

The Prayer Book TODAY



Golden Age

The PBS 50th Anniversary Celebrations

All at Sea: Praying on the Waves

2023 Kilmister Awards

Lent 2024

Society and Media contacts

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All contributions, including articles, letters for publication, Branch news and notices of forthcoming events, should be sent to The Prayer Book Today at the above address, or by email to tpbt@pbs.org.uk. Submission by email is preferred whenever possible. Electronic submission in editable format (such as Word or RTF) saves the Editor a considerable amount of work. We reserve the right to edit or amend contributions.

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The deadline for contributions for the next edition is:
Friday, 26th April 2024

Publication date: Friday, 7th June 2024

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Prayer Book Society, please visit our website or contact the office at Copyhold Farm for an application form.

Key dates 2024

Lenten Quiet Day: The Prayer Book and the English Hymnal

St James', Garlickhythe (Tube: Mansion House)

Saturday, 9th March at 10.00am

The day will include Matins at 10.30am, Holy Communion at midday, and Sung Evensong at 3.00pm. Guest speaker: The Revd Ian Forrester.

Commemoration of the Martyrdom of Thomas Cranmer

The University Church of St Mary the Virgin at 11.00am

Procession to martyrdom site. After lunch, a lecture, 'Thomas Cranmer, the Prayer Book and the Victorians' given by the Revd Canon Dr Jeremy Morris.

Thursday, 21st March at 11.00am

Peter Toon Memorial Lecture and Evensong

Pusey House, Oxford

Wednesday, 8th May at 4.00pm (refreshments from 3.15)

'Modernity Disenchantment, and the Medieval Discovery of Nature', The Revd Dr Hans Boersma, Order of St Benedict Servants of Christ Professor in Ascetical Theology, Nashotah House.

Evensong at 5.30pm followed by drinks.

Ascension Day Evensong at St James' Palace

The service will be sung by the Gentlemen and Children of the Chapel Royal. It will be followed by a drinks reception.

Thursday, 9th May at 6.30pm

Choral Matins at the Tower of London

followed by a drinks reception.

Sunday, 12th May at 11.00am

Benefactors' Event

Saturday, 18th May at the Savoy Chapel

PBS Annual General Meeting 2024

St Giles in the Fields, London (Tube: Tottenham Court Road)

Saturday, 31st August at 2.30pm

Guest speaker: The Rt Revd Michael Marshall
 Evensong will be sung at 4.30pm.

PBS Annual Conference

St Chad's College, Durham

Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th September

Booking forms will be enclosed with the Trinity 2024 issue of *The Prayer Book Today*.

Advent Quiet Day

St James', Garlickhythe (Tube: Mansion House)

Saturday, 14th December at 10.00am

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The Chairman's Letter

St Mary's, Car Colston, is a fine church at the heart of a small community in rural Nottinghamshire. Amongst its many interesting historical features, it contains the tomb of seventeenth-century antiquarian, Dr Robert Thoroton, chiefly remembered for his county history, *The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire*, first published in 1677. Like all ancient churches, the hallowed walls of this lovely church have absorbed centuries of prayer and devotion. They have witnessed all kinds of significant events in British history and, of course, countless baptisms, weddings and funerals have been performed there. St Mary's is one the Prayer Book Society's valued Corporate Member churches; additionally, the Society is Patron of the parish, which also includes the church of St Wilfrid in the neighbouring village of Screveton.

In January, I had the privilege of joining the congregation and wider village community for a special Service of Dedication to mark the restoration of the church bells, six in total, which had been out of action for over 40 years. At the same time, new Royal Arms, superbly painted by a talented village resident, Henry Blagg, were dedicated. A greeting from the King, congratulating the parish on its splendid achievement, was printed in the front of the commemorative order of service.

In 2023, we saw impressive growth in PBS membership, activity and outreach, with much for which to be thankful—the generosity of our members making it all possible

During the service, I felt immensely proud both of what the community had achieved and of the Society's relationship with the parish. Speaking with members of the congregation afterwards, including some who had worked tirelessly to make the project a reality, I was deeply impressed with their commitment to making the church a place of welcome, celebration, and hospitality for everyone in the village. Clearly, the vicar, the Revd Ruth Colby, is well known and much loved by her people; likewise, the key lay officers are active, engaged and passionate about the place of the church in the community. It was an uplifting and memorable occasion, marked by heartfelt thanksgiving for what had been achieved, and real commitment to future outreach.

The turning of the year provides us, as members of the Prayer Book Society, with an opportunity to look back with thanksgiving on all that has been achieved in the life of our Society during the past year, and to renew our commitment to the work entrusted to us in the year ahead.

As I reflect on our activities during 2023, a number of key events stand out: namely, the national Finals of the Cranmer Awards at Liverpool Hope University, the Commemoration of Cranmer's Martyrdom in Oxford, a wonderful residential conference, and our very special celebrations in Westminster to mark the 50th anniversary of the Society. There have also been Quiet Days, online seminars, Branch Festivals, and a great many local events under the auspices of the Prayer Book Society.

New partnerships have been formed, not least with the Royal School of Church Music; Branches have been relaunched; Prayer Books have been distributed to ordinands; a significant number of individuals, churches and other institutions have shown their support for the Society's mission by signing up for membership. It is thrilling to note that many of our new members and supporters are young clergy and ordinands. This is an incredibly positive sign of the Prayer Book's appeal to younger people, and our programme of activity is constantly expanding and developing in order to reach the widest possible audience.

In 2023, we saw impressive growth in PBS membership, activity and outreach; there is much for which to be thankful. Once again, I wish to express my sincere thanks for all the time, skill, prayer and financial generosity that our members contribute to making it all possible. The Trustees are immensely grateful to each and every one. They also recognise that there is a great deal of work to be done in the future if the Prayer Book is to be rescued from the margins and put back at the heart of the Church of England.

Recognising the magnitude of this challenge, our Trustees and staff have, over the past year, been working in a number of focus groups to develop a strategic plan for future growth of the Society. *Growth*, of course, covers much more than increasing our membership, though that is obviously part of it. It also encompasses growth in activity, growth in influence, growth in personal discipleship and more. We have spent time noting the strengths and weaknesses in our current activities, identifying key areas for future development, and setting realistic strategic objectives for the next five years. All of this is, together with the necessary resources—human and financial—to achieve those goals, under the headings of: engagement with the National Church; theological training; membership; children and young people; events; resources and communication; and financial sustainability.

The work undertaken to date has been extremely valuable and, I believe, vital. It is also a *responsible* way of planning for the future, as we want to use our income—generously, and often sacrificially, given by members—in the best and most effective way possible. There is still a great deal of work to be done; however, we hope to be in a position to share more about this important stream of work at our AGM (31st August) and Conference (10th–12th September).

There are two ways in which I now invite you to share in this work of planning for the future. First, please help us grow our

membership by recruiting a new member to the Society, and by encouraging your church to join as a Corporate Member. Membership forms, magazines and leaflets detailing the Society's current activities and future aspirations can be obtained from Copyhold Farm. Secondly, please keep this ongoing strategic work in your prayers. For many years, we have asked our members to pray the Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity in their own homes on Sunday evenings. But now I am asking you to use this prayer *each and every day* as you pray for the future growth and flourishing of the Society. I am committing myself to this and I hope you will join me in it too.

Finally, back to Car Colston and the marvellous work undertaken by the small village congregation in partnership with its local community. As I left the church after the great celebration on that January evening, a local parishioner said, 'This church has been going for hundreds of years and we just want to continue to bless our community for years to come.' That is a wonderful aspiration and one which we can embrace for our Society. The Prayer Book has been in existence for hundreds of years and we want to see it continue to bless, strengthen and enrich the discipleship of people of all ages,

Chairman's visits during 2023

In addition to national PBS events, the Chairman had pleasure in accepting the following invitations during the course of 2023:

13th January—St George's, Edgbaston (Birmingham)

A lecture entitled 'Meekly Kneeling upon your Knees: the Contemporary Relevance of a Prayer Book Spirituality' as part of the 'Theology at St George's' programme.

22nd January—Hospital of St Cross, Winchester

Addresses during the 9.30a.m. and 11.00a.m. services to celebrate the Hospital's decision to join the PBS as a Corporate Member.

25th January—St Sepulchre's, Holborn Viaduct (London)

A reflection on the Collect appointed for the Feast of the Conversion of St Paul during Choral Evensong.

30th January—Pusey House, Oxford

Representing the PBS at Choral Communion for Charles, King and Martyr.

2nd February—Canterbury Cathedral

Representing the PBS at the Consecration of former PBS Deputy Chairman, Paul Thomas.

22nd April—Blackburn Cathedral

An extended address on the key tenets of Prayer Book spirituality as part of the Blackburn Branch Festival.

23rd April—All Saints', Notting Hill (London)

An address on the spiritual significance of the Coronation during Choral Evensong.

30th April—SS Peter & Paul, Rustington (Chichester)

An address on the spiritual significance of the Coronation during Choral Evensong.

29th May—All Saints', Northampton



now and in the years ahead. May the God whom we serve help us rise to this challenge and put the Prayer Book back where it belongs, at the heart of our Church.

With my prayers and good wishes,
Bradley Smith

Representing the PBS at the annual Oak Apple Day service.

18th June—All Saints', Highbrook (Chichester)

An address on remaining faithful during the interregnum. Happily, the name of the new incumbent was announced at the end of the service!

1st July—Exeter Branch

A talk entitled 'Thoughts on Belonging' during a Branch meeting at Bovey Tracey.

2nd July—St Mary Steps (Exeter)

A visit to meet the regular congregation and celebrate the parish's decision not only to become a Corporate Member but also to revert to the BCP for the principal Sunday morning service.

27th August—Coombes Parish Church (Chichester)

An address entitled 'In Praise of Sacred Space and Holy Time' during Evensong in the ancient candlelit setting of Coombes Parish Church.

23rd September—Lichfield Branch

A talk about the Prayer Book Society's current activities and aspirations as part of the Branch relaunch at Lichfield Cathedral.

4th November—Winchester Branch

An address entitled 'For Such a Time as This', as part of the Branch relaunch at Winchester Cathedral.

26th November—All Saints', Lincoln

A short talk and presentation of Prayer Books following Choral Evensong.

