that it is vital if the Holy Spirit is to flow through us to produce the fruit that God wants.

Also in this parable, Jesus said He was the vine, and we are the branches. We have no existence apart from Jesus. We can do nothing for God on our own and must be joined to Jesus. In the same way a vine utilises the life-giving sap to flow into the branches, so we need the Holy Spirit to flow His life into us. It is only by remaining in Jesus can He give us the inner resources for an effective fruit-producing life.

Jesus said '*Abide in Me*' (John 15:4 King James Version). Abiding speaks of sustenance, being upheld and supported, enduring and withstanding. So, if we are to reap a harvest of holiness, may we be prepared for God's pruning, and continue to abide in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

St Ternan's Harvest Festival will be held on Sunday 12th October. Goods donated will be given to Portlethen Larder

Draft Notes of Vestry Meeting held in Community Room on Tuesday 2nd September

Prayers Mary opened the meeting with a Bible reading and prayers

Matters discussed

1. David Meldrum our contracted architect joined the vestry meeting to brief us on the development of plans to introduce electric heating to St Ternan's. He presented his working drawings along with a variety of images of hardware which he suggested would meet the needs of the congregation. He hoped that his proposals would allow the body of the church to reach a mean temperature of 21 -23 degrees C. The systems would be operable with minimal maintenance and effort. The designs would also conform to the requirements of net zero.

The purposed units are far infra-red. They would be located on the cooms just above the walls. Their angled position would allow for optimum heating of the congregation. The work would require minimal disruption to St Ternan's. It was agreed that three electricians would be asked to undertake quotes. It is purposed that under the guidance of our architect and consultation with the electrician that the heating hardware would be purchased by St Ternan's for installation by the electricians.

Formal Proposal: That we replace our present heating system in the church with a bespoke infra-red system as outlined by the Architect.

Proposed: Dee Seconded: Sue Passed unanimously

2. Treasurer's Report

Geoff gave this verbal report at the meeting

'Firstly, apologies for a lack of detailed accounts. As our Year end was 31st August, I will be preparing accounts for the full twelve months within the next two weeks and will circulate them to everyone. In summary since our last accounts at the end of June we have suffered a deficit on our normal activities of £2,835, (Year to Date deficit of £6,725) taking our Bank Balance down to £21,102. However, in addition we have received a Grant of £5,000 for our Net Zero Project so our Total Bank Funds are presently £26,102.

1. Outstanding Creditors

We presently owe SSE about £1,300 for electricity supplied since April 2024. We are in dispute with them over their late billing and expect to receive a small discount on this

amount in respect of their late invoicing. This bill will be payable as soon as that discount is agreed.

We have also incurred legal costs resolving the legal title to the Rectory which we are sharing with the Diocese and we can expect a bill for our share (£2,500) by Christmas.

2. Net Zero Application

As expected, we were successful in our application for Funds relating to the installation of a new electric overhead heating system. We have already received a Grant of £5,000 and have an additional award of £2,250 for 50% of costs incurred in the project. The additional award is subject to submission of invoices etc.

3. Sunday School Funds

We hold a UTP fund of £5,100 out with our accounts in respect of our old Sunday School Funds. Vestry will remember that we formally closed our Sunday School earlier in the year after a prolonged period of inactivity. Due to the pressures on our Funds I am asking for authority to include the UTP in our Accounts for the year ended 31st August 2025. If needed these funds can be sold and transferred to our Bank in short order.

This was accepted by Vestry Proposed: Geoff Bell, Seconded: Sue Selway

4. Provision of water supply to the Church

On the sale of the Rectory, we must have an independent water supply from the water main in the road to replace our shared supply with the Rectory. We currently have three quotations for this work of varying amounts and perhaps quality which Mike will talk us through but I am proposing that we sign a contract for c. £14,500 as soon as practical and commence the works as soon as possible.

