



# Cobham & Luddesdowne News

January 2025

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**PARISH of COBHAM with LUDDESDOWNE and DODE**

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

Phone no. 01474-812068 email:- [alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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

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<b>Lay Chair</b>	Hilary Savage	
<b>Churchwarden</b>	Hilary Savage	(01634) 723027
<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Ron Chamberlain	(01474) 814250
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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](mailto:editorialcln@gmail.com)**

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January  
2025

From the Rev'd Pam Davies

Dear Friends,

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.***

The beginning of a new year can be a funny old time! For some it is full of excitement for plans to come...for some it's a bleak time where the thought of another year, going through the motions without a loved one just seems so hard.... for some the new year just seems a big anti-climax after all the busyness of Advent and Christmas...the bills are coming in and it's getting cold!

And yet, we are filled with hope. We hope that this year will be somehow different and perhaps better than the last one. We hope that we can improve our lives for the better...maintain or improve our health...maintain or improve our finances....keep in touch and perhaps enjoy many more happy times with loved ones, friends and family.

As the days become quieter after the busyness of Christmas, we can find ourselves thinking about past times...reflecting on the good and bad bits of our lives. I encourage us to do this and to do it prayerfully. I want to encourage each one of us to look at the health of our relationships with each other. Are they in a good state or do they need some attention?

We must also look at the health of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Are we a good disciple or have we lapsed a bit as the years roll by? I think we all might lapse...we all might stray a bit from the straight road...The Way, The Truth and The Life which is Jesus Christ.

Continued on next page

Life today, no matter what we think, is pressured. There are subtle pressures on us from the media...from our work colleagues...from our friends and families that cause us to get our priorities confused; that maybe cause us to put our relationship with God on the backburner for a while.

This New Year 2025...this month...I urge us to wipe the slate clean, to make a fresh start in our discipleship with Jesus.

***Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.***

Let us get our diaries and calendars out and mark dates when we will attend the church activities... commit to attend the Wednesday Morning Service at Sole Street....or maybe to attend church every week.....

It's time to welcome Jesus right back into the centre of our lives again because Jesus is our hope. He is waiting for each one of us

Let us start the New Year becoming a new creation in Christ.

Blessings

Rev Pam



## **Do you remember the ‘Millennium Bug’?**

*By Tim Lenton*

It was 25 years ago, on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2000, that the calendar switched over to the year 2000, with no major computer problems from the Y2K “Millennium Bug”.

The Y2K bug was a computer flaw involving software and hardware that might have caused problems when dealing with dates beyond 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1999. This was because, for storage reasons, there had been a practice of using two figures for dates – for instance 78 instead of 1978. It was therefore feared that 00 for 2000 might be interpreted as 1900, with chaos resulting in the power industry, transportation or anywhere that computers were critical.

When this potential problem was recognised – surprisingly late, in the mid-1990s – a great deal of money was poured into preventing it from happening, particularly by countries like the USA and Australia, as well as the UK.

Other countries, such as Russia, South Korea and Italy, spent almost nothing on the problem. Ironically, they suffered no more in the end than those who invested many millions, because it turned out that there were very few difficulties.

A nuclear energy facility in Japan experienced failure in its radiation equipment, but backup facilities ensured there was no danger. Missile launches were detected in Russia and attributed to the Y2K bug, but the launches had been planned as part of Russia's conflict in Chechnya.

Because of the lack of disastrous outcomes, many people dismissed the Y2K bug as a hoax or an end-of-the-world cult. A small number of fundamentalist Christians had been interpreting the whole issue as apocalyptic, involving the breakdown of society, the Last Days and the subsequent Second Coming.

Similar computer problems had been predicted for other years, for similar but obviously not identical reasons. They include 1975, 1999, 2010, 2022 and – wait for it – 2038.



**1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:wendy.minister@googlemail.com)) if you would like more information about 1<sup>st</sup> Cobham Brownies or register your interest through the Girlguiding website at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus/) and selecting 1<sup>st</sup> Cobham Brownies.

