

St Matthew's **MAIL**

**Suggested
Donation**

£1.00

News from the Parish of Kingsley, Northampton

OCTOBER 2026



www.stmatthewsnorthampton.org.uk

Services at the Parish Church of St Matthew

Sundays

10.15am	The Parish Mass (sung)
5.30pm	Evensong — according to The Book of Common Prayer

First Sunday in the month

10.15am	All Age Mass for the Parish Family
5.30pm	Choral Evensong
<i>When the choir is on holiday (coinciding with school holidays and half terms) Choral Evensong is replaced with Congregational Evensong</i>	

Second Sunday in the month

10.15am	Laying on of hands and Sacrament of Anointing is offered in the Lady Chapel
5.30pm	Congregational Evensong

Third Sunday in the month

5.30pm	Choral Evensong and Benediction
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Fourth and Fifth Sundays in the month

5.30pm	Congregational Evensong
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Weekdays *(during winter months of November to March, may be held in the Parish Centre)*

Morning and Evening Prayer are said publicly at 9.00am and 5.30pm daily

Monday 7.00pm Mass (on Bank Holidays at 9.30am)
(Healing Mass and Devotions on the first Monday in the month)

Tuesday Currently suspended

Wednesday 12 noon Mass

Thursday 12 noon Mass

Friday 12 noon Mass

Saturday 9.30am Mass

(Mass of Our Lady of Walsingham followed by a Cell Meeting on the second Saturday of the month)

Major Feast-Days Procession and Sung Mass at 7.30pm

(Always held in church. The morning Mass may be cancelled — refer to literature in church and on website)

Sacrament of Reconciliation, commonly known as Confession, is celebrated in the Lady Chapel by appointment with the clergy. They are also available for advice and guidance on any matter of concern.

All aspects of the sacrament are in confidence.

Worship Calendar for October

The Church prays for the local community daily; please also include 'Our Parish' in your own daily prayers.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Observance</i>	<i>Mass Intention</i>	<i>Our Parish</i>
1	S Thérèse of Lisieux, V, Dr	Prayer and knowing small is beautiful	Chaucer Street, Junction Road
2	The Holy Guardian Angels	Our thanks for the protection of heaven	Local businesses
3	Of the BVM	Security in baby care units	Cowper Terrace, Lingfield Terrace
4	HARVEST THANKSGIVING	The farming community	Randall Road, Romany Road
5	Healing Mass	The Ministry of Healing	Waverley Road, Milton Street North
6	Feria	The sacred privilege and responsibility of preaching	Carlton Road, Carlton Gardens
7	Feria	Christian ethics and the law	Local Shops
8	Feria	Perseverance in Prayer	Ryland Road, Brookfield Road, Betjeman Court
9	S John Henry Newman, Pr	Anglican / Roman Catholic relations	Sunningdale Close, Masefield Way, Fairway
10	Of OLW	The Shrine, Society, and our Parish Cell	Hazeldene Road, Greenview Drive
11	THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (Proper 23)	The Parish	Kenmuir Avenue, Kenmuir Crescent, Kenmuir Gardens
12	Feria	The joy of Christian community	Local Doctors, Dentists and Vets
13	S Edward the Confessor, K	For HM King Charles III	Malcolm Road, Malcolm Terrace
14	Feria	Judge not and you will not be judged	Fairfield Road, Raeburn Road
15	S Teresa of Ávila, V, Dr	Time set aside for daily prayer	Wallace Road, Wallace Terrace, Wallace Gardens
16	Feria	Understanding of baptismal vocation	Church members not living in the parish
17	S Ignatius of Antioch, B, M	Victims of religious persecution	Kingsley Primary School, Wallace Road Nursery
18	THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (Proper 24)	The Parish	Abington Avenue, Ashburnham Road
19	Monthly Requiem	The Faithful Departed	Birchfield Road, Cedar Road
20	Feria	Overcoming hostility	Broadway, Park Avenue North
21	Feria	Faithful stewardship	Oakwood Road, Collingwood Road
22	Feria	Stating our beliefs with charity	Nursing and Residential Homes

23	Feria	Our ecumenical neighbours	Abington Grove, The Crescent
24	Of the BVM	The displaced and destitute	The Drive, Tudor Road, The Vale
25	THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY (Proper 25)	The Parish	Brookland Road, Brookland Crescent, Highfield Road
26	Feria	Avoiding hurtful conversation	Kettering Road, St Matthew's Parade, Kingsley Park Terrace
27	Feria	Marriage – two becoming one flesh	Kingsley Road, Oliver Street
28	Ss Simon and Jude, Aps	Fidelity of the faith of the apostles	Milton Street, Byron Street
29	Feria	Boldness in speaking the 'gospel of peace'	Shelley Street, Moore Street
30	Feria	Acting with compassion	Chaucer Street, Junction Road
31	Of the BVM	Those who promote parenting skills	Local businesses



October Pastoral Letter from the Vicar

When the world comes to our doorstep

There is something rather strange about living in an interconnected world. A conflict can be taking place thousands of miles away, and yet somehow it manages to find its way into our own homes.

The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow stretch of water between Iran and the Arabian Peninsula. It is not somewhere most of us will ever visit, and until recently I suspect that many of us would have struggled to locate it on a map. Yet it has become a familiar name. A very large proportion of the world's oil and gas passes through it, and disruption there quickly affects energy prices, transport costs and, ultimately, the price of things we buy.

It is one of the uncomfortable realities of modern life: a decision made, or a bomb dropped, on the other side of the world can affect what it costs us to fill the car or heat the house. And there is an even more uncomfortable truth. For us, the consequences may be measured in pounds and pence. For people living in the midst of the conflict, they are measured in livelihoods lost, homes destroyed, families separated and lives ended. The economic statistics can make suffering sound remarkably tidy. "Inflationary pressures." "Supply disruption." "Market volatility." Behind each of those rather bloodless expressions are human beings trying to feed their families and wondering what tomorrow will bring.