Proposed Geoff that we accept the quote from WM Donald

Seconded Irene /Mike Passed

5. Sale of Rectory

We now need to appoint a sales agent /lawyer to take on the sale of the Rectory. Mary has already established contact with a Stonehaven Lawyer who agreed to act for us. We should therefore resolve to appoint him formally and ask him to carry out the necessary preparatory work of valuations, EPC work if required and drawing up of sales particulars. Vestry will be aware of potential Planning Blight arising from the Solar Farm proposed for the land immediately East of the Rectory and we will need the Lawyer's advice on how to handle this. I would expect the preparatory work to take no more than two months, after which the property will be marketed. We can anticipate a number of fees totalling no more than £5,000 for this preparatory works which may be payable before the sale proceeds are received.

Proposed: Geoff that we formally appoint an agent with regards to selling the Rectory

Seconded: Sue Passed

6. Provision of additional ventilation

Our Architect is of the view that we need to re-establish adequate ventilation within the Church as we no longer heat the building on a 24/7 basis. He has agreed to supervise this work as required. We will not proceed until we have funds and a firm quotation for the works.

7. Discussions with the Bishop

Since the announcement of Mary's departure, I have had a number of conversations with the Bishop which culminated in a Joint meeting, chaired by the Bishop, with St James last Tuesday. Some of these conversations have been quite trenchant but I have been at pains to be quite realistic on our long-term prospects should we not be able to sell the Rectory or indeed if we do sell the Rectory. We have agreed that a brief audit of our spiritual, financial and people resources should be undertaken in the next few weeks so that the plans for the future of ourselves and St James can be properly designed. His support for selling the Rectory has been a main feature of these conversations and has eliminated any perceived need for delay until a new Priest is in place.

8. OSCR

At 1.00am on Sunday morning OSCR emailed me to remind me that we only had until 31st May 2026 to send our Accounts into their system! Nonetheless I expect Peter Nelson to be our Examiner as I have already had a brief discussion with him about his own accounts during which he volunteered to help again. My conversations with OSCR about disclosure of Trustee's personal details are ongoing and when there is anything to report I will circulate their answers.

9. Budget for 2025-2026

Following our conversations with the Bishop we can now prepare a draft Budget for the next twelve months. I will attempt to prepare the Budget in two parts - one representing just our normal activities including the cessation of Stipend payments on Mary's departure and a separate schedule for our Capital works (Sales of Rectory, new water system and new heating system). Again, as soon as this is prepared, I will circulate it to everyone.

SUMMARY

I appreciate this is an unsettling time for everyone and there are those who may believe that we are somewhere up that famous creek without a paddle! But I am reassured that if we get all of the above completed and timeously and within budget then whoever joins us in due course as our Priest will have the best possible start and be able to build upon all the hard work of the last 3-4 years.'

3. Property Convenor's Report

- Monthly checks carried out- no major issues
Some slates have slipped position, roofer visited to look, will sort displaced slates and check over roof for winter
- Gents WC cistern would not shut off, valve replaced
- Water main insulation quotes received
- Replacement heating- David has visited to survey. Mike went to 'Net Zero Roadshow' some interesting information given

4. PVG Report

- Still awaiting clearance for Irene and Steven

5. AOCB

-
- Bible Sunday 26th October 2025- this will be a joint service with St James's
- Meeting with the Bishop was productive. We need to update our profile. It was suggested that Geoff, Irene and Jan make any alterations as necessary and then sent it to Vestry members for approval
- Issues with the organ- Mike to ask John Noble for advice regarding the organ but it was felt that we need to accept that the organ is old and we have the electric piano if necessary
- Cleaning the Rectory- it was proposed that we ask Norma Butler to assist Pamela and Mary in cleaning the Rectory prior to it going on the market

The meeting closed with the Grace.

Irene Butler

Progress Report for October 2025

During October we should see the resolution of the last outstanding issues relating to the sale of the Rectory and the scheduling of the installation of replacement heating systems for the Church as well as the provision of a new water supply.

1. New Water Supply

As our current water supply is shared with the Rectory, we have retained an experienced contractor, Donalds, who also work at Chapelton to run a new supply from the water main in the road directly into the Church. This work should take no more than five days. Once completed we will isolate the Church from the Rectory's supply.

