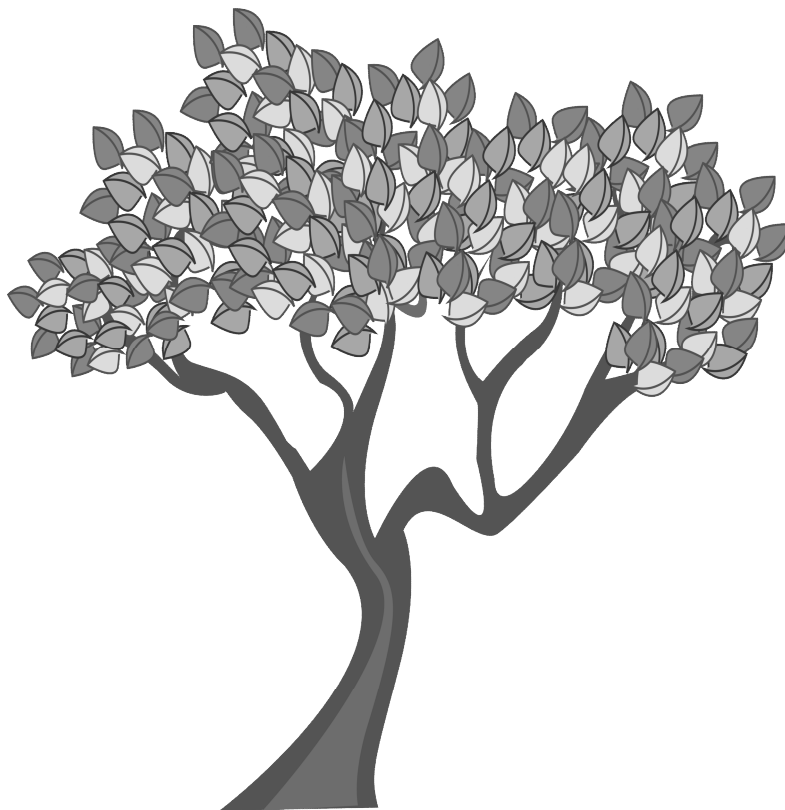




OCTOBER 2026

South & East Leicestershire Area United Reformed Churches



**SAFFRON LANE, WIGSTON MAGNA, SOUTH WIGSTON,
WHETSTONE, ABBOTS ROAD**

<http://selaunc.org.uk>

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Dear Friends,

Churches might have a notice on the outside of their building which declares 'All Are Welcome' but are all churches welcoming?

Before we got married me and Ivor went to a Church of England in Liverpool where we were made to feel very uncomfortable because people were looking at us, not in welcome but with suspicion. We did persevere in attending the church but one week when it was a Communion service the vicar declared that everyone who loved the Lord were welcome to take part. So, we duly went up to the rail, took the elements and went back to our seats. After the service one of the congregation came to talk to us but they didn't just want to have a chat, they wanted to know if we had been confirmed, if not, we shouldn't have taken the elements. Needless to say, we didn't go back to that church again!

Then, when we were called to churches in Ipswich, we arrived before each of us was Inducted. We decided that on the Sunday before we would go to another URC church in Ipswich to see what it was like. There was the notice outside saying, 'All Are Welcome' but our experience was anything but. We sat down in a pew and then we were asked to move because someone always sat there. Nobody spoke to us before the service, although we tried to have a conversation with one or two people which wasn't very successful. After worship we were invited to go into the hall to have coffee but aside from being asked where we were from, conversation was hard to come by. Now, these are extreme examples (I hope). Did these churches, though, think that they were welcoming?

I was reading an article on 'Welcome' from the Methodist Church which states that research shows that churches are often less welcoming than they believe and that visitors who experience a warm greeting and a hospitable community are more likely to return.

Welcoming is not just the responsibility of the designated welcomers it's the role of every person who attends the church.

What does the outside of your church look like? How the outside of a church building looks says a great deal. Out of date Notice Boards, overgrown grass and plants, posters that have seen better days, are unlikely to feel welcoming. But these areas can be quickly improved. If there aren't many or any people who are able to do any tidying up maybe another church, or churches within the Area can help?