The Christian response is not to imagine that we can solve problems which are well beyond our control. Nor is it to pretend that complicated international conflicts have simple answers. But neither should we allow distance to make us indifferent.

Prayer does something rather important here. It refuses to allow other people's suffering to become merely an item in the news. When we pray for peace in Iran, for people caught up in the fighting, for those whose livelihoods are threatened, and for leaders who carry enormous responsibilities, we are acknowledging that these people are not abstractions. They are our fellow human beings. There is a wonderful phrase in the First Letter of John: "Let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action." Christian compassion has always had to negotiate the awkward distance between what we feel and what we do. Sometimes what we can do will seem very small. We can give. We can pray. We can support those who are helping refugees and the victims of war. We can be careful about the language we use about people with whom we disagree. We can resist the temptation to turn complicated human situations into simplistic stories about heroes and villains.

And we can perhaps learn to be a little more grateful for the things we too easily take for granted.

The world may feel increasingly uncertain, but the Christian faith does not ask us to live in fear. It asks us to live faithfully. We are not promised that the world will always be peaceful or prosperous. We are promised something rather different: that God has not abandoned his creation. That is why the Church continues to pray for peace, even when peace seems impossibly distant. We pray because hope is not optimism. Hope is the stubborn Christian conviction that God is still at work, even when we cannot see what he is doing. And perhaps, in a world in which events in a distant strait can suddenly arrive on our doorstep, that is something worth remembering.

We may not be able to control the course of events in Tehran, Washington, Jerusalem or anywhere else. But we can decide what kind of people we will be here in Northampton: people who are grateful rather than entitled, compassionate rather than indifferent, prayerful rather than cynical, and hopeful rather than despairing.

It is not everything. But it is a beginning.

Your sincere friend and parish priest,

Fr. Nicholas

Next month's magazine

Contributions to our magazine are always appreciated so let us know what you / your group are up to! If you don't have the confidence to write something yourself, just let us have the details and we'll write it for you.

Please leave paper contributions in the 'P' (for 'Parker') pigeon hole in church or email files to: magazine@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

When attaching photographs to the email address please send no more than 7mb -worth per email, otherwise it jams the system! Thank you.

Deadline for the NOVEMBER magazine is SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER

Editor: Dorrie Parker

Layout and production: Gary Drinkwater

St Francis of Assisi

Earlier this year, for the first time in 800 years, the mortal remains of St Francis were publicly displayed for veneration at the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, Italy. Nearly half a million pilgrims registered to visit for this rare event. I didn't go. In truth, I'm not particularly drawn to that kind of devotion, though I have a great affection for St Francis and for Assisi, and I look forward to celebrating his feast on 4 October.



St Francis has often been cited as a saint for our own day because of his special sense of kinship with the environment: he called the animals and the natural world his brothers and sisters (you might like to look up his *Canticle of the Creatures*). He also famously gave up a rich-man's lifestyle and deliberately embraced social outcasts, which contrasts with the rampant consumerism that affects us all.

A less well known, but equally important aspect of Francis' ministry was his willingness to cross the divides that separate people from each other. During the Fifth Crusade he crossed enemy lines to meet with the Muslim Sultan Malik al-Kamil in a gesture of peace and respect. Perhaps this is why the wonderful prayer-poem *Make me a channel of your peace* has often been ascribed to him. Although this is a false attribution – the poem originated in France in the early 20th century – it is a beautiful and timely text for us to take to heart. This October, and always, may we be messengers and ministers of love, healing, hope, light, joy, pardon and consolation.

With every blessing,



The Rt Revd Alex Hughes
Bishop of Brixworth

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Weekday Scripture Readings for October

Our weekday scripture readings, one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament, taken from the 'Additional Lectionary' which was constructed by the Church of England principally for use in Cathedrals at weekday Evensong.

Thursday	1	Nehemiah 8.1-12	1 Corinthians 14.1-12
Friday	2	Isaiah 1.10-17	Mark 12.28-34
Saturday	3	Daniel 6.6-23	Revelation 12.7-12
Monday	5	2 Samuel 22.4-7, 17-20	Hebrews 7.26 – 8.6
Tuesday	6	Proverbs 22.17-end	2 Corinthians 12.1-10
Wednesday	7	Hosea 14	James 2.14-26
Thursday	8	Isaiah 24.1-15	John 16.25-33
Friday	9	Jeremiah 14.1-9	Luke 23.44-56
Saturday	10	Zechariah 8.14-end	John 20.19-end
Monday	12	1 Kings 3.3-14	1 Timothy 3.14 – 4.8
Tuesday	13	Proverbs 27.11-end	Galatians 6.1-10
Wednesday	14	Isaiah 51.1-6	2 Corinthians 1.1-11
Thursday	15	Job 26	1 Corinthians 11.17-end
Friday	16	Job 19.21-end	Mark 15.33-47
Saturday	17	Isaiah 44.21-end	John 21.15-end
Monday	19	1 Kings 6.2-10	John 12.1-11
Tuesday	20	Proverbs 31.10-end	Luke 10.38-42
Wednesday	21	Jonah 1	Luke 5.1-11
Thursday	22	Exodus 12.1-20	1 Thessalonians 4.1-12
Friday	23	Isaiah 64	Matthew 27.45-56
Saturday	24	2 Samuel 7.18-end	Acts 2.22-33
Monday	26	Isaiah 42.14-21	Luke 1.5-25
Tuesday	27	1 Samuel 4.12-end	Luke 1.57-end
Wednesday	28	Jeremiah 3.11-18	Jude 1-4, 17-end
Thursday	29	Isaiah 35	Matthew 11.2-19
Friday	30	2 Samuel 11.1-17	Matthew 14.1-12
Saturday	31	Isaiah 40.27-end	Revelation 19.6-10

If you are online, a new facility lately introduced on our website is on the Weekday Scripture Readings page – you can now click onto an individual reading and it will pop up for you without you having to search through your bible (in the New Revised Standard Version, Anglicised Catholic Edition).

