



50p (or £5 per annum)

## SALTWOOD PARISH MAGAZINE

Saltwood and Lympe benefice



January  
2026

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**ITEMS FOR THE FEBRUARY MAGAZINE**

If you have any items for the February edition of the magazine, please forward to Beth Lewsey, by the **24<sup>th</sup> January** by email if possible, to: [parishmagazine@saltwoodchurch.org](mailto:parishmagazine@saltwoodchurch.org) or deliver to 20 Castle Avenue. (Tel 01303 264577).

*N.B. Copies of the parish magazine can be found under the tab 'Newsletters' on our website: [lympneandsaltwoodchurches.org.uk](http://lympneandsaltwoodchurches.org.uk)  
The 'e' version may contain extra material, so it's always worth a look!*

There is a memorial to them in Leigh. This was an amusing and yet thought-provoking talk.

Marjorie Mitchel gave the vote of thanks which was heartily endorsed by the members.

The next meeting will be on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2026 when we will discuss and vote on the resolutions for the NFWI Annual Meeting in June. Our speaker will be Brian Russell with a talk entitled Getting Paid for Seeing Amazing Things.

**Margaret Alcock**

## Finishing with a Smile ...

...A clergyman was walking down the street when he came upon a group of about a dozen boys, surrounding a small puppy. Concerned lest the boys were hurting it, he went to investigate. One boy explained, "We just found this puppy, and we all want him. So, we've decided that whichever one of us can tell the biggest lie will get to take him home."

The minister was taken aback. "Don't you boys know it's a sin to lie? Why, when I was your age, I never told a lie." There was dead silence for a moment. The minister thought he had got through to them.

Then the smallest boy gave a deep sigh and said, "All right, give him the dog."





## Castle Green WI

<https://castlegreenwi.org.uk/>

President Christine Farquhar welcomed thirty-five members and six guests to the December meeting. The Lads' Club was looking suitably festive as were members. The record of the last meeting was approved and signed.

Mary W was thanked for her Christmas floral arrangement and Christine B; Kate D and Julia M were thanked for organising the refreshments.

Future events. The committee had been working on the 2026/27 programme, and it is on the website.

Subgroups. Please see website for details of future meetings. Our Annual Meeting will be on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026, and Christine asked members to consider joining the committee as several long-standing committee members will be standing down.

As it was Christmas we then enjoyed mulled wine, mince pies, ginger cake; coffee, tea and chat were also available as usual.

We then settled down to listen to Tony Harris whose illustrated talk was entitled My Life as a Film Star. Tony was secretary of the Baptist Church in Whitstable when he was approached by a film company which was looking for locations for an episode of a BBC series about the evacuation of Dunkirk. Whitstable was to become Leigh-on-Sea. Tony took us through the process of filming, the people involved, not forgetting the catering truck, and how he became a 1940s Methodist Minister. His "film" of these events was excellent and amusing. In the second part of his talk Tony told us of the three men from Leigh on-Sea who were the subjects of the BBC film. Frank Osborne, Leslie Osborne, and Harold Potter were fishermen who volunteered to take their "little ship" to Dunkirk and lost their lives on the return journey.

## A Letter from the Rector

Dear All

As we step into a new year, it's a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the recent Christmas season and the ever-changing seasons of our lives. The joy of Christmas lingers in our hearts, reminding us of the hope and light that Jesus brings into our world.

This past Christmas, we celebrated the birth of Jesus who truly is the Saviour of the earth. As we reflect on this fact each, just for a moment, consider the significance in God of new beginnings, His love, and the promise of redemption. As we lit our candles and sang familiar carols, we were reminded of the humble manger and the profound truth that God chose to enter our world in such an ordinary, yet extraordinary way.

Christmas is not just about receiving gifts; it's a time to give and share. Whether through acts of kindness, donations to those in need, or simply offering a listening ear, we embody Christ's love when we serve others.

Our gatherings during the Christmas season were a testament to the strength of our community. The joy of fellowship, the warmth of shared meals, and the laughter of children remind us that we are never alone on this journey of faith.

As we transition into January, we are reminded that life is filled with seasons—each with its own purpose and beauty.

Winter is a season that represents dormancy and rest. Just as nature takes a break, we too are called to reflect, recharge, and seek God's guidance for the year ahead. It's a time for focus on our own wellbeing and prayer, allowing ourselves to be still and listen for God's voice.

