

Shirley Parish Magazine

February
2026



SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE (see also inside the back cover)

CLERGY & READERS

Vicar - in vacancy

Reverend Richard Haynes

email: curate@shirleyparishb90.co.uk

Tel: 07972 530161

Reverend Wendy Carter

email: revwendy@sky.com

Tel: 0121 744 6315

Reverend Dr. Theresa Jones

email: theresaj1@btinternet.com

Tel: 0121 272 3366

Gill Gough

email: g.gough@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 0121 603 2636

Sarah Penfold

email: penfold633@gmail.com

Tel: 0121 681 1525

Denise Smith

email: deesmith1181@hotmail.com

Tel: 07815 193892

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: facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@shirleyparish5736>

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4904334906>



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

Gill Hanton - Telephone : 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.

OUR SERVICES IN FEBRUARY

Date	Time	Service	Venue
Sunday 1st	10.30am	Parish Communion *	St James Church
Candlemas	3.30pm	Reflective Worship	St James Church
Thursday 5th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 8th	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Holy Communion	St John's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship	St James Church
Thursday 12th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 15th	10.30am	Parish Communion	St James Church
Wednesday 18th	7.30pm	Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes	St James Church
Ash Wednesday			
Thursday 19th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Saturday 21st	10am	Messy Church	St James Church
Sunday 22nd	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Morning Worship	St John's Church
	10.30am	Worship 4 Everyone	St James Church
Thursday 26th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church

* with Archdeacon Jenny Tomlinson

KID'S CHURCH



**WORSHIP AND ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN -
DURING THE 10.30AM SUNDAY SERVICE AT
ST JAMES CHURCH - ALL WELCOME!**

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

Sunday Services at St James Church are live-streamed on YouTube -
<https://www.youtube.com/@shirleyparish5736>

**PLEASE CHECK FOR ANY CHANGES TO OUR SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES ON THE
WEEKLY NOTICE SHEET OR ON THE WEEKLY EMAIL**

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OUR PRAYER FOR THE TIME OF VACANCY

Heavenly Father,
 thank you that we are held together as a community in your love.
 Let us be ready to share the good news of Jesus with those around us.
 Strengthen us as we patiently wait as a parish,
 remembering that your Son is the Good Shepherd
 who will guide us along our future path.
 May we gently encourage one another,
 be quick to listen
 and humbly reach out to support those in need.
 With everlasting hope,
 we trust in you alone to provide in this new season.
 In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Find out more at

<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/future-ministry-in-shirley-parish>

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OUR MEMORIAL SERVICE

My son Andrew and I attended the Memorial Service, held in conjunction with the Co-op Funeral Company, at St James Church on the evening of 4th December 2025.

We would like to say a sincere thank you for the warm welcome, the lovely order of service, the doves for our lapels, and the Christmas tag, bauble shaped, to write our own message in memory of our loved one to hang on the Memory Christmas Tree.

The service, ably taken by Reverend Richard Haynes, was compassionately put together. The carols, the readings, the voicing of our loved one's names, then the lighting of our own personal tea light on the stand, made it an occasion that Andrew and I will remember for many years to come.

Afterwards there were lovely refreshments, ably served by Jan and Lee Dalton, and a chance to talk to many friends.

A sincere thank you to you all.

I am currently in South Africa staying with my daughter for a few weeks. Our Christmas and New Year were spent in a very warm sunny climate and completely different to the English traditional Christmas of 2024. I appreciate that currently the weather in the UK is very cold. Nevertheless I think of you all and, despite the time difference, I have watched some of the Sunday services on YouTube.

I wish you all a very happy, peaceful and healthy New Year.

Ann Blackford



THIS MONTH'S ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS



Mothers' Union - Wednesday 4th February

2pm in Church House



The Friends of St James - Tuesday 10th February

7.30pm in Church House

Your attendance and support will be appreciated

LITTLE NICK AMONG THE ANGELS

‘But you said’, I remonstrated with Sarah, ‘That on Christmas Eve there would be angels at the crib. All I can see is bits of angel all over the table’. There were hundreds of bits of angels, bodies, wings, heads all in shiny card and all definitely not at the crib. Well things did improve a little, the bits of angel were enveloped and boxed ready to go to church ... only to be replaced by some even bigger bits of angel. The explanation was unconvincing. ‘I’m making a triptych’.

