

Shirley Parish Magazine

June 2026

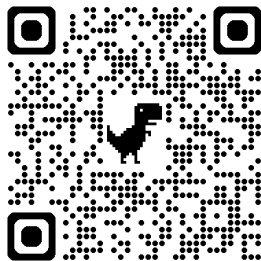


The flowers are blooming,
the time of birdsong has come!

Song of Songs 2:12



KNOWING CHRIST
MAKING HIM KNOWN



SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE (see also inside the back cover)

CLERGY & READERS

Vicar - in vacancy

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

Social Media: <https://www.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.

Registered Charity number 1131912

OUR SERVICES IN JUNE

Date	Time	Service	Venue
Thursday 4th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 7th	10.30am	Parish Communion	St James Church
	3.30pm	Reflective Worship	St James Church
Thursday 11th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 14th	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Holy Communion	St John's Church
	10.30am	Morning Worship	St James Church
Wednesday 17th	2pm	Home Communion Community Service	St James Church
Thursday 18th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Saturday 20th	10am	Messy Church	St James Church
Sunday 21st	10.30am	Parish Communion	St James Church
Thursday 25th	10.30am	Holy Communion	St James Church
Sunday 28th	8am	Holy Communion	St James Church
	9am	Morning Worship	St John's Church
	10.30am	Worship 4 Everyone	St James Church

10.30am Sunday Services at St James Church are live-streamed on YouTube -
<https://www.youtube.com/@shirleyparish5736>

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

KID'S CHURCH



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

(if you are not receiving the email please let Emily in the Parish Office know)

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 CURATE'S REFLECTION AT THE APCM (10th May)

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” — 1 Corinthians 12:12

It is a real privilege to offer a short reflection on the year we have just lived through together. This has been a year of change, but it has also been a year in which the faithfulness of many people has kept Shirley Parish steady and hopeful, and where there has been growth in many forms.

And so first, I want to pay tribute to Paul and Kate Day. They helped build a strong foundation of worship, mission, care, governance, and community life, and because of their faithful leadership, when vacancy came, we did not fall apart. In fact, not only have we been able to keep everything going — which is no small achievement — but thanks to the leadership teams and culture that had been built, we have actually seen growth in people coming in, in people growing in faith, as well as in our missional work: in schools, in care homes, and in the life events of baptism, funerals, and weddings.

It is right though, that amongst the growth we acknowledge the closure of Christ the King church as a place of worship last August and give thanks for all that was done there and through there.

The reports you have read show some of the visible signs of life and growth - and also the generous giving that made the Pod and the heating project possible. Those things matter. But there is another story that the reports can never fully illustrate - the story of the unseen, steady work that keeps this parish alive.

Think of our parish not as an organisation but as a living body. In that body there are parts — people — who contribute in so many ways, most of which are unknown outside those most immediately affected. Their names may not be in the reports, but their faithfulness is the reason everything else can happen. We owe them our gratitude just as much as the obvious people. Thank you.

So where are we now, as we gather today? We are a parish that has come through a year of change with faithfulness and grace. We are a community that has discovered, perhaps more deeply than before, how many gifts God has placed among us. We are a body in which people have stepped forward quietly, generously, and often sacrificially, to ensure that worship, pastoral care, and our presence in the wider community have continued without interruption.

We are also a parish that has learned something important about itself: that our life together does not depend on any one person, but on the shared work of many, and on the Spirit who holds us together. The truth is that God has been forming us in many ways and teaching us to trust him in the in-between times.

And we are a parish waiting in hope. The appointment process for a new incumbent is underway, and we hold that in prayer. But even as we wait, we can recognise that God has already been at work among us. The gifts we have seen emerging, the generosity we have witnessed, and the unity we have experienced are themselves signs of God's faithfulness in this season.

We are stewards and custodians of the churches in this parish and servants to all who live here, whatever they believe or don't believe. Jesus has given us the responsibility and the gifts to do this — namely the Holy Spirit and each other. We are a gift to one another.

So, if we acknowledge that and continue to show the courage we have already shown in saying 'yes' to one another and to God, then Shirley will continue to be a place where people know Christ and are helped to make him known.