2. New heating System

We have agreed the style and location of the replacement electric heating panels and our Architect is preparing a fully costed programme of works. As these will be installed

by a qualified electrician, we anticipate a speedy installation which should not affect any of the existing features within the Church. At this time we will not remove the existing radiators but again merely isolate them from the existing shared boiler within the Rectory. It is anticipated that the new system will be easily controlled by new time clocks and electronic over-rides.

3. Legal Works re Title Deeds

We have now completed all the legal works required to remove Aberdeen Endowments Trust from the Title Deeds of both the Rectory and the Church. In addition, we have had prepared an up-to-date Title Deed for the Rectory itself showing clearly, it's boundaries and rights of access. This work was carried out by Lyndseys of Dundee who handle a lot of the Diocesan property work. Their final bill has been submitted and despite a lengthy dispute with AET has come in on budget. It has already been agreed with the Diocese that they will share this cost on a 50:50 basis as we have also resolved the disputed title to the remaining area of the site including the Church itself.

4. Legal Works re Sale of the Rectory

We have commissioned Raeburn Christie of Stonehaven to carry out all the legal works relating to the sale of the Rectory and to sell the property forthwith. We choose them as they were nearer to us than the Dundee lawyers and had a better knowledge of the local market.

5. Provision of Additional Ventilation

As part of the works on the new heating system our Architect advised that we needed to review and improve our ventilation within the building of the Church. He has commented that a number of ventilation points have been sealed and unless these are re-opened and possibly added to then we will suffer from a build up of damp. This work will be scheduled for the Spring/Summer of next year once we have funds available.

6. Accounts and Budgets

At first glance our deficit for the year to 31st August 2025 is £6,725 taking our Bank Balance down to £21,102. Although expenditure on repairs and maintenance has been minimised, we continue to operate at a level of expenditure not matched by our ongoing receipts. Also, during this period, we lost our tenant and have begun to incur substantial costs related to the Rectory. We have received a grant of £5,000 but this is reserved for our Net Zero project and is not included in General Funds. Usually by this time we would have prepared a budget for the year 2025-2026 but with the material uncertainties about when a new Priest will be appointed and the timing of our various building works and eventual sale of the Rectory any budget will need some of these uncertainties resolved before it can be usefully prepared. It should be noted that in the event of a cash deficit before the sale proceeds from the Rectory are received that the Diocese will give us a loan to bide us through, secured against the proceeds of the sale.

7. Discussions with the Bishop

Over the past two months I have had a number of full and frank discussions with the Bishop about the future of our Church. I also sit on the Bishop's Council and have heard other Charges raising similar issues with him. As a result of these and other

discussions I expect that the Diocese will carry out an audit of our financial, people and spiritual resources before the end of October to inform the Bishop and the Diocese of how they can provide us with support in the immediate and the medium term. I should perhaps record that during all these discussions he has been wholly supportive of our efforts to sell the Rectory and has indicated that the proceeds from the sale will be available to us to maintain worship at St Ternan's.

8. Discussions with St James

We have held a joint meeting with St James, chaired by the Bishop, to discuss how the search for a new Priest is to be handled and also the financial implications of continuing with our present arrangements. Of all the meetings over the past two months this felt the most positive as we all seemed to readily agree on most things!

9. Forthcoming Elections to the Vestry

We are entering a period of great change as Mary heads off for a well-earned retirement and as we finally complete the much anticipated sale of the Rectory. It is a paradox that as the Vestry is becoming busier and busier that we are also beginning to suffer from a lack of members willing to serve and undertake the various roles required to run the affairs of the Church for the next few years. Whilst this may be understandable given the age profile of our membership, we do not have the funds to hire outside professionals to carry out the work although we have discussed with the Bishop that there ought to be assistance from the Diocese for smaller churches.

As ever I'm more than happy to answer any queries, either after our Service or by email at Gbelleh54@aol.com.