In Spring we will see signs of new life emerging. This is a metaphor for growth and renewal. Just as flowers bloom after the cold, we are invited

to embrace the new opportunities and challenges that God places before us.

Summer and Autumn seasons bring their own joys and trials. Summer represents the vibrancy of life, while fall reminds us of the beauty in letting go. Each season teaches us valuable lessons about faith, resilience, and trust in God's plan.

As we embark on this new year, let's carry the light of Christmas in our hearts and be open to what God has in store. Consider setting spiritual goals for the year. Whether it's committing to regular prayer, studying Scripture, or participating in church activities, intentionality can deepen our faith. Let's continue to support one another in our journeys. Join us for upcoming events and service projects that foster community and reflect Christ's love.

In this season of new beginnings, let us remember that God is with us through every season of life. May we find joy in the journey, comfort in His presence, and strength in our community.

Wishing you and your families a blessed and fulfilling New Year!

Rev Barry



Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do; but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do.  
– Anon

Many well-preserved terrestrial shells were also found, the majority being common garden snails and a small number of other snails widespread in southern England. They were all large, but it is not certain whether or not they were for eating. They will, however, be a valuable future contribution to our understanding of Roman activity in Lympe and local ecology.

Greg stressed the importance of always sieving on future digs to provide information not previously known. Apparently, it appears that Great Britain is the only English-speaking country that does not routinely sieve excavated material. In Canada, the United States and Australia, sieving is effectively mandatory for professional credibility, as information is often lost when hand digging alone. However, sieving should be selective, depending on context and material (e.g. building debris may not require full sieving). Samples should be recorded by volume, and statistically useful counts of approximately 200–600 items are considered acceptable for analysis. To prevent confusion between excavation areas or contexts, no more than one cubic metre (1 m<sup>3</sup>) of soil should be processed at a time. All recovered finds and fragments must be placed in clearly labelled trays corresponding to their context and unit. Wet sieving can be used for heavy clay type soils, but great care must be taken if water-soluble material, metal or glass are expected to be found. Pre-treatment with washing soda in a bucket of water overnight allows such soils to be sieved. SHAL thanks Greg for his analysis and advice. We are looking forward to reading his final report, our next year's excavations, and of course more sieving, that will add to our growing knowledge.

**Next meeting: 7.30 pm on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026** at the Harry Margary Hall, Lympe - 'Memories of Lympe and Brockhill Schools'. If you would like to become a member of SHAL please email Rosemary Stutchbury at [rosemary@stutchbury.myzen.co.uk](mailto:rosemary@stutchbury.myzen.co.uk).

## SHAL: Studying History and Archaeology in Lympe

### SHAL's Beacon Field Shell Finds by Greg Campbell - self-styled 'Naïve Chemist'

Greg Campbell, a specialist marine shell archaeologist, spent a day examining shells from this year's dig. His initial report (summary follows) gives a fascinating insight into some of the eating and food production habits of Roman-period occupants of Beacon Field, Lympe. They ate oysters primarily from fully managed beds along with 'wild' oysters and common whelks as by-catch. They also consumed mussels from well-managed or regularly harvested beds, supplemented by digging or raking of intertidal mud (cockles, spiny cockles, Baltic tellins) and gathering on rocky shores (limpets, periwinkles, dogwhelks) possibly along the high tide line which was considerably more marine and estuarine than the present day. All of these could have come from the nearby coast and what is now known as Romney Marsh.

**Analysis of shells** There are 1,016 shells, most well preserved, and structurally sound with little flakes or chips. 10 shell types were identified, all native to the British Isles, namely common oysters (75%), mussels (13%), common whelks (5%), edible cockles (5%), and small quantities of others. Two badly broken spiny cockles found may have been harvested with the edible cockles. Approximately 2% of the shells were large, well preserved common limpets. There was one dog whelk, one periwinkle (both common on rocky shores) one Baltic tellin and one cuttlefish bone, the latter being a rare find in archaeological digs. The common oysters colonized stable surfaces from low tide to 80 metres depth. Preservation was good, with about one in four shells complete enough to measure and almost all were of a good size (4-6 inches) for eating. Greg's analysis indicated that whole oysters had been transported to the site and the shells' appearance and attached organisms suggest they lived in silt-free waters.