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." — 1 Corinthians 12:12

Rev'd Richard Haynes

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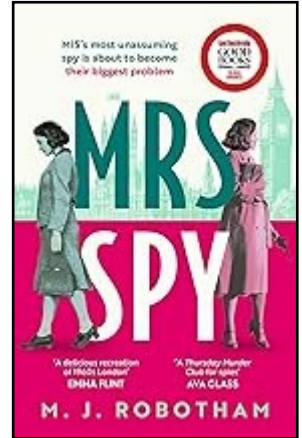


Email: steven_harwood@icloud.com

SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB

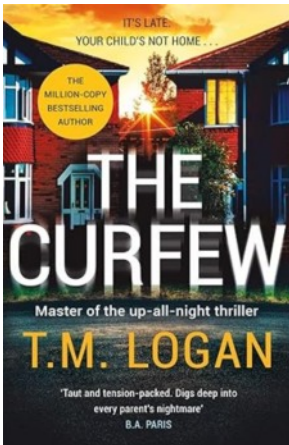
Mrs Spy by M.J. Robotham

The Book Club's latest read took us into 1960s London with an MI5 agent called Maggie Flynn. She is described as a 'watcher' – a spy who follows suspects and reports back rather than engaging with them face to face. She is widowed, has a Beatles-mad teenage daughter and is very good at disguises. She clearly feels that her job links her with her late husband – also, she thought, a low level 'watcher'. What she thinks is a comfortable job and lifestyle – apart from the demands of the teenage daughter – is turned upside down when she accidentally encounters a Russian agent who knew her husband and why he died. Her attempts to find out what really happened to her late husband take her further and further into danger and the world of spies.



There was a mixed response to the novel from Book Club members. They found the plot reasonably gripping especially towards the end, but most of the group found the characters not so easy to empathise with. The story starts slowly and takes a while to gather pace. Nevertheless, our Book Club readers were entertained and enjoyed being taken back into the 1960s – most of us are old enough to remember those times anyway.

The average score from the group, for 'Mrs Spy', was 5.1.



We were delighted to welcome a new member to this meeting and would, of course, be happy to see more new readers joining us in the future for books, tea, biscuits and wonderful conversations. Check the weekly pew slip for dates.

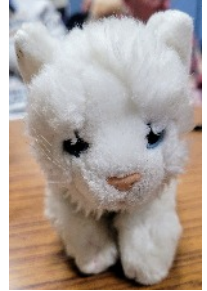
The next book is '**The Curfew**' by **T.M. Logan** and we will meet on **Monday 1st June**, 2pm in Church House.

Ray Speakman



LITTLE NICK AND A CONFUSION OF CAPITALS

Without a by or a leave I am stuffed into a bag on Sunday morning. Things did not improve when I found that I was at church. To be precise I was abandoned in the Sacristy. Sarah had left me a Winnie the Pooh book to read but it didn't help when she muttered something about being here for the APCM/AGM later ... and left the room.



It was ages before she came back. I could hear through the door that there was singing and talking. And I'm still not sure why I couldn't sit with Bernard even if Sarah was busy.

Eventually I was allowed out. Along with my bag I was taken into a pew. 'Funny', I thought 'we are near the front. We always sit at the back'. Bernard rescued me from the bag and sat me at the front to the pew. I could see people sat at a table in front. Richard was there so I tried to wave to him, but I nearly fell off and had to be rescued. He didn't wave back but I think he saw me.

I asked why we were here and Sarah explained that it was the annual parish church meeting which is like an annual general meeting but for a church. She kept saying APCMAGM until I got more and more confused. Apparently, it is to give the whole church the chance to hear what has happened during the last year and to look ahead to the future. Sarah pointed out that I am not old enough to vote so no raising a paw and anyway I'm not on the register to vote.

The people at the front did a lot of talking about money and things that had happened and things that we hoped would happen in church. I did get to laugh when it turned out that Sarah had forgotten to sign a form for something, not so clever after all!

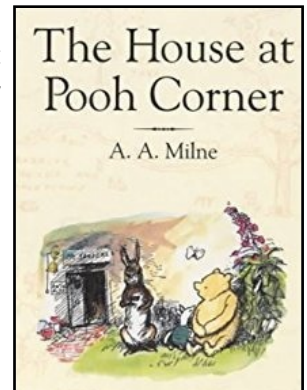
The meeting did not last too long, and it was good to hear about how the church is. There is something called PGS that I didn't understand. Oh, and PCC.

My head hurt in the car on the way home. I think I had been to a PCCPGSAPCMAGM but without the confusing letters it had been interesting. Just one thing still bothered me. Why was there a Winnie the Pooh book in the bag?