Geoff Bell

2nd October - Guardian Angels, keeping an eye on us

The teaching of Jesus encourages us to believe in guardian angels. He once said, 'See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.' (Matthew 18:10)

The existence of angels was suggested in various Old Testament texts, Jesus mentioned them explicitly, and the early Christians accepted their existence and work (Acts 12:15).

In England, devotion to the angels, both in Anglo-Saxon times and later, was strong. In modern times, the great American evangelist Billy Graham has written an entire book on the existence and work of angels.

Alcuin described them as intercessors (in the 11th century Leofric Missal); Herbert of Losinga, bishop of Norwich (d 1119) specially praised them, and his contemporary, Reginald of Canterbury, wrote prayers in their honour.



Honorius Augustodunensis (d 1151) clarified the existing belief of the time by asserting that each human soul, when infused into the body, is entrusted to the particular care of a single angel, who protects both body and soul and offers prayers to God.

For many centuries Christendom was satisfied with the feast of St Michael (and all Angels), but the special feast of the Guardian Angels was introduced in Austria, Spain and Portugal in the 15th – 16th centuries. Guardian Angels were then seen as guardians of particular towns or regions, or of each individual. Pope Clement X made the feast day universal in 1607, fixing its date to 2nd October.

The Nicene Creed: The Person of the Holy Spirit- Canon Paul Hardingham

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

This month we are considering what the Nicene Creed says about the Holy Spirit.

'We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life': The original version of the Nicene Creed ended simply *'We believe in the Holy Spirit.'* However, the phrase *'the Lord, the giver of life'* was added to counter the teachings of Macedonius (Bishop of Constantinople), who viewed the Holy Spirit as a creation of the Son. The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity who shapes us, according to Christ's image, through His fruit and gifts: *'the Spirit gives life...we are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.'* (2 Corinthians 3:6,18).

'who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified': In the late 6th century the Latin churches added the phrase *'and the Son'* (the Filioque Clause), which was rejected by the Orthodox Churches. Augustine described the Spirit as *'love proceeding'* from the Father and the Son, so we can know God: *'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, He will testify about me.'* (John 15:26).

The Creed is clear that the Holy Spirit is due equal status and worship with the Father and the Son, as a distinct divine person: *'May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.'* (2 Corinthians 13:14).

'He has spoken through the Prophets': Why does the Creed include this activity of the Spirit? It is not just referring to the OT prophets, but the whole of Scripture. He has inspired Scripture, so that we have God's word communicated by human writers: *'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness'* (2 Timothy 3:16). When we read the Bible, the Spirit enables us to hear what God is saying to us.

In what areas of life have you felt the Holy Spirit at work in you?



Dear Lord,

So far today, I am doing all right. I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or self-indulgent. I have not whined, complained, or cursed. I have not charged on my credit card or eaten any chocolate. However, I am going to get out of bed in a few minutes, and I will need a lot more help after that! Amen.

Praying With the Prayers of the Bible: the Prayer for Holy Love

1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13, runs: 'May the Lord ...establish your hearts unblameable in holiness.' Paul's first letter to the Thessalonian church, dating from about 51 AD, is generally regarded as the first book in the New Testament to have been written. That means that this *prayer is the first New Testament prayer to have been composed*.

Paul has already highly commended the genuine spiritual experience and character of these new Christians. He thanked God for their faith, love and hope, 1:3; they were examples to others, 1:7; their faith in God was being widely spoken about, 1:8; and having turned from idolatry they were now serving the true God and expecting Christ's Second Coming, 1:9, 10. It is for these new and enthusiastic believers that Paul now prays.

The prayer asks for two great blessings for these Christians. First that they may abound in love toward each other and to the world, and then that their conduct will be characterised by holy living. What a model prayer this is for Christians in every age! Note Paul's words, 'may the Lord make you increase and abound in love' (v.12). This is not merely asking that these believers will love one another, but that their love will be full and overflowing.