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

**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](mailto:janetferguson@hotmail.fr) . Ian Sheridan, Acting Chairman, 07951 927 517

## **SOLE STREET WI wishes you all a healthy, happy New Year !**

Our members ended on a high note of optimism last year, having completed two very successful fund raising events - the Pre-loved Sale for the St Mary's Church Room and our Craft Stall at Meopham Autumn Fayre.



This was frivolously followed by our informal Christmas meeting, held at South Street Baptist Church, at the invitation of our member Kathy, who is the Deacon there. irresistible silly spectacles & hats from crackers.



The serious business conducted at the meeting was concluded by vote and discussion on the four topics promulgated by National Federation for 2025 campaign :

- Eliminating landfill of medical packaging
- Bystanders can be lifesavers
- Let's talk about incontinence
- Join the repair revolution

We will celebrate the New Year with lunch at our current host venue The Railway Inn. It is hoped that the renovation of the SMCR will be completed for our meeting on Tuesday 25th February, so time and venue TBC. Our speaker will be Gill Smaggasgale, telling us all about "Walking 1000 Miles in Lockdown".

For further information on all our activities please tel Yvonne 01474 813455,

Molly Isaacs

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## **Gardeners announce their 2025 Programme of Events & Shows**

Cobham Gardeners' Society in early December held their annual AGM and Christmas Get Together which was well attended. After the formal business of the AGM, Liz Jardine, Chairman of Cobham Gardeners, presented 2024 award winners with their trophies, members then enjoyed a festive catch-up with fellow members with Christmas nibbles and a drink.

In addition, Liz announced the launch of our programme of Expert Speaker Talks & Shows for 2025, all talks and shows are held at The Meadow Room and are as follows:

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February, 7pm – talk Caroline Halfpenny – Plants for Health and Healing

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm - talk Steve Edney – The Kitchen Garden

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Spring Show

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May – Hanging Basket Workshop by Liz Jardine

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June – Summer Show

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> June – coach trip to RHS Hyde Hall. £10 for members and £15 for non-members, more information email [cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk)

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September – Autumn Show

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October – talk Dr John Hughes ; Monet, Painter & Gardener

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December – AGM & Christmas Get Together

Non-members are welcome at the talks and pay £3. Viewing of shows free to all.

Gardeners' events get started with a talk by Caroline Halfpenny on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm entitled “Plants for Health & Healing”.

Caroline looks at plants that are found in many gardens and in the wild that have been used to improve our health and wellbeing throughout history. Some of the plants with healing properties within your own garden may surprise you! Entry is free to members and non-members are welcome and pay only £3.

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 via the Gardeners' e-mail, [cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk). Membership is a modest £10 for the year – money you more than get back from free entry into all Gardeners' expert speaker talks and savings quality plants at local garden centres.

## **January - Often The coldest month**

January might be the middle of winter but as the days lengthen the garden starts to grow. Now is a great time to plan for the coming gardening year and to order seeds and plants. Enjoy the fresh air, on dry sunny days, and check your winter protection, stakes, ties and supports are still working after any severe weather. Also put out food for birds and leave some garden areas uncut, a little longer, to provide shelter for wildlife in your garden.

### **RHS - Top 10 jobs this month**

- Recycle your Christmas tree by shredding it for mulch
- Clean pots and greenhouses ready for spring
- Dig over any vacant plots that have not been dug already
- Disperse worm casts in lawns
- Inspect stored tubers of Dahlia, Begonia and Canna for rots or drying out
- Prune apple and pear trees
- Start forcing rhubarb
- Plan your vegetable crop rotations for the coming season
- Keep putting out food and water for hungry birds
- Make a polythene shelter for outdoor peaches and nectarines, to protect against peach leaf curl

### **Buckingham Palace opens its front gates to tourists**

Next time you are in London, you can pop into Buckingham Palace. And for the first time, starting this month (January) tourists visiting the iconic building will be welcomed to walk in through the front gates and then proceed across the famous forecourt.

It is part of the King's vision to give people greater access to Buckingham Palace. You can also now book a 90-minute guided tour, from January to May, to have a more in-depth look at the history of the rooms in the East Wing.

For more information go to: <https://www.buckinghampalace.co.uk/buckingham-palace-tours.php>

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### **LUDESDOWN PARISH COUNCIL**

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.