Introducing Graeme Middleton

We are delighted to welcome Graeme Middleton to St Matthew's as an ordinand on placement. Graeme will shortly begin two years of theological formation at St Stephen's House, Oxford, and, as part of his training, will spend much of his weekends and some vacation time with us during the coming academic year.

Graeme will have the opportunity to experience and participate in the breadth of our parish life and ministry, including our Sunday worship and other aspects of parish life. We hope that his time at St Matthew's will be both a time of discovery and enrichment for Graeme, as he prepares for ordained ministry, and a blessing to us as a parish.

Graeme has provided the following short biography and photograph to introduce himself.

Hello, I'm Graeme and I am excited to be joining the St Matthew's family. I was brought up in a small town just outside of Middlesbrough called Thornaby-on-Tees, a veritable hotbed of Anglo-Catholicism!



It was during these formative years my belief in God started. I was brought up in the Methodist tradition and did not discover the joys of ritualism and the Eucharist till much later in life. I studied environmental biology at university (*did nothing with it after*) and moved to Northamptonshire some 30 odd years ago. From that you may be able to guess I have a semi-significant birthday looming on the horizon.

It was here in the mean streets of the shire that I met my wife Elaine (the power behind the throne) – we have shared in matrimonial bliss for the past 15 years and it was her influence that brought me to faith as opposed to just belief. I started worshipping at Holy Trinity and from there progressed to all the roles under the sun in that place. Which in turn led me to start to explore ordination, a journey I have been on for the past couple of years. I start my formation training at St Stephen's House Oxford at the beginning of October. I am in illustrious company as one Fr Nicholas Setterfield also attended said institution.

I will be at 'Staggers' on a Monday to Friday and home at weekends, where I will be spending the majority of my Sundays with you guys at St Matthew's, and during which time I hope to get to know you all – and unfortunately for you, you will have the chance to get to know me and my 'ways and idiosyncrasies'. This will also give me some much-needed time with Elaine and the girls, whose support has helped me get to this point. I would greatly appreciate any prayers you have to spare and can promise to reciprocate. Hold onto your hats, it's going to be a bumpy ride!

Graeme

Chippings from the Vicar's Work Bench

October is always a wonderfully full month in the life of St Matthew's, with Harvest, Confirmation, the continuing rhythm of our devotional life, and the approach of All Saints' and All Souls'. There is much for which to give thanks, and much in which to share. I hope that you will find time to join us for as much as you can.

Thank you!

First, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped to make our Patronal Festival and Feast of Dedication such memorable occasions, and to all who supported our celebrations of Our Lady of Walsingham and Michaelmas. There is always a great deal of work behind the scenes in preparing for these occasions, from music and flowers to catering, sacristy work and the many other practical details which most people never see. It is the generosity of so many people that enables us to celebrate our great feasts with such joy and beauty. Thank you to everyone who played a part, whether conspicuously or quietly behind the scenes. It is very much appreciated.

Harvest Thanksgiving – Sunday 4 October

On Sunday 4 October we shall give thanks to God for all the good gifts that surround us in creation. Our morning Mass will be an All-Age Mass, with a presentation exploring some of the themes of Harvest and the ways in which we receive, enjoy and share the gifts entrusted to us. There will be an added joy this year as we celebrate within the Mass the Baptism of AJ Rowan Lupita Lush, one of our Cub leaders. AJ has chosen to be baptised with the encouragement and support of the children among whom she serves. She is also currently receiving instruction as she prepares for Confirmation, so this will be a particularly significant occasion in her journey of faith.

You may remember the excellent sketch presented at last month's All-Age Mass on the theme of forgiveness – and, rather amusingly, the difficulty of being unforgiving! Sometimes a memorable bit of humour can help us to see something afresh, and we can perhaps learn more readily when we have been made to smile.

Harvest itself is changing. This year the harvest was approximately four weeks earlier than would once have been usual, something which reminds us that our climate and seasons are not quite what they once were. From next year, therefore, we shall celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving in September, which will better reflect the actual timing of the harvest and the changing pattern of our seasons.

At 4.00pm we shall gather again in church for a Songs of Praise, followed by our Harvest Supper. I hope very much that you will support both the morning and evening celebrations. Details of tickets for the supper are available through the usual parish channels.

Healing Mass – Monday 5 October

Our next Healing Mass will be on Monday 5 October at 7.00pm in the Lady Chapel. I am looking at ways of updating and revising this service so that it continues to speak meaningfully to those who come. I would therefore be very grateful to hear from anyone who has attended the Healing Mass in the past. What have you found helpful? Is there anything which you particularly value about the service, or anything which you think could be changed or developed? Your experience and reflections would be very helpful as I consider its future shape.

The Laying on of Hands

I intend to develop an opportunity for the laying on of hands after Communion on the second Sunday of each month. At present, this ministry takes place in the Lady Chapel. My intention is to invite members of our worshipping community to share with the clergy in this ministry in the Lady Chapel.

This is something in which we can all share. After the individual has spoken privately with the priest, duly prepared members of the laity may place a hand gently upon the person's shoulder and join silently with the priest in prayer. It is a simple but powerful expression of the fact that Christian prayer is not something we undertake only on our own: we carry one another before God. Of course, anything shared with the priest remains confidential. I shall say more about how this will work in due course, but I hope that it will become a valued part of our common life and prayer.

Parish Cell of Our Lady of Walsingham

Our next Cell Mass at the Holy House will be on Saturday 10 October at 9.30am in the Lady Chapel, followed by refreshments and our Cell discussion. These discussions are always stimulating and enriching. They give us an opportunity to reflect together upon our faith, the life of the Church and the place of Our Lady and the Shrine of Walsingham in our Christian discipleship. You do not need to be an expert, nor a long-standing member of the Cell, to come along. I very much hope that anyone and everyone who feels drawn to do so will accept our invitation to "come and see."

Be a Chorister Morning

Our Be a Chorister Morning takes place on Sunday 11 October.