Sarah told me to download a sermon from the parish website to find out -

<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/download-a-sermon>

Nicodemus Penfold - Parish Raconteur (retired)





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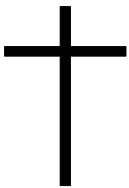


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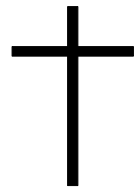
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Linda Pitt opened the May meeting and commenced with prayers.

Linda welcomed Liz Formby, Founder and Trustee of ACEF (Akamba Children's Education Fund) to give us an update on the Brainhouse School following the devastating floods in Kenya two years ago.

Brainhouse Academy is a school and children's home located in the Mathare North slum of Nairobi, Kenya, providing education, meals, and a safe environment for over 800-900 vulnerable children and orphans. Liz commenced by giving us a recap of the school's progress since her last visit to us and started her PowerPoint presentation with the school choir singing 'Amazing Grace'. When ACEF was set up sixteen years ago its main aim was providing food, clean water to drink and a safe place to live.

The devastating flooding in 2024 resulted in casualties and widespread damage, among the affected areas was Nairobi and Rift Valley. The school suffered with the loss of some of their buildings, equipment and resources. No lives were lost in the disaster. Not to be deterred, by the resilience of the adults the school is slowly recovering supported by ACEF. Liz went on to say that the school has its successes with some children going to university. They are all encouraged to believe in themselves, giving them confidence.

Whilst ACEF continues to support the school they are also branching out to help the children's families, particularly mothers, to encourage them to run their own businesses by the introduction of a microbank that is looked after by the son of the Headteacher. It is hoped that by lending small sums of money to mothers that it will help them to gain independence and contribute to society and in time pay back their loan plus interest to the microbank.

ACEF's aim is to give the school the tools and encouragement to improve their lives. Liz concluded with Desmond Tutu expression of the African philosophy of Ubuntu "I am because we are".

Our next meeting on **Wednesday 3rd June** will be a MU 150th Anniversary service in Church House followed by a celebration cake with tea or coffee.

All our meetings are held in Church House at 2pm and visitors are always welcome.

Susan Knight

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THIS MONTH'S ECO TIP

Wash vegetables in a bowl instead of under running water, then use the water to flush your toilet or water your garden.



I LOVE MY TOOTHBRUSH!

Dentistry creates a surprising amount of plastic waste for something that's about health. A single practice can create between 50 and 100 kg of plastic waste per month and, because it is mainly single-use plastic, it will take between 200 and 500 years to break down. And much of this single-use plastic, because it is then contaminated, cannot go into normal recycling, gets incinerated or goes into landfill, both creating CO₂.

We're talking about gloves, suction tips, bibs, instrument trays, packaging, patient cups to mention some of our per visit plastic usage. We can't do much about this and we can't blame dentists for this overuse of plastics. They use it because it is the only way at the moment to guarantee sterile, single-use items cheaply and reliably. And there are strict infection control standards, so anything re-usable must withstand autoclave sterilisation at 121 to 134°C. This rules out the use of bamboo, paper and most bio-plastics.

So, while we leave the world of dentistry to deal with safety versus waste, what can we do?

My dentist assures me that he is not on commission for recommending the usual electric toothbrush! He has not been supplied with any information on my aluminium-handled sonic toothbrush - and yet he has admitted that my dental scores are better than they have ever been! It is exactly the same story for my daughter, who also uses this planet-friendly sonic toothbrush.

Every year, four billion toothbrushes end up in landfill or in our oceans – that is enough to circle the globe twelve times.



For starters, the aluminium sonic toothbrush that I use comes with no plastic packaging. Teeth definitely feel cleaner than ever before, gums are stronger and dental scores verify this. When, like all electric toothbrushes, the brush head needs replacing after three months, a non-plastic envelope is supplied to send them back in threes, the natural bristles are removed and the rest of the brush heads are made into soap dishes! And the soap dishes are very stylish too!

As the manufacturers of my brush say, "Made to last in your bathroom, not landfills".

So, while dentistry works on eco solutions for their work, let's do our bit to support healthy teeth and gums without adding to the planet's problems ... because "our habits can change the world".

Chris Speakman - On behalf of the Eco Group

THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

Members are reminded that subscriptions for the next six months (June to November) are now due - £13 for six months - £26 for twelve months. Please make cheques payable to "Friends of St James 100 Club". Subscriptions may be handed into the Parish Office or posted to - Lynda McPherson, 90 Dickens Heath Road, Shirley B90 1RL.



