



# ECHO



FEBRUARY 2025 EDITION



## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH OF OCCITANIE

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### CHURCH OF ENGLAND REELS AS TV NEWS EXPOSES NEW SAFEGUARDING SCANDAL AND BISHOP 'RETIRES'

The Church of England has been rocked by yet another scandal after lead reporter on Channel 4 News, Cathy Newman, who has been investigating numerous safeguarding failures in the Church revealed that the Bishop of Liverpool, Dr John Perumbalath, had been accused by both the Church of England Bishop of Warrington and also a woman in his previous diocese in Chelmsford of sexual assault and harassment.

Within 48 hours of the story becoming public, the Bishop announced his 'retirement'.

The matter was further complicated because it emerged that the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell had been aware of the allegations in 2023 before he had 'enthroned' the Bishop in Liverpool and had allegedly pressured an appointments committee to appoint Bishop Perumbalath in Liverpool after he had failed a 'safeguarding competency' test.

A complaint about the Bishop from one of his 'victims' was dismissed under the Church's Disciplinary Procedures because more than 12 months had passed since the alleged assault. She has also alleged that the Church of England's National Safeguarding Team discouraged her from pursuing her complaint by warning her how traumatic and difficult it would be to pursue it. The Team apparently decided that there were 'no ongoing safeguarding concerns'.

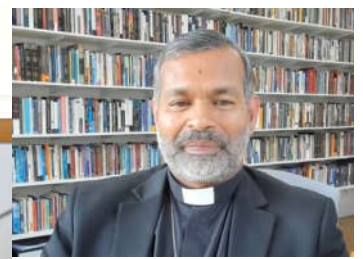
Cathy Newman has become globally acknowledged for her reporting of safeguarding issues in the Church of England, and it was her initial investigation into the behaviour of abuser John Smyth which ultimately contributed to the resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby, who left his post in January.



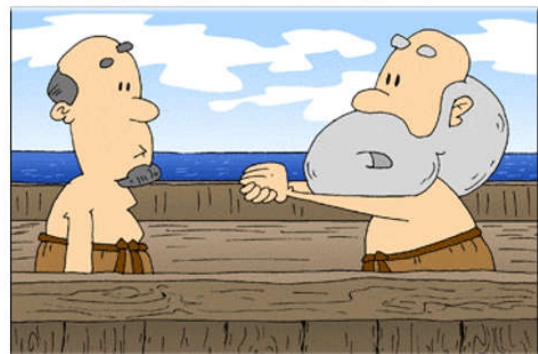
Investigative Reporter Cathy Newman



Archbishop of York - Stephen Cottrell



Bishop of Liverpool - Dr John Perumbalath



IN ONE OF THE FIRST PUNS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT NOAH DECIDED TO KEEP THE BEES IN THE ARKHIVES

# STOP PRESS

As we went to press, new information about this story was still being received, so the following pages contain recent updates

## OPPOSITION SAFEGUARDING MINISTER CALLS FOR ROYAL COMMISSION INTO CHURCH SAFEGUARDING FAILURES



UK Member of Parliament Alicia Kearns, who is the Conservative Party spokesperson on matters relating to Safeguarding has called on the Government to establish a Royal Commission to conduct a thorough review of allegations of child abuse within the Church.

Speaking on TV News, she criticised the Church for a lack of transparency and accountability over abuse cases. She called for a Royal Commission to conduct a full review. She said that Parliament “cannot allow it to continue where this institution thinks that it can investigate itself and hold its own people to account”.

She added that “Time after time we have seen that they protect the institution over survivors or potential future victims.

“We see people of whom there is a strong history of abuse being promoted and there being a hiding of their record.

“It cannot currently operate in an open, transparent and safe way.

“The Church can outlive any criticism and because it is timeless, it can simply move on”

She noted that there are also calls for a complete review of the structures of the Church of England because management were over-riding and ignoring the wishes of congregations and clergy and disempowering the Church Parliament - the General Synod.

A number of MP’s and clergy have contacted the office of the UK Prime Minister asking that Parliament take back the historic control of the Church that it held prior to 1919 when powers were given to a “Church Assembly” to create its own laws.