I am sure that you will recognise the ever-present challenge of recruiting new members to our choir. It has never been easy – even cathedrals face this challenge – but it has become considerably harder in recent years. Music in schools is often poorly resourced and its importance is not always understood, while opportunities for children simply to sing together have become much fewer. The virtual disappearance of singing from many religious assemblies and school occasions has not helped.

This presents a real challenge for Tom as our Director of Music, and one which he takes very seriously. We hope that the Chorister Morning will give children an opportunity to discover something of what singing in a choir can offer: music, friendship, discipline, team work, enjoyment and the experience of belonging to something larger than oneself. Children may first become interested through coming to St Matthew's, or through meeting Tom in school. But, as with so many activities involving children, everything ultimately depends upon parental support. Choir membership is a real commitment for a family, and it is that commitment which enables a choir to flourish.

Please pray for our choir and for this initiative. And if you know of a child or family who you think might be interested, please do speak to Tom. He will be very happy to have a conversation and to discern with you whether the choir might be something in which they would enjoy taking part.

PCC – Wednesday 14 October

A reminder to members of the Parochial Church Council that our next meeting will take place on Wednesday 14 October at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre. There is always plenty to discuss as we seek to care for the practical, financial and spiritual life of our parish. Please keep the PCC and all those who serve on it in your prayers.

Parish Confirmation – Sunday 18 October

Our Parish Confirmation takes place on Sunday 18 October at 10.15am.

We shall be very pleased to welcome Bishop Andrew Proud, who will be known to many of you. Bishop Andrew is an Assistant Bishop in our diocese and was formerly Bishop of Reading.

We have two adult candidates on this occasion: AJ Rowan Lupita Lush and Michael William Bell. Both have been worshipping regularly with us for some time and have become valued members of our parish community. It will be a particular joy to see them make this important step in their Christian journey. For various reasons, including a number of unfortunate circumstances and health difficulties, several others who had expressed a desire to be confirmed are unable to do so on this occasion. We hope and pray that they will have the opportunity to take this step in due course, when the time is right for them.

Please hold AJ and Michael, and all those preparing for Confirmation, in your prayers.

Monthly Requiem – Monday 19 October

Our monthly Requiem Mass will be celebrated on Monday 19 October at 7.00pm in the Lady Chapel. The monthly Requiem is a quiet and prayerful opportunity to commend to God those who have died, and to remember before him those whose lives have touched our own. All are welcome.

House Group – Wednesday 21 October

A small alteration to the date discussed when we last met: our next House Group gathering will be on Wednesday 21 October at 2.00pm at the Vicarage.

These gatherings are deliberately informal: an opportunity to meet together, talk, listen and reflect on our faith in good company. New faces are always welcome, so please do come along if you have not joined us before.

The clocks go back!

A seasonal reminder – British Summer Time ends on Sunday 25 October. The clocks go BACK one hour at 2.00am. In practical terms, that means you get an extra hour in bed. Please remember to make the adjustment before you go to bed on Saturday evening, however, or you may suffer the particular indignity of arriving at church an hour early!

Half Term and All Saints' Day

Please note that the school half term falls in the week commencing Sunday 25 October. The choir will therefore have a Sunday off and will return on Sunday 1 November for our celebration of All Saints' Day. The morning Mass will be for all ages, and in the evening we shall have Solemn Choral Evensong at 5.30pm.

All Saints' is one of those great occasions when the Church reminds us that the Christian life is lived within a much larger company than the people we see around us. We belong to the communion of saints: those who have gone before us, those who worship alongside us, and those who will come after us. I hope you will make a particular point of joining us for this beautiful feast.

All Souls' Day – Monday 2 November

On Monday 2 November at 7.30pm we shall celebrate our annual Parish Requiem for All Souls' Day.

Families of those whose funerals have taken place at St Matthew's during

the past year will be invited to join us, and during the service we shall remember by name those who have died. All Souls' is a sacred and tender moment in the Church's year. We gather to remember before God those whom we have loved but see no longer: to give thanks for their lives, for all that they meant to us, and for the memories which remain part of our lives.

The service acknowledges the sadness which comes with separation, but it also speaks of Christian hope. We entrust those who have died to the loving mercy of God and hold before us the promise that death is not the end. In Christ, death becomes the gateway to resurrection and the beginning of everlasting life in God's presence.

The atmosphere of the Requiem will be quiet and prayerful, giving space for remembrance, thanksgiving and hope. There will be an Act of Commemoration, when we shall remember by name those whose funerals have taken place at St Matthew's during the past year. Those who are baptised are warmly invited to receive Holy Communion, if that is their custom, or to come forward for a blessing. Family members and friends are very welcome to attend. If you are planning to come, please let our Administrator, Anita Speake (tel. 791251), know so that we can make suitable arrangements.

All Souls' Day offers us a precious opportunity to support one another in grief and to place our trust once again in God's promise of eternal life. We give thanks for those whom God has entrusted to us for a while, and we look forward in faith to that day when, in the fullness of God's kingdom, we shall be reunited with those who have gone before us.

Remembering the Departed

As you will be aware, it is our custom at St Matthew's to pray for those who have died. This is an invaluable part of our parish ministry: praying for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed, that they may be at peace and reconciled to God, and also offering comfort and support to those who continue their earthly pilgrimage.

As our lists have grown over time, it seems right to take a fresh look at how we exercise this ministry, while retaining its essential character. The purpose is not to reduce our prayer for the departed, but to ensure that the way in which we maintain our lists remains meaningful, pastorally appropriate, and rooted in the living relationships of the present congregation.

The Recently Departed will continue to be remembered regularly in our prayers until after their funeral has taken place.

Departed loved ones and friends may also be remembered in prayer, whether or not they lived locally or had any particular connection with St Matthew's. We rightly pray for those whom we have known and loved, wherever they may have lived or worshipped.