Perhaps Paul is recalling that Jesus said the world would recognise His disciples by their love toward one another (John 13:35). But this love, the essence of Christian experience, is not narrow or parochial. Paul prayed that their love would abound not only to each other but also 'to all men.' What a picture of what His church should be! All of us who claim to be His people should be known by our love for one another and for the world for which He died.

Then comes the second request in the prayer, that their hearts will be 'established unblameable in holiness.' (v.13). The word translated 'established' means to be fixed, to be settled, indicating constant character. In this world no Christian can be faultless, but by His grace and mercy we are called to be blameless. In the prayer Paul brings together the condition of our hearts - overflowing in love, and the quality of our conduct - steadfast in holy living. What a combination of holy love, a reflection of what Jesus was!

One other aspect of this prayer is worth noting. When Paul prays that the love of these Christians will abound to each other, he adds that this is how he feels about them; 'as



we do to you' (v.12). Likewise, in 2:10 Paul says the Thessalonians are witnesses of His holy, righteous and blameless conduct among them.

The love and holiness for which Paul prays for these believers can be seen in his own life and work. Surely the most pressing need in all our congregations is that all of us as Christ's disciples will consistently bear witness to His love controlling our hearts and our conduct.



Last Month on the Facebook Page

31st August 2025

This quote is from a science fiction book call Triumphant by Jack Campbell. The story is about a fleet of space craft trapped deep in enemy territory, surrounded by the enemy and having to fight their way out to safety. Life can feel that way sometimes, trapped with no way out, with the walls closing in. What the character in the book was explaining was that if you lose hope, you will never see the way out. If you have hope, then you will see that there is always a way out, a way forwards. Jesus is that hope for us, for no matter how dark it may seem, Jesus will lead us on the path to salvation.



7th September 2025



Jesus was a force for change. He challenged the temple authorities and brought about change in the people around him. For us today, following Jesus should be a transformative experience. It should change how we see the world, change how we treat our neighbours, change who we see as our neighbours. To change we must first be challenged. Our view of the world and ourselves needs to be challenge. To do that you have to read the bible and find the uncomfortable truths that challenge our views. Being a follow of Jesus should not be a warm and cosy experience, it should be uncomfortable and challenging

but ultimately rewarding.

14th September 2025

Sometimes we can point to the moment we became a Christian. Perhaps some event in our lives that brought us to God for the first time. Faith, however, is a more slippery concept. It sneaks up on you. It grows slowly, in a way you don't always notice, like the seconds on a clock ticking away unnoticed, until you notice that an hour has passed. Faith starts small. A vague feeling, perhaps of something missing. God steps in beside you, as you walk. That faith grows until, before you realise it, it becomes something substantial. Something you can lean into when you need it. The great thing about it though, is that God doesn't step away, look at you and consider it job done. No, God stays and keeps working in you. Always.



21st September 2025



Sometimes all we have is hope. There are times when life can throw us a curve ball, knock us down. This can be bewildering and sometime all we have left to hang on to is hope. Hope is a powerful thing. It reminds us that things can and will get better. Whatever is going on in your life today, it will get better, there will be an end to it. Reach out to God in prayer, share your troubles and believe it will get better.

28th September

Being a follower of Jesus is not a destination, but a journey. The model for life, that the story of Jesus lays out for us, sets some impossibly high standards. Standards that I suspect no earthly human will ever fully meet. I don't think that God intends for us to meet these standards, to one day become the complete Christian, because what then? What do we strive for after that? Do we rest on our laurels in our perfection? I think it is more about striving to move closer to these standards every day, becoming a little bit better every day, leaving a bit more of the old behind us every day. It is the stepping forwards that matters, both on the first day of the journey and the last.



31st October - All Hallows Eve – or Holy Evening

Modern Halloween celebrations have their roots with the Celtic peoples of pre-Christian times.