### **For details of Cobham PC's Meetings**

Visit

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



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## **BELL RINGING** by Peter Hartley

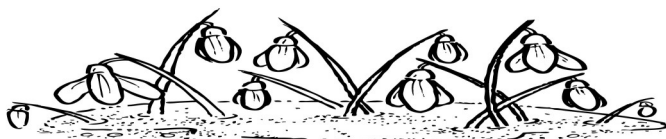
In the centuries old embrace of Cobham College the future is yet to come, the present is here and the past is known. Glancing back into the recent past and the autumn St. Margaret's, Rochester arranged a day's ringing down Thanet way. We began by the grey cold looking North Sea at Westgate-on-Sea. The church was consecrated in 1884 but the bells only arrived in 1975 having come from Holy Cross, Canterbury. Four of the bells were cast by Joseph Hatch in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century who also cast four of our Cobham bells.

In the parish church at Birchington past the grave of Dante Gabriel Rossetti it was a climb up the vertical ladder behind the organ into the ringing room for a ring on their eight bells. All Saints, Whitstable was rebuilt in 1875 and has a chancel enhanced by the work of Omar Ramsden. After a ring it was good to walk along the seafront with an ice cream and gaze at the still active oyster beds.

In 1310 the parish of Herne was carved out of the vast parish of Reculver and Nicholas Ridley was a vicar. There is a brass inscription to Samuel Weller May and he was a friend of Charles Dickens who gave the Christian names to one of his immortal characters. The bells were augmented to eight in 2011. The church at Hernhill looks across the village green and we rang the eight bells which were rehung in 1997. As the light faded an enjoyable ringing day came to an end.

In November at Cobham we rang a 45 minute quarter peal of Plain Bob Doubles and Grandsire Doubles to send our best wishes to friend and fellow ringer Nigel Pagram. Our ringing was also to thank all who helped achieve the restoration of our bells thirty years ago and as part of the Kent County Association of Change Ringers, Rochester District, annual November Quarter Peal Month.

Ringling is an enjoyable hobby and a service to the church. It involves skill, concentration and team work to ring the required changes in the order in which the bells ring out in accordance with the various methods (patterns/tunes) being rung. If only world affairs could be ordered and conducted with a similar spirit of harmony and co-operation. Whatever may come to pass in 2025 the toast remains a Happy New Year.



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## Thursday Fellowship.

The Fellowship is 20 years old in January and we are celebrating with a members' Dinner in the St. John's Centre, Meopham on 30<sup>th</sup> January. The nature of the costs and catering means that we are not able to invite others to this, but most of our meetings are open and all are welcome.



The **1<sup>st</sup> 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*). The first meeting in the New Year is on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Boys and girls aged 5-18 years old are invited to join us for games and challenges, art, craft, cooking, nature and science activities and Bible stories. The weekly subscription is £2.

The young people also 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](http://www.BOYS-BRIGADE.org.uk) for more information about 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 26<sup>th</sup> January. Everyone is very welcome to join us.

**SONG TIME** meets every Monday morning 9.45am-11am for families with babies and toddlers under five. The first meeting in the New Year will be on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January. There is a good variety of toys, including a slide and ball pool, craft, musical instruments, singing and refreshments. Family admission is £1.

The **Family Games Afternoon** will be on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2pm-4pm, with table tennis, pool, indoor archery, curling and lots of board games including Scrabble. Free admission. Please visit [www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk](http://www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk) for more information about all the activities at the church or ring 01474 815039.

**Meopham Library Writing Group** The next meeting of the Meopham Library Writing Group is on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 at 10am. The following meetings will be on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 6<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Each month there is a different writing theme, such as "Turning Point" which can be used as a starting point for a poem, short story or an article. There is also a writing challenge, which involves everyone choosing a word and then trying to make a sentence or two, using as few words as possible, but including every word chosen.