New Generation Speaks Afresh

Latest Regional Heats of the Cranmer Awards

Over the course of the autumn last year, over 100 young people participated in regional heats of the Cranmer Awards in dioceses as far apart as Leeds and Salisbury. Others had competed in speech and drama festivals earlier in the year. Contestants are required to recite aloud substantial passages from the Book of Common Prayer, and do so in a manner appropriate for a church service; any form of dramatisation of the passages is discouraged. The judges score candidates on clarity and projection, fluency and rhythm, natural or intelligent communication of meaning, and accurate memorisation and timing. As ever, the standard was incredibly high. We congratulate all who took part.

Six candidates aged thirteen to eighteen took part in the senior heat for the northern part of the Diocese of Salisbury at St John's, Devizes. Chairman of the judges, the Revd Gerry Lynch, said, 'Despite the impression some people have that young people aren't interested in traditional forms of worship, we were astounded by the maturity and clarity with which all our candidates read from some genuinely challenging parts of the Prayer Book. They did themselves and their school proud. We would have been happy to have any of the six entrants read a lesson if the Archbishop of Canterbury had been visiting St John's.' Winners, Isabela and Reuben, will take part in the National Finals.

Eighteen young people competed in the first ever regional heat to be held in the Diocese of Leeds. The Revd Alexander Crawford, Vicar of St Margaret's, Ilkley, had a difficult task in judging the competition. 'It was wonderful to see young people from a variety of backgrounds come together to recite these beautiful texts that have inspired our ancestors for generations,' he said. Winners, Roseanna and Nelson, will go forward to the National Finals.



Charlie and Father Pip

certificates to all the unplaced competitors in the Rochester regional heat. Eight juniors and four seniors competed at the Tonbridge School. Guest of honour, the Revd Fergus Butler-Gallie, urged the young people—and indeed all others present—to be both challenged and changed by the living texts of the Prayer Book.

The Chester Branch is renowned both for the standard of its young contestants and the meticulous organisation of the competition, which has been running in the diocese for many years. The heat was held at St Mary's, Nantwich, in November, and once again a mixed group of candidates excelled in their delivery and comprehension of the time-honoured texts.

Organiser of the Chichester East heat, Valerie Mighall, is already planning for this year's competition. 'Year on year, the number of competitors increases. This year we had eleven juniors and eleven seniors, representing four schools in the Battle area. The standard was incredibly high and the Bishop of Lewes really struggled to make his final decision. We are looking forward to getting a few more schools on board in 2024.'

By the time this magazine arrives, the winners of the regional heats will have competed in front of a large audience at the National Final at Hampton Court Palace.

'It's a really powerful thing to hear young people reciting passages, mainly of Scripture, from the Book of Common Prayer,' observes PBS Chairman, Bradley Smith. 'Participating in the Cranmer Awards is a wonderful experience for the candidates, and they have the opportunity to develop a whole range of skills that will stand them in good stead for later life.'

Let the final word go to Charlie, who participated in the Salisbury South heat at Sherborne Abbey: 'As I eagerly prepare for the Finals, I know this experience has been one of great personal and spiritual growth for me, and that all I achieve is to the glory of (and by the grace of) God.'

It doesn't get better than that!



Rochester candidates

International adjudicator, Amelia Appleby, said it was 'unprecedented' that she awarded Highly Commended

Faithful Service

Kilmister Award recipients receive their honour



Six members of the Prayer Book Society were honoured with the Kilmister Award as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations in Westminster in October 2023. They were presented with their medals by Christine Kilmister, the widow of the late Tony Kilmister, after whom the prestigious award is named.

The recipients were:

- Jonathan Baldwin, for long and dedicated service to the Chester Branch
- George and Joanna Comer, for services to the Rochester Branch and support of all the Society's activities
- John Dearing, for services to the Oxford Branch and PBS Trading
- Rosemary Hall, of the Durham & Newcastle Branch, who has organised the Society's Annual Conference for over twenty years
- Dr John Verity, for faithful service as Secretary of the Guildford Branch

'Each recipient of the Kilmister Award has, in their own way and over many years, made an exceptional contribution to the life of our beloved Prayer Book Society,' said Bradley Smith, Chairman of the PBS. 'I am thrilled that their valuable work has been recognised in this way, and I thank each of them for all they have done, and continue to do, to further our aims.'

The Kilmister Awards were inaugurated in 2022 to recognise and celebrate outstanding voluntary work for and on behalf of the Prayer Book Society.



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Advent Quiet Day and Online Seminar



Many of the 40 Prayer Book Society members who took part in the PBS pilgrimage to the Holy Land in September 2023 have stayed in touch via WhatsApp, e-mail and post. An Advent Quiet Day at St James', Garlickhythe, on 9th December provided an excellent opportunity for the pilgrims to regroup. Once again, there was the benefit of the wise and gracious ministry of Bishop Michael Langrish, one of the two bishops who led the pilgrimage that ended only a matter of days before the present conflict broke out.

Naturally, the longing for peace was foremost in the hearts and minds of the pilgrims who had recently stood in the holy places, now seen in the media torn apart by hatred and violence. They were joined in person by other PBS

members and supporters, and online by some who were unable to get there due to the rail strike. The day included: Morning Prayer, led by the Archdeacon of London; three thoughtful addresses by the bishop; and a celebration of Holy Communion at midday. Evensong, conducted by the Revd Christopher Hancock, was sung at the close of the day with Max Smith at the organ and Bradley Smith as cantor.

The theme of the day was 'This is the way, walk in it' (Isaiah 30:21), and during the times of silent prayer and reflection participants were invited to meditate on a number of well-known poems. At the end of a thought-provoking day, those who didn't have to run for the last trains out of London were invited to stay for a meal and further insightful conversation with the bishop.

The theme of our online seminar for Advent was 'The armour of light'. The Rt Revd John Ford, former Bishop of the Murray, Australia, and co-leader of the Holy Land pilgrimage, enabled participants from all parts of the country and beyond to explore the riches of the Collect appointed for daily use during the season. Bishop John's reflections were also rich and meaningful, rooted in a deep and lively love of the Scriptures and church tradition, and a lifetime of pastoral ministry. It is easy to miss subtleties in purely electronic forms of communication, but on this occasion, it was quite clear that the audience left inspired and edified.

The Litany, prayed slowly, carefully and intentionally, was an appropriate way to end a profound session. A day or two later, a participant wrote to say that he had never before heard the Litany. Going forward, he would weave its all-encompassing petitions into his own pattern of prayer. *That* is an example of what makes these occasions so valuable: the Prayer Book experienced at the heart of personal devotion, inspiring prayer, and strengthening discipleship.



The Archdeacon of London

Distress, Thanksgiving, and Hope: The Forms of Prayer to be used at sea

Mark Broadway exhorts us to 'pray everywhere—even at sea!'

According to the 1922 'Revised Table of Lessons', every second year, on the Saturday immediately prior to the Fourth Sunday in Lent, we are to read Ephesians 6. We should read it on two other occasions also—but with Lent no doubt on all our minds, it seemed a good place for us to begin. There, we are taught by the Apostle that we should be 'praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit' (Ephesians 6:18 KJV). Our prayers may be many and varied, across our diverse communion, and across the diversity of each life lived in the power of the Holy Ghost,

but no matter what we are praying about, or where we are praying, if we pray in the Spirit we can't go far wrong.

Some will find themselves praying on the golf course. Perhaps a trivial prayer: 'O Almighty God, vouchsafe seasonable weather on the eighteenth hole?' Perhaps something deeper, as the suppliant uses the silence of the green to raise his heart in petition for a loved one. Likewise, at sea we find a plethora of potential occasions to intercede for a comfortable ferry ride to Dublin, one which doesn't wake the baby; or perhaps for the life of a fellow sailor, dying in the medical bay aboard a battleship in His Majesty's Navy.

Cranmer could hardly have conceived of the specifics of modern nautical life, but as is so frequently the case, he has helped to convey to us a remarkable set of prayers to be used at sea. Prayers which have stood the test of time; or, I should say, prayers that still offer all upon the sea something of a safe haven. For my own part, serving as part of the crew aboard my local RNLI lifeboat has given me more than one occasion to lift my heart (and occasionally my voice) in prayer. In these pages, I want to explore three genres of maritime prayer—Distress, Thanksgiving and Hope—and, through these broad categories, to explore something of the theology we find in the 'Forms of Prayer to be Used at Sea', and finally to connect them briefly to contemporary life.

Pray in Distress

I remember distinctly the first 'Shout' that saw me don



the Yellow and Black and take to the water. As it happened, I was already in the station, undergoing one-to-one navigation tuition with one of the station trainers. We were alerted by a banging on the training-room door before even the pagers went off in our pockets. 'Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour' came to mind immediately in the changing room. I was almost ready to climb aboard by the time my mind had reached 'and further us with thy continual help'. It was afloat and heading off on the task that my mind was able to finish: 'that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.' This is, of course, the Collect appointed to be said in the 'Forms of Prayer'.

Turning now to some of the other set prayers in more detail, we might wisely begin with the opening prayer, 'O Eternal Lord God', which is appointed to be said each day by those who serve in the Navy. I am assured by friends who are naval chaplains, or a 'Bish' as they are lovingly called by those afloat with them, that these prayers do remain a staple of public worship and private devotion even three-and-a-half centuries on. We begin here, not merely because it comes first, but because it is remarkably instructive: 'O Eternal Lord God, who alone spreadest out the heavens and ruleth the raging sea', addressed, of course, to the Father, but simultaneously reminding us of the divinity of Christ the Son of God. The divine power of Jesus shines through in a few key passages in



One day, we all shall pass through the tempests of this life to the safe haven of God's loving presence

the Gospel, but not least in that story where Our Lord calms the raging sea. For good reason, this account has become the favourite of almost every lifeboat crewman I have met. It ends with the rhetorical question: 'And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"' (Mark 4:41).

The opening prayer leads to the 'Prevent us, O Lord' Collect, and is then followed by 'Prayers to be Used in Storms at Sea'. These are pastoral, in that they recognise a unique and terrifying aspect of human existence, and speak into it with a desire to build hope and consolation. But they are also an occasion for the sailor in distress to put his conscience right before God in the midst of his peril: 'in this our great distress cry unto thee for help: Save, Lord, or else we perish.'

They are also deeply theological prayers and, typical of the time they were written, speak boldly about divine providence: 'Most powerful and glorious Lord God, at whose command the winds blow, and lift up the waves of the sea, and who stillest the rage thereof'. The prayers hold a balance between God's ordinance and God's loving intervention, with the purpose of leading the sailor to live a life of service: 'O send thy word of command to rebuke the raging winds, and the roaring sea; that we, being delivered from this distress, may live to serve thee.'

Provision is given, also, for a short private form of prayer for 'single persons, that cannot meet to join in Prayer with others, by reason of the Fight, or Storm'. Again, these major on a threefold theme: God's power, our sinfulness and God's mercy to save. This is typified here:

*O Lord of hosts, fight for us; that we may glorify thee.
O suffer us not to sink under the weight of our sins, or the violence of the enemy.
O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thy Name's sake.*

Pray with Thanksgiving

Of course, not all is storms and terror—and God is true to his promise, and has delivered those who have called upon him. It is right, then, that these forms of prayer should also contain prayers of thanksgiving. It is worth noting that these thanksgivings begin with words from the Psalms. Psalm 66, *Jubilate Deo*, and Psalm 107, *Confitemini Domino*, are to be said after a storm. It is a cause of personal sadness that the singing of Psalms has fallen by the wayside in much of modern Christianity, although I must confess to the encouragement I have found in noting that there is a resurgence of singing Psalms without paraphrase or addition (to contemporary settings) within certain streams of Evangelicalism. This is much to be encouraged, as we at Matins and Evensong continue to recognise the way in which God has given us the Psalms as a hymnal along with sacred Scripture.

Back to the story of my first Shout... I noted with a glad heart that my disjointed, silent, stumbling prayer was answered. Our tasking request, which had come through to us from the coastguard, after an observer on the shoreline rightly called 999 and reported someone in distress, was successful. Our boat, an Atlantic Class rib-style vessel, was launched without delay; we made good way to the casualty and found him well. We extracted him and he was grateful for a lift back to the shore. Grateful indeed he was to us and to the institution, but for me the words to the hymn appointed to be sung 'after victory or deliverance from an enemy' rang true:

Therefore not unto us, O Lord, not unto us: but unto thy Name be given the glory. The Lord hath done great things for us: the Lord hath done great things for us, for which we rejoice. Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord: who hath made heaven and earth. Blessed be the Name of the Lord: from this time forth for evermore.

Words drawn from the treasury of Scripture; would that all our prayers and praises be so richly saturated with the Word of the Lord.

Pray with Hope

One day, we all shall pass through the tempests of this life to the safe haven of God's loving presence. For countless souls, that passing has taken place whilst at sea. Many of these have never been afforded a Christian burial, their life ending in catastrophe or alone and adrift. To lose one's body to the sea had, for the ancient people of the world, a special significance. The sea in the Bible is often understood to be a place of profound chaos and terror; and in this respect it came to be understood as signifying death itself. We note well the abolition, so to speak, of the sea at the end of the Bible. John writes: 'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea' (Revelation 21:1). This is a symbolic way of abolishing death itself, in a similar way to the doing-away-with-night that we also read about. Without wanting to sidetrack us too much, these phrases at the end of the Bible are to do with an 'undoing' or a 'redoing' of the first chapter in

the Bible, when light and dark are separated, the sea and the land are separated, and finally God and Man find themselves separated, only to be reunited in Christ through death.

It is with good reason, then, that the 'Forms of Prayer to be Used at Sea' should conclude with special words for the burial of the dead:

We therefore commit his Body to the Deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body, (when the Sea shall give up her Dead) and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; who at his coming shall change our vile Body, that it may be like his glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.

This is the hope that permeates all Christian hope: that as Christ was made like us, so shall we be made like him. As he suffered death, and thereby overcame it, we might know death but never truly suffer it. The 'Forms of Prayer to be Used at Sea' give us words to pray in distress, with thanksgiving, and as with all the Book of Common Prayer, they give us cause to pray with hope. This is a hope I cling to, every time the paggers sound.

The Revd Mark Broadway is a priest in the Diocese of Llandaff, and a member of the Porthcawl RNLI Lifeboat Crew. His debut book, *Journeying with God in the Wilderness*, is published by Inter-Varsity Press and available from the Prayer Book Society.

PBS Annual Conference and AGM



PBS Annual General Meeting 2024
St Giles in the Fields, London (Tube: Tottenham Court Road)
Saturday, 31st August at 2.30 p.m.
Guest speaker: The Rt Revd Michael Marshall
Evensong will be sung at 4.30 p.m.



PBS Annual Conference
St Chad's College, Durham
Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th September
Includes an afternoon exploring Auckland Castle
Booking forms will be enclosed with the Trinity 2024 issue of *The Prayer Book Today* and online

Gems in Unlikely Places

David Greenwood finds beauty and truth in 'The Order for the Burial of the Dead'

Our modern society goes to such lengths to insulate its members against pain and death that we really don't know how to deal with death when it inevitably comes. Many insist that words mean little at such a time, but in the right hands they are powerful things. Never far from Anglican Christians, the Book of Common Prayer sits on the shelf, offering words both true and beautifully expressed. Most of those who appreciate its enduring beauty have a favourite service or prayer that resonates with them. I have yet to find a single soul who confesses a preference for 'The Order for the Burial of the Dead', and yet that service contains both truth and beauty.

While it shares the inherent beauty of the language

Time and time again, when such numbed mourners register those familiar phrases from the Prayer Book—the resurrection and the life' or 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust'—I have seen them start, visibly snapping out of the fog

in common with the rest of the Prayer Book, there is a very practical benefit to the burial service. This is because its language is so very familiar, not only to churchgoers but also from having seeped into the English-speaking world through films and television. All too often, people mourning the loss of a loved one, particularly when death comes without warning, are in too much shock to engage and really grieve at a funeral, which will inevitably leave a great deal of destructive angst pent up inside them. I have noticed that this is particularly so at celebrations that centre around a bland recital of the fine deeds of the dearly departed. Such service may indeed have accessible language, sometimes verging upon trendy, but it frequently fails people in grief when and how they need it most. Time and time again, when such numbed mourners register those familiar phrases from the Prayer Book—the resurrection and the life' or 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust'—I have seen them start, visibly snapping out of the fog, reminded of where they are at and being able to fully grieve.



I discussed this observation with a friend, only to find that she not only understood but vociferously agreed. Many years ago, she had lost a baby to stillbirth and remained unable to mourn as she needed. Looking back from the other side of internalised grief that had dissipated only over the course of years, she expressed that she wished she had had something, anything, to puncture the bubble of shock.

Even those not familiar with the overall message of Christ will recognise these phrases—but what is that fuller message, the truth embedded amidst the beauty? That Jesus was the Christ, God incarnate, with the unique right to proclaim in the opening of the service: 'I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die'. Even from a Prayer Book known for its 'comfortable words', these stand out as words that, properly understood by believers, can assuage sorrow like few others. Those thinking that a bit abstract may in time find even greater solace from the words of committal: 'ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ'.

Long may the Prayer Book continue to serve the Church with this message.

The Revd Dr David Greenwood is Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Classics at the University of St Andrews.

May the King Live Forever

Matthew Butler reports on the celebration of coronations old and new at Bath Abbey

On Sunday, 8th October 2023, members of the Bath & Wells Branch of the Prayer Book Society were pleased to attend a programme of events at Bath Abbey to celebrate the 1050th anniversary of the coronation of King Edgar, first King of All England, in 973. That coronation, which was devised and conducted by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, took place in the Saxon Abbey that occupied the same site as its successors: first the Norman cathedral and then the current Abbey. The form of service used on that occasion provided the template for all subsequent coronations, including that of His Majesty the King last May. It was, therefore, apt that this anniversary should happen to fall in a year of coronation, and fitting that it should be celebrated in this holy place.

The programme began with an absorbing talk by the Revd Canon Dr Robin Ward, Principal of St Stephen's House, Oxford, on the Coronation Liturgy. This largely covered the same ground as Dr Ward's seminar 'Anointed, Blessed and Consecrated', the first in a series of online seminars that are still available on the Prayer Book Society's YouTube channel and which I thoroughly recommend.

After Dr Ward's talk, members were given a guided tour of the Abbey conducted by Mr Jeremy Key-Pugh—one of the Abbey's licensed lay ministers and a Churchwarden Emeritus—in which various points of interest relevant to the monarchy were highlighted. Among these were the window at the east end of the north aisle depicting Edgar's coronation. It was installed in 1949, and a plaque in the nave commemorates the visit of Elizabeth II in 1973 to mark the 1000th anniversary of the same event.

Amusingly, that visit did not go entirely to plan as, due to a miscommunication, the Great West Door was closed just as the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were about to enter. Her Majesty later joked that she thought she had come on the wrong day!

Then it was time for a special service of Choral Evensong. Very graciously, the Abbey clergy had allowed the Prayer Book Society considerable influence in the design of the service. Thus, while Abbey Evensong normally begins with 'O Lord, open thou our lips', this time the full Introduction, Confession and Absolution were used—the first time those words had been heard in the Abbey since the sad and regrettable loss of Choral Matins in 2017. The Prayer for the King's Majesty was also said.

While the readings—which were, naturally, from the King James Version—were simply those appointed by the lectionary for that day, by sheer fortuity they were entirely apt for the occasion. The first, from Proverbs 2, enjoins the reader to 'incline [his] ear unto wisdom' so that he may 'understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity'. The second, from 1 John 2, reminds us to 'love not the world, neither the things that are in the world' because 'the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever'. Such advice is, of course, very meet and right for a king; and the theme of seeking wisdom and relying on God rather than the lures of the world was explored in a thoughtful and incisive sermon from the Right Revd Michael Langrish, former Bishop of Exeter and current member of the Bath & Wells Branch of the Prayer Book Society.



The boys and lay clerks of Bath Abbey sang the Canticles to Stanford's setting in C, and the anthem was Handel's magnificent 'The King shall rejoice in thy strength'. The service was brought to a rousing conclusion with two verses of the National Anthem.

After Evensong, members of the Prayer Book Society enjoyed prosecco and cake in the Abbey's Learning Room, one of the warren of new underground spaces recently constructed as part of a major development project. In celebration of the event, the Abbey bellringers rang a successful quarter peal of 1282 changes of Cambridge Surprise Royal, lasting 54 minutes.

God save the King! And may the British monarchy last at least another 1050 years.

Patterns of Worship 1999–2023

Michael Hardman has undertaken new research into Prayer Book usage throughout the Diocese of Guildford

In October 1999, Robert Ingram, then Secretary to the Guildford Diocese Branch of the Prayer Book Society, produced a Directory of churches in the Diocese that conducted services according to the Book of Common Prayer. I decided in early 2023 that Robert Ingram's excellent work needed to be updated in order to provide a more accurate guide for churchgoers in the Diocese, having regard to the inevitable changes that would have occurred over the passage of time.

Methodology

It was necessary to contact each church in the Diocese in order to have comprehensive details of the services held. I also made extensive use of the lists of parishes and the interactive map of churches available on the Diocese of Guildford website.

Which churches to include and which to exclude from the Directory? A description on a church's website such as, 'Traditional said service of Holy Communion' did not necessarily mean that it was Holy Communion conducted according to the BCP. Some churches adopt 'Common Worship Order Two (Traditional Language)', the wording of which is almost identical to the BCP Holy Communion service except for some minor additions, and some omissions such as a reduction in the choice of Collects and Offertory Sentences, the change from 'indifferently' to 'impartially' in the Intercessions, and the adoption of a different lectionary

The COVID pandemic made significant changes to service patterns and there is some evidence to demonstrate that it caused a reduction in the use of the BCP

other than the BCP provision.

However, clergy who offer the BCP often make changes to the liturgy. For example, the Summary of the Law (which does not occur in the Communion service) is generally offered rather than the Ten Commandments, and the change to 'impartially' is sometimes made, together with a modernised version of the Lord's Prayer. Other churches use the BCP but adopt the *Common Worship* lectionary and an alternative version of the Bible for the readings. (The use of



the *Common Worship* lectionary at both the early and later services enables the officiant to prepare only one sermon!)

I therefore decided it would be unreasonable (and possibly outwith the spirit of Article XXXIV) to exclude these churches from the Directory, because at least the language of the BCP itself can still be enjoyed by worshippers.

Changes in worship patterns

Most churches that have disappeared from the Directory since 1999 simply no longer conduct any services according to the BCP. Typical responses to my enquiries were: 'We now use *Common Worship* for all services because there was no demand for the BCP' or 'The congregation had dwindled to two, so the PCC decided to stop the BCP service'. One church no longer holds BCP services because it now has a mixed congregation from different denominations.

Some churches that formerly offered BCP services have disappeared from the Directory for more irreversible reasons. For example, the church of St Francis, Headley Down, was sold some years ago and is now occupied by the Headley Down Community Church (not C of E). There is a proposal that Christ Church, Longcross, closed since 2004, should be converted into flats.

Worship patterns might also have changed during an interregnum or upon the arrival of a new incumbent. The COVID pandemic made significant changes to service patterns and there is some evidence to demonstrate that it caused a reduction in the use of the BCP, or services where it was mainly used.

Analysis

The validity of comparisons between the BCP provision set out in the 1999 Directory and this 2023 Directory would depend on the extent of each survey and the criteria adopted for inclusion in each. However, the two Directories indicate that in 1999 there were 151 parish churches in the Diocese that provided services according to the BCP, but by 2023 this had reduced to 103. In percentage terms (using the current total of 212 churches in the Diocese), the number of churches using the BCP in 1999 represented approximately 71 per cent of the total, but by 2023 this figure had reduced to approximately 49 per cent. The number of BCP services provided by each church each week had also diminished. The table below shows the number of churches offering the various types of BCP service in 1999 and 2023:

Year	Holy Communion	Morning Prayer/ Choral Matins	Evening Prayer/Evensong
2023	96	14	25
1999	133	52	86

Conclusion

The statistics provide disappointing reading and emphasise the continuing need for the existence of the Prayer Book Society. Let us hope the statistics will show no further decline, or perhaps even an increase, in the use of the BCP in another twenty years' time!

Copies of the 2023 Directory can be obtained (either in electronic or hardcopy format) by emailing michaelhardman@btinternet.com.

Michael Hardman

Secretary, Guildford Diocese Branch, Prayer Book Society



Pilgrimage to the Painted Churches of Moldavia 4th–12th September 2024

In Romania, there are several UNESCO-listed painted churches, situated in unspoilt countryside but with modern pilgrim facilities. This autumn, Fr Philip Warner, Rector of St Magnus the Martyr Church in the City of London, and a frequent visitor to Moldavia, will be co-leading a pilgrimage to the best of them. The group is limited to twenty persons, and full details of the itinerary, cost and how to book will be sent (with no obligation) on request.

During the pilgrimage, the Prayer Book will be used and presentations made to local places of worship.

For further information, please email Fr Philip via pilgrimage@stmtm.org.uk

Books for Lent 2024

Three new titles to inspire the Lenten journey

Lent with the Beloved Disciple

Michael Marshall. *Bloomsbury*, 208 pages.

£10.99 Order code 4938

The 2024 Bloomsbury Lent Book invites you on a six-week journey in the company of the 'beloved disciple' as found in the narrative of the Gospel of St John. *Lent with the Beloved Disciple* takes us into the heart of that Paschal Mystery, by which all things in heaven and earth are ultimately fulfilled in the risen and ascended Christ, the one who is 'all in all'.

Michael Marshall is the speaker at the PBS AGM 2024.

Prayers of a Simple Heart Before God

Andrew Hawes. *Austin Macauley*, 103 pages.

£7.99 Order code 6249

Prayers of a Simple Heart offers a way to enter the journey of Lent. Canon Andrew Hawes shares his own pilgrimage towards Easter experiencing the depths and heights of encounter with God. These 40 'prayer-poems' are the outworking of exploring the Gospel reading set for each day. They are offered as a springboard for thought, prayer and action: as windows opening fresh perspectives. They speak heart to heart.

Andrew Hawes is a former editor of *The Prayer Book Today*.

Journeying with God in the Wilderness. A 40-Day Lent Devotional through the Book of Numbers

Mark Broadway. *IVP*, 160 pages.

£11.99 Order code 4651

With readings from the book of Numbers, as well as from the New Testament, *Journeying with God in the Wilderness* guides us through an often-neglected book of the Bible, helping us to make sense of the Old Testament through the lens of the New, and giving us Christ-centred hope. It will encourage and inspire anyone feeling lost or bewildered on life's journey by showing them the fulfilment of the promises of God to his people in the wilderness.

The Revd Mark Broadway was a speaker at the PBS Conference 2023.

All publications available from the PBS online shop

New Arrangements for Book Sales

Anyone who ordered books from us recently may have noticed that the order was fulfilled by St Olav's Bookshop, rather than Copyhold Farm. This follows a decision of the Trustees, having received proposals from two potential service providers, including St Olav's. It was the Board's view that, by outsourcing our book sales, we could free up the staff at Copyhold to focus on day-to-day administration, including dealing with members' queries.

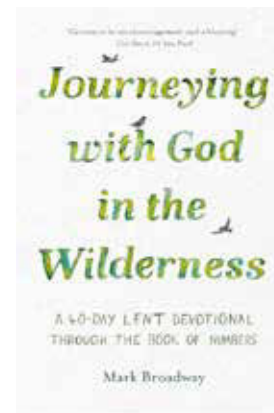
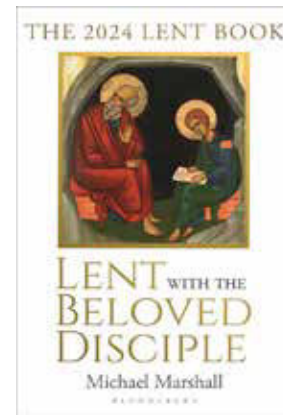
Negotiations with St Olav's were led by me. Some will be aware that our Chairman, Bradley Smith, is an employee of St Olav's bookshop. I should emphasise that Bradley played no part in the commercial negotiations and abstained when the

proposal to engage St Olav's was put to a vote of the Trustees. He will receive no benefit from the new arrangements.

The outsourcing to St Olav's will make no difference to the cost of books ordered; in fact, it may well result in a shorter delivery time. Please let us know if you experience any issues.

Finally, John Dearing has decided, after many years of faithful service, to step down from being General Manager of Trading at Copyhold Farm. We wish him well for the future and are very grateful for all he has done for the PBS over the years.

Paul Meitner
PBS Deputy Chairman and Treasurer



The Age of Gold



On a sunny Saturday, 7th October, the autumnal sunshine still holding to summer as the ancient bells of Westminster Abbey rang out, approaching 1000 people gathered in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Prayer Book Society. The occasion had regrettably been postponed due to industrial action on the railways. It was clear, however, that this time nothing would put off or prevent the faithful from having a good day. The aim was to celebrate, and give thanks for, a remarkable association. Members and guests alike displayed much happiness in being there. Fifty years is a notable time in the lifespan of anything or anyone, and all the more so in today's culture of the temporary and short-lived.

PBS Ecclesiastical Patron, the Rt Revd and Rt Hon. the Lord Chartres GCVO, presided and preached with great aplomb. He clearly relished being back in his old diocese and the Abbey precincts, where, only a few months before, he had participated in the Coronation of HM the King. How better to commemorate the longevity of an institution than with a celebration of its future. This, after all, was a significant public occasion to mark the contribution to the renewal and maintenance of Anglican liturgical life by the Book of Common Prayer.

The sermon considered the enduring appeal in worship, spirituality and private devotions of the Prayer Book. Bishop Chartres avowed how he is one himself who 'resorts to the Prayer Book at least twice a day; who was ordained and consecrated according to the Prayer Book rite; who hopes to be buried with the Prayer Book service'. Discernible nodding amongst the congregation demonstrated he was not alone in this practice and commitment. 'After more than 50 years, the Holy Spirit communicates through the sobriety and rigour of the Book of Common Prayer and nourishes not some antiquarian taste but more and more life in Christ,' he exhorted.

Before the service, Organ Scholar, Carolyn Craig, played 'Master Tallis' Testament' by Herbert Howells and 'Fantasia in A' by William Byrd. After the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Cllr Patricia McAllister, was conducted to her seat, the clergy entered with the Westminster Abbey Special Service Choir, which sang Byrd's setting of the Ante-Communion Collect, 'Prevent us, O Lord', ably conducted by the Abbey's Assistant Organist, Matthew Jorysz. The first hymn was 'Christ is made the sure foundation'.

The Epistle was read by senior Cranmer Awards winner, Brendan Ritchie, and the Gospel proclaimed by the Dean of Westminster, the Very Revd David Hoyle MBE. The offertory hymn was 'Thy hand, O God, has guided'. Further pieces from the choir included works by Merbecke, Stanford, Elgar and Jack Oades (born 1994), whose setting of the Collect for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity was sung as a Communion motet. It was followed by the congregation singing 'The Church's one foundation'.

As the service concluded, the *Gloria* was sung to C. V. Stanford's setting for the Coronation of King George V, and, following the Blessing pronounced by Bishop Chartres, the recessional music was Elgar's *Allegro Maestoso* from the Sonata in G Op. 28. All emerged into the dappled Westminster sunlight as the bells of St Margaret's rang out, accompanying the move to Church House a few steps away and a hot buffet luncheon. Friends old and new alike shared news with the elation of such a happy occasion. The same theme was picked up by the Bishop of Oswestry, the Rt Revd Paul Thomas, who gave a stirring address in the main chamber.

A little while later, many proceeded to the Abbey for Evensong; Prayer Book, of course. Finally, the official celebration was concluded, amid the throng of many fond farewells and good wishes. It had been a day to remember.

The Address, by the Bishop of Oswestry

It is exhilarating for me to address you today following the great liturgy at St Margaret's and this delicious luncheon, as together we make jubilee—celebrating five decades of the invaluable, indispensable, inestimable work of the Prayer Book Society. *Vivat!*

All anniversaries should encourage a proper retrospection; a healthy looking-back at what, by God's providence, has come to pass across the years. And looking back today, in numerous ways we see a very great deal for which to render thanks: we call at once to remembrance the visionary founders of this Society, who established it with clear-sighted purpose to ensure that the Church of England's historic and normative liturgy was not consigned to a display case in the liturgical museum at a time of rapid and radical liturgical revision, but rather continued to be part of the living, praying life of the Church. That was our founders' eminent vision; it is ours still.

We recall also those who, by their considerable and sacrificial financial generosity across these years, laid strong foundations. Endowed with funds (most notably the appeal made by the late Lord Charteris for the establishment of the Cranmer Awards), the PBS was able to adapt and develop in a very fleet-of-foot way its work and strategy as the liturgical landscape changed and as a less hostile and more co-operative relationship developed with the official liturgical authorities.

We are aflame for Tradition, which is the dynamic communication of the past in the present—the living and continuous connection with the unchanging things

And across these five decades, the Prayer Book Society has been abundantly blessed with wise, strong leadership and many devoted Trustees: Tony Kilmister (who now rests among the saints), Roger Evans, the indomitable Prudence Dailey (with whom for a happy season in my life I had the privilege to work alongside, and from whom I learned such a great deal). To each of them we owe a debt indeed—Tony fought many battles (he rather relished them, methinks) to establish the PBS and carve out its distinctive role and identity; Roger Evans, with great lawyerly skill, oversaw the transition of the PBS from the old and inefficient constitutional arrangement to the efficient governance structure we have today; Prudence, with unmatched skill, found the points and places where real and constructive partnerships could be made with the contemporary Church of England.

All this makes for an oh-so-rich legacy across the years, for which we render thanks to almighty God.



Copyhold Staff at the Celebration service



Cranmer Awards winner Brendan Ritchie reads the Epistle



The Dean of Westminster reads the Gospel



Bishop Paul greets guests after the service



Members mingling outside St Margaret's



Bishop Richard with guests



Prudence Dailey with Bishop Paul

Through all these things, the aim and objects of the Society are being realised: the deepening, the strengthening and the hallowing of Christian discipleship through a knowledge of, and immersion in, the incomparable liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer

But as I celebrate with you today all that has been achieved—and all that God has blessed and made fruitful—I also give you this warning. Be on your guard that the retrospection proper to this happy anniversary does not collapse into life-sapping nostalgia! Nostalgia is not a looking-back in thanksgiving, but a harking-back with sorrow. It is the debilitating love of things that are lost, of things that once were but which no more are. In an organisation like this—which has such a very lively historical consciousness and the deepest appreciation of history—we must be all the more careful not to make the past a prison. Which is why members of the Prayer Book Society have no interest at all in 'heritage' (which is a suffocating concept based on an obsessive desire to preserve what was—a town that once had a vibrant industry, which industry has sadly declined and died, will almost certainly have a 'heritage centre'). No, we are aflame for Tradition, which is the dynamic communication of the past in the present—the living and continuous connection with the unchanging things. To quote the composer Gustav Mahler (who was himself quoting an author of antiquity): 'Tradition is not the worship of ashes but the preservation of fire'. Instead of looking back, Tradition makes us a prospective people—we look up, look ahead, and see that God (who is ever new, ever Alpha) is indeed doing a new thing in our age.

This is precisely where this anniversary celebration ought to orient us—outward, onward. None of you should be surprised by the stress I give this. The Missionary Bishop of Oswestry is a rolling stone, a prelate in perpetual motion, ever moving onward. Indeed, in these last eight months, I have driven some 20,000 miles visiting the parishes in my sacramental and pastoral care, travelling the 'Via Oswestria'! And I am thrilled that the same zeal for tomorrow, zeal for what's next, possesses the Chairman and the Trustees of his board. Like you, I am delighted to see the imaginative and outward-reaching instincts and strategies adopted by the Prayer Book Society in her fifty-first year of confidence: Branches are being renewed (in my own Diocese of Lichfield, no less); very valuable work is being undertaken with ordinands; a wholly new generation of Trustees from the widest spread of backgrounds has been fostered—the leadership is refreshed; the Cranmer Awards have been



Bishop Paul gives the after-lunch address



Members enjoying lunch in Church House



Editorial Changes

After a long and distinguished stint as editor of *The Prayer Book Today*, the Revd Canon Andrew Hawes has stepped down and entered a form of well-deserved retirement. During the twelve years of his editorship, Andrew oversaw a number of changes and developments in the magazine, not least its redesign, and has helped to make it such a lively and readable publication.

'I am very thankful for the opportunity to have been editor of *The Prayer Book Today*. The role opened up to me the full range of activities and the wonderful people involved with the PBS, not just in the UK but also abroad,' he commented. 'It has been a joy to be able to communicate the ever-growing and diverse activities of an organisation which has become a vital expression of Christian life and faith, and which is making a difference in so many places. Thank you to all those who have contributed over the years, and especially to those who gave advice and helpful criticism!'

Andrew will continue his association with both *TPBT* and the PBS in numerous ways, and we thank him for his dedication and unwavering contribution throughout his time in the editor's seat.

Succeeding him is the Revd Simon Walsh, an experienced editor and journalist, and non-stipendiary priest in the Diocese of London. Simon's background is in corporate communications and public relations. He is also a linguist, lover of literature, and a lifelong devotee of the Prayer Book. 'I am thrilled to become the new editor of *The Prayer Book Today*, and particularly in succession to Canon Hawes, who has done such tremendous work,' he said. 'The recent 50th anniversary celebrations of the Prayer Book Society were fantastic to



The Revd Simon Walsh



The Revd Andrew Hawes

see. I use the Prayer Book a great deal—both publicly and in private—and it is uplifting to see how widely respected and esteemed it is. Part of that is how *TPBT* tells the Prayer Book's story as central to our lively and living faith.'

Hope is a Duty A retreat with the Book of Common Prayer Conductor: Canon Andrew Hawes SSC

As we live in times of great uncertainty and jeopardy in many aspects of life, this retreat will explore the Christian understanding and experience of hope.

The Annual Retreat of the Anglican Association (which Prayer Book Society members regularly attend) will be held at Parcevall Hall, near Skipton in the Yorkshire Dales from **Monday, 22nd April to Friday, 26th April 2024**.

All services will be in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer, with readings from the Authorised Version.
The cost for the week is £375 per head.

Please address all enquiries to:
Mrs Rosemary Hall, 23 Beatty Avenue NE2 3QN.
E-mail: hallrosemary36@gmail.com Tel: 0191 285 7534.

The Revd Dr Roger Beckwith 1929–2023

Roger Thomas Beckwith was born on 21st July 1929 in Barnet, North London, to Eric (an architect) and Winifred. After attending the local grammar school, he went on to Oxford, where he earned his first undergraduate degree in English. Roger was an avid reader who loved poetry and literature generally, and he was later to compile an anthology of the poems, hymns and prose writings of the English poet, Henry Kirk White. Roger self-published this book in 1985—the bicentenary of the poet's birth.

At the heart of Roger's life was his deep Christian faith, and this led him to an interest in academic theology. In addition to his BA, MA and BD degrees, he completed the Bible Diploma and Diploma in the Ministry of the Word at Tyndale Hall, and was also awarded the degree of *Litterarum Doctor* by the California Graduate School of Theology.

Ordained Deacon in 1954 and Priest the following year, Roger served his title curacy in Harold Wood in London, before becoming a tutor at Tyndale Hall in Bristol, whilst also helping out as Honorary Assistant Curate at the local parish church. He had been contemplating joining a religious order, but any such thoughts were quickly dispelled by his meeting with the young Sunday School teacher, Janet. Her sweetness of temperament matched his own; Roger and Janet married in 1958, and he clove to her for almost 65 years. Their mutual devotion was remarkable: Roger always referred to Janet as 'my love', and it was evident he meant it literally. Even towards the end of his life, with his capacities somewhat diminished, he visibly lit up when, for example, Janet returned home from a trip to the shops. Theirs was an expansive love that spilled over and enfolded those around them, and made visiting their home an especial joy.

After Bristol, in 1963 Roger and Janet moved to Oxford, where Roger was appointed first Librarian and then Warden of Latimer House, a recently founded Anglican evangelical research centre, where he remained for over thirty years. During his time there, he conducted research and published articles, tracts and several books, undergirded by his passion for opening the Scriptures and proclaiming the good news of salvation. Roger's most substantial work on the Bible is a book entitled *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church*. This remains one of the most comprehensive studies of the history of the Old Testament written to date. He remained notably modest about his considerable achievements, which included teaching himself Aramaic in order to further his research. In 1992, Roger was awarded a Lambeth DD by Archbishop George Carey in recognition of his theological contribution to the life of the Church of England.

Alongside his work at Latimer House, Roger lectured part-time in liturgy at Wycliffe Hall. He was a stalwart defender of the Book of Common Prayer, even when this sometimes put him at odds with fellow evangelicals of his day. Roger was a Vice-President of the Prayer Book Society, and President of the Oxford Branch. He was a popular speaker at PBS Conferences



and Branch events, and frequently participated in the Society's annual wreath-laying ceremony at the Martyrs' Memorial in Oxford to commemorate the martyrdom of Thomas Cranmer. In addition, he was a member of the Society's Board of Trustees for a number of years.

Remaining in Oxford after his formal retirement, Roger continued to study and to write, and in 2003 his book *Elders in Every City: The Origin and Role of the Ordained Ministry* was published (soon to be republished).

Roger's ministry united his academic and theological work with the praise and worship of Almighty God, and the pastoral care of God's people. Over the years he served as Assistant Curate at several parishes in and around Oxford, as well as being involved with St Mary's, Castle Street, in Reading. For ten years, he was Branch Padre of the Oxford & District Branch of the Royal Air Force Association. Wherever he went, he was always ready with a kind word and a listening ear.

Roger was held in high esteem on both sides of the Atlantic, with frequent invitations to speak at conferences in the US and Canada; he also had significant links with South Africa. In addition, his international work had an ecumenical dimension, including representing the Church of England in discussions with the Old Catholics, and sitting on the Anglican-Orthodox commission.

It is, however, probably fair to say that Roger was renowned and admired as much for his sweet nature as for his academic prowess. St Paul's description of the Fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) reads like a personality profile of Roger: 'love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance'. Roger went through life with a twinkle in his eye, and loved both people and animals.

With his steadfast faith in Christ and hope in the promise of everlasting life, Roger certainly did not fear death: indeed, it often appeared, especially towards the end of his life, that he had one foot in heaven already. He died peacefully on 21st October 2023, barely a fortnight after he and Janet had moved to a care home near their daughter in Dorset. He leaves behind Janet, their four children, their grandchildren and one great-grandson—and many friends who loved him.

Prudence Dailey
Vice-President of the PBS

John Scrivener 1951–2023



John Scrivener was one of the Prayer Book Society's most gifted and dedicated supporters. The editor of *Faith & Worship* for some twenty years, a Regional Trustee, an original member of the Chester Branch Committee, and a supporter of many events, his contribution was always valuable and often profound as he brought to bear his quiet wisdom, immense learning and lively humour.

John was born in Chichester, one of a family of four children. He read English Literature at the University of Sussex, then with two friends opened The Cliffe Bookshop in Lewes. He later moved to Chester to open a bookshop on Upper Bridge Street Rows—originally Scrivener & Burgis, then Scrivener's. He was also a tutor at the University of Liverpool in the Department of Continuing Education.

John was a server at Chester Cathedral in his earlier years in the city, at a time when the Prayer Book liturgy was dominant there, and he would often speak appreciatively of the ministry of Canon Bill Vanstone, and of the study groups held in his home.

In recent decades, John was a member of St Peter's, Plemstall, the parish where he lived with his wife, Pat, who survives him. John and Pat were married in 1990 after many years of friendship.

John gave long service as secretary of St Peter's PCC, and as a member of the Deanery and Diocesan Synods, and for a term on General Synod. He gave practically of his time in parish life, and graciously of his thinking in committees and study groups. He attracted a large attendance at a memorable Lent course he led on poetry in 2015, and then a good number to a study day he gave on T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets* in 2022. Not typical parish study material, but in the words of Eliot, quoted by John in one of his last *Faith & Worship* editorials, 'there is no good in making Christianity easy and pleasant... a good many can be attracted by finding it difficult'.

John brought a challenge to the prevailing thought of the Church of our time, weighted by his depth of knowledge, of enormously wide reading, of literature and beyond. He had a grasp of Church history, liturgy, and even theology, beyond that of almost all clergy—and carried it with humility and grace. May he rest in peace.

The Revd Dr Mark Hart
Chairman, Chester Branch

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An Oxfordshire Oasis:

The Grade-I-listed Parish Church of St James the Apostle in Somerton

Over thirty years ago, my husband Tim and I bought Fermor House, named after the Catholic Fermor family, Lords of Somerton, whose three restored and conserved marble effigies, tombs and hatchments—which encompass their Coat of Arms—are important monuments in the Fermor Chapel in St James's, Somerton. The Fermors bought the manor and park in 1512, with the family staying until 1642; a remaining window in the park is listed. Apparently, our little house, located in the park, was built from stones purloined from the manor.

St James's dates back to the eleventh century—mostly fifteenth–seventeenth century. The village, small for such a vast church, goes back to Saxon times. When we came, the church was in a sad state of repair, only enlightened by the 1662 service given by Canon Hewitt Wilson, who alternated every Sunday to include the other churches in the benefice. We were welcomed by Canon Wilson, who introduced us to members of the other congregations, thereby helping us make the acquaintance of benefice-wide parishioners; the churches in those days were well attended.

Although *personae non grata* in the eyes of Miss Emberlin of Somerton, as we were only weekenders, we became beneficiaries, with the village, of a large legacy left to the church in her will. Miss Emberlin is the sole reason St James's is in such good condition today, along with various grants, including the Heritage Lottery. And, in time, we became permanent residents and part of the restoration team.

Only the rear pews were removed, giving space for a Christmas bazaar, lectures and musical evenings, and a carol service. The famous Nativity, with live sheep, a donkey, shepherds, kings and baby in a crib, is standing room only. It is organised by Victoria Prentis, the MP and Attorney General, who lives in the village with her family.

This church was originally a twelfth-century building. Evidence of this is a blocked-up door in the south wall of the nave, seen as you enter; it has a fourteenth-century hexagonal font in front. Also from the twelfth century is the lower nave; the clerestory was added late in the fifteenth century; the north aisle, on the left as you enter, is late twelfth or early thirteenth century, while the south aisle is fourteenth century. The chancel is late thirteenth century, including two arches; the rood screen separating the chancel from the nave is a fine example of late fifteenth-century tracery.

Perhaps the single most important carving is the stone-sculptured reredos, about 1400, behind the altar, depicting the Last Supper in a splendidly lively style. The eleven apostles are carved differently, caught in mid-gesture, except John, who is lying in the lap of Christ; it is humane, animated and brimful of charm. It is so precious that it was dismantled, hidden from the Puritans in the seventeenth century and only reinstated in



1822. The stone altar has crosses at each corner, depicting the Crusaders passing.

The Fermor Chapel, perhaps, is the *pièce de résistance* where many resources were spent; the tombs and the effigies are of Thomas Fermor and his wife; Richard, eldest son of Thomas, who died in 1642; and John Fermor, eldest son of Richard, who died prematurely. On the chest tomb next to the chancel are fine brasses of William Fermor, who died in 1552, and his wife, Elizabeth Norrys.

It is a very beautiful and poignant chapel. An arched oak door leads out to the graveyard, generously kept up by a member of the church.

The church tower dates from the late fourteenth century, replete with gargoyles, again on the north side; the battlements and pinnacles were added in the fifteenth century. St James's has a feeling of permanence, timelessness, comfort and peace; it is loved and cared for by members of the village even though they may not all be churchgoers.

The vicars wear the correct colour chasubles, richly embossed with a filigreed scallop shell from the emblem of St Jaime de Compostela's pilgrimage to Santiago, known as 'The Way of St James', where the saint is thought to be buried. The church is heated; the matching pew cushions are in remembrance of Tim Leon.

St James's holds Evensong on the first Sunday of the month at 6.00p.m.; shortened Matins and Holy Communion is every third Sunday at 11.00a.m., lasting for one hour. Readings are from the King James Bible. Like Shakespeare, the cadence of the language has given guidance and illumination to generations of Christians. The experience lifts us above the mundane, where true contemplation of the creative stillness of God is possible. Worship for us is a pastoral activity; it has the potential for spiritual renewal for the whole community.

St James's is also open every day for visitors who follow the brown signs.

Suzanne Leon

New Corporate Members



St Matthew's, Winchester

We are delighted to report that, since the Michaelmas 2023 issue of *The Prayer Book Today* went to press, the Prayer Book Society has gained a further ten Corporate Members, making a magnificent total of 34 new member churches and organisations during the past year. Like our individual members, they can be found in a variety of settings all over the country and beyond; and they represent every shade of churchmanship and ecclesiastical tradition.

The hamlet of **Coddington, Herefordshire**, derives its name from the Anglo-Saxon word for a collection of mud cottages. The houses are more substantial now, but the parish is still small with a population of about 120. Occupying the site of an earlier building from the Saxon period, the church of **All Saints'** was built between the years 1148 and 1163. A peaceful country church with seating for about 80 people, it boasts many interesting features, including an east window by Morris & Co. and some fine embroidered altar frontals by William Morris, not to mention panoramic views of the

Herefordshire countryside from the churchyard. All services follow the Book of Common Prayer, with one early morning Communion and one Sung Matins each month. Evensong is sung occasionally.

At **St Matthew's, Winchester**, Prayer Book Matins is the principal Sunday service, with Holy Communion monthly. The Psalms and Canticles are sung congregationally, and with enthusiasm. There is also a weekday Prayer Book Communion service followed by coffee and conversation. A small church of great charm and simple beauty, it seats only about 55 people. Originally built in the twelfth century as a chapel for the farming district of Wyke, or Weeke as it is known today, it has in recent years been completely reroofed, refurbished and sensitively reordered. Part of the Parish of St Matthew and St Paul (a much larger 'daughter' church to St Matthew's), the congregation is rightly proud of its history, and eager to serve the present-day community as well as visitors to Winchester.

Wimborne Minster, Dorset, has been a place of prayer for over 1300 years. It is dedicated to St Cuthburga, the sister of Ina, King of Wessex, who founded a Benedictine nunnery in Wimborne around 705 AD. Her nuns were sent to Germany with St Boniface of Crediton (c. 680–755) to help convert the pagan tribes, and Wimborne still maintains a special link with the town and Benedictine nunnery of Ochsenufurt. Wimborne's nunnery, possibly already in decline, was destroyed in a Danish raid in 1013. In 1043, Edward the Confessor founded a college of secular canons to live and worship at Wimborne. The greater part of the present-day church was built by the Normans between 1120 and 1180 to support these canons. Steeped in history, the Minster is a living place of worship and pilgrimage. On Sundays there are three services, including an early Prayer Book Communion, and Choral Evensong sung by the Minster choir of boys, girls and men. Additionally, St Margaret's Chapel, built in the thirteenth century to serve the almshouses surrounding it, offers a monthly Communion service according to the Prayer Book rite.

St James the Apostle, Somerton, is one of seven village churches in the **Cherwell Valley Benefice** north of Oxford. The church is approached along a path that leads past old apple trees and a medieval preaching cross, with glimpses of gently rolling, sheep-filled fields, and more fruit trees. Its greatest treasure is an early fourteenth-century stone reredos on the east wall. A rare survival, it depicts the Last Supper in animated detail. Revealed in 1822 and restored to its position behind the altar, every figure seems to be captured in motion: pouring wine, raising a bowl, holding up a hand to turn down a drink. Weekly services are held at St James's: two contemporary and two traditional. The Prayer Book is used for Evensong, and for Matins with Holy Communion.

St Leonard's is the historic parish church for **Bewdley and Ribbesford, Worcestershire**. Built in 1100, it is a popular halt for walkers on the Worcestershire Way, which passes the church and runs up through the churchyard. Special features include a Norman tympanum above the north door, carved in the style of the Herefordshire School of Sculpture, and an unusual timber south arcade which dates from the fifteenth century. Miraculously, the latter survived a lightning strike in 1877. St Leonard's pulpit preserves fascinating carvings believed to have been part of a fifteenth-century rood screen. In its panels can be seen a pig playing the bagpipes and a fox preaching to geese! St Leonard's is more than just a distinguished and historic building: it is home to a community of Christians who gather for prayer and worship, mainly using the traditional liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer. Regular services include Sung Matins twice monthly.

St Anne's Church in the West End of **Derby** celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2022. Originally built to serve the poorest part of the town, the church's modest red-brick exterior belies an extravagant and very original interior. Rooted in the Catholic tradition of the Church of England since its earliest days, today it attracts both local people and those from further afield who appreciate traditional worship, supported by choir and organ. From 2006, St Anne's was left without an incumbent for fourteen years, during which time fewer services were held and the congregation inevitably dwindled. Under the leadership of the Revd Giles Orton, appointed in 2020, St Anne's has expanded its ministry and outreach to the local community and now offers a stable pattern of worship, including regular services of Evensong sung by the St Anne's Singers, and always followed by generous refreshments.



St Anne's, Derby

St Michael's Church, St Albans, has the strongest claim to be the oldest site of known Christian activity in the British Isles: St Alban probably lived within a quarter of a mile of the church and he was likely to have been tried in the basilica (the



All Saints' Pavement, York

headquarters of Roman Verulamium) which once occupied the site where the church now stands. During the High Middle Ages, St Michael's was controlled by the Abbey, in part to support pilgrims who were making their way to Alban's shrine. **St Mary's, Childwick**, was built in 1867 to serve the agricultural estate at the north end of St Michael's parish. The church was designed by George Gilbert Scott and built by the estate owner, Henry Toulmin. The parish of St Michael's with St Mary's is active and growing, with a passion to serve the community in the western part of St Albans. The Prayer Book is used for Holy Communion on Sundays at St Michael's, and for weekly Evensong at St Mary's.

The city-centre church of **All Saints', York**, stands at one end of Pavement, so named, probably, because it was the first medieval street in the city to be paved. A carved Anglo-Danish grave cover revealed during excavation work in 1963 strongly suggests that a burial ground with an earlier associated church had been on the site from Viking times. A stone's throw from the Minster, All Saints is known for its distinctive lantern tower, its fifteenth-century blue-painted ceiling, and its many civic links. On Sundays there are three services, all taken from the Book of Common Prayer: a said service at 9.00a.m. (Morning Prayer and Holy Communion alternately); a sung service at 10.30a.m. (Matins, with congregational Psalms and Canticles, alternating with a Sung Eucharist); and at 6.30p.m. there is Evensong. As spiritual home of the Guilds of York, All Saints hosts many civic and commemorative services, including an annual sermon—the Jane Stainton sermon—to mark the anniversary of the beheading of Charles I. All Saints is a vibrant parish, and it is particularly encouraging to note enthusiasm for the Prayer Book and the work of the PBS amongst younger members of the congregation. Commenting on the PCC's

decision to join the Society, PCC member, David Norman, said: 'At All Saints, the Book of Common Prayer shapes our worshipping life, and we have found it to be a great asset in reaching "all sorts and conditions" of people with the gospel of Jesus Christ, whether they be students at one of the universities, retired or somewhere in between. Joining up as a Corporate Member reflects not only our commitment to the continued use of the Prayer Book, but also our desire to take advantage of the full depths of its spiritual riches.'

The **Holyford Mission Community** is a group of six churches in East Devon. United by a common desire to provide welcoming places of worship, learning and hospitality, each parish maintains its own distinctive identity. Together, they offer a rich pattern of worship, including many Prayer Book services and a variety of social activities. **St Andrew's, Colyton**, is one of the six churches in the Mission Community. Located in the centre of the town, it boasts an impressive, and rather unusual, octagonal lantern-top stage, which sits on top of a twelfth-century tower containing eight bells. A major fire in 1933 caused extensive damage to the church; however, during renovation, a Saxon cross dating from the late tenth century was discovered inside the tower. Today, it stands by the font and is considered to be the best Saxon carving in Devon. Many local children have received musical training through the choir of St Andrew's, some achieving outstanding results in the Royal School of Church Music's *Voice for Life* scheme. The choir sings regular services of Choral Evensong; the Prayer Book is also used for Holy Communion on Sundays and weekdays.

The idea of forming a community of retired Anglican clergy began with Canon William Henry Cooper around the year 1890. While visiting on the south coast, he discovered dozens of retired priests, without any income, living in workhouses. He determined to do something and set about the task of founding a new community, of which he was to become the first Warden. Today, set in idyllic countryside in **Lingfield, Surrey**, the College of **St Barnabas** provides holistic care in a Christian community through supported living flats for individuals and couples; it also has a regulated care wing. One well-known former resident, erstwhile rector of All Souls', Langham Place, the Revd John Stott, described the College as 'a rich Christian community of worship and fellowship, a context congenial to thinking and writing'. The two chapels, the Upper Chapel and the Lower Chapel, are at the heart of the College. There are three services each day, including Prayer Book Communion on Sundays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and Evening Prayer on Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Clergy residents are encouraged to continue to celebrate Holy Communion for as long as they wish and are able to do so.

We warmly invite applications for Corporate Membership from churches, schools and other institutions where the Prayer Book is known and loved. Applications can be made online via the PBS website; application forms are available upon request from Copyhold Farm. Could your church or organisation be next to join us in 2024?

News from the Branches

Chelmsford

Chelmsford Branch have taken the, for them, unusual step of arranging their Annual Service of Evening Prayer 2024 in the same church as last year. St George's Church, Great Bromley CO7 7TS, is indeed a magnificent church, its nave covered by a double hammer-beam roof, among the most splendid in Essex, but it wasn't pure aesthetics that decided the Branch Committee's choice. The other church considered will be celebrating the 750th anniversary of its founding next year, in 2025, and it was thought that the Branch's Annual Evening Prayer would be a suitable addition to the celebrations. The Branch Committee is very grateful to their friends in Great Bromley for stepping into the breach. The service is to be held on Saturday, 11th May 2024 at 3.00p.m. Both the church and the Committee extend a warm invitation to all.

Chichester West

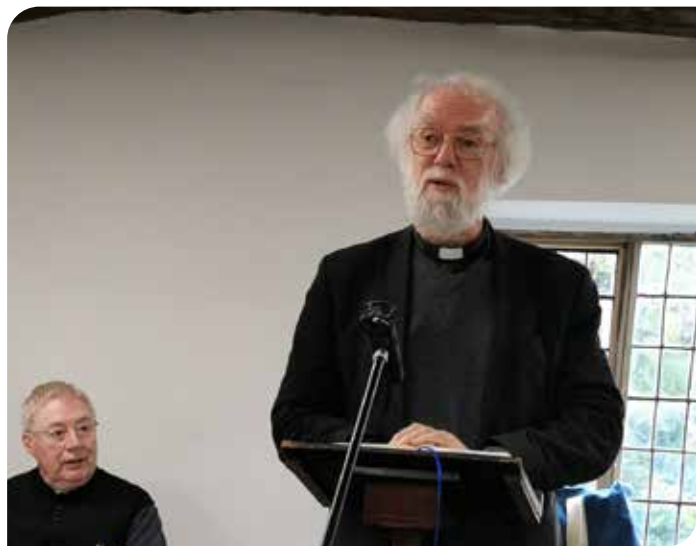
The annual visit to Chichester Cathedral is a highlight in the Branch calendar. Members from the far-east of the Diocese made the heroic journey the full length of Sussex to join friends from Chichester West for a glorious celebration of Holy Communion, sung by the cathedral's excellent voluntary choir, on Saturday, 16th September. The celebrant and preacher was the Revd Canon Simon Holland, Interim Dean, who warmly welcomed members to the cathedral and spoke movingly about the work of the Prayer Book Society in celebrating, sharing and promoting the beauty of holiness. Lunch followed at Cloisters, after which Branch Chairman, the Very Revd Lee Duckett, shared a personal testimony of his journey to faith. It was an inspiring story, spoken from the heart, and it was clear that his hearers found it deeply moving.

The cathedral visit brought the 2023 programme to a close. Looking ahead, the Branch once again has a full programme of services and events to look forward to, including a visit to Parham House followed by Evensong at St Peter's, Parham; wreath-laying at the Martyrs' Memorial at Woodmancote; and, of course, a return visit to the cathedral for the annual Branch Festival. This is planned for Saturday, 21st September 2024, when the preacher will be PBS Trustee, the Revd Dr Stephen Edmonds. Members, friends and supporters from far and wide are welcome to join us.

Lichfield

The relaunch of the Lichfield Diocese Branch, with a Festival at the cathedral on 23rd September 2023, was intended to showcase the use of the Prayer Book in public worship, for the nourishment and edification of PBS supporters and seekers, the exciting of Piety and Devotion in the Publick Worship of God underpinning the continuing use of the Prayer Book.

The Holy Communion liturgy was undertaken, as would have been expected—decently, reverently, soberly—under the accomplished eye of the precentor, Canon Andrew Stead, with the Chamber Choir singing the various choral



Carols service. It soon became standing-room only. There were 64 students in total, of all faiths and none. They filled St Anselm's Chapel to hear and read the traditional King James' Nativity of our Lord and belt out classic carols, led by their newly formed choir—including a most enjoyable rendition of 'Little Donkey'! A truly joyous time was had by all and the service was followed by a flowing wine and homemade cake reception. The students of the choir were so enthused that plans are now in place to make the choir a permanent fixture of the chapel community, with efforts being made to sing Evensong on a more regular, if not weekly, basis. Watch this space! Any spare copies of the Parish Psalter (with chants) which PBS members might be able donate would be very gratefully received.

The Revd Joshua Gaskell



Students of St Anselm Hall

Rochester

Our varied programme of events for 2023 began in February with Ash Wednesday Morning Prayer, Litany and Communion at St Botolph's, Lullingstone. The service was followed by a frugal lunch of bread and soup, with donations going to Porchlight, the Kent charity for the homeless. This has become a regular feature of the calendar for the Corporate Member church and will be repeated in 2024.

In March, we held a Quiet Day in conjunction with St Benedict's Centre, part of St Mary's Abbey in West Malling. The Lenten theme was 'In Sure and Certain Hope: reflecting on our own earthly mortality and promised resurrection' as we prepared to remember Jesus' death and resurrection, drawing on the Book of Common Prayer's 'Order for the Burial of the Dead'. The appreciation of this day was such that a second was arranged for September on the theme of 'Thanksgiving using the Book of Common Prayer'. Both days were led by the Revd Harriet Johnson and gained us a new member of the Society.

On Ascension Day, we again met for Morning Prayer at another of our Member churches, St John the Evangelist, Groombridge. The church was in interregnum and the service was ably led by churchwarden, Winston Blake. Between the service and lunch at the Crown Inn, organist Anthony Roberts gathered a talented group of singers together for an informal

recital in aid of the Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal.

In June, we were invited to join the regular worshippers in the private chapel at Knole for Prayer Book Holy Communion led by the Revd Sophie Sutherland. The chapel at Knole is in the part of the house retained as the private apartments of Lord Sackville and his family, and is not open to the public. Worshipping in what was once Cranmer's chapel is a very special event.

Our AGM was held at St Mark's Church in Bromley, an area recently dragged most unwillingly into the Mayor of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone, and a topic of conversation and concern for those unsure about their car's compliance. Especial thanks went to Eileen Vassie, who was standing down from the Branch Committee. She had been responsible for organising several enjoyable visits to St Martin's, Chelsfield, and the outstanding visit to the Chaldon 'Doom' wall painting and, adjacent to the church, the fourteenth-century house which is still in domestic use. We were delighted that Felicity Brown and Charlie Clark heeded our request for volunteers to join the Committee. Following the business meeting, the Revd Canon Victoria Pask joined us for tea, after which her husband, Conrad Donaldson, gave a fascinating illustrated talk about the history of Bromley and St Mark's Church. This was followed by a glorious Evensong, with the very able choir conducted by Director of Music Andrew Wilson.

As usual, the Branch's events ended in November with the Cranmer Awards heat at the Judd School, Tonbridge, with eight junior and four senior entries. It was a wonderful evening with a remarkably high standard of competition. International adjudicator, Amelia Appleby, said it was 'unprecedented' for her to award Highly Commended certificates to all the unplaced competitors. We were fortunate that the Revd Fergus Butler-Gallie, in his last term as Assistant Chaplain at Tonbridge School before taking up his post in Oxfordshire, agreed to be our Guest of Honour. He spoke to the audience with infectious enthusiasm for the Book of Common Prayer, and what it has and does mean to him. He urged all the young people to look deeper into it and challenged them not to be changed by it. The Rochester Branch is truly grateful to the Judd School, Tonbridge, for giving us, year after year, a superb venue at which to run the heat, and to the teachers at all the schools who prepare pupils for the heats. We wish the winners, George and Owen, the best of luck at the Hampton Court Final in February.

Joanna Comer

Winchester

Winchester Cathedral was the setting for a special day of worship, teaching and fellowship to mark the relaunch of the Winchester & Portsmouth Branch of the Prayer Book Society on Saturday, 4th November 2023.

After an excellent lunch, during which acquaintances were renewed and new friendships made, a formal business meeting was held. The Revd Dominik Chmielewski, Rector of the Parish of St Faith and Master of the Hospital of St Cross, Winchester, was elected Chairman in succession to Mr Dick Wilkinson, who stepped down after many years of service to



the Branch. A former Trustee, Dick served the Winchester & Portsmouth Branch with distinction, organising many events and special services, as well as promoting the work of the Society across the Diocese. We are delighted to report that he will continue to be closely involved with the Branch in this new phase of its life. Alex Pope, possibly the youngest member of the Branch, was elected to serve on the Committee.

The elections complete, national Chairman, Bradley Smith, took the floor. His short address, entitled 'For Such a Time as This', focused on four encouraging areas of development in the Society's life: a time of growth; a time of diversification; a time of mission; and a time of partnership. He closed by wishing the newly relaunched Branch every success in the future.

The real highlight of the day was an impressive address by the Revd Canon Angela Tilby, Canon of Honour at Portsmouth Cathedral, entitled 'The Prayer Book and the Cycle of Time'. Her erudite paper, which focused on the composition of the Prayer Book lectionary and its method of reading Scripture, is published in the Lent 2024 issue of *Faith & Worship*.

Members were then treated to a private guided tour of the cathedral. Choral Evensong, with a sermon by the new Branch Chairman, rounded off an enjoyable and memorable day in a glorious setting.

Commenting on the event, one of the participants, said, 'It was such a privilege to take part in the Winchester & Portsmouth Festival on Saturday. Canon Tilby's talk was so inspiring; she left me so much to think about, and really helped me appreciate the genius behind the way the Collects, Epistles and Gospels are arranged in the Prayer Book. The cathedral Evensong was sublime, and a perfect ending to a splendid day. I went home and immediately filled in a membership form. I wish I had done it years ago!'

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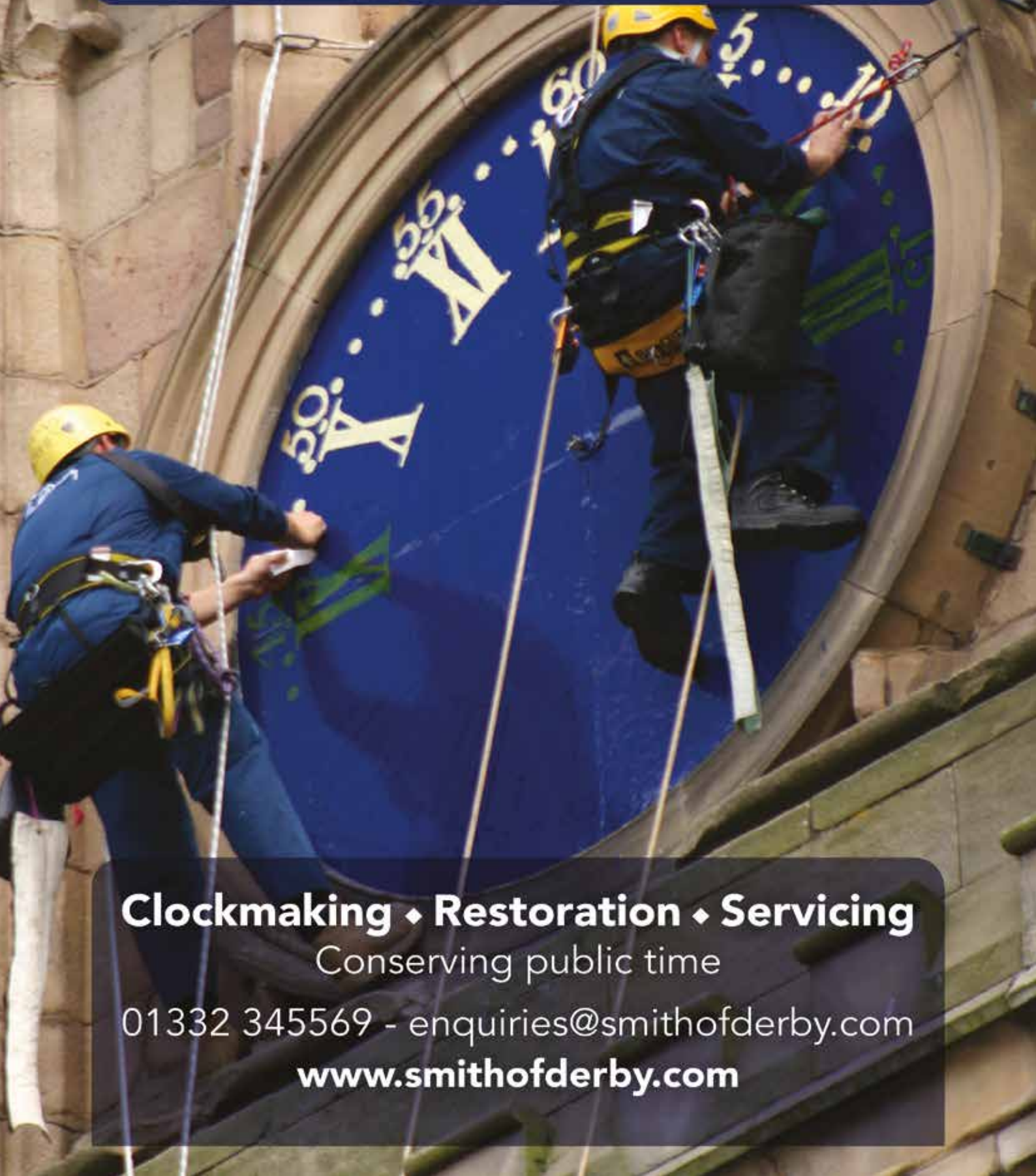
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