In those long-ago days, on the last night of October, the Celts celebrated the Festival of Samhain, or 'Summer's End'. The priests, or Druids, performed ceremonies to thank and honour the sun. For there was a very dark side to all this: Samhain also signalled the onset of winter, a time when it was feared that unfriendly ghosts, nature-spirits, and witches roamed the earth, creating mischief. So, the Druid priests lit great bonfires and performed magic rites to ward off or appease these dark supernatural powers. Then the Romans arrived, and brought their Harvest Festival which honoured the Goddess Pomona with gifts of apples and nuts. The two festivals slowly merged.

When Christianity arrived still later, it began to replace the Roman and Druid religions. 1st November - All Saints' Day - was dedicated to all Christian Martyrs and Saints who had died. It was called 'All Hallows' Day'. The evening before became an evening of prayer and preparation and was called 'All Hallows' Eve', The Holy Evening, later shortened to 'Halloween'.

For many centuries, however, fear of the supernatural remained strong. During the Middle Ages, animal costumes and frightening masks were worn to ward off the evil spirits of darkness on Halloween. Magic words and charms were used to keep away bad

luck, and everybody believed that witches ride about on broomsticks. Fortune telling was popular, and predicting the future by the use of nuts and apples was so popular that Halloween is still sometimes known as Nutcrack Night or Snap-Apple Night. Today, Christians have learned to turn to prayer instead of charms to overcome the powers of darkness. And the deeper, true meaning of All Hallows' Eve, should not be forgotten. As Christians, we all draw closer to Christ when we remember and give thanks for our loved ones and for others who have gone before us through the gates of death.



Illuminations II – Morning on Exmoor- *Philippa Johnson*

A whisper of daybreak – the dawn’s brush-stroke of starling-purple
 leans the soul towards morning. Night’s gauze
draws back: the sky’s green, chill-lit now; from fields & hills
 identities rise with the light – beech & oak, a church tower,
 a huddle of sheep blinking away the dew. Crimson & silver
rosebay willow-herb stud the hedgerows, hawthorn & sloe drip;
 in lavender breaths of waking each being inhales new thoughts,
to see this world refreshed, differently – from a dragonfly’s gliding
 to a hen’s food-forage, the cow’s thoughtful stance
or the gaze of a stranger, we are re-lit, brighter & softer, in greys & golds.
 God’s fingers gild the frilled clouds & lift, lift us into life.

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ROTA: OCTOBER 2025

DATE:	CELEBRANT Assistant Address/Reflections	Readers/ Intercessions	Readings:	Sidesperson	Refreshments
05/10/25 TRINITY 16	STEVEN COULL <i>Dee Foulds</i>	Carol Masson Sheila Usher Susan Edwards <i>Sue Selway</i>	LAMENTATIONS 1: 1-6 2 TIMOTHY 1: 1-14 LUKE 17: 5-10	Sue Selway	Sylvia/David
12/10/25 TRINITY 17 Harvest Festival	REV CANON MARY JEPP <i>Sheila Usher</i>	Kaeden Mackay John Usher Geoff Bell <i>Dee Foulds</i>	DEUTRONOMY 26:1-11 PHILLIPIANS 4:4-9 JOHN 6:25-35	Steven Coull	Maureen/Mike
19/10/25 TRINITY 18	JOHN USHER <i>Sheila Usher</i> <i>Reflections: Ian Wilson</i>	Rhona Vassilikos Steven Coull Sue Selway <i>Sheila Usher</i>	JEREMIAH 31: 27-34 2 TIMOTHY 3: 14-4.5 LUKE 18: 1-8	Kaeden Mackay	Rhona/Carol/Katie
26/10/25 TRINITY 19 JOINT SERVICE WITH ST JAMES – AT ST TERNAN'S	REV CANON MARY JEPP <i>Irene Butler</i>	Kaeden Mackay T.B.A Geoff Bell	ISAIAH 45. 22-end ROMANS 15. 1-6 LUKE 4. 16-24	Sue Selway	Maureen/Mike
02/11/25 TRINITY 20 Songs of Praise	IRENE BUTLER <i>Dee Foulds</i>	T.B,A		Irene Butler	Sylvia/David

CHURCH CLEANING - OCTOBER 2025 SHEILA USHER