Former General Synod members Jayne Ozanne and Gavin Drake who both resigned in protest over different aspects of the Church’s behaviour over safeguarding have added their voices to calls for intervention by the British Government.

On 31 January a poll in one UK newspaper - *the Daily Telegraph* - showed that more than 85% of readers who voted wishes the Archbishop of York to resign.

## A FORMER VICAR WRITES....



The Reverend Dan Langdon-Griffiths was a Church of England priest who ministered in the Occitanie Region for 3 years before returning to the UK, where he found himself in the eye of the storm in the Diocese of Liverpool. He now works as a Chaplain in the UK National Health Service where part of his role is to champion whistleblowers.

When the current crisis erupted, he asked to share a reflection about events.

During my first year as an ordinand (trainee vicar) at St John’s College in Durham the Bishop of Durham at that time, Justin Welby, visited us and spoke convincingly and with conviction of integrity and honesty - qualities, self-evidently essential for those entering ordained ministry. It was compelling; if we were to help the church bear the gospel to the world, then the gospel itself should be the remarkable thing about us, our failings and hypocrisy should not become a stumbling block.

One comment of Justin's, however, stayed with me more than the rest. If you [succumb to moral failure] "we will not protect you."

He made it clear that the Church would not cover up wrongdoing, because to do so would damage justice, harm victims, and undermine the reputation of both the institution and the faith. At the time, I accepted this as a necessary safeguard against corruption - an assurance that our Church would hold its own accountable, no hiding places for the wicked like we had witnessed in other places, the other denominations upon which we looked down scornfully from our superiority. Imagine the conceit of my confidence when Justin went on to become Archbishop of Canterbury.

Years later, I would come to see the other side of that promise.

What happens when the Church’s system of discipline is used not to protect truth and integrity, but to suppress and punish? What happens when bishops, equipped with the full weight of the Clergy Discipline Measure, wield it not with wisdom and justice but as a tool of control? What happens when serious offences slip through the cracks while minor infractions are met with the full force of official judgment?

When earlier this week I heard about the scandal surrounding Bishop John Perumbalath, my reaction was not shock, nor even glee, but of grim recognition and a visceral disgust. Here was a man who had once sat in judgment over others, myself included, who had upheld the Church's discipline system without apparent concern for the human cost. And now, he found himself in the glare of scrutiny, albeit that of harsh media lights rather than the measured oversight of his archbishop.

Bishop John is not just another senior cleric - he served on the Clergy Discipline Commission, the very body responsible for overseeing and shaping the system that governs clergy discipline in the Church of England. He was part of the machinery that decided how justice was administered, how accusations were handled, and opined on the appropriate penalties for wrongdoing.

Now, he stands accused himself. The allegations against him are serious, including accusations of sexual assault and harassment by multiple women - shockingly including one of the bishops serving under his pastoral care (and my former boss)

And yet, despite these serious allegations, Bishop John has not faced a CDM process himself. Indeed, during the very months he was deliberating on other cases, he was skirting the edges of his own and slipping free by the skin of his teeth. One complaint against him was dismissed only because it was brought beyond the one-year time limit, though the President of Tribunals had the authority to allow an investigation but refused to do so.

This means that if the Church had truly wished to investigate, it could have done so. Another complaint, lodged by my former bishop the Bishop of Warrington, Bev Mason, resulted in no formal proceedings - only for the Archbishop of York to arrange for Bishop Bev to take the last 18 months as study leave instead.

The Archbishop of York had the power to order a "Visitation" to Liverpool, enabling him to have an investigation, but chose (or was 'advised') not to.

Bishop John's working relationships on the Clergy Discipline Commission warrant strong scrutiny in this situation. How much did those connections influence the outcome? The fact that he was part of the system that could have judged him raises serious ethical concerns. But then, I am hardly the first to suspect that the Church's system of discipline functions primarily to protect those at the top while disciplining the inconvenient.

Alas, all that we have seen in the last decade of church unravelling has exposed the Church of England as a spent force morally.

Not because attendance is falling.