The last question to ask of our churches is, How prepared are we to welcome all sorts of visitors? I was impressed with a welcome card from a church in Covent Garden (you might have seen it yourself at some point). So, I've passed it onto Di to include in this magazine.

You may think I'm putting too much emphasis on a church being welcoming but surely welcoming others is part of the response we make to God - The God who loves us, has welcomed us, and continues to welcome us.

Yours in the name of Christ our loving Saviour.

Pam.



The Area Minister is on Sabbatical

Revd Martin Ferris is on Sabbatical from August until the end of October and will be unavailable for his usual duties.

Should any urgent pastoral or church related matters arise, please contact your respective Church Secretary in the first instance.

If there is a matter that requires his attention or of which he needs to be made aware, please ask that the Church Secretary liaise with Di Statham our Area Secretary, who will contact him as appropriate.

During his Sabbatical he will not be regularly accessing emails.



SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES

Whetstone URC	10.00 am
South Wigston URC	10.30 am
Wigston Magna	10.30 am
Saffron Lane	11.00 am
Abbots Road	10.45 am

Please check with the relevant Church Secretaries to confirm when services are taking place at any of the Area Churches.

DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER 26 MAGAZINE

Sunday 18 October 2026

Send your items to your church representative or direct to
di.statham@btinternet.com

**If you do not have a computer a hand written copy can be accepted.
Contact Di Statham 0116 296 2847 for information**

Worship Leaders for October 26

Saffron Lane	4	Geoff Milnes
	11	Ray Green
	18	Philip Tiplady
	25	Richard Benham
South Wigston	4	Marion Bartholomew - Café Style Service
	11	Eileen Williams
	18	Ray Green
	25	David Miller
Wigston Magna	4	Ray Green
	11	Revd Les Gill
	18	Revd Pam Smith - Communion
	25	Julie Slatford
Whetstone	4	Shirley Eastman - Harvest Festival
	11	David Todd
	18	Kevin West
	25	Revd David Howlett
Abbots Road	4	Revd Pam Smith - Communion
	11	Paul & Alison Hadley
	18	Eileen Williams
	25	Revd Jacquie Gavin

Regular Church Events

Whetstone URC	Community Coffee Morning Thursday 10.00 to 12.00
Saffron Lane URC	Weekly 3T's (Tea, Toast & Talk) Thursday 10.00 to 12.00
Wigston Magna	Community Cinema Alternate Months from February - 1.30 pm Sit Sip and Social 2 nd Wednesday of each month 2pm - 4 pm Coffee Morning Every Saturday 10.00 am to 12.00 pm
South Wigston	Drop In with coffee / tea. 4 th Wednesday of each month (Not JULY & AUGUST) Coffee Morning 2 nd Saturday of each Month
Abbots Road	Lunchbox every Tuesday from 12.30pm - 3 course meal £5.00 Quiz Thursday evenings from 7.15pm (on Zoom) Thursday Stay and Play and Little Borrowers toy library For children aged 0-4 years old and their parents/carers 10.00 to 11.30 £1.50 per family Saturday Coffee Morning including a raffle, on Zoom from 10.30am. Raising funds for our chosen charity - Rainbows Children's Hospice

Bible Bytes

Wednesday 7 October 2026

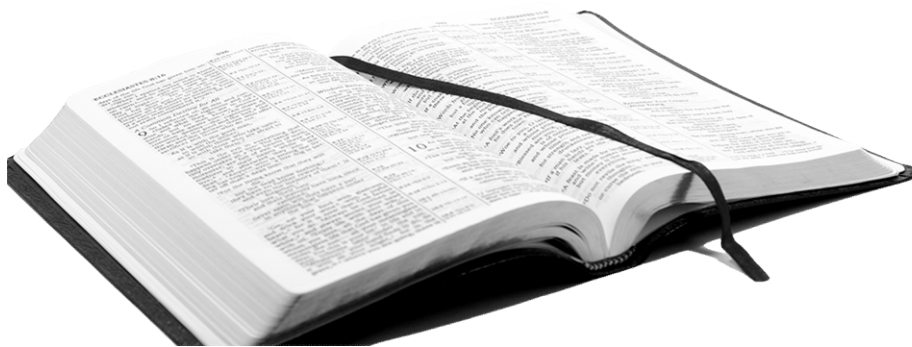
10.30 am

Saffron Lane URC

Come and enjoy a light and friendly discussion

No Need to be a " Bible Expert"