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GIVING THANKS FOR FATHERS

There is no finer sound in the world than your child calling you 'daddy', or 'dad'. I love it!

And as I look around our neighbourhood, dads today are far more involved in their children's lives than when I was a child. Pushing prams, holding hands while out on a walk, bathing, playing games. Dads are in all these activities and more. I see the dads on either side of our house, and they obviously love their kids with all their hearts.

Unfortunately, too many kids grow up without a stable and involved male figure in their lives over the whole of their childhood and beyond. And no prizes for guessing the outcome; when they reach fatherhood, their kids often grow up without a stable and involved male figure in their lives.

The month of June brings Father's Day - this year on the 21st June. May all dads reading this be pampered like never before! If it's a fine day, it may be a case of 'Stand back everyone - dad's going to bar-b-q'. But before we get carried away, let's spare a thought for those who for one reason or another couldn't be dads, or whose dads fell far short of the high expectations we invest in them, or who lost a dad at a crucial time in life and feel a permanent ache where 'Dad' should be.

Our Christian faith teaches us to look at God as 'Father' - we address Him as such in the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, and it was Jesus' custom to talk to God as 'Father'. Maybe, taking into account those who have had a very mixed experience, or a bad experience of fathers, we should qualify what we say of God and call Him 'the Good Father', or 'our Good Father'.



Because that is what the experience of countless Christians would testify to; that God is a good father. I think of the picture Jesus paints in the parable of the Prodigal Son; the father on the look-out for his wayward son day after day, and when he sees him in the distance runs all the way to him to embrace him. Now in Jesus' time, in that culture, fathers did NOT run, least of all to welcome returning no-goods who had wasted half the father's fortune. Fathers were people of dignity. Run? Never!

Jesus has turned that on its head. We can be sure that a welcome awaits us; we turn to God, or return to God, and find that He's already half-way towards us, coming at speed to embrace us.

WHAT'S ON!

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During Love your Burial Ground Week/Churches Count on Nature, hundreds of church communities across the country take part in a week-long nature count to monitor and celebrate the biodiversity in their churchyards, which this year takes place from **Saturday 6th June to Sunday 14th June.**

In 2025 there were 8,668 records of nature spotted, that were submitted by over 6,000 participants.

This initiative is jointly run by the conservation charities Caring for God's Acre and A Rocha UK, together with the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

Look out for more details about how we will be participating in this year's event.

THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN: LORD, FOR THE YEARS

*Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.*

*Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the Word, receive your people's praise.*

*Lord, for our land in this our generation,
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.*

*Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt you,
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you:
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.*

*Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us –
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.*

By Timothy Dudley Smith

This well-loved hymn was written in 1967 by the Rev'd Timothy Dudley Smith, who later became Bishop of Thetford. He later confessed: "I wrote it on a train when I was very pressed for time. I'm thankful if something I write gets picked up, but I suspect anyone who does something in a rush later regrets that they didn't find time to apply the sandpaper a bit more!"

Dudley Smith had been asked to write a hymn for the centenary service of the Children's Special Service Mission, now Scripture Union, in St Paul's Cathedral. His commission was to write words that could be fitted to Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia*, as it was to be accompanied by an orchestra with this tune in their repertoire. And so – 'Lord for the years' was written.

Dudley Smith need not have worried about lack of time – his lyrics were a 'hit' in the cathedral on the day, and went on to become so well-loved that George Carey chose the hymn to be sung at his consecration as Bishop of Bath and Wells, and then again later, in 1991, on his consecration as Archbishop in Canterbury Cathedral.

The hymn continued to be widely sung and loved, until in 2002 Timothy Dudley Smith was asked to write an extra verse for it so that it could even be sung around the time of the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Many of the words in the hymn were true for Queen Elizabeth herself. She would have celebrated her 100th birthday this April, and her 'official' birthday on the second Saturday in June. She did indeed thank God 'for the years Your love has kept and guided, urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way'...

And so indeed the 'extra' verse added for the Queen also held true:

*Lord for our hopes, the dreams of all our living,
Christ and his kingdom one united aim,
Rulers and peoples bound in high thanksgiving,
Lord of our hopes, our trust is in your Name.*



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CORPUS CHRISTI – THANKS FOR HOLY COMMUNION

The feast of Corpus Christi was proposed by Thomas Aquinas, focused on the Eucharist or Holy Communion. It celebrates the joy of sharing the Body and Blood of Christ with His presence in the Eucharist, and is usually celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday (4th June this year).