Not because its coffers are empty – they are not. Not because the culture has changed.

It is dying because it is rotten from the inside out. The rot is not contained to one scandal, nor to one bishop—it is widespread, systemic, and deeply ingrained at every level of the institution. From parish churches to great cathedrals, from Archdeacons to Bishops, the sickness is everywhere.

I have witnessed it firsthand.

I have walked through a great cathedral, shoulder to shoulder with a man who would later be sentenced to life in prison for unspeakable crimes committed against children in that holy place. How many more like him hid in plain sight, protected by status and institution?

In the quiet offices of a parish church, a senior cleric casually described to me how he monitored his wife's movements via her phone - a level of control that in any other context would be called what it is: domestic abuse. And yet, among his peers, it was nothing more than a point of discussion.

I worked in a Diocesan Office knowing that a former Bishop of that diocese had sexually assaulted some of the very people who had come to him for pastoral care. And still, the institution carries on, protecting its own, excusing itself, moving forward as though nothing happened.

The Church of England is far from uniquely bad - it is simply humanly fragile, and fragile institutions, by their nature, hurt people. It is a sad fact of life.

But where other institutions, such as the BBC and NHS, have at least begun to acknowledge their toxic traits and attempt to root them out, the Church remains slow on the uptake. It cowers, hands over its eyes, refusing to countenance the notion that the guardian of morality could itself be among the very worst of offenders.

And it is not only the scale of abuse but also the drip-drip-drip nature of its revelation that is destroying the institution. Each new scandal, each suppressed report, each betrayal of victims further erodes what little credibility remains. The cumulative effect of these revelations is poisoning the organisation. No fresh initiative, no strategic vision, no evangelistic energy can compensate for a Church haunted by its own unrepented sins.

But God is not bound by it. The Holy Spirit is not confined to its structures.

To those who seek to do good, I urge you: look beyond the Church. Do not let its decay convince you that faith itself is dead. The institution may be crumbling, but the call to justice, to mercy, and to love remains.

Where the Church has failed, there is still love, still grace, and still work to be done. And beyond the Church's walls, there is also still love, still grace, and still work to be done.

*We will print a longer piece from Dan next month*

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND FACING AN 'EXISTENTIAL CRISIS'

Bishop of Rochester speaks out after Diocese passes vote of No Confidence.



Speaking after the Diocese of Rochester's Synod passed a vote of no confidence in the way the Church of England's Archbishops' Council has historically been managing safeguarding,

Dr Jonathan Gibbs, the Bishop of Rochester and former Bishop with responsibility for

Church Safeguarding, declared that the Church of England is facing "one of the biggest existential crises ... since the Reformation."

Following the recent publication of an independent inquiry by former Director of Social Services, Mr Keith Makin, into the extensive abuse perpetrated by John Smyth, clergy and lay members of the Rochester Diocesan Synod voted overwhelmingly (51-5 with 9 abstentions) to express No Confidence in the manner in which the Church of England was managing safeguarding matters.

Dr Gibbs himself voted in support of the motion, and told his Synod that he had urged the Archbishop of Canterbury to resign.

He said that said that the Makin Review and earlier reports had "revealed both personal and systemic failure in the life of the Church at every level. Evil has been covered up, the plight of victims and survivors has been played down or ignored, and this has felt like a betrayal not only of the victims of abuse but also of those countless people, clergy and laity alike, who have been working so hard at diocesan and parish level to improve the quality of safeguarding in the life of our Church."

The General Synod of the Church of England will meet in early February to consider proposals to strengthen safeguarding arrangements within the Church, and amongst the options will be the one demanded by most victims of church abuse for complete independence for safeguarding teams.

In a further historic event, the UK Charity Commissioners have written to all members of the General Synod reminding them of their legal obligations as Trustees of the Church of England to ensure that proper, effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.



## LOUISIANA LAW ON 10 COMMANDMENTS REACHES THE COURTS

Last July, we reported on a new law introduced in the US state of Louisiana requiring all schools to display copies of the 10 Commandments in every school classroom in the State.