With regard to anniversaries of death (Years' Minds), however, these will in future be confined to those for whom there is a current member of the congregation who knew them personally. We have accumulated a number of names whose connection with the parish is now very remote, including some who were known only to a former worshipper who has themselves since died. While we continue to remember that former worshipper, it does not seem necessary also to maintain indefinitely the complete list of people whom they themselves asked us to remember. Otherwise, we risk creating a kind of remembrance by extension, which can continue without any living connection within our worshipping community.

I hope everyone will regard this as a reasonable and proportionate approach. There is also something appropriate in recognising that, when we have prayed faithfully for a soul over a considerable period, we may reasonably entrust that person to the mercy of God, trusting that our prayers have been heard.

None of this diminishes the Church's prayer for the departed, nor our confidence in the communion of saints. Indeed, All Souls' Day and our Monthly Requiem remain important occasions when we gather as a parish to pray for the faithful departed and to commend them to God's mercy. Please do support these occasions whenever you are able.

Our aim is simply to ensure that this important ministry remains both meaningful and pastorally focused: not less prayer for the departed, but prayer that is properly connected with the living pastoral life of our parish, while entrusting all the departed to the mercy and love of God.

One more!

Dorrie Parker

Last month's Bridesmaids Quiz stirred a lot of interest, so glad you enjoyed trying to guess who they were. There was just one late entry, and we don't want her to miss out, so here she is – the date is 1950.

You'll find the answer on page 23



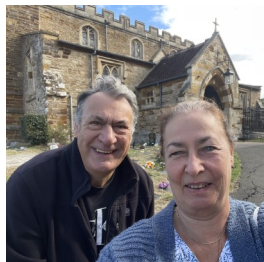
Ride, Stride and Drive 2026

Nick Bailey

There is a secret 11th Commandment which states: Thou Shalt Not Suffer Foot Blisters Or Saddle Sores!

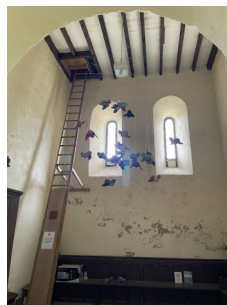
That's why Denise and I took the car for this year's sponsored Ride, Stride and Drive initiative – visiting churches in and around Northampton while raising funds for St Matthew's.

First stop was the beautiful St George the Martyr Church, Wootton. Small inside, the fabulous church currently uses infra-red heaters to keep worshippers warm. Just as well, because history tells us that in 1943 the entire congregation suffered carbon monoxide poisoning when its coke-fired heating system went into meltdown.



Next up was the 13th Century St John the Baptist Church in Quinton with its sensitive stained-glass windows installed in memory of three fallen World War heroes.

A gentle drive took us to the redundant 12th Century Church of St Peter and St Paul in Preston Deanery which is now run by the Churches Conservation Trust. Having become a ruin, in 1580 the landed gentry sold the church bells and turned its tower into a pigeon loft. At the time, pigeons were considered a luxury food and their dung was scooped up to make fertiliser and saltpetre for gunpowder. The chancel was used as a kennel for greyhounds.

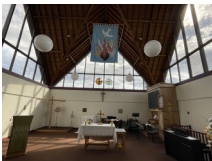


Down the road is St John the Baptist Church, Piddington, dating back to 1290. Its 100-year-old clock was made by Dent & Co - famous for constructing Big Ben. The legendary Baptist missionary John Carey was married in the church.

Across town, we visited the monastic 12th Century St Luke's Church, Duston. Passing through its beautiful lynch gate, we were looking forward to seeing its stunning stained-glass windows. Unfortunately this beautiful house of worship – built for Augustinian monks from the nearby St James Abbey – was closed.



This called for a short period of wailing and smiting. I even suggested gnashing of teeth, but Denise said we should save those for our sandwiches.



Then we headed down memory lane to St Mark's Church Whitehills. This simple, modern church was our house of prayer after we got married in 1984 and where both our beautiful daughters were christened.

Our phone Satnav then directed us east to the 11th Century All Saints Church in Little Billing. This wonderful church, with its side tower, is mentioned in the Domesday Book. Inside, we saw its original Saxon font – one of the most important pieces of church stone carving in the county – and still used to this day.



Final stop was St Andrew's Church, Great Billing. This building is Grade 1 listed because it contains an overbearing black and white marble monument to Henry O'Brien, 7th Earl of Thomond who owned Billing Hall. Described as 'shockingly inept', it is thought to be the last work of legendary sculptor John Bushnell who died in 1701.

During church restoration work in 1980, a sealed burial vault was opened. A gold plaque inside informed historians that the Earl of Thomond buried inside was so fat that his bowels had to be interred separately.

Amazing what you learn!

We had a wonderful day, seeing magnificent churches still standing after 1,000 years and meeting the many lovely volunteers who work so hard to make this possible. God bless them.

Mission accomplished!

The 'Inside' Story

Dorrie Parker

The day had arrived! I had snuck into the church before the 9.30am Mass to set up the table at the back ready to receive our first energetic visitors... then quietly kept out of the way in the outer porch and read my book until just before 10.00am when we were opening for business. Oops, panic struck – I couldn't get the gate unlocked! So abandoning my post to seek out a strong man from the Lady Chapel to help me (luckily there was one, and Steve came to my assistance), we welcomed in our first visitor, plus Christine who had come to be a Recorder for the Ride+Stride, but was delayed by the road closures and wondering what was going on.

Normally queuing up outside at 10am would have been the normal gang from Kingsley Park Methodist Church across the road – now sadly closed, so we missed that long-standing ritual.

Jean finally made it later to help record too, with tales of problems with the roads being closed off along her route in for the *Amazing Northampton Run* – the half marathon taking place that day. As if the constant road works weren't enough!

Many visitors remarked about churches which had taken part in previous years not being open this year, and of course that reflected in the number of people who were doing the rounds – if your church isn't now taking part then we don't see those previous Riders/Striders.