In December, one of the writing group members brought along her newly published children's book, which had been beautifully illustrated by a professional artist. Other members over the years have published anthologies of poetry and even novels. Anyone who is interested in writing either as a beginner or more experienced writer, is warmly invited to join our small, friendly group. Creative writing is a very enjoyable activity, which can also be used to record special family memories and it can be very therapeutic for people who have been bereaved, or who are facing challenging times. Please ring 01474 813379 for more information, or just turn up at Meopham Library on 2<sup>nd</sup> January. New members are always very welcome!



"It's worth getting to church an hour early to grab a pew by the electric socket."







### Funeral Service

Winifred Florence MILNER (known as Win, previously of Luddesdown Parish) was born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1929 and died on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at the age of 95 years old. Win's funeral service took place at Thames View Crematorium on the 31<sup>st</sup> October. Our condolences and prayers go to Win's family and friends.

### Funeral Service

June Maureen PULLEN (a member of Cobham Church) was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1935 and died on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at the age of 89 years old. June's funeral service took place at Thames View Crematorium on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The service was conducted by The Rev'd Canon Chris Stone. Our condolences and prayers go to June's daughter Linda, son Shane and their families and friends.

## **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 14th January.**

**CONTACT: MARY PALMER—01474816788**

St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead

Church Services January 2025



**Wednesday 1st January** No - 10am Holy Communion

**Sunday 5th January** 9.45am All Age Worship at St John's  
11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's

**Wednesday 8th January** 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

**Sunday 12th January** 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's  
11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's

**Wednesday 15th January** 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

**Sunday 19th January** 9.45am Morning Worship at St John's  
11.15am Churches Prayer Meeting at St John's Centre

**Wednesday 22nd January** 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre

**Sunday 26th January** 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's  
11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's

**Wednesday 29th January** No 10am Holy Communion

**Cobham, Luddesdowne and Sole Street**

**Church Services during January**



**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January**

**10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Cobham**

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January**

**10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne**

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January**

**10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham**

**4pm Flame, Cobham**

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January**

**10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne**

**Midweek services in Sole Street**

**At The Railway Inn, in the Restaurant area.**

**9:30am 8<sup>th</sup> Holy Communion**

**Informal Morning Prayer**

**15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January**



TWO WOMEN EVENTS

Present:

# CHINA CRISIS



**THURSDAY 24TH APRIL 2025**

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## **COBHAM & LUDDSDOWN W.I.**

Our annual Festive Tea at the beginning of December proved to be an entertaining and enjoyable preliminary to Christmas for everyone. The only things missing were the crackers, which had been abandoned this year. We still had the silly paper hats and a small gift but we had to make up the corny jokes ourselves (some were more successful at this than others). The more nervous among us appreciated the lack of the snaps as crackers were pulled and were so often accompanied by minor injuries and accidents when glasses were knocked over, plates and cutlery ended up on the floor, etc. There was, as usual, plenty of food, most of which had kindly been donated by our members. To start the afternoon off, we welcomed back a much expanded and even more enthusiastic choir from Cobham Primary School, who entertained us with some delightful Christmas songs, together with some skilful translation of their words into British Sign Language, which added another dimension to their presentation. The singing was beautiful and we were even treated to some delightful solo voices by some of the braver choir members. A great deal of practice had obviously been put into this presentation and the children were a real credit to their teachers and to their school, evidenced by the enthusiastic and appreciative round of applause that they received.

We have a really interesting mix of activities lined up for our monthly meetings this year, starting with some gentle Chair Exercises on January 8th and on February 5th Jackie Simmonds will be giving a talk entitled 'My Life as a Tiller Girl – An Original London Palladium Tiller Girl'. On March 5th Sue Oaten will be coming along to demonstrate flower arranging which we hope will inspire some beautiful displays at our Spring Show in April.

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month (except August) from 2pm until 4pm at the Meadow Room, The Street, Cobham. (This year we will be meeting on the second Wednesday of January, due to New Year's Day falling on the first Wednesday). Visitors and new members are always welcome.