This was blocked by a federal judge in November, and is now being referred to the US Court of Appeals. Some 20 religious organisations have filed 'amicus' briefs with the Court supporting the decision to ban this law.

The law has, however, found a supporter in President Donald Trump, who has recently caused a storm of controversy after disagreeing publicly with Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, the Episcopal Bishop of Washington after she asked him to show mercy to immigrants and LGBTQ+ people.



This is not the first time that President Trump has clashed with Bishop Budde. In 2020, Trump held a press conference in front of her church in Washington in which he held up a Bible after the police had cleared peaceful protesters from the churchyard using teargas.

The objection by other religious organisations is that the Louisiana law favours Protestant interpretations of the 10 Commandments over other faiths' versions.

We will report on the progress of the case in our next edition.

POPE FRANCIS  
**HOPE**  
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY



**POPE FRANCIS' AUTOBIOGRAPHY 'HOPE' HAS BEEN PUBLISHED**

"Hope, The Autobiography" is billed as the first ever biography to be published by a serving Pope.

Originally intended to be published after his death, His Holiness decided to bring publication forward to coincide the beginning of the Roman Catholic Jubilee Year of Hope.

Written first-hand by Pope Francis and assisted by Italian author Carlo Musso, the book contains previously unpublished personal photos and papers and took six years to write.

The prologue to the book tells how his parents narrowly avoided being part of the tragic sinking of the Italian liner SS Principessa Mafalda in 1927 off the coast of Brazil. 314 out of 1,252 passengers and crew lost their lives, but the Pope's parents were not on board because they had been unable to afford the fare.

The book continues through his childhood, the enthusiasms and preoccupations of his youth, his vocation, adult life, and the whole of his papacy up to the present day.

Narrating his memories, the Holy Father addresses crucial moments of his papacy and various important and controversial questions of our present times, including wars plaguing the world, the future of the Church and religion, social policy, migration, the environmental crisis, women, technological developments, and sexuality.

Moreover, "Hope" includes numerous revelations, anecdotes, and considerations.

Much of the interest of the book is how Francis is handling the criticism of his initiatives. The answer is, **combatively**.

He is defensive about Fiducia Supplicans, the declaration about the blessing of people in irregular situations, notably homosexual couples and the divorced- and-remarried, which almost capsized Rome's relationship with the Orthodox churches.

"It is the people who are blessed, not the relationships," he says. Except that you do have to foresee how these things look, especially if they're done in church. For those who are struggling in difficult marriages, a blessing for the divorced-and-remarried doesn't look like an affirmation of their efforts.

He also considers the issue of women's ordination within the Catholic Church. he argues against it on the basis that this aggravates the problem of "clericalism". Instead, he wants to see women given more power within the Church, which he is already doing. He articulates an interesting principle: "The Church is female – it is not male" (based on St Paul), and it must, he says, be "demasculinised".

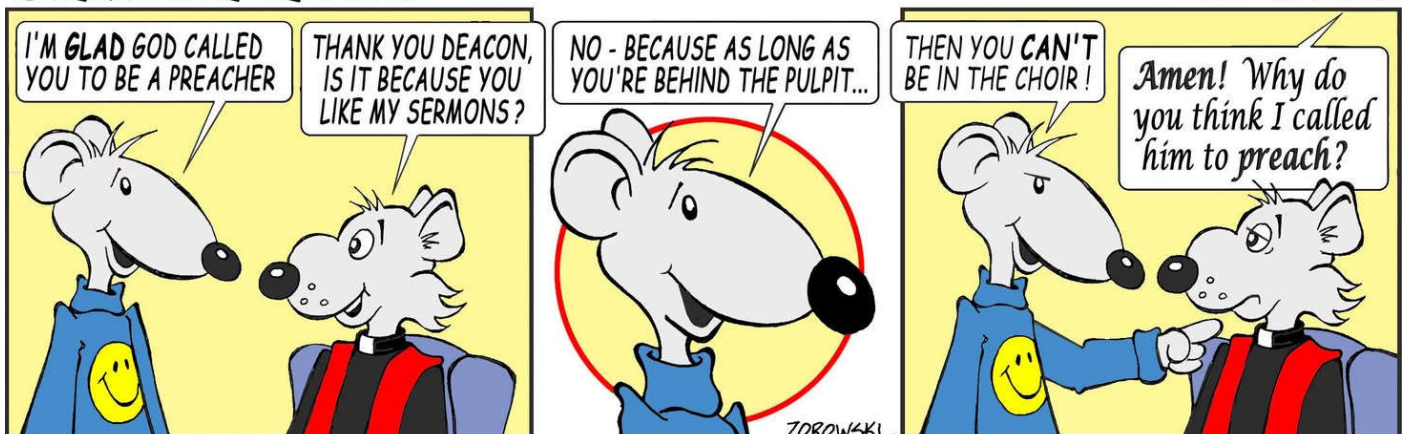
"It is not a question of co-opting all women into the clergy... of enhancing the Marian principle, so that it is even more important in the Church than the Petrine principle. Mary is more important than Peter, and the mystical nature of the woman is greater than the ministry."