You will understand that such strange behaviour is not unknown in our house and usually marks the build up to some sort of event. Our angels were going to the crib.

I had never been to the Christmas Eve Crib Service before, so it was all quite exciting for me. We got there in time for a quick rehearsal. It turned out that there were to be two angels (Margaret and Sarah) one silver and one gold who had misunderstood what would happen when Jesus was born. They were trying to deliver a message but were getting into a muddle doing it. Not only that but they kept interrupting Linda who was trying to lead the congregation singing carols and hearing the Christmas story.

The church was very full, but there was a team of welcomers making sure people had somewhere to sit and handing out the envelopes with the angel kits inside. I offered to help but Sarah told me that making people welcome was too important a job for me, so would I please sit down and be quiet.

I sat down and was quiet until we came to sing Little Donkey and there were instruments handed out. Then I banged my tambourine as loudly as everyone else. Part way through we opened our envelopes to make a little angel each. I had to have help with mine because glue dots and paws don’t work well. Someone helped me and we all waved our angels together.

It was alright in the end. The muddle was sorted and as well as the angels we saw Mary and Joseph at the crib with baby Lottie taking the part of Jesus. The big angels on the triptych were standing guard over the family. And Richard explained that the Christmas message was for all of us. Afterwards there were mince pies and drinks.

Sarah has suggested that I should say thank you to the welcomers, the people serving refreshments, and everyone else who took part on the day or making angels beforehand. Thank you!

Nicodemus Penfold (Parish raconteur – retired!)

THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

Congratulations to the January winners

£50 ~ Gill Gough £25 ~ Sheila Walford

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB

Books that last

There's a line in a Seamus Heaney poem ('Postscript') that we might conjure up to sum up what books have done to and for us. He talks about how there are moments in our lives that 'catch the heart off guard and blow it open'. Books provide those moments for all of us in the Book Club.

So, we have taken on two short projects to begin 2026. The first to read any Roald Dahl book. The second to tell the rest of the group about any book that caught our heart when we were younger – as children or as parents and grandparents.

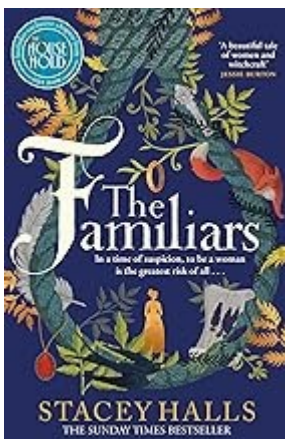
The Roald Dahl books were: *The Magic Finger*, *Matilda*, *Love From Boy: Roald Dahl's Letters to His Mother*, *Danny the Champion of the World* and *The Giraffe, the Pelly and Me*. All of these books evoke memories of the past – particularly of reading to our children and grandchildren. Each book is often beautiful, invariably funny, but most of all none of them are sentimental. Many of the adults in the books are cruel, school is often brutal, yet the central young characters are clever and perceptive. We agreed that all of Dahl's books are dark and yet at the same time, delightful.

From talk of Roald Dahl, we went on to give the titles of some books that, in earlier years, had the power to 'catch the heart and blow it open'. Once we started on our lists, it became hard to stop.

The books: *The Cluck and Master Quack* (long since out of print) Edited by Annette Mills; *Little Women* Louise May Alcott; *What Katy Did* Susan Coolidge; All of the Narnia books C.S. Lewis; *A Wayne in a Manager* Gervais Finn; *Heard it in the playground* Poems by Alan Ahlberg; *The Thirty Nine Steps* John Buchan.

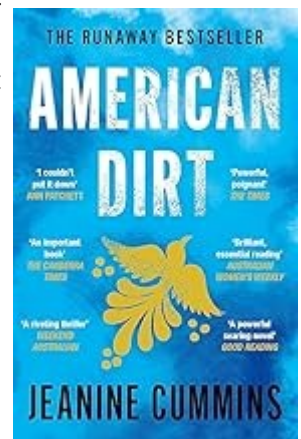
We found it difficult to stop talking once we started!