## Diary – St Peter and St Paul



January  
2026



<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup></b>	18.00-19.00	Bell Ringing Practice – <i>and each following Thursday</i>	
	19.00	Choir Practice – <i>and each following Thursday</i>	
<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	N.B,	Carol Eastell's day off – <i>and each following Friday</i>	
	09.00	Prayer Group in the Church – <i>and each following Friday</i>	
<b>Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	10.00	Book Fair in the Lads' Club	
<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup></b> <i>Epiphany</i>	08.00	Holy Communion BCP	
	09.45	Bubble Church in the Lads' Club	
	09.40	Prayer Meeting in the Lady Chapel ( <i>and each following Sunday</i> )	
	10.00	Holy Communion	
<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup></b>	14.00	Monday Chats in the Lads' Club – <i>and each following Monday</i>	
<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	N.B.	Our Rector's day off – <i>and each following Tuesday</i>	
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	10 – 11.30	Toddler Group in the Lads' Club - <i>&amp; each following Wednesday</i>	
	14.00	Afternoon Prayer Groups at 34 Harpswood Lane	

<b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup></b>  <i>Baptism of Christ (Epiphany 1)</i>	09.00	Holy Communion at Pedlinge (BCP)
	10.00	Holy Communion
	16.00	Bonfire and bangers at Saltwood church
<b>Wednesday 14<sup>h</sup></b>	14.00	Cinema Club in the Lads' Club
<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup></b>	11.00	Funeral (David Sheath)
	19.00	Hymn Singing at Lympne
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	10.30	Coffee Morning at Lympne
	18.00	Quiz Night in the Lads' Club
<b>Sunday 18<sup>th</sup></b>  <i>Epiphany 2</i>  <i>(Start of Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)</i>	08.00	Holy Communion BCP
	10.00	Holy Communion – and Sunday Club in the Lads' Club
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup></b>  <i>Conversion of Paul (Epiphany 3)</i>	08.00	Holy Communion BCP
	10.00	Hooba Family Service
	16.00	Taize Service at Lympne

### Saltwood Church Pastoral Group

*'And let us look out for one another to provoke love and good works'*

Our Pastoral Group meets monthly to seek ways of offering support to those who are going through difficult or challenging times. If you know someone you are concerned about, or if you have concerns yourself, please contact us. You will always find a friendly voice and a listening ear at the end of the line. Caring for others is at the heart of Christian life and you can help us by being our eyes and ears, letting us know of anyone who is in need.

Contacts: 01303 266454      01303 883243

Lympne Fellowship normally meets at 1.15pm in the Harry Margary Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, with a programme of interesting and informative talks and activities.

For further information about our group, please contact **Jill Page on 07846 819693**.

***ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH, LYMPNE***

## *Coffee Morning*



***SATURDAY 17<sup>th</sup> January***

***10.30 am - 12.30pm***

- *Join us for coffee and festive cakes & bakes*
- *Bring the family, friends and neighbours*
- *Catch up with old friends and new  
(well-behaved dogs welcome)*

**Proceeds to maintenance of the church plus  
a donation to the month's nominated charity:**

**Home Farm Trust, Lympne Place**  
**Supporting adults with learning disabilities**

## ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, LYMPNE



### Services & Events in January

Sunday 4th Jan	11am Holy Communion
Sunday 11th Jan	11am Family Service
Sunday 18th Jan	11am Holy Communion
Sunday 25th Jan	11am Holy Communion

### 4pm Taizé Service

### Regular Events:

Mondays 12:-30-1pm (every other week) - Prayer Meeting

Mondays 5pm (every other week) - Home Group - Speak to Valerie or Rachel

Mondays 19:30-21:30 - Bell ringing Practice (each week)

Friday mornings (every other week) - Home Group - Speak to Monica or Peter

Saturday mornings 10:30 - 12:30 Eco group working churchyard (when dry)

### Lympne Fellowship

Our December meeting saw us enjoying our Christmas Party with plenty of bring and share food, mulled wine, while trying to match up photos of young children with their adult selves – quite a challenge! Now all the Christmas festivities are over and we are settling down into yet another New Year, with a packed programme to look forward to. In January we will be playing Bingo with a Difference – last year's was great fun, always allowing for time to socialise and catch up with what's going on.