Pope Francis is shown to be a very complex person, filled with compassion but also with authority and purpose.

He has lodged a letter of resignation with the Vatican Chamberlain in case of him suffering a serious medical condition, but otherwise he has no intention of resigning, so it may be necessary to publish a sequel in a few years' time.

## Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



## LOT HOUSE GROUP

Janet Varty - [janet@ourchurch.fr](mailto:janet@ourchurch.fr)



We met just before the end of the season of Epiphany to consider Take 3, Gifts and Power a Wild Goose meditation. It provided an opportunity to recognise how the gifts from the 3 men were carefully chosen for their meaning. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.



They were not just signs of generosity but symbolic of the dominant themes in Christ's life.

When Jesus was tempted in the desert he was offered three gifts again, worldly wealth and political power and the chance of bodily immortality.

When Jesus was arrested he came before a different three men Caiaphas, Herod and Pilate all protecting power and authority of different sorts.

We shared the stories that went with our personal golden mementoes and we smelt the sweet aromas of the incense in the burners.

Our afternoon was interrupted by the presence of 2 angels, who left the wall because of the heat from the fire!

We enjoyed discussions of our priorities around faith and about death. We were reminded by the texts that whenever we are offered the gifts and temptations of gold, frankincense and myrrh in our lives we hope we can follow the way Jesus showed us.

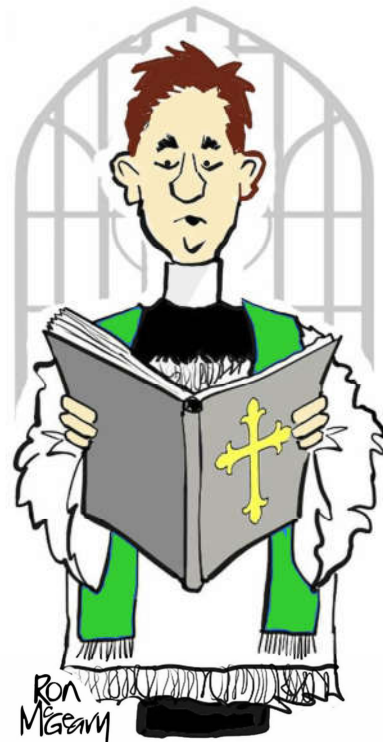
Finally birthday cake and sparkling wine or water was shared to celebrate 2 birthdays. A full two hours of enjoyable friendship and faith.

Our next meeting is on February 27th.

Janet.



## CHURCH NOTICES



*And finally, this year the choir have been asked to practice for the pancake race in the churchyard as last year it took us 4 hours to scrape the pancakes off of the chapel ceiling*



## What's The Big Idea ? - Acts of the Apostles

Over 2 years, Canon Paul Hardingham, Vicar of St Peter's, Bolton and a regular contributor to ECHO, is writing a series of monthly articles about the books of the Bible. This month Paul looks at the Acts of the Apostles

The Acts of the Apostles was written by Luke, a physician-friend and fellow-traveller of Paul. It complements his gospel, both being written for Theophilus (Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1), in around AD 63, during Paul's first Roman imprisonment.