EVERYBODY welcome



October Birthdays

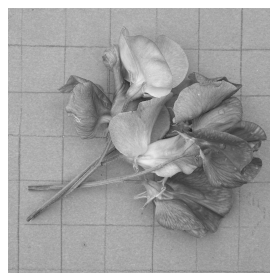
20th - Elaine Wiggins (80)

30th - Les Gill (80)



Quick Gardening Tip

Plant your runner bean seeds and sweet pea seeds in empty toilet rolls. When the plants have grown and are ready to be planted out - plant the whole tube in the ground. The roots will be undisturbed and the cardboard will decompose.



Community Cinema

Monday 5th October 2026

I Swear

Doors Open 1.30 pm

Film Starts - 2.00 pm

Free Tea and Coffee

plus

Movie Snacks £1 per item

(Hot Dogs / Ice Creams / Popcorn /
Sweets / Nuts / Crisps)

Entry FREE – (Donations Welcome)



Autumn Fayre

Sat 31st October

10am to 1pm



***Cake Stall, Toys
Bric-a-brac, Books, Jigsaws
Raffle, Tombola***



Bacon & Sausage cobs

**FREE Tea and Coffee and a
warm welcome!**

All proceeds going to LOROS

Wigston Magna United Reformed Church

Long Street, Wigston



RECIPE – OCTOBER: GREEN PEA and MINT SOUP (Serves 4)

850mls vegetable stock

1 large onion, chopped

1 large potato, peeled and cubed

450g frozen peas

Handful of fresh mint leaves, plus extra to garnish (optional)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons fat-free natural yogurt

- 1 Place the stock, onion and potato in a large pan, and bring to the boil.
- 2 Simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 3 Add the peas and the mint to the pan, bring back to the boil, reduce heat and simmer for a further 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- 6 Leave the soup to cool slightly, then blitz until smooth.
- 6 Season with salt and pepper.
- 6 Reheat and stir in the yogurt.



GARDENING NOTES - OCTOBER

- 1 Remove unwanted self-seeded perennials before they have a chance to establish.
- 2 Rake up fallen rose leaves to prevent the spread of black-spot disease.
- 3 Cut off bunches of green tomatoes from plants, and ripen indoors.
- 4 Plant blueberries in pots or in the ground.
- 5 Sow hardy varieties of peas for harvesting in late Spring.
- 6 Check greenhouse heaters are working before frosts arrive.

DIARY - October

- 7th Bible Bytes - Saffron Lane URC 10.30am. All welcome.
- 8th Churches Together in South Wigston meeting - 2.00pm at South Wigston Congregational Church.
- 10th Coffee Morning South Wigston URC: 10.00am - 11.30am.
- 10th Churches Together in South Wigston social evening - Beetle Drive, 7.00pm at St Mary's Church.
- 14th Elders' Meeting, 10.00am, followed by Church Meeting, 10.30am.
- 25th British Summer Time ends - **Clocks back 1 hour.**
- 28th Drop-in: 10.00 - 11.30am

Thought for the Month Ahead.
*The gratification comes in the doing,
not in the results.*
James Dean.

South Wigston News

PRAYER LIST – October.