## A Prayer for the month of January

Heavenly Father,  
As the dawn of 2026 unfolds, we pause to thank You for the gift of life, the lessons of the past, and the promise of what lies ahead. Bless this year with peace in our hearts, clarity in our minds, and strength in our spirit.

Guide our steps so they align with Your purpose, and let kindness flow through our words and actions.

Protect our loved ones, heal the broken, and bring light to places shadowed by fear or doubt. May this year be filled with growth, joy, and opportunities to serve others with love.

May we place every plan, dream, and challenge into Your hands, putting our trust in You, Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
*Amen.*



## INTERCESSIONS FOR JANUARY

*Today we pray especially for.....*



- 1 Those who live in Bartholomew Close and Lea Close
- 2 Those who protect us – the emergency services
- 3 All who worship at St Peter & St Paul and at Pedlinge
- 4 Saltwood school, at the start of a new term
- 5 The lonely, thinking particularly of those known to you
- 6 Those who live in Bartholomew Lane and St John's Road
- 7 Those who visit our church and those who make use of it
- 8 Holy Trinity Folkestone, St George Folkestone, and St. Paul Sandgate
- 9 Our organists and choir
- 10 Canterbury Cathedral, Diocesan House and their staffs
- 11 Those who live in Hillcrest Road and Quarry Lane
- 12 Those who care for the church and churchyard and make them beautiful
- 13 The national role of the Church of England
- 14 St John the Baptist Folkestone
- 15 Our neighbours
- 16 Those who live in Holly Close and Mulberry Court
- 17 Those unsure of their future, thinking particularly of those known to you
- 18 St Augustine's Primary School – staff and pupils
- 19 The Pilgrims Hospice
- 20 Families going through difficult times, thinking particularly of those known to you
- 21 Those who live in North Road West, North Road and Barrack Hill
- 22 Those parts of the world where there is war or political strife and those who suffer as a result
- 23 Our own benefice with St Stephen Lympne
- 24 His Majesty's Government and Members of Parliament
- 25 Compassion UK
- 26 Those who live in Pedlinge and Sandling
- 27 The terminally ill and their families, thinking particularly of those known to you

Over the past 60 years there has been a huge shift from “What’s on tonight?” to “What do I feel like watching right now?” The pressure on evening services from TV schedules has largely disappeared — first through video recorders, and more recently through catch-up services and a move towards other forms of content altogether.

But what about Sunday mornings? For many families, Sunday morning is now sports time, with football, rugby and cricket training and matches, as well as swimming, dancing, gymnastics clubs, and competitions. How is the church responding to the habits of much of the country today?

If Sunday Night at the Palladium prompted a shift in church service times 60 years ago, perhaps the church should again consider how it might offer something for the sportsmen and women in our communities. Late afternoon or evening services might be an option.

**Late Afternoon Taizé Service.** On Sunday 25th January at 4pm there will be another Taizé style service at Lympne church. A chance to join in a quiet, contemplative service, singing simple chants, accompanied by cello and piano. Candles and some art or a picture to focus on, maybe a short reading but no sermon.



(N.B. 18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity)

### Monthly Afternoon Prayer Group:

We have such a lot to pray for and we would love more of you to join us at Penny's home, 34 Harpswood Lane. We usually pray for up to an hour and then Penny puts the kettle on for a welcome cup of tea. The next meeting is on Wednesday 7 January at 2 pm.

### Lent Lunches:

(Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on 18 February through to Holy Week and Palm Sunday on 29 March)

At this late stage we are still hoping the Lent lunches will happen. These will be on four Saturdays during Lent but the dates have not been confirmed yet. I expect we could use some extra hands to help the various groups and we most certainly will need your help in making some soup. However, if you have a burning desire to take the whole of this organising on please give Carol a ring on 07795 100 441. Otherwise please make yourselves available to help and also to come to the lunches.

### From Rachel Cornish (Warden at Lympne):

#### Sunday Night at the Palladium...

Who remembers this? Certainly not the Lympne churchwardens — they're far too young!

This was a live variety show broadcast by ITV from 1955 to 1967. It became a cultural phenomenon, regularly drawing massive audiences, sometimes reaching up to 22 million viewers - nearly half the UK population at the time. It had a significant impact on Sunday evening habits across the country. Many churches even changed service times to allow congregations to get home in time to watch.