So there was a trickle of people at first, and then things hotted up once we got to about 11.15am. As before, there were solitary visitors and others who came in groups. The furthest travelled was from St Andrew's Church in Harlestone. This year the organisers of the Historic Churches Trust had decreed that people could drive too, meaning that non-cyclists were able to get out into the villages who would have welcomed the extra visitors. Nick and Denise, representing St Matthew's, took advantage of that too.

At 12 noon there was a change of personnel at the desk, and Tony and David took over for the afternoon session. As regularly happens, the last visitor arrived a whisker before 2.00pm when I had the keys in my hand at the door about to lock up!

Although St Matthew's wasn't taking part in the Heritage Weekend, there were still visitors who wandered in, seeing that the church was open. Two had rung Anita about a chance to visit and she had suggested coming on the Saturday – they stayed quite a long time, following the tour in the Welcome leaflet and armed with the extra information on A4 cards we used to set out when we had

the people willing to open for 'church sitting'. They were very appreciative of being able to look around.

One lady was particularly interested in the Moore *Madonna and Child*, and spent some time on a drawing. Another wanted to come in and sit for a while, and a man came in and told us he used to be a pupil at St Matthew's School – he stayed and chatted for some time.

So I would like to thank Nick and Denise for representing St Matthew's by visiting other churches, to Christine, Jean, Tony and David for volunteering to be Recorders on the day, and to all those who generously sponsored us all (final total will be in next month's magazine), raising funds for the **Northamptonshire Historic Churches Trust** – a body of voluntary organisations that raise money for the restoration and maintenance of historic churches and chapels, supported by the national Churches Trust. In 2012 St Matthew's gratefully received a grant from them of £10,000 for our own major repair works.

Their Annual Report 2025 can be found in the bookstall at the back of church – do take a look and read which local churches were helped by last year's fundraising, and maybe you too can be tempted to join in next year.

The Parish Church of St Matthew

**Sunday
4 October
Harvest Thanksgiving**

**10.15am
All Age Mass
for the Parish Family**



Sunday 4 October

**Harvest
Songs
of Praise
and
Supper**



in Church at 4.00pm

(Details regarding Supper to follow)

32nd St Matthew's Multi-Aged Girlguiding

Mandy Ludlow

News from 32nd St Matthew's Girlguiding

We are delighted to be back together for the autumn term and have an exciting programme ahead. Our Guides have begun working towards their Take Action Theme Award, starting with the Craftivism interest badge. Craftivism is all about using creativity to share an important message and inspire positive change.

For their first activity, the Guides used coloured loom bands to make bracelets for friends. Each colour represented an environmental issue. We were impressed by how much the girls already knew, particularly about wildfires, and by the thoughtful designs they created – including a tiny strawberry-shaped ring!

Summer Adventures at Jubilee

Guiding continued throughout the summer, too. At the beginning of August, a group of Brownies and Guides enjoyed a wonderful day at Jubilee, our county campsite. Using only the natural materials they could find, they built dens and let their imaginations run free – one group even created cooking pots and pretend food. They also made sundials, played games and enjoyed spending time together in the countryside.

The exceptionally hot weather meant that campfires, barbecues and the pizza oven were not permitted, but our resourceful leaders were determined that nobody should miss out on s'mores. Marshmallows and chocolate biscuits were placed between two metal oven trays, and the power of the sun was harnessed to create a mini solar oven. It was a memorable example of problem-solving in true guiding style!

Behind the Scenes

August is also a time for planning and preparation. Alongside organising the new term, our leaders tackled the all-important job of tidying the Parish Centre cupboard. After a busy term, equipment does not always find its way back to the right place! Several hours – and a great deal of sorting – later, everything is organised and we now know exactly what we have ready for the months ahead.

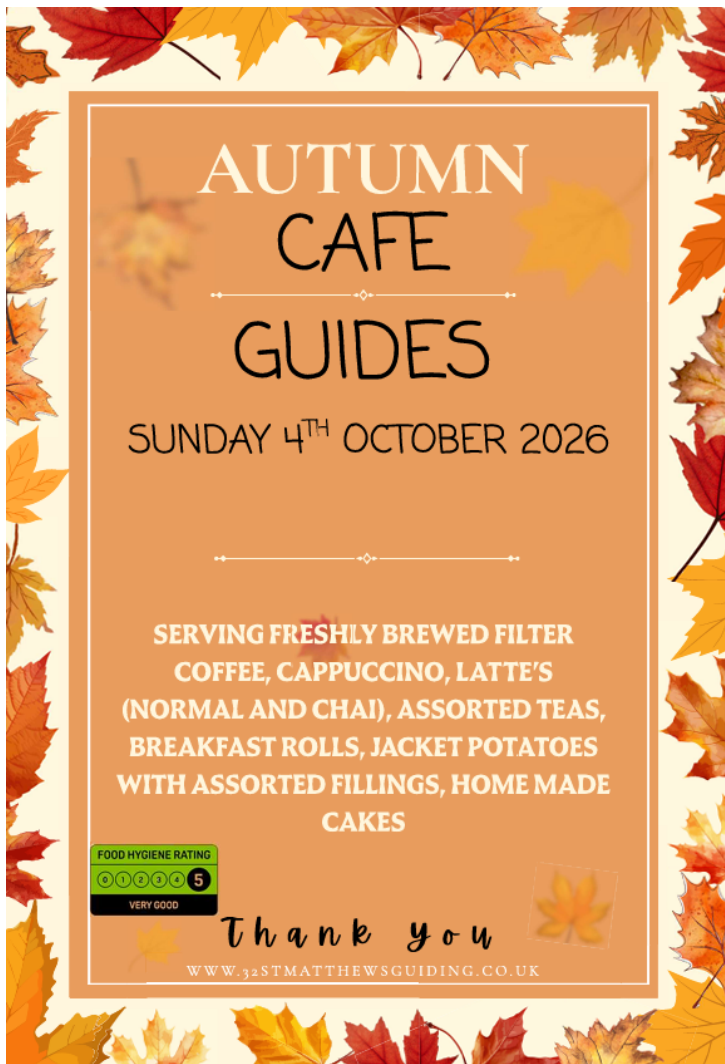
Come and Join Us

Our units currently have spaces available across all sections. Girlguiding offers girls a welcoming place to build confidence, learn new skills, enjoy

adventures and make lasting friendships. If a young person in your family might like to join us, please speak to one of our leaders – we would love to welcome her.