Please pray for:

- 1 All who have suffered bereavement, injury, homelessness or despair in recent disasters – earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, landslides, floods and fire.
- 2 Rev Martin and his family, as they mourn the loss of Martin's brother.
- 3 All who work for our emergency services.
- 4 All who are attending our churches today.
- 5 The unemployed, especially young people seeking jobs.
- 6 All who are involved in Churches Together Groups in our areas.
- 7 Those attending our Bible Bytes session, and Eileen as she leads it.
- 8 All who are sick.
- 9 Our young people away from home in their first term at university.
- 10 All who are travelling to Synod today.
- 11 Give thanks for God's bountiful harvest of food.
- 12 Those who are homeless.
- 13 Children in Care, and those who look after them.
- 14 Martin, Eileen and the Elders of our churches who work so hard for us.
- 15 All those suffering from depression.
- 16 Asylum seekers and refugees searching for a place to live in peace & safety.
- 17 Christians of all denominations, that they may work closely together.
- 18 Our Lay Preachers who give so much to our churches.
- 19 Nurses, doctors, and all who work in our hospitals.
- 20 Those living with an addiction.
- 21 All who work for peace.
- 22 Chaplains in schools, colleges, prisons and hospitals.
- 23 Those in our communities who feel isolated.
- 24 As the clocks go back, think of those waking on the other side of the world.
- 25 All those listening to God's word in our churches today.
- 26 The work of Age Concern.
- 27 Victims of violence.
- 28 All local ecumenical projects.
- 29 Tolerance and understanding between nations, races and faiths.
- 30 Give thanks for the beauty of Autumn.
- 31 All those whose lives are ruled by superstition.

South Wigston News

Shepherd of the Flock

Dear shepherd of the wayward flock
Please teach us how to live
A life like yours; of peace and love
Recognizing blessings that you give.

Our lives are full of stress and strain
We search for we know not what
Instead of appreciating our world and homes
And the blessings that we've got.

Help us to focus on higher things
The things of your new world
Instead of striving for this earth's dross
But seeking your gifts that unfurl.

Lord teach us how to read you word
Digesting all it contains
Open our eyes that we may see
The blessing that it still sustains

Holy shepherd of your loving flock
Open our ears to hear
Your lovely voice that guides
Us away from dangers and fears.

Amen

By Lauren Fretter

South Wigston URC

Multi Faith Centre

North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College

DROP IN

Wednesday 28 October 2026

10.00 to 11.30

Talk By Revd Ivor Smith

Come along and join us

Everybody Welcome

Tea / Coffee and Biscuits Available

Saffron Lane News

Preachers and Readers list for October- November 2026

Date	OT	NT	Ser	Col	Preacher	
Oct 4 th	9	30	9	13	G Milnes	Communion
Oct 11 th	5	15	5	13	R Green	Communion
Oct 18 th	6	36	12	13	P Tiplady	Communion
Oct 25 th	8	7	#	13	R Benham	Family Service
Nov 1 st	12	30	12	13	L. Gill	Communion
Nov 8 th	3	9	3	13	E Williams	Communion CBM 10.30 start
Nov 15 th	5	15	5	13	M Ferris	Communion
Nov 22 nd	36	6	#	13	P Smith	Family Service
Nov 29 th	7	8	#	13	D Howlett	Family Service

3.Kath T	8. Brian S	12 Elizabeth R	36 Dec B
5.Sue B	9. Terri D	13.Darren C	# No server
6.Pat S	10.Malvolia B	15. Samuel M	
7.Angela S	11.Richard B	30 Sandra C	

October Birthdays

None

November Birthdays

6th Sue Bloxham

13th Elizabeth Richardson

30th Darren Clay



Saffron Lane News

What Happened at Saffron Lane in September

- 19th Four people to attend Food and Hugine training at Whetstone
- 20th Our Harvest service with gifts going to the South Wigston Food
- 22nd Our fish and chip supper
- 25th Singing at Oak Court 2.00pm come and join us
- 27th Special Group Service at 3.00pm

What is Happening at Saffron Lane in October

- 3rd Our Charity Coffee Morning **HAS BEEN CANCELLED**
- 7th Bible Bytes - 10.30 am - Everybody welcome
- 10th East Midland Synod at Leicester



Saffron Lane URC
Pork Pie Island
LE2 6TE

Finger Sandwich Afternoon Tea

Saturday 24th October

11-00 am - 1.30 pm

£18 per person

Advance Booking Required with a 50% deposit
Contact Mary - 07952542338

Also available
Tombola Crafts Stall
Cakes
(all at extra cost)

Whetstone News

Thank You

Thanks to all who supported our Charity Coffee Morning on Saturday 12th September. The church was filled with high quality clothing, toys, games, books, jigsaws and much, much more! A fantastic £350 was raised for Epilepsy Research. Thank you !