Today, younger generations don't watch television in the same way. Instead, they watch content on their own schedule, on their own devices — via YouTube, Netflix, Amazon Prime, TikTok, Instagram, Twitch, podcasts, and more.

- 28 Our study groups
- 29 Other, non-Anglican, churches in the local area
- 30 Folkestone Rainbow Centre
- 31 Those who live in Sandling Road and Highfield Close

## PAYMENT for your Parish Magazine

This magazine has been printed for the benefit of those who cannot access the internet. If you need this paper copy, a small charge of 50p per copy, or £5 per annum, is made to cover the cost of printing. Your payment may be put in the wall safe by the church door.

However, if you have the magazine delivered to you, January is a good time to hand the £5 to the person who delivers to you, and they can pass this to our Treasurer, John Hall.

May I remind you that all editions of the magazine, including a fuller version of this month's can be found on the church website: [www.lympneandsaltwoodchurches.org.uk](http://www.lympneandsaltwoodchurches.org.uk)

Just click on 'Newsletters' on the very top line (next to 'Join mailing list') and select the month you wish to read. Of course, reading the magazine via the internet is free!

If you would like a monthly email reminder that the new online magazine is available, just contact the Rector, and ask to be added to the mailing list

## Used Stamps

A reminder that any stamps you have from post received can be used to raise funds for charity. It would be helpful if you could separate the UK ones from the overseas ones and trim the borders to 1 cm. Melissa Russell will be pleased to receive them from you. Thank you!





## Saltwood Cinema Club

on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January

at 2pm in the Lads' Club

### THE THURSDAY MURDER CLUB

Four irrepressible retirees spend their time solving cold case murders for fun, but their casual sleuthing takes a thrilling turn when they find themselves with a real whodunit on their hands.

**Cost £5 per person to include tea and cake**

All proceeds to the Lads' Club Funds



### NOTES FROM THE CHOIR

Happy New Year everyone, festivities over for 2025, we now look forward to new beginnings, new resolutions, and most of all hopes for peace and tranquillity in 2026.

Here are some lyrics to a song our little Music Group used to sing most years in January. The song is called 'Candlemas Eve' and based on an old poem about the passing of the seasons and how new things succeed the old:-

*"Down with the rosemary and bay, down with the mistletoe  
Instead of holly now upraise the greener box to show  
The holly hitherto did sway, let box now domineer  
Until the dancing Easter Day on Easter eve appear  
Now youthful box which now has grace your houses to renew  
Grown old surrender just it's place unto the freshened yew  
When yew is out then birch comes in and many the flowers besides*

And this is why the virgin birth matters. Christ is fully human through Mary, yet free from Adam's fallen inheritance. Mary is indeed "*favoured among women*," but the miracle lies not in her nature, but in God's preserving work. Any faithful woman could have been chosen, at any time. God is beginning something entirely new.

The promise then focuses on one Person: "*He shall bruise your head.*" The serpent will wound Him, but He will win. In one sentence we glimpse the cross and the resurrection.

So perhaps the wonder of Genesis 3:15 is that the story of both Christmas and Easter is first spoken not in Bethlehem, but in Eden. At the very moment everything seems lost, God promises that a Child will come who will suffer, yet prevail, undo the serpent's work, and bring new life.

Christmas, it turns out, begins far earlier than we think — and its light shines from the garden all the way to the manger, and onwards to the cross.

### From Carol Eastell: -

#### Monday Chats:

We all enjoyed being at the Castle pub for our Christmas lunch. Jackie, Morag and Jess made us very welcome and they had decorated the pub so nicely with the log fire burning. We are looking forward to future gatherings there. Jackie has lots of ideas some of which will be right up our street. Senior lunches and Friday mornings for breakfast, coffee etc. Monday Chatterers will be spoilt for choice as we are also hoping to meet in the pub once a month for a leisurely lunch, though not on Mondays as that is the pub's day off!

Following the Christmas break, our weekly meetings begin again on Monday 5 January in the Lads' Club from 2 pm to 4. Come and join us – you will be most welcome.

*“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,  
and between thy seed and her seed;  
it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”*

Genesis 3:15 (KJV)

What is striking is that God speaks these words not to Adam or Eve, but directly to the serpent. And that is worth pausing over. The serpent first appears here in the third chapter from the beginning of the Bible with little explanation, but in a lovely piece of biblical symmetry, in the third chapter from the end of the Bible we are told plainly who he is — *“that old serpent, which is the Devil”* (Revelation 20:2).

Before God even addresses humanity, He announces that evil will one day be defeated. The Gospel is declared at the moment things look darkest. Adam and Eve are simply bystanders, receiving grace before they hear anything of judgment on them.

Then comes the unusual phrase, *“between thy seed and her seed.”* Everywhere else in the Bible, family lines are traced through the father, never the mother — except here. The serpent’s seed follows the ordinary human line, passed on from father to child. But *“her seed”* is spoken of differently. It is set apart, preserved, and not treated as a carrier of that same inheritance. Long before Isaiah speaks of a virgin conceiving, Genesis has already planted the idea that this birth will be different.

Christians speak of *Original Sin* — the brokenness we all inherit from the fall. Every human being shares it, but Scripture consistently traces its transmission through Adam, the father of the human race, not through Eve. The mother is no less human and no less sinful, but the brokenness of the race is passed on through the father. That is why the phrase *“her seed”* is quietly significant: it points to a birth in which that ordinary line of inheritance is bypassed altogether.

*Both of a fresh and fragrant kin to honour Whitsuntide.  
Thus times do shift, thus times do shift, each thing its time doth hold  
New things succeed, new things succeed as former things grow old.”*

We also look forward to a new term in our choir, there are Evensong services to rehearse for and it really is not that long until Easter on 5<sup>th</sup> April. We will be singing some of the most moving hymns and anthems during Passiontide, so please do come and share these with us, they are too beautiful to keep to ourselves.

All of us in the choir would like to pay tribute to our dear Richard Baulch, who recently passed away. He was a true friend and inspiration to so many people, and touched so many lives with his warmth, humour, and incredible musical talent.

In the absence of a musical director, he gave so much of his time to the choir - although he was the first to admit that he was more an entertainer than choir master - taking us most Thursday evenings without one murmur of complaint, in fact he rather enjoyed himself. On several occasions we would finish our hymns and he would go straight into band music or play Rachmaninov, just straight off, no music, just pure talent, and the smile on his face was utter joy. We shall all miss him so much. Thank you, Richard, for the music.

**Fran Dyer**



## From the Parish Magazine – JANUARY 2006

January 2006 was a quiet month in Saltwood, so instead of 'news' here is a thoughtful page from twenty years ago:-

### The Basket and the Bible

The story is told of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandfather was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading from his old worn-out Bible.

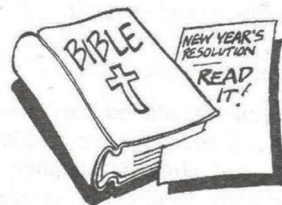
One day the grandson asked, "Grand-father, I try to read the Bible just like you but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. "What good does reading the Bible do?"

The Grandfather turned from putting coal in the stove and said, "Take this coal basket down to the river and bring back a basket of water." The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, "You will have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again.

This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was "impossible to carry water in a basket," and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, "I don't want a bucket of water; I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out the door to watch the boy try again.

At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could, the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but when he reached his grandfather the basket was again empty. Out of breath, he said, "See, it's useless!"

"So you think it is useless?" the old man said "Look at the basket." The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old coal basket, it was clean. "Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. "You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out."



showing us together. And very deliberately, we are asking for ideas — imaginative, prayerful, simple or bold ways of offering hospitality, ideas that can be shared, shaped, and taken forward together across churches, well beyond benefice boundaries. Nothing will be dismissed out of hand. There is no pressure and no expectation — just an open invitation to walk, listen, pray, and imagine alongside one another.

### Quinquennial Inspection

2026 is a quinquennial year for Saltwood. Every five years, all Church of England buildings undergo what is known as a *quinquennial inspection*. This is a thorough but routine review carried out by a suitably qualified inspecting architect or surveyor, who looks carefully at the fabric of the church — roofs, walls, stonework, rainwater goods, timber, and other key elements — to assess their condition and identify any maintenance or repairs that may be needed. The purpose is not to find fault, but to help us care well for the building that has been entrusted to us, plan sensibly for the future, and address small issues before they become larger and more costly problems.