Christmas Craft Market

Finally, please save the date for our Christmas Craft Market in November. This important fundraiser will feature a wonderful selection of local crafters and makers, with something for everyone. We hope you will come along, browse the stalls and support 32nd St Matthew's Girlguiding.



Café Guides Recipe for October

Coffee, Walnut and Cardamom Cake

I came across this recipe when looking for something a little different. Two of Mark's favourite things are coffee cake and cardamom – this cake ticks both boxes, and I am definitely in his good books!

Preparation time: 40 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Serves 8

Ingredients

For the cake

- 200g unsalted butter, softened
- 200g soft brown sugar
- 3 large free-range eggs, at room temperature, beaten
- 200g self-raising flour
- 100g walnuts, toasted and finely ground
- 2 tbsp ground coffee
- Pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp milk

For the cardamom syrup

- 100g caster sugar
- 100ml water
- ¼ tsp ground white cardamom

For the coffee buttercream

- 185g unsalted butter, softened
- 300g icing sugar, sifted
- 1 tbsp instant coffee, dissolved in 2 tsp boiling water
- Walnut halves or pieces, to decorate

Method

Make the cake

1. Line 2 x 20cm non-stick sandwich tins with baking parchment.
2. Preheat the oven to 160°C fan / 180°C / 350°F / gas mark 4.
3. Combine flour, ground walnuts, ground coffee and salt in a bowl.

4. In a large bowl or food mixer, cream butter and sugar until pale and fluffy.
5. On medium speed, add eggs a tablespoon at a time, mixing well between each addition. Add a teaspoon of milk if the cake batter looks like curdling.
6. On the lowest speed, add the flour mixture until just combined (10 secs).
7. Evenly fill the tins (weigh each tin if you want to be precise) and smooth the surface with palette knife or back of a spoon.
8. Bake in the centre of the oven for 30 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean and the top feels springy to the touch.
9. Remove the cakes from the oven. Leave them in the tins for a couple of minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.
10. Wrap the cakes in cling film and rest overnight at room temperature before icing.

Prepare the cardamom syrup: Place the caster sugar and water in a small saucepan and, over a low heat, dissolve the sugar completely. Bring to the boil for a couple of minutes.

Make the buttercream

1. Place the unsalted butter in bowl or food mixer and beat until pale and light in texture.
2. Add the sifted icing sugar in 3 batches, beating well between each addition, until the buttercream has increased in volume and is very pale and fluffy.
3. Add the coffee mixture and beat again to mix.

Assemble the cake

1. Place one cake half upper side down on a serving plate, generously brush with the syrup.
2. Sandwich the cakes together using half of the buttercream.
3. Place on the top layer, brush again with syrup, then decorate with the remaining buttercream and walnut pieces.





Girlguiding

32nd St Matthew's
Rainbows, Brownies,
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We help girls grow in confidence,
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go.girlguiding.org.uk/join-us



Scan me
to join
the fun!

Girlguiding. We help all girls know they can do anything.

Spot the extra Bridesmaid! Answer

Well done if you got it right – it's Janet Hanna!

Late for Church

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could go to church. As she ran, she prayed, *"Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!"*

While she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her dress dirty. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, *"Dear Lord, please don't let me be late... But please don't shove me again either!"*



Going Somewhere

Older people often go to another room to get something, and when they get there, they stand wondering what they came for.

This is not a memory problem. It is God's way of helping older people get more exercise.

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Monday 15:00 - 23:00

Tuesday Closed

Wednesday to Sunday 15:00 - 23:00



From My Bookshelves

Basil Ludford-Thomas

The bookshelves in our house have been creaking under the weight of so many books so that Chris and I decided the time had come for us to part with many of our treasured books.

During the course of sorting these, I came across the following book entitled **100 Best After Dinner Stories**. It is a collection by Phyllis Shindler published in 1992 of after dinner stories and anecdotes by famous people from all walks of life.

I hope that you will find the following two extracts amusing.

The Most Reverend and Rt. Hon. Dr. George Carey

D.D., M.Th., Ph. D.

Archbishop of Canterbury

A preacher was notoriously boring. One Sunday, the verger tried a little experiment to liven up the sermon – he laced the vicar’s water with gin. The sermon that followed was remarkable. It was funny, down-to-earth, full of neat illustrations, hard-hitting and spiritually enlightening. The parishioners were astonished and the verger was jubilant.

The next Sunday, he stepped up the gin in the water and another sensational sermon followed, even more powerful than the last.

On the third Sunday, the bishop was visiting the church, so, in honour of this occasion, the verger put nine-tenths gin to one-tenth water. The vicar excelled himself, preaching on the story of Daniel in the Lion’s Den. The pulpit shook as he paced up and down, he acted the parts, he laughed, he cried, he shouted, he whispered, he touched the hearts of his congregation, he fired their enthusiasm, he inspired them to follow Daniel’s example. After the service, the bishop shook the vicar’s hand warmly.

“A very good sermon,” he told him, “but there’s only one small point. God sent an angel to shut the mouths of the lions. Daniel didn’t ‘zap them between the eyes and strew their brains across the walls like spaghetti.’ ”

The Reverend Canon Richard Tydeman

M.A.

Canon of St Paul's Cathedral 1963-81

Preacher to Lincoln's Inn 1972-81

Frequent contributor to BBC Drama

My Favourite Wedding Story

I had been conducting a wedding rehearsal in Church with the bride and groom, going through the service and answering questions. The couple were just leaving afterwards, when the groom came back. "By the way," he said, "will you put the word 'obey' in the bride's promise?" "Well," I said, "we usually omit it nowadays, but of course I will put it in if you want it." "Oh," said the groom, "I'm not bothered myself; but she wants it put in, and I always do what she says."