Special Treat !!!

For his anniversary, what do you get the man who has ridden on the footplate of "The Flying Scotsman" and is known by royalty for his talent as Whetstone's Principal Organist?

A flight in a spitfire!

Departing from Leeds Airport, Bernard was treated to 45 minutes of flight time over the surrounding area. He was also briefed about how to use his parachute, in case of an emergency! (Thankfully, that wasn't necessary!)

What an amazing experience! Congratulations to Bernard and Jean. (Please ask Jean to see the photos, especially the ones where she's wing walking!)

What an amazing couple!

Congratulations

We send our love and congratulations to Ken Werry who celebrates his 100th birthday on 21st September.

Congratulations to Thomas West for achieving a 2:1 in his Computer Science degree. He is now in the process of becoming a Police Officer. We are so proud of him!

Upcoming Events

On Sunday 27th September, we will be having a Harvest Songs of Praise - a chance to sing our favourite Harvest hymns and learn a little bit more about them.

Then on Saturday 3rd October, we will be holding a Harvest Coffee Morning from 10am til 12noon. Any donations of Harvest produce will be gratefully received and will be used to decorate the church in preparation for our Harvest Festival on Sunday 4th October.

This service will be led by our own Shirley and will be followed by a Bring-and-Share lunch and the sale of harvest produce in aid of a charity, as yet to be decided. All welcome!



Just for a Laugh

The minister gave a lengthy sermon about forgiveness, after which, he asked the congregation to raise their hands if they now felt able to forgive their enemies.

Everyone raised their hand except the 96 year old lady at the back.

"Why can't you forgive your enemies?" the minister asked.

"I haven't got any!" the old lady replied.

"Really? At 96 you haven't got any enemies?"

"No," she answered, "I've out-lived them all!"

Whetstone United Reformed Church. LE8 6LP

Season Of Harvest

**Harvest Songs of Praise on
Sunday 27th September.
10.00 A.M.**

**Harvest Coffee Morning
Saturday 3rd October.
10-12**

Donations of Harvest goods welcomed

**Harvest Festival
Sunday 4th October.
Followed by sale of Harvest Goods
and a Bring and Share Lunch.**

Abbots Road News

HOLIDAY AT HOME.

We met on Monday catching up with old friends. Dorothy, who had planned the week was busy making sure everything was in place. Ginette and Anne, two of our Lunch Box diners, settled down with the newspapers. Audrey, as usual, was painting which is her forte. Jack, Mary, Joyce and Irene (who had travelled from Morley to be with us and was roped in to help), had their heads down and eyes searching for the pieces of the jigsaw they were doing. Some of the pieces looked very small!

The children Elle-Jay and Lawson were busy with LEGO. Edith and Kathy were busy making greeting cards.

Then there was the all-important food department. The kitchen was a hive of activity. Kate, Kathy and Irene took it in turns to make tea and coffee and a plate of biscuits all prepared to welcome us. Pam was busy preparing lunch. Sue also came down on Tuesday to help in the kitchen.

After lunch which was cleared away by the kitchen staff, the attendees had time to relax. We played a noisy game of Beetle.

On Tuesday we had presentation from a representative from Rainbows Children's Hospice. The work they do for the children and families is marvellous, and I think most of us shed a tear as we found out more about the children who have life limiting conditions and their parents.

Lunch that day was fish and chips which Jack kindly went to fetch. Some members of Lunch Box joined us for lunch that day. The portions of chips we had were enormous so we had quite a lot left but 'staff' were able to take some home to eat for their tea.

On Wednesday we had a lady from Wiltshire Farm food come to talk to us. We were also able to taste a selection of their meals. So, lunch that day was soup and rolls plus dessert.

On Thursday we had a coach trip to Gates' Garden Centre where we had a pre-ordered meal. After the meal we had a wander round, the most popular shop being Pavers where some ladies treated themselves to shoes and sandals.

A lovely week was had by all.

Edith

SUNFLOWERS

Some weeks ago, during a service we were given a paper cup 2 small black seeds and compost to set them in.

I set my seeds at the time, not knowing what they were. I proceeded to water them and watched them grow, then I asked Kate, who had provided them and lo and behold I found out they were sunflowers.

I haven't a garden so they are on my bathroom window sill. Then things happened and the seeds sprouted shoots and they began to grow and grow.

As I write this, they are 26 inched tall.

What I would like to know is how tall are other people's plants?

Who has the tallest sunflower?

I would like to know just for fun.

From Edith.



Abbots Road News

Please pray for:

The people affected by the wild fires that have been sweeping across countries in Europe, including Britain and British Columbia in Canada, who are still recovering and rebuilding their lives.

People living in countries where war is raging still - Ukraine, Sudan, Yemen, Ethiopia, Libya and the threat of attack of Iran from America.

The people of Nepal and Tibet affected by flash floods

Refugees and Asylum seekers

For those who suffer through addictions and for their families who worry about them.

All those suffering through mental illness and the lack of help, especially young people.

Those who need to use Food Banks because they can't feed their family otherwise. Also, for those who volunteer serve them.

All those who suffer from Dementia, and for their carers.

All those who are ill and in pain, awaiting treatment in hospital and for the NHS staff who care for them.

For all those who are housebound, feeling lonely and frustrated because they can't get out.

For the ministry of Rainbow's Hospice. For the children and families in their care. For the love they show in their caring.

For those we know who are suffering at the moment, in our families, our friends, and our church family.

For Brian and Dorothy,

For June and Andy,

For Roy,

For Anne and John

For Muriel

For Anne and Rob

For Kris

For Lisa and Kev.

For Martin, Charlotte and family after the death of Martin's brother.

For our churches in the South and East Leicester Area as we go forward into God's future together.

For our Ministry Team, for Eileen and for Martin and Charlotte as Martin continues his Sabbatical.

WELCOME SIGN FROM ST. PAUL'S CHURCH COVENT GARDEN

It reads as follows:

'We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, widowed, straight, gay, confused, well-heeled or down at heel. We especially welcome wailing babies and excited toddlers.

We welcome you whether you can sing like Pavarotti or just growl quietly to yourself. You're welcome here if you're 'just browsing, just woken up or just got out of prison. We don't care if you're more Christian than the Archbishop of Canterbury or haven't been to church since Christmas ten years ago.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up too fast. We welcome keep-fit mums, football dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians, junk food eaters.

We welcome those who are in recovery or still addicted. We welcome you if you're are having problems, are down in the dumps or don't like 'organised religion'.

We offer a welcome to those who think the world is flat, work too hard, don't work, can't spell, or are here because granny is visiting and wanted to come to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced, both, or neither.

We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throat as kids, or got lost in Covent Garden and wound up here by mistake.

We welcome pilgrims, tourists, seekers, doubters..... **and you!**

YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH

Having no luck training his pet, a dog owner asked an evangelist to help. A week later, the evangelist returned the dog and demonstrated his success by throwing a stick and ordering 'fetch'. The dog returned with the stick and, on the command 'Drop', placed it at his feet. Next, the evangelist said, 'Roll over', which the dog immediately did. Excited, the owner told the dog, 'Heel'. The animal placed his paw on him and said solemnly, 'I command this sickness to leave you.'

What happens when you walk into the Red Sea? You get wet!

A man walks into a bar - ouch!

My neighbour knocked on my door at 2.30 this morning, can you believe that? 2.30 a.m.? Luckily for him I was still up playing my Bagpipes.