### Bible Gem 1 - The First Christmas Message — Hidden in Eden

Last month, I promised that I would try, each month, to share a few Bible gems — little treasures that are sometimes easy to miss, but which reward a closer look. And as we find ourselves at the beginning of a new year, it seemed especially fitting to begin right at the beginning of the Bible itself.

What may surprise some is that within the first three pages of Scripture — long before kings, prophets, or even Israel itself — the Gospel is already there. Not explained in detail, of course, but revealed with certainty. God makes it clear from the outset that evil will not have the final word, and that a deliverer will come.

and neighbours! The last quiz was a great success and a sell-out. The Lads' Club has a finite capacity, so it's first come first served, don't wait to the last minute!

An evening of fun and fellowship – cowboy style! Look forward to seeing you!

**Peter Kent**

## WARDENS' CORNER

**From John Campbell: -**

**Elham Deanery Matters:**

As well as being Churchwarden, I am also one of your deanery representatives and Co-Lay Chair of the Deanery Synod. Over the past few months there has been a quiet but very encouraging stirring across the deanery, as people from different parishes have begun meeting, listening, praying, and getting to know one another a little better. It has not been about programmes or plans, but about making space for God to speak and for relationships to grow. This sits within a wider, quiet awakening that is becoming visible across society — a sovereign work of God, drawing people back into relationship with Him, often in simple and unexpected ways: a desire to come into church, to open a Bible, or to read one for the first time. We sense that our call, in this season, is to be ready for that work through hospitality — first towards one another, then between churches, and from there outward to every stranger God brings across our path.


As Reverend Barry has written and said so clearly, our openness and readiness matter deeply. As we move forward, we would really value your prayers for the whole deanery, and we would love more people simply to come along to deanery synods, share a cup of tea, meet others from neighbouring churches, and be part of discerning what the Lord is




A new year is traditionally a time to reflect on how we might do better – and many of us make New Year's Resolutions, though how long we manage to keep them is another matter altogether ... Perhaps that's because we try to do things in our own strength, rather than asking for God's help!

Here are a few things we might consider as we make plans and resolutions for this new year:-





# BOOK FAIR



Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2026

**THE LADS CLUB**

Rectory Lane, Saltwood

CT21 4PZ


10.00 am to 12.30 pm

FREE ENTRANCE

Free parking at church car park

START THE NEW YEAR & STOCK UP WITH

## ALL TYPES OF BOOKS



Military -WW1 & 2


Railways & Steam Locomotives

Art & Painting/Local History

Hobbies/Sport/Classics

Novels/Hardbacks/Children/Young Persons

Some Old /Collectables/Rare Books






### ALL AT BARGAIN PRICES

### REFRESHMENTS


Stay and have a cuppa and a slice


ALL FUNDS GO TO THE LADS' CLUB



CASH ONLY



	<h2 style="color: blue;">Wild West Supper &amp; Quiz Night</h2>	
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Tickets are going fast, approx. two-thirds sold, so book your places now to avoid disappointment. Also, like last time, I need tickets to be paid for in advance (either with cash or the plastic bank cards machine) and by latest Sunday 4th January please.

A reminder -the Wild West themed Supper & Quiz Night is on Saturday 17th January 2026 at 6pm in Saltwood Lads' Club. Tickets are £10. All proceeds go to St Peter & St Paul church funds.

Sadly, it's not possible for the Lads' Club to provide a hot supper. But we won't be put off by this and we will still have a Wild West Supper together although it will have to be a **bring-your-own supper** (please bring your own plates & cutlery but glasses provided). Wine and soft drinks available! We ask that you don't bring your own drinks and support the bar by donations.

The evening starts with some short games and supper followed by the quiz with prizes for winning teams. During the evening there are more games (for which please bring some £1 coins), more prizes and a raffle.

Wild West being the theme, please dress up in cowboy/cowgirl and rancher outfits, and dig out those checked shirts, neckerchiefs, jeans/gingham dresses and cowboy/cowgirl hats (just suggestions!) – anything that goes with the Wild West! Prizes for the best outfits!

To make a team table booking (max 6 per table) or to just come as a couple or as an individual (and a table will be assigned), please contact me at [pkent.email@gmail.com](mailto:pkent.email@gmail.com) or on 01303-266140 or see me at the back of the church (Saltwood) after Sunday 10am services where I will be most weeks. Anyone can come, it's not just for Saltwood and Lympe churches and you don't have to be a churchgoer so bring your friends