While Luke's gospel records what Jesus began to do and teach, Acts tells us about what Jesus continued to do and teach through the disciples, empowered by the Holy Spirit (1:1-3).

Luke's aim is:

- To present a history. Christianity has a firm historical foundation. The life and teaching of Jesus Christ are recorded in the Gospels; Acts provides an account of the spread of the Church, as the result of the work of the risen Lord and the Holy Spirit through the apostles.
- To give a defence. We read speeches to both Jews (eg 4:8–12) and Gentiles (eg 25:8–11), showing us how the Early Church challenged pagan and Jewish thought, the Roman government and Hellenistic culture.
- To provide a guide. We see basic gospel principles being applied to specific situations in the context of problems and persecution. These same principles are applicable for us today.
- To depict the triumph of Christianity in the face of bitter persecution. The success of the Church carrying the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome and planting local churches demonstrates that it operates under the rule of the exalted Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (1:8). Just as the Holy Spirit empowered the first Christians in their witness, so He will do the same for us today!



## ARIÈGE CHURCHES GATHER TO CELEBRATE THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Traditionally, churches use the period of 8 days between the Feast Days of St Peter and St Paul to observe a Week Of Prayer for Christian Unity, and in the Ariège Département, the different denominations gather in the Protestant Chapel (referred to as a 'Temple') in the village of Carla Bayle to hold a joint service.

Carla Bayle is seen as a highly appropriate place to come together given that it is the birthplace of the 17th Century French Huguenot philosopher and writer Pierre Bayle. Bayle was forced to flee to Holland owing to religious persecutions in France.

It was there that he wrote his 4-volume *Philosophical Commentary*, which was a plea for tolerance in religious matters.

The theme of the 2025 Week of Prayer was "Do You Believe This?" and was led by the brothers and sisters of the ecumenical monastery in Bose, Northern Italy. The week centred on a celebration of the creation of the Nicene Creed in 325 AD which sought to create a single prayer in which the beliefs of different sects could be united.

Clive Billenness represented ECO at this service and led the prayers of intercession while the sermon was preached by Père Edouard de la Portalière, the Catholic Priest in Foix.

ECO dedicated its service on Sunday 25th January to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and you can hear Clive's reflection on the Sins of Heresy and Certainty in this service



## Today is not Tomorrow

Today is not tomorrow, she said

Tomorrow they will operate

But today is not tomorrow

So today, we will not  
go sky-diving  
bungee jumping  
set off on a cruise

Today we will  
shop at the local market  
prepare a room for guests  
go for a walk  
through vineyards and woods  
look towards the mountains

And later we will  
light the fire  
prepare food  
share pictures and stories  
and read poems to each other,  
because

Today is not tomorrow, she said.

*Neil Batcock*



### GINGER CATS

#### A MYSTERY SOLVED AT LAST

One of the great scientific mysteries has finally been solved - what makes some cats ginger ?

Now – after 120 years of searching – scientists have good news. They have finally found the chunk of DNA that is responsible. The so-called ‘Garfield Gene’ is **Arhgap36**.

Ginger cats feature on artwork in ancient Egyptian tombs and there are even mummies of ginger cats in Egyptian tombs.

In 1912, genetics researcher Clarence Little proposed a theory on the origin of the ginger coat.

Teams in Kyushu, Japan and the Stanford in the USA have now identified the gene which confirms Little’s hypothesis.



**Arhgap36** has been hiding away on the X chromosome, of which males have one copy while females have two. When the Arhgap36 gene is present on a cat’s X chromosome, it forces the pigment-making cells in the skin to produce more pheomelanin, leading to the orange-tinted fur.

It seems that if a male inherits this gene from either parent, he will be Garfield-ginger, while a female will usually turn calico or tortoiseshell.

And having solved this genetic conundrum, the scientists will now turn their attention to understanding Garfield’s predilection for eating lasagne...



*The New Diocesan Treasurer explained to Revd Jones that Parish Share payments were entirely voluntary*





A British musician and composer who by chance discovered fragments of musical scores when he visited the Nazi camp at Auschwitz in 2015 has returned to Poland and has identified the composer of the music.