For our next read we have a choice:

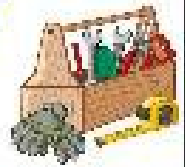


The Familiars by Stacey Halls, and/or *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins, and we meet for more talk about having our hearts blown open, on **Monday 9th February** in Church House at 2pm.

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BIBLE STUDY MORNING

‘AN INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW’S GOSPEL’

Saturday 31st January, 10am – 11.30am in Church House

Having had to postpone due to the weather, the new date for this Bible study morning will be Saturday 31st January.

You may know that the Church of England’s lectionary follows a three-year cycle, focusing in turn on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with John interspersed at key points. This year, our readings focus mainly on Matthew.

Matthew’s Gospel is carefully structured and richly layered. It has provided a strong foundation for the Church’s teaching on Jesus, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Christian life. During our study morning, we will *lift the lid* on this Gospel, exploring questions such as: Who was Matthew? When and why was the Gospel written? What are its main themes, and how have they shaped the history of the Church and continue to speak to us today?

Whether you are new to exploring Matthew’s Gospel or already familiar with it, I hope that there will be something for everyone. We all know more of Matthew than we might realise, and this session will be a chance to deepen that understanding together.



The only requirement is to bring a Bible with you - not a phone or electronic device - and to come with an open mind, ready to think, learn, and be challenged. Refreshments will be served, and if you have any questions beforehand, please feel free to ask me.

Reverend Richard Haynes

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Coming next month : The Friends of St James Coffee Morning
with books & Bric-a-Brac
Saturday 7th March - 10.30am in Church House

SHOCKING ECO FACTS

Did you watch the Dr Who spin-off film over Christmas, called “The War Between the Land and the Sea”? I am not a science-fiction fan, but this film is one that everyone should watch. It is about an ancient species, Homo Aqua, forced to emerge from the sea to confront humans about all the plastics, oil, excrement, poison dumped there by humans and making it impossible for them to live at the bottom of the ocean. When the human response is not forthcoming, they decide to return what humans have dumped in the seas to the land. We see unimaginable quantities of plastics and other rubbish literally raining down - a plastics flood - over the whole world and an international emergency is declared!

Recently, Kate and John, Ray and I attended a talk at the Stratford upon Avon Autumn Literary Festival. We chose to attend a talk given by journalist, Saabira Chaudhuri, and criminal psychologist, Dr. Julia Shaw. Their talk focused on the way in which profit-obsessed global companies have hood-winked us into a reliance on disposable, often single-use, plastics and plastic-wrapped ultra-processed foods like ready meals. They asked how plastic could have taken over our lives and why we had been unable to rein it in. Dr. Shaw touched on some of the worst environmental “green” crimes of our time. It was shocking to realise that companies will claim recyclable disposability of their packaging / cups / etc. when in fact they are deceiving us. The talk made everyone present aware that we need to take responsibility for what we buy and what we believe of the manufacturers’ claims.

“While at first we shaped plastic, somewhere along the way plastic took over and began shaping us.” Saabira Chaudhuri.

From a book by Chaudhuri ...

Shocking fact number 1:

Many plastics are made using additives that can leach into food and drinks. Tiny particles of plastic have been found in everything from foetuses to the human brain, with a knock-on effect on health as well as biodiversity and the ocean’s ability to act as a carbon sink.

Shocking fact number 2:

Globally, just 9% of all plastic waste ever created has been recycled. Most plastics are uneconomical to recycle.

Shocking fact number 3:

The equivalent of one dustcart of plastic waste ends up in the ocean every minute.

From the talk at the literary festival, I took away the determination to buy food using the LOAF philosophy as one small step towards minimising our carbon footprint on God’s earth and seas - and to scrutinise packaging of goods beyond food before I commit to buy. I hope you will too.

At the end of “The War Between the Land and the Sea”, the head of UNIT (originally from Doctor Who, the Unified Intelligence Taskforce), is walking along a beach when she comes across a runner who drops his empty plastic water bottle.

“Pick that up”, she commands sternly. He refuses several times. The programme finishes as she produces a gun and points it at him.