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**The Band: The Long Buckby Community Band**
 **Director of Music: Chris Music**



WHEN & WHERE

 **Date:** Saturday 3rd October

 **Time:** 19:30
(doors open at 19:00)

 **Venue:** St. Matthew's Church,
Kettering Road, Northampton,
NN1 4RY

TICKET INFORMATION

 **Adults: £15**
(Includes a complimentary
glass of wine on arrival)

 **Children (12 & under): £10**
(Includes a complimentary
soft drink on arrival)

**★ BOOK YOUR
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 **www.rotarybecket.org.uk**

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Gala Concert

St Matthew's Church

Saturday 24 October at 7.30pm

Malcolm Arnold:

The Sound Barrier - Rhapsody for Orchestra, Op 38

Philharmonic Concerto for orchestra, Op 120

Manx Suite (Little Suite No 3), Op 142

Ruth Gipps:

Oboe Concerto in D minor, Op 20

Shostakovich:

Festive Overture, Op 96

Symphony No 9, Op 70

Northampton Symphony Orchestra

John Gibbons *conductor*

Emmet Byrne *oboe*

Tickets £15.00 | Concessions £12.00 | Under 18s £5.00

<https://ti.to/nso/nsoconcert241026>

BRITTEN

50th Anniversary Concert

Saint Nicolas

Rejoice in the Lamb

Jubilate in C

Old Abram Brown

Prelude and Fugue

on a Theme of Vittoria

14th November, 5pm

St Matthew's Church,
Northampton

Tickets £20

Students and U16s £5



Scan for tickets

5th December, 5pm

St Wilfrid's Church,
Harrogate

Tickets £20

Students and U16s £5



Scan for tickets

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Northampton
Philharmonic
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St Matthew's Patronal Festival flowers

Sarah Oughton

These photos show the glorious flowers that enhanced our worship as we celebrated St Matthew's Day and the Feast of the Dedication.

They are arranged with great love and care to the glory of God.

Thank you to my team Sally, Polly and Carol.



The Parish Church of St Matthew

1 November All Saints' Day

10.15am

All Age Mass
for the Parish Family



4.00pm Solemn Choral Evensong

The Parish Church of St Matthew

Monday 2 November **ALL SOULS DAY**



7.30pm
Sung Requiem Mass

Friends of St Matthew's Music **100+ Club**

Congratulations to the lucky winner of £50 in our SEPTEMBER draw —

Number **85**, held by **Seymour Franklin**



You too could win the **single prize of £50** in our monthly draw if you had a number! For just £3.00 a month you'd be in with a chance, whilst also helping pay for our Director of Music's salary.

For full details and a form, please email Jonathan Starmer at
office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

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Diocese of Peterborough Safeguarding Team

Email: safeguarding@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

Direct lines: 01733 887040 / 01733 887039

Independent support

Safe Spaces: 0300 303 1056

Email: safespaces@victimsupport.org.uk

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A Christian Workers Co-operative supporting the local community and the wider world.

Parish Giving Scheme

The Parish Giving Scheme exists to allow members of the St Matthew's community to support the life and work of the Parish, and the upkeep of our church, through regular giving. It provides our principal source of income and helps us meet our main financial commitments, including our contribution towards the Diocesan Common Fund (the 'Parish Share') and the costs of our employees.



THE PARISH CHURCH OF
ST MATTHEW • NORTHAMPTON

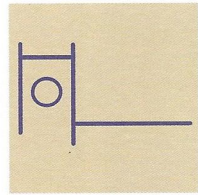
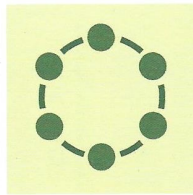
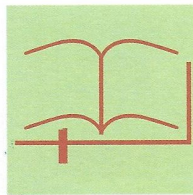
The Scheme is the most tax efficient way of contributing to the church because contributions may be eligible for Gift Aid (raising your donation by 25% at no cost to either you or St Matthew's).

There are two methods of payment available: by a banker's direct debit or by weekly-numbered envelopes via the collection plate. The amount that you give is entirely confidential and is known only to the lay people who administer the Scheme.

If you are interested in learning more or in joining the Scheme, please speak to our Stewardship Recorder Polly Matthews. She can be contacted via the Parish Office as below.

Polly Matthews

<office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk>



TM

PARISH GIVING SCHEME

Parish Office

27A The Drive, Kingsley, Northampton NN1 4RY (*within the Parish Centre*)

Telephone: 01604 791251 Email: office@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

Parish Administrator: Anita Speake Office opening hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays 9.30am till 12.30pm, 1.00pm till 4.00pm; Wednesdays CLOSED

Ministry Team

Parish Priest	The Revd Canon Nicholas Setterfield	Tel: 01604 604412
	vicar@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk	
Assistant Priest	The Revd Canon Nicholas Gandy	OGS

Parish Officers

Churchwardens	Gary Drinkwater churchwarden@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk Dave Wilson churchwarden@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
PCC Secretary	Polly Matthews pcc-secretary@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
PCC Treasurer	Donald Cran treasurer@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
Stewardship Recorder	Polly Matthews

St Matthew's Trust

David Waller
trust@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

Particular Responsibility

Safeguarding Officer	Ben Drouet safeguarding@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
Verger	Gary Drinkwater
Head Server	Nick Everitt head-server@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
Sacristan	Seymour Franklin sacristan@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
Electoral Roll Officer	Seymour Franklin
Archives	Patrick Rawlinson
Website & Magazine Editor	Dorrie Parker magazine@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

Music Department

Director of Music	Tom Moore music@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
Parish Organist	Jonathan Stamer
Friends of St Matthew's Music	Steve Stringfellow friends@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk

Walsingham Cell

Cell Secretary	Dave Wilson walsingham@stmatthews-northampton.org.uk
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