For information please email the secretary at [cobhamluddesdown@wkwfi.org.uk](mailto:cobhamluddesdown@wkwfi.org.uk)



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*It can be a bit gloomy after Christmas, so maybe we need a bit of January Jollity!  
When I was younger, I got my jollity in spades from those old hand-drawn cartoons that were a staple of television back then! I'm not sure that anything has made me laugh quite so much since then!*

## **The Cartoons of Old**

Didn't we love those cartoons of old?  
The faintly ridiculous stories they told!  
Of cats chasing mice, and dogs chasing cats  
Wile E Coyote and his Road Runner traps  
That never succeeded, or trapped him instead  
We laughed at disaster 'cos no one was dead!  
Donald Duck, Mickey Mouse, or dear old Bugs Bunny  
There's nothing today that is nearly so funny!

Dastardly, Muttley, in those great Wacky Races,  
Whose schemes always left them both sunk without traces;  
Or Fred of the Flintstones, and Wilma, and Barney  
We laughed at their tales of prehistory blarney!  
The unending feuding of Tom and of Jerry  
Which always succeeded in making us merry!  
Those hand-drawn cartoons made us rock like a jelly  
Who needed computers to bring us good telly?

*By Nigel Beeton*



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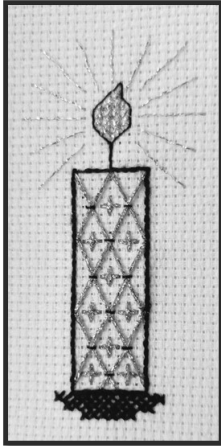
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## North Kent Embroiderers

Hello Everyone,



Our last meeting was the 'Four Corners' stitching. This meant that three corners of the room were allocated each to a different embroidery task whilst the fourth was a free choice, either to do your own work or to sit and chat and drink tea! Most of us decided to use the occasion to sew under the guidance of either Angela, Veronica or Lis who had each planned a little project for those who had signed up to do. Angela was teaching her group how to make a little pop open purse like the ones that Callisto had shown us during a previous talk. Veronica's group's task was to make a felt tree decoration and Lis was showing her group how to stitch an embroidered panel for a Christmas card, like the one you can see here. The session was

well attended and everyone seemed pleased with what they had achieved (even if we went away with some homework to do). These sewing sessions are always a good opportunity to get to know each other and for our new members to see how the group works.

The other main activity of the afternoon was the swapping of our 'postcards'. You may remember that the idea of these is for those who wish to take part to embroider a postcard size piece using the theme given for each month.



The theme for the month in question was

"Remembrance" so you can imagine that there were many poppies to be seen, I have added a picture of Angela's piece here, which as you can see is embroidered with poppies and daisies using a beautiful combination of collage and stitching techniques, together with a painted background.

If you would like 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](mailto:info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk)

or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734 Happy stitching, Karen All photos with permission.



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## Killing Comparison:

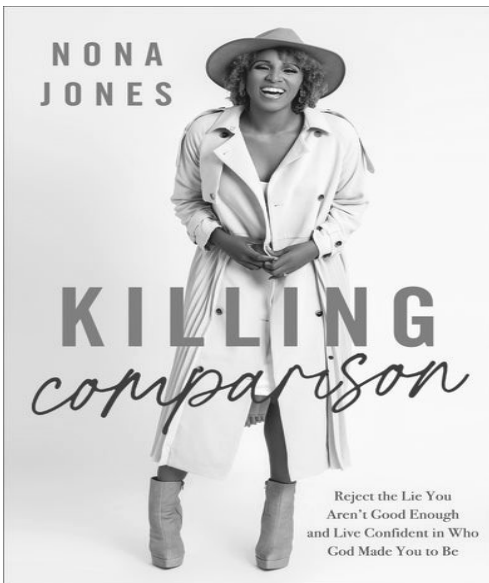
### Reject the Lie You Aren't Good Enough and Live Confident in Who God Made You to Be

By Nona Jones, Zondervan, £16.86

If you find yourself with feelings of insecurity, sure that others are better off or more worthy than you are...then you're in good company! In today's image-driven world, nearly all of us deal with the struggles of comparison and self-worth.

Nona Jones knows this mindset all too well. Throughout her life and in her recent career as an executive for the world's largest social media company, Nona discovered how true confidence can only be achieved by defeating comparative thinking and securing our identity to God's approval alone.