Leo Geyer had visited the camp to undertake research after being commissioned to write a piece of music in memory of the Holocaust historian Martin Gilbert.

While visiting the Auschwitz-Birkenau museum, he was told by an archivist that there were remnants of musical scores which had been arranged and played by orchestras at the camp.

Geyer found 210 pieces of music in 'varying levels of completion'. Over 8 years, he has been re-assembling what he described as a 'broken jigsaw puzzle' in order to render the music playable again.

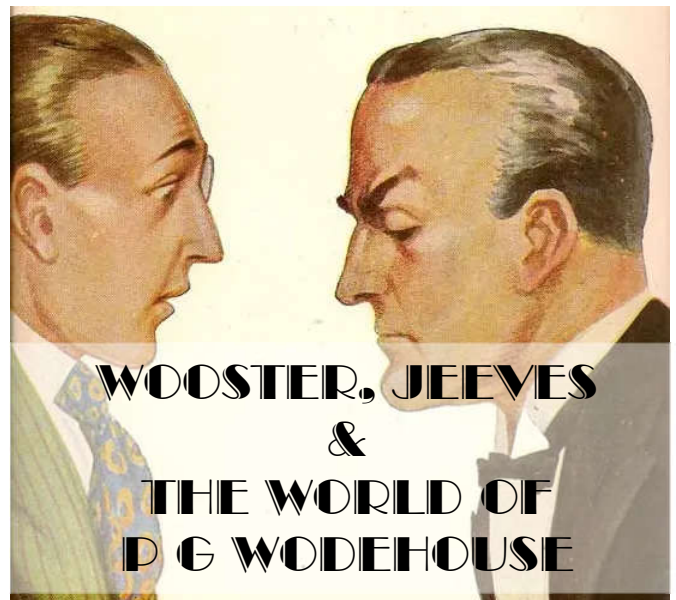
Over 1.1 million people died in Auschwitz and at least 6 orchestras were formed by the SS from the prisoners held there. The condition of some of the fragments of music is very fragile with very faded writing.

One particular piece of music especially grabbed his attention because the handwriting on it closely resembled his own. But this was incomplete and unsigned. Entitled "Daremne Zale" (Polish for "Futile regrets"), through extensive research, Geyer has now identified the composer as Mieczysław Krzyński, the Deputy Conductor of the Auschwitz 1 Orchestra.

Little is known about this man, although it is believed that he was liberated from Auschwitz after the war.

The music which Geyer has discovered contains small marks of rebellion, where forbidden melodies were woven into compositions. In one piece, a Polish Army bugle call was hidden inside the music.

A film documentary about Geyer's work including the playing of the music that he has restored has been broadcast on the Sky Arts satellite channel.



Fifty years ago, on 14th February 1975, P G Wodehouse died. The well-loved British-born comic novelist, short story writer, lyricist and playwright who lived his later life in Long Island, USA is best known as the creator of Jeeves.

He was always a prolific writer, publishing more than 90 books, 450 plays, 200 short stories and much else between 1902 and 1974. His many tales of the relationship between Bertie Wooster and his butler, Jeeves, have been played on TV, film and stage. He had an unusual first few years, being brought up by relative strangers in England while his parents lived in Hong Kong. He later went to Dulwich College, with which he formed a close attachment.

Wodehouse's genius was primarily in his writing; in person he was described as "dull," and was certainly very shy. Baptised an Anglican, he had an agnostic outlook: Evelyn Waugh once said that Christianity didn't really apply in his work because he – or his characters – had never left the Garden of Eden. He wrote sympathetically about "pious but fallible" curates, vicars and bishops, and his work revealed an unexpectedly deep knowledge of Scripture.

Born in Guildford, he moved to France for tax reasons in 1934 and was later taken prisoner by the advancing Germans in 1940. After his eventual release he made the naïve mistake of making five broadcasts on German radio to the USA, which had not yet entered the war. The broadcasts were humorous and apolitical, but they provoked some anger in Britain, to which he never returned.

Wodehouse took US citizenship in 1955, while retaining his British one. He had always loved America, and his biographers suