



Cobham & Luddesdowne

February 2025 News

£1

PARISH of COBHAM with LUDESLOWNE and DODE

Priest-in-Charge – The Rev'd Canon Alyson Davie

Phone no. 01474-812068 email:- alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk
(Rest Day: Friday)

Associate Priest – The Rev'd Pam Davies

For Wedding, Baptism and Funeral enquiries and all other enquiries please contact Pam.

The Vicarage, Battle Street, Cobham, Kent. DA12 3DB

Phone no 01474-394515 email:- rev.pamdavies@sky.com (NB new number)

(Current work days are Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday)

Pastoral assistant- Janet Weaver, 36 Highview, Vigo Village, DA13 0RR
(01732) 823936

Church Safeguarding Officer - Hilary Savage - (01634) 723027

Church Office Phone no. 01474 813495

Church Officers of St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham

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|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Lay Chair | Hilary Savage | |
| Churchwarden | Hilary Savage | (01634) 723027 |
| PCC Secretary | Ron Chamberlain | (01474) 814250 |
| Treasurer | Jeffrey Julie-Rusz | 07946 249021 |
| Deanery Synod | Hilary Savage | |

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| Treasurer | Janet Weaver | (01732) 823936 |

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| Peter Balanck | Diana Bampton |
| Ron Chamberlain | Jill Beety |
| David Palmer | Sue Campbell |
| Lynn Ruddock | Janet Weaver |

SUBMISSIONS Cobham and Luddesdowne News is a community magazine produced by and for the residents of Cobham, Sole Street and Luddesdowne.

Please send material for inclusion by the 15th of the month preceding publication to editorialcln@gmail.com

Cover photograph Adrian Whiteing—footpath from Manor Road, Sole Street to the Sole Street railway bridge

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February
2025

Letter from the Rev'd Pam Davies

Dear Friends

Are you listening to me? It's a familiar question. In most of our conversations we listen to the other person, up to a point anyway. Sometimes we only half listen, and sometimes we are mainly thinking about what we want to say. Sometimes we get distracted, but sometimes we really never listen at all, especially to those we think we know very well. Then we can be in trouble.

There is also a kind of blessing which is really careful and attentive listening ready to encourage the speaker to say more, not assuming we already know what they mean, not filling in the blanks not just relating what we hear too quickly to our own experience. Such listening will help the other to say more, and to learn more about what they think and feel as well. Listening like this is a gift and a skill, but all of us can do more to listen to one another.

Listening is also crucial to learning and understanding. The ones that find it most difficult to listen are those who already know everything! I'm sure we all know someone like that - it's never ourselves of course. Sometimes we find it difficult to learn, not because we don't listen, but because we're not interested and we think the subject is pointless and irrelevant.

Listening to God is not altogether unlike listening to other people. It requires our time and attention and there are also skills to be learned. There are various reasons why listening to God can seem difficult (or impossible). We may not think it is possible to hear what God says because he is not there, or because there is no reliable way of knowing what he says.

Continued on next page

Perhaps we don't want to hear what God says, fearful that it will in some way threaten or challenge our own well-being. All these issues clearly have to be tackled before we can hear what God says. You may even be asking is there a God anyway.

Perhaps you have questions about listening or talking to God And you've never had the opportunity to ask these questions or even better to listen to the answers. Well! I'm offering you an opportunity to come along and ask your questions. From the 11th March to the 8th April you are invited to join me each Tuesday afternoon at 1.30 for an hour at St Marys Church Room, Sole Street. If afternoons are difficult then why not join me in the evening at the Vicarage Battle Street Cobham from 7.30 on the same Tuesdays.

No question is too little or too big to be asked. Some questions may be easy to answer while others are more difficult. But this is an invitation and an opportunity to find out what all this faith business, church business and God business is all about.

Looking forward to seeing you and listening to the questions you wish to ask.

Blessings

Rev Pam

LOCAL FUNDING GROUP '24

**Thank you for supporting the Local Funding Group's
Coffee Morning held on the 9th January 2025 at Sole Street
House.**

**With your generosity, we were delighted to send £260 to
Parkinson's UK.**

**Our next meeting is to be held at The Railway, Sole Street on
10.30 – 12.00 Thursday, 13th February, 2025.**

SOLE STREET WI

Sole Street WI members celebrated our first meeting in 2025 by enjoying a pub lunch at The Railway Inn followed by a Games & Quiz afternoon. Not only was this huge fun but it very practically avoids the last minute cancellation by speakers in January's oft inhospitable weather !

The Walking Group's meetings each Tuesday morning have continued throughout the winter months, tailored to members' choices of distance and conditions underfoot. A hot beverage sustains the party at different local cafes/bakeries.

The Craft meetings re-start on Monday 3rd March at 2pm in our craft guru Helen's home when we will be planning the creation of fabric multi-dimensional door stops and draught excluders amongst a variety of craft items for sale at next Autumn's WI fair in the S.M.C.R in November.

Our scheduled speaker for our meeting on Tuesday 28th February (2pm at The Railway Inn) is Gill Smaggasgale, whose presentation is entitled "Walking 1000 Miles In Lockdown". Members have also been invited this month to bring donations as has generously been the case in the past for the Gravesend Food Bank.

With the official Opening Days for the renovated St Mary's Church Room currently due to be held at the beginning of March, it is our hope to be able to hold our monthly meeting on Tuesday 25th in the church room, reverting to 7.30pm, when our speaker will be Derek March on the topic of "English Country Cheeses".

For information on this and all our activities, please contact our President, Yvonne telephone 01474 813455.

Molly Isaacs





1st Cobham Brownies
(Tuesday evenings during term time only at The Meadow Rooms, Cobham)

At Brownies, we welcome all girls from 7 to 10 years old for non-stop fun, learning and adventure. Brownies get to explore their creative side, get out into the great outdoors, and start to learn to look after themselves, others and the world we live in.

Please email Wendy Ostridge (wendy.minister@googlemail.com) if you would like more information about 1st Cobham Brownies or register your interest through the Girlguiding website at www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus/ and selecting 1st Cobham Brownies.

We look forward to meeting new members for our new term.

Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks.

With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year.

Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably by email janetferguson@hotmail.fr . Ian Sheridan, Acting Chairman, 07951 927 517

Refurbishment and New Extension to St Mary's Church Room, Sole Street

I am pleased to inform everyone that the completion to the refurbishment and provision of an additional extension to the St Mary's Church Room in Sole Street is very near.

Much of the interior work and the new extension is now completed. The new roof is in place, the old school bell has been rehung and the repaired stained glass windows are in place, though covered at present for protection. The new sympathetic windows have been fitted and inside the old stage removed and extensive repairs have been made to the flooring. At the time of writing, mid-January, much of the remaining work including the erection of disabled ramps and cladding to the sides of the building is external and thus weather related. However, it is hoped that by the time you read this report the refurbishment should be completed and we have a provisional hand over date of 2nd February 2025, (also dependent on weather).

Following hand over, items have to be brought back from storage and cleaned, so realistically, the hall may be available for use by user groups from March, if the Committee and post holders are in place and can be appointed by that time. It is hoped to hold a special Open Day for village residents and other supporters of the project, but at the time of this magazine going to press, these details have not been finalised. (Further details next month).

On behalf of the St Mary Magdalene PCC Cobham, I would like to thank all who have donated to the project. Special thanks are due to the Local Funding Group for their efforts and to all the many individuals who have made sizeable donations. I also wish to record our gratitude to the Lower Thames Crossing and all the other grant giving bodies for their generosity. A complete list of these donations will be given in a future Newsletter.

Thanks to all for your patience, support, encouragement and generosity.
Ron Chamberlain
PCC Secretary Cobham.



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February - Spring is in sight

This month there are signs of the approaching spring, with bulbs appearing and wildlife waking up as light levels and temperatures increase. There's plenty to do indoors this month to prepare for the season ahead. Outdoors, as the garden comes to life again, it's time to prune shrubs and climbers, such as Wisteria as well as evergreen hedges. Also, February sees the start of our expert speaker talks, all held at the Meadow Rooms (see page 10)

Wednesday 12th March at 6.30pm for 7pm "The Kitchen Garden" by Steve Edney

Kitchen gardens or potagers as they are called in France conjure up images of wildly romantic spaces which are both beautiful yet functional. Steve's talk will cover a beginners guide to, good design, planting and variety choices plus handy tips to get the best from your fruit, veg and herbs. Steve has been perfecting his art for over 28 years, accolades include appointment to the RHS Herbaceous Committee, the RHS plant trial forums, multiple RHS Gold medal winner, plus he has appeared on tv several times including Gardeners' World. Entry is free to members and non-members are welcome and pay only £3.

RHS – Top 10 Jobs for February

- Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover
- Chit potato tubers
- Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines, and peaches
- Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off
- Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
- Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'
- Prune Wisteria
- Prune hardy evergreen hedges / renovate overgrown deciduous hedges
- Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea
- Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter, remove dead grass from evergreen grasses

You can buy Membership of Cobham Gardeners at any time ... and get savings at local garden centres straight away to help with all those garden jobs. You can apply for membership at the talks or via email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk It is only a modest £10 for the year – money you get back from free entry into all Gardeners' expert speaker talks and massive savings of up to 50% on quality plants at local garden centres.



Cobham Gardeners' Society

Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
SatNav DA123BZ Registered Charity No 228007



Wednesday 19th February 2025 - 7pm Plants For Health & Healing

Caroline Halfpenny takes a look at plants that are found in many gardens and in the wild that have been used to improve our health and wellbeing through out history. Some of the plants with healing properties within your own garden may surprise you!

Members free - non members £3



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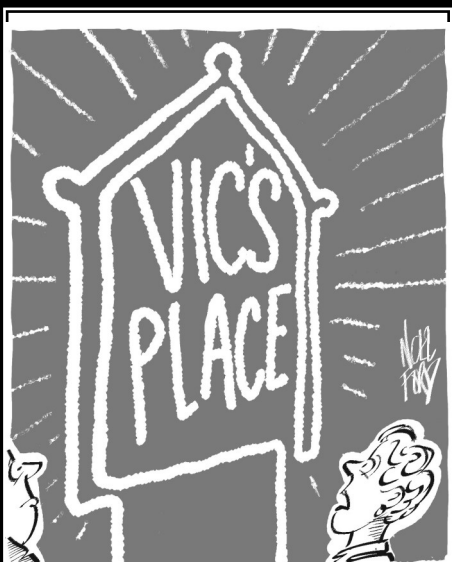
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07460242304

Or email

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"It may well attract more young folk to join the congregation but I still prefer the old church notice board"

Lewis Solomon

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BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley

A useful proposition by Kenneth Graham in “The Wind in the Willows” is worth observing at this time of the year. “No animal”, he writes, “according to the rules of animal-etiquette, is ever expected to do anything strenuous, or heroic, or even moderately active during the off-season of winter”.

From my snug College burrow I recall a November ringing trip where at Wrotham we rang the 8 bells recast in 1911 to mark King George V’s Coronation. With a 20cwt tenor bell they make a grand sound. There is a vaulted passage through the base of the tower which allows an excellent path for disabled access.

Ringling at Ightham there was a chance to look into St. Catherine’s Chapel and see the memorials to two soldiers awarded the Victoria Cross. William Sutton, a bugler in The Rifles, won his Victoria Cross in 1857 in the Indian Mutiny. However he was to die in the workhouse. Thomas Colyer-Fergusson won his postumous V.C. in 1917. His family were of Wombwell Hall, Northfleet and Ightham Mote and family trust funds helped towards the restoration of our Cobham bells in 1994.

The estate church at Shipbourne was built in 1881 by the Cazalets of Fairlawne on the site of a previous chapel. Peter Cazalet was the trainer of horses owned by Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. The tower was encased in scaffolding for some restoration work. But we were able to ring the 6 bells once we had ducked under a scaffolding pole in the ringing room.

The church at Hadlow stands in the shadow of the tall and slender 1838 tower of Hadlow Castle. There has been a church here since Saxon times. We rang the eight (1695 and 1775) bells. In the last forty years much re-ordering has provided the building with modern facilities for worship and community use and organ recitals are enjoyed. The amazing 1880 organ by Thomas Monk with three manuals and over 2,000 pipes, one of which is 32 ft., was the gift of the Reverend James Moneyppenny.

John Vane, 7th Earl of Westmorland, demolished Mereworth’s castle, church and village between 1722 and 1744 and built in a style to commemorate his Grand Tour. In the Kentish countryside Mereworth Church is amazing and looks as if it has come straight from the City of London. Having rung the six bells we emerged into the darkening November day. Time to hunker down. Spring is coming.



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TWO WOMEN EVENTS

Forthcoming TWO Women events

13th February – Chris Difford

20th March – Kiki Dee and
Carmello Luggeri

24th April – China Crisis

15th May - Oasis

The 1st South Street BBGA Company meets every Friday evening during term time 6pm-7.30pm at South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0QJ(*next to Hope Hill*). Boys and girls aged 5-18 years are invited to join us for games, art, craft, cooking, Bible stories, nature and science activities. The weekly subscription is £2 and half term is on 21st February 2025.

The young people have opportunities for kayaking, canoeing and stand-up paddle boarding at the Boys Brigade Water Activities Centre in Tonbridge, as well as summer camps at the Honey Hill Boys Brigade Campsite in Maidstone. Please visit www.BOYS-BRIGADE.org.uk for more information about the Boys Brigade.

South Street Baptist Church Sunday morning services at all begin at 10.45am and finish about midday, with refreshments afterwards. The Family Service and BBGA Church Parade will be on Sunday 23rd February. Everyone is very welcome to join us.

SONG TIME meets every Monday morning 9.45am-11am for families with babies and toddlers under five. Half term will be on Monday 17th February. There are plenty of toys, including a slide and ball pool, craft, construction toys, musical instruments, singing and refreshments. Family admission is £1.

The **Family Games Afternoon** will be on Saturday 15th February 2pm-4pm, with table tennis, pool, indoor archery, curling and lots of board games including Scrabble. Free admission.

Please visit www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk for more information about all the activities at the church or ring 01474 815039.

Meopham Library Writing Group meets again on Thursday 6th February 2025 at 10am and the following meetings will be on 6th March, 3rd April and 1st May. Each month there is a different writing theme, such as “Footprints”, which can be used as a starting point for a poem, short story or an article. There is also a writing challenge, when everyone in the group chooses a word, which then all have to be included in a short sentence, using as few words as possible.

Anyone who is interested in writing is warmly invited to join our small, friendly group. Creative writing is a very enjoyable activity, which can be used to record special family memories and can also be very therapeutic for people who have been bereaved, or who are facing challenging times. New members, whether beginners or more experienced writers, are always very welcome! Please ring 01474 813379 for more information, or just turn up at Meopham Library on 6th February.

Rome bracing to welcome 60 million visitors this year

If you like peace and quiet, it is best to avoid Rome this year. For 2025 is a Jubilee Year for the city, and tens of millions of visitors worldwide are expected to converge on Rome. In all, a staggering 60 million are expected.

As Pope Francis has recently explained: “Once again, Rome will welcome pilgrims from across the globe, as it did in 1300 during the first Church Jubilee.” Many religious and cultural events on the theme of ‘Pilgrims of Hope’ are planned.

The Pope foresees that this year Rome will be a “place of hospitality, a melting pot of diversity and dialogue, a multicultural hub where the world’s colours come together like a mosaic. Rome can embody an eternal spirit, rooted in its glorious past yet committed to building a future without barriers, discrimination or mistrust.”

The Jubilee tradition harks back to Old Testament Jewish practices. The modern tradition of Jubilee began with Pope Boniface VIII. It was seen as a time of grace, “offering freedom to those imprisoned by sin, resignation, and despair.”

The 2025 Jubilee coincides with the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, as well as a rare common celebration of Easter by all the Churches.



**Cobham
Gardeners'
Society**

Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
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By Steve Edney.

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Members free - non members £3



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St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead
Church Services February 2025



Sunday 2nd February 9.45am Morning Worship & Baptism at St John's
 11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's

Wednesday 5th February 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

Sunday 9th February 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
 11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's

Wednesday 12th February 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

Sunday 16th February 9.45am Morning Worship at St John's
 11.15am Churches Prayer Meeting
 at St John's Centre

Wednesday 19th February 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

Sunday 23rd February 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
 11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's

Wednesday 26th February 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

Cobham, Luddesdowne and Sole Street
Churches Services during February



Sunday 2nd February

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham

Sunday 9th February

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Luddesdowne

Sunday 16th February

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham

4pm Flame, Cobham

Sunday 23rd February

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Midweek services in Sole Street

At The Railway Inn, in the Restaurant area.

9:30am 5th Holy Communion

Informal Morning Prayer

12th, 19th and 26th February

THE TUESDAY POP-IN



Meetings are held at the Leather Bottle on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30 till 12 noon; all are welcome to join us for a relaxed chat and coffee.

Next pop-in Tuesday 11th February

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PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION

LUDESDOWN PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings will be held at 7.30pm on Monday

Annual Parish Meeting on 17th March 2025 and the

Annual Meeting on Monday 19th May 2025

All Meetings will be taking place at Luddesdown Village Hall.

<http://www.luddesdown-pc.gov.uk/community/luddesdown-parish-council/>



Cobham Parish Council Meetings 2025

All meetings will be held in the Meadow Rooms, Main Hall until further notice. All meetings will start at 7.30pm

- 4th February 2025
- 4th March 2025
- 1st April 2025 – Annual Parish Assembly
- 15th April 2025 – Annual Parish Meeting
- 13th May 2025
- 3rd June 2025
- 1st July 2025
- 9th September 2025
- 7th October 2025
- 4th November 2025
- 2nd December 2025 – Budget Meeting

<http://www.cobham-kent-pc.gov.uk/>

Funeral

Irene Mary MEDLEY (known as Rene) was born on the 10th January 1929 and died on the 18th October 2024 at the age of 95 years. The service took place on the 5th December 2024 at Medway Crematorium.

The service was conducted by Life Celebrant Scott Lowe.

Our condolences and prayers go to Rene's 1st cousin once removed Frances Dinn and all her friends from Cobham College.



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Chocolate

A lovely heart-shaped box of chocolates was received on Valentine's Day by a young student from her new boyfriend. On the enclosed card was the inscription: 'To Helen, with all my allowance.'

Boots

My young daughter needed new boots. When her friend arrived one morning in a lovely pair of new boots, I asked where she had got them. "At the store," she answered.

"Which one?" I asked patiently.

She looked confused, and then down at her boots. "Both of them," was her reply.

No news

A traveller was marooned in a small town because of a landslide caused by heavy rain. It fell in torrents for three days. Looking out of the window of the restaurant, he finally remarked to the waitress: "This is like the flood."

"The what?"

"The flood. Surely you have heard about the great flood and Noah and the Ark?"

"Sorry, sir," she replied. "The internet's been down for three days."

More than cheese

Our choir had worked hard to raise money for new gowns. To celebrate our achievement, we decided to hold a special concert. The invites went out, and we were surprised at the amused reaction of our church members. Then we reread the invitation. We had invited them to a 'Concert with Cheese and Wince.'

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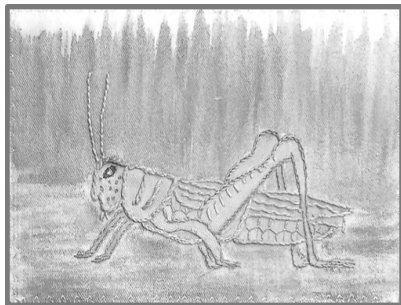
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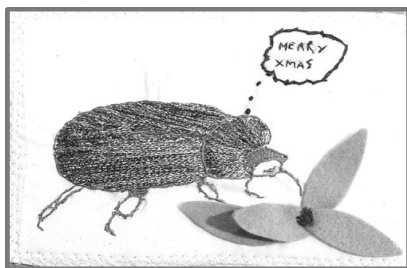
North Kent Embroiderers



Our last meeting was a fun session prior to Christmas. Claire had organised a very challenging quiz for us all to take part in. The questions relating to embroidery were particularly testing!

Members enjoyed seasonal snacks of mince pies and sausage rolls etc provided by the committee. No meeting would be complete without some kind of cake or

other snack. Anita has kept us supplied with extremely delicious cakes over several years but now it is time for her to step down and so Louise has drawn up a rota for members to volunteer their services as cake supplier for a month starting in May. Time for us all to show our skills maybe? As usual we had our free raffle, this time with a Christmas theme.



Our post card swap continued with a theme of 'insects' as you can see here in these beautifully stitched pieces. We also had a 'Secret Santa' sack for those who wished to put in a festive card that they had stitched and then to take a (hopefully) different one in return. The next meeting will be a 'stitch and chat'

which is a chance to maybe get some help with a tricky piece of embroidery that someone is working on – other members are always willing to help – or just to continue working on a current piece or even one of those 'ufos' - unfinished objects that may be lurking in the cupboard at home! Whatever it is there will be a chance to catch up with other members whilst we are sewing.

If you would maybe like to start a new hobby and to join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our website <https://northkentembroiderers.co.uk/> or email us at: info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734 Happy stitching, Karen All photos with permission.



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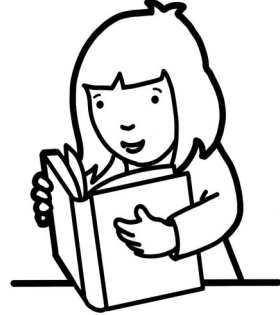
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Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Matthew chapter 18 verses 21-35

Jewish teachers used to say you only had to forgive people three times before getting revenge, so Peter asked Jesus...



It was a freezing cold day in January when we went for a little drive to the Riverside Leisure area in Gravesend, not somewhere we usually venture in mid-winter! The Gordon Lake was frozen and the swans and ducks were restricted to a small pool of water. I keep away from the swans they make strange noises, hissing and flapping about their giant wings - bit scary! When we arrived it was foggy, but as the sun began to shine the fog lifted and we had an enjoyable, if chilly, walk. Sadly the café was closed so there was no hot chocolate for the editor... never mind. Love and licks Paddy



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Wordsearch for February 2025

February opens with Candlemas – the naming of Jesus in the temple. Simeon and Anna praised God to see the promised Messiah, sent by a loving God to save his people. February also celebrates the love between men and women: Valentine cards and wedding fayres abound. ‘Love’ as in social compassion is also remembered: Fair Trade fortnight, Holocaust Memorial Day, World Leprosy Day, Education Sunday and National Nest Box Week.... Love is truly needed by everyone!

naming Christ Candlemas Simeon Anna temple love Valentine

romance Matthias Fairtrade Fortnight coffee bananas chocolate

justice poverty nest box marriage wedding Holocaust leprosy

education sunday



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