Join Pastor Nona Jones as she provides a fresh, biblically rooted perspective on the age-old human habit of comparing oneself to others. *Killing Comparison* will give you the tools you need to: determine your true source of self-worth; develop practical ways to conquer daily comparison; learn how to control social media instead of letting it control you; and discover how to accomplish your dreams without comparing yourself at every turn.



Through practical insight and down-to-earth encouragement, Nona helps you avoid the despair of comparison and pursue a life inspired by the one who made us in his image.



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**I love my little garden, so it was nice to learn some exciting news;** this coming Spring Monty Don (the bloke off the tele) is going to design a garden for dogs for the Chelsea Flower Show. The garden will include a well-kept lawn for doggie comfort, and a large tree for shade. For the dog's human friends, there will be spring-flowering bulbs.

The garden is part of a collaboration of Radio 2 and the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). It will also include a brick path inscribed with the names of the dogs belonging to the Queen (Jack Russell terriers Beth and Bluebell), the channel's presenters, RHS ambassadors and Monty Don's retriever, Ned. It is nice to remember, in some way, the pets that you have loved. We have a little dog statue and a rose bush in our garden to remember dear old Harvey.

I will not be spending too long in the garden while it is so cold, but I know that the editor likes my company when she is putting food out for the birds or sweeping up the leaves!

Keep warm and have sweet dreams of sunnier times in the garden.  
Love and licks Paddy x



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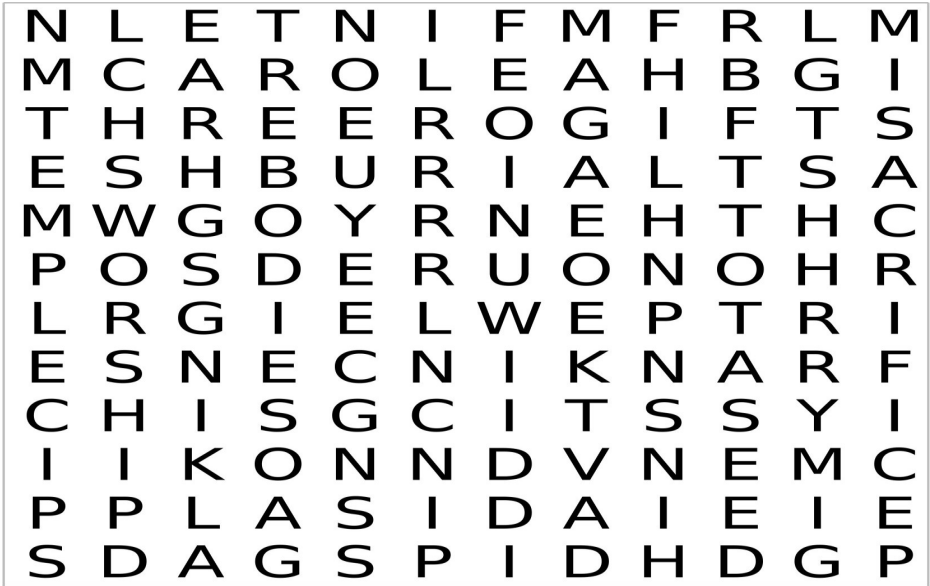
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**Word Search - Gifts of the Wise Men**

What about their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh? One Victorian scholar has offered a possible explanation. He was the Rev John Henry Hopkins, an American Episcopalian minister, who in 1857 wrote the much-loved Christmas carol, 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

Gold, said John Henry Hopkins, was a gift that would have been given to a king. Frankincense had traditionally been brought by priests as they worshipped God in the Temple. Myrrh was a spice that the ancients used in preparing bodies for burial.

If that is true, then you could say that the Wise Men, in choosing their gifts for this infant, honoured Jesus with gold because He was King of the Jews, with frankincense because He was to be worshipped as divine, and with myrrh, because He would also become a sacrifice and die for His people. The Wise Men were the very first Gentiles ever to worship Jesus. What faith they had!

Gifts Gold Frankincense Myrrh Henry Hopkins Carol Three Kings  
 Orient Worship Temple Spice Ancients Bodies Burial Honoured  
 Divine Sacrifice Die Gentile faith



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