Today, most Protestant denominations don't acknowledge the festival, because of its association with the doctrine of the Real Presence. However, some Anglican churches do observe it, as the Thanksgiving for Holy Communion.

How do we understand the significance of the Eucharist or Holy Communion? Paul in 1 Corinthians 11: 23-32, points us in three directions.

A Past Commemoration:

The Eucharist *looks back* as we remember the Passover meal Jesus shared with His disciples (Luke 22:14–20). Jesus broke the bread and took the cup to signify that His atoning sacrifice on the Cross delivers us from the bondage of sin and death. As we remember His broken body and shed blood, it becomes personal: Christ died for *me*, suffered for *my* sins that *I* might live. It is truly a *eucharist*, a thanksgiving: '*Do this in remembrance of Me*' (1 Corinthians 11: 24,25).

A Present Communion:

The Eucharist speaks of the communion we enjoy with a living Christ, because our sins are forgiven. Paul encourages us to *look in* at the state of our hearts: '*Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*' (28). We should also *look around* acknowledging the communion we have with other believers. Holy Communion expresses our unity together: '*Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.*' (11:17). Paul is expressing his concerns here about the divisions in the Corinthian Church.

A Future Certainty:

The Eucharist is also a place where we *look forward* to Christ's return: '*For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*' (26). It declares that the reign of Christ has already begun, as we look forward to Jesus' return. He will unite earth and heaven under His rule and sin, death and Satan will finally be defeated.

So, when we next take Holy Communion, let's reflect on the past, present and future implications of what this meal means for us.



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JUNE WORDSEARCH

Mary - the virgin mother of Jesus. Her visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, is a moving account of two humble, ordinary women, suddenly caught up in a great event that would shape world history. Their trusting faith in God and acceptance of His will, shine through.

After Jesus is born, Mary makes few appearances: when the family visits Jerusalem and she loses her Son on the way home; when she urges Him to help the wedding party in Cana with its wine problem; and when Jesus gives her into the keeping of the beloved disciple when He is dying on the cross. Mary's last appearance is in Acts, just before Pentecost.

Mary, chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ, one who is both God and Man, holds a unique place in history. Down the centuries that have followed, the Church has paid special honour to Mary – and well deserved it is. "All generations shall call me blessed..."

BELOVED
 BLESSED
 CANA
 CENTURIES
 CHURCH
 CROSS
 DISCIPLES
 DYING
 ELIZABETH
 EVENT
 FAMILY
 GREAT
 HISTORY
 JERUSALEM
 KEEPING
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*Answers are
on page 24*





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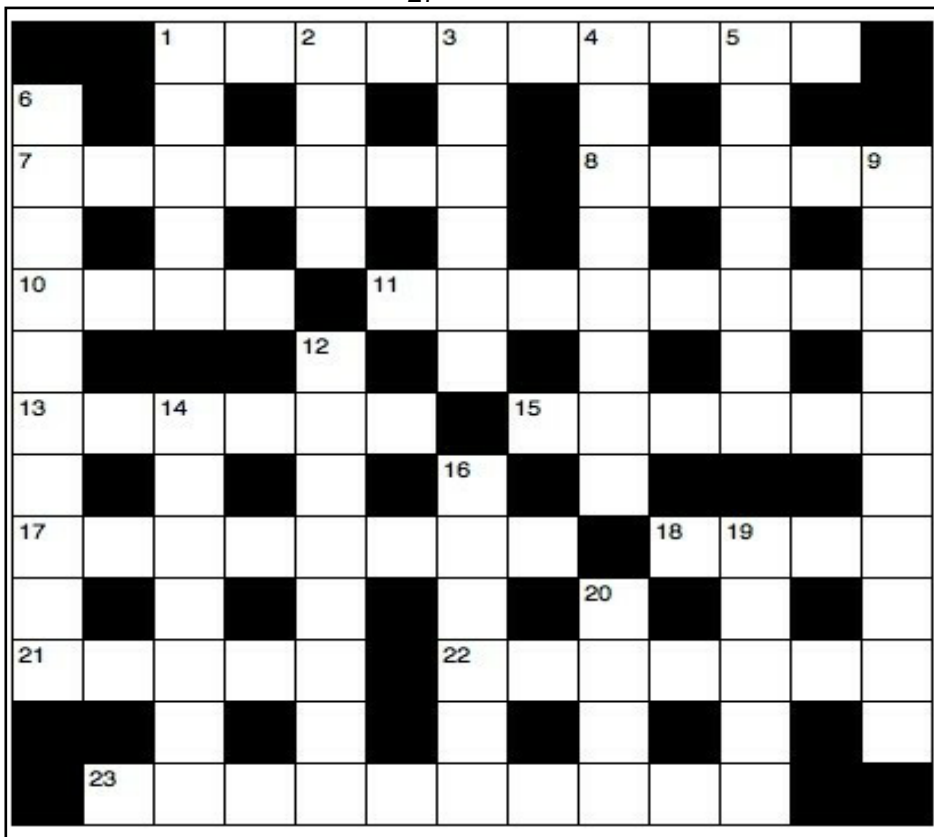
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

Across

- 1 Evil (Genesis 6:5) (10)
- 7 Musician called for by Elisha when he met the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom (2 Kings 3:15) (7)
- 8 The request that led to the institution of the Lord's Prayer: 'Lord, — us to pray' (Luke 11:1) (5)
- 10 'We are hard pressed on every—'(2 Corinthians 4:8)(4)
- 11 Fraud (2 Corinthians 6:8)(8)
- 13 'His troops advance in force;they build a siege ramp against me and — around my tent' (Job 19:12) (6)
- 15 Where Rachel hid Laban's household gods when he searched his daughter's tent (Genesis 31:34) (6)
- 17 'Now about spiritual gifts,brothers,I do not want you to be—' (1 Corinthians 12:1) (8)
- 18 Nomadic dwelling (Genesis 26:25)(4)
- 21 'As for man,his days are like—,he flourishes like a flower of the field' (Psalm 103:15) (5)
- 22 Or I live (anag.)(7)
- 23 Those guilty of 1 Across (Romans 13:4)(10)

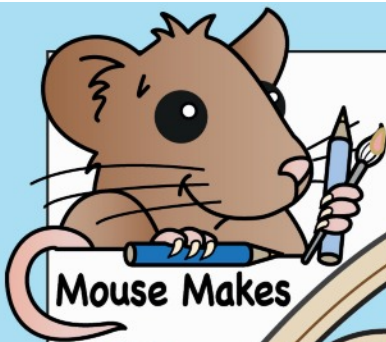
Down

- 1 'God so loved the — that he gave his one and only Son' (John 3:16) (5)
- 2 'Away in a manger, no — for a bed' (4)
- 3 Mob ten (anag.) (6)
- 4 'Each — group made its own gods in several towns where they settled' (2 Kings 17:29) (8)
- 5 Began (Luke 9:46) (7)
- 6 Speaking very softly (John 7:32) (10)
- 9 Workers Ruth joined when she arrived in Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (Ruth 2:3) (10)
- 12 Put in jail (Acts 22:19)(8)
- 14 Aceturn (anag.)(7)
- 16 Discharge (Acts 21:3)(6)
- 19 'All these—come from inside and make a man "unclean"' (Mark 7:23) (5)
- 20 'Let us rejoice and be glad and — him glory!'(Revelation 19:7)(4)



1	5								
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"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



<p>V HIW VENLR SLAEPLG HALDOOR EMEWORD PBREADW HLALPHA EEMCGJY RMEHOEK DMIRSST SAVIOUR PNESNSU OUNTLOT MESSIAH RLGBFIS KEOMEGA</p>	<p>O ISD JYIAM ACGODJM LROCKUA MELORDJ IABBAGE GTDEBES HOYRFET TRAHATY YGHOIEF VSWLARA OHEYENT JEHOVAH IKINGLE SHIELDR SAVIOUR</p>	<p>V UDE TRUTH THAHSRI OSPOWER ULFLIFE POWYNDR AWISDOM DBEPBVC VWTIREO OIEREFM CTRIAIF ANNTTRO TEACHER ESLGIFT DSGUIDE THELPER</p>

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 SON • SAVIOUR • LORD
 EMMANUEL • MESSIAH
 SHEPHERD • LAMB • WAY
 TRUTH • LIFE • DOOR
 BREAD • WORD • HEALER
 VINE • ALPHA • OMEGA

GOD • FATHER
 ABBA • LORD • JEHOVAH
 YAHWEH • ALMIGHTY
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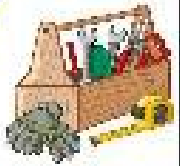
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