My boyfriend thinks I'm a stalker. Well, he's not exactly my boyfriend yet.

Someone broke into our canteen last night and stole all the coffee cups. Now on my way to the police station to look at some mugshots.

I said to the vet, I want you to look at my cat. He said, 'Is it a tom?' I said no it's here with me in this box.

Had a go at blindfolded archery this morning. You should try it, you don't know what you're missing.

I got arrested yesterday for stealing helium balloons. The police held me for a while, then just let me go.

Abbots Road News

Cont....

Can't believe I've been banned from my local pub for smoking in the beer garden. Apparently, some other patrons complained about " the smell of the Haddock."

Went to see two psychiatrists at the same time. Woke up with a massive headache. Never mix your shrinks!

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Maybe a big horse

Maybe a big horse who?

Maybe a big horse I'm a Londoner.

I've been invited to a fancy dress party with a Tupperware theme. I can hardly contain myself.

My acupuncture session this morning was a disaster, apparently, it can't cure pins and needles.

Still big delays on the A14 to Ipswich this morning after a truck carrying grain collided with an Ovaltine lorry. Police described it as a malty vehicle accident.

Did my first nude painting early this morning. The neighbours weren't happy but the front door looks great!

My uncle works down the pit. He hurt himself last week, nothing serious just a miner injury.

Got stung badly by a hornet yesterday. The doctor said to put some ointment on it, but it'll be miles away by now.

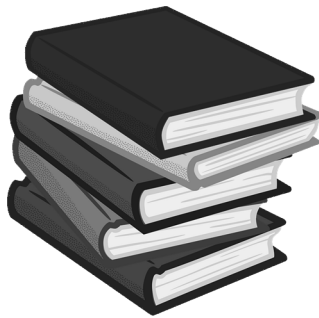
St Stephens URC Book Sale

St Stephens URC in De Montfort Street Leicester have set up a weekly Book Sale on Friday's from 11.00 to 4.00 to raise funds for the Church.

They are looking for donations of used books - for both Adults and Children of ALL ages - to supplement their stocks.

If you have any books that you have finished with and are willing to donate please speak to your Church Secretary who will make arrangements for them to be passed on to St Stephens.

Of course you are also welcome to go along to the sale if you are free on a Friday and purchase books for yourself and your family.



A thought about Books

People of power have no time to read yet
the people who do not read are unfit for power.

Michael Foot

Beware of Spreading of Gossip !!

One day a man saw at a distance his vicar hugging the wife of another church member. He was shocked. The first thing he did was to tell other members of the church what he had seen, "just between the two of us".

That Sunday the vicar announced that one of the members of the church had suffered a terrible tragedy earlier in the week. It turned out that what the gossiping church member had seen was the vicar consoling this person's wife.

He was so ashamed that he went to his vicar and confessed what he had done, and asked for forgiveness, which he was granted.

The vicar asked the man to do him a favour. Because he felt so guilty, he jumped at the chance. So, the vicar said to him, "Take this feather pillow to the top of the hill in the centre of town, tear it open and release all the feathers to the wind, then come back to me when you have finished".

The church member obliged, convinced that he knew the lesson he was being taught. When he came back to the vicar, he told him that he understood the lesson, - that gossip can spread quickly and easily.

The vicar said " That is true, but for the most important part of the lesson:

Go and pick up every feather !!!! "

From "A Bundle of Laughs", J John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books.

Lectionary Readings

4 October

Exodus 20: 1-4, 7-9, 12-20;

Psalm 19;

Philippians 3. 4b-14;

Matthew 21. 33-46

11 October

Exodus 32: 1-14;

Psalm 106: 1-6, 19-23;

Philippians 4. 1-9;

Matthew 22. 1-14

18 October

Exodus 33: 12-23;

Psalm 99;

1 Thessalonians 1. 1-10;

Matthew 22. 15-22

25 October

Deuteronomy 34: 1-12;

Psalm 90: 1-6, 13-17;

1 Thessalonians 2. 1-8;

Matthew 22. 34-46