“Pick it up”, she shouts. We assume that he did pick it up!

Chris Speakman for the Parish Eco Group

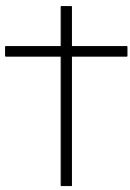


This month's ECO tip ...

Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth;

Turning the tap off when you don't need it saves the typical household

9,000 litres of water a year.



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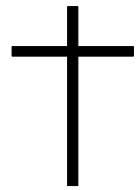
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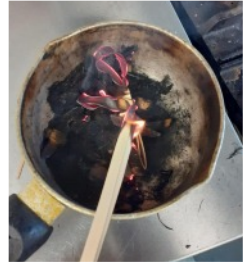
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PALM CROSSES FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

This year Ash Wednesday falls on 18th February marking the beginning of the season of Lent, and once again, I plan to use the palm crosses given out last year to make the ash.



Therefore, would you please bring any palm crosses you have into St James Church where there is a box on the right-hand side when you come in. Or, just let me know you have some and I can arrange a collection.



The plan is to make the ash on Ash Wednesday itself outside St James Church; and anyone who would like join me in making the ash is welcome, just let me know in advance that you would like to come.

The ash will then be used for our Eucharist service later in St James Church at 7.30pm where we will impose the ashes upon all who would like this done.

If you would like to know more, please feel free to get in touch.

Reverend Richard Haynes



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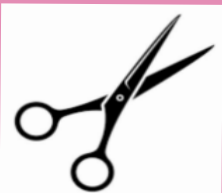
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LENT 2026 IN SHIRLEY PARISH - 'DRAW NEAR'

This year, our Lent journey runs from Ash Wednesday on 18th February to Easter Sunday on 5th April, and as part of our discipleship, we're delighted to be following the Church of England's national theme: **Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent.**

Together, we'll be exploring six practices that help us grow in faith and deepen our life with God:

worshipping together, praying, exploring the Bible, sharing communion, offering service, and sharing the good news with others.

As part of this, we're offering a series of Lent Conversations each week. You're welcome to come to whichever time suits you best:

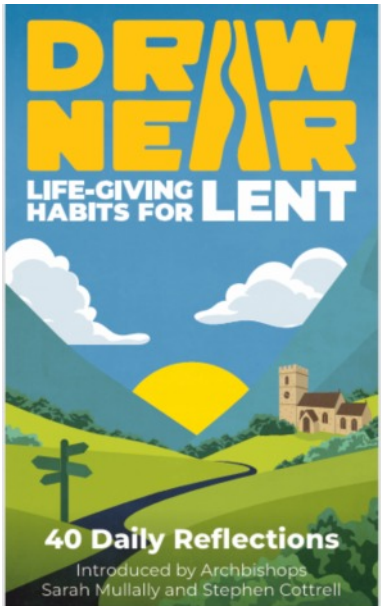
7.30pm on Wednesday evenings: 25th February, 4th March, 11th March, 18th March, 25th March

2pm on Thursday afternoons: 26th February, 5th March, 12th March, 19th March, 26th March

All sessions will take place at Church House.

As we travel from Lent to Holy Week and onto Easter, may this season help us draw near to God and discover again the life God longs to share with us. If you would like any more information, please speak with me or a member of the ministry team.

Reverend Richard Haynes



Booklets with daily reflections will be available in our churches and the Monday to Saturday reflections on the Everyday Faith App will also be based on the booklet.



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SHIRLEY PARISH



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FEBRUARY WORDSEARCH

Candlemas comes exactly forty days after Christmas. In New Testament times forty 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'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Luke 2: 22-40). 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.

AFTER

CHRISTMAS

IMPORTANT

PUBLIC

AGE

DAYS

JEWISH

TEMPLE

APPEARANCE

DESCRIBED

LIGHT

TESTAMENT

BABY

EARLY

LIGHTING

WORLD

BOY

FESTIVAL

MARY

CANDLEMAS

FIRST

NEW

Answers are

CANDLES

FORTY

PRESENTATION

on page 20

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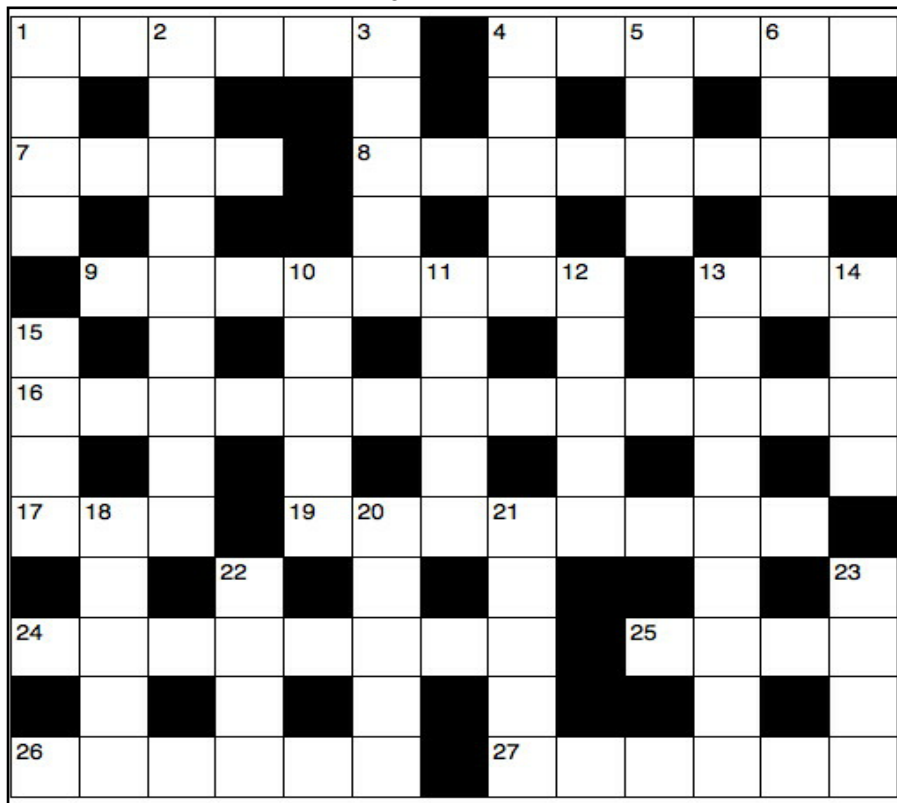
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

ACROSS

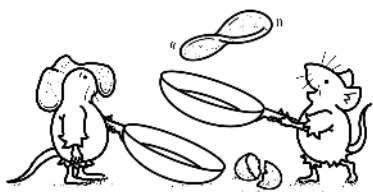
- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)
- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1–2) (5,3)
- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)
- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)

DOWN

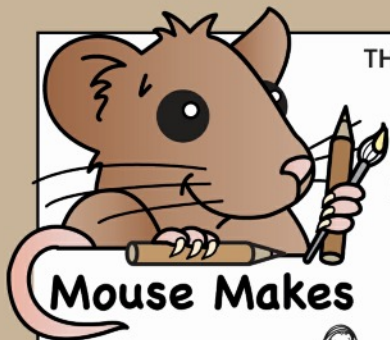
- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)
- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of 16 Across — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)



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



Answers are on page 25



Read the story in

Luke 4:1-13



THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible

Learn God's word.



SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first

Worship only Him.

1

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

JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust

Him do not test Him.



PUZZLE ANSWERS

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

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



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SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE *continued*

CHURCH WARDENS

Parish Wardens

Linda Pitt Tel: 0121 744 6777
email: lindaalisonpitt@gmail.com

Gill Hanton Tel: 07973 942145
email: gill.hanton@btinternet.com

Deputy Warden - St James the Great Church

Kate Crocker email: kate_crocker@hotmail.com
Tel: 07562 664163

Deputy Warden - St John the Divine Church

Linda Alford email: lindaalfor@hotmail.com
Tel: 0121 430 4785

SAFEGUARDING

Sue Harries
Tel: 07977 012753 or 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)



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Day at the races

Wednesday 11th March, 2pm - 4pm

Join us as we watch the races; it will be an afternoon for all to enjoy.

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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.

We must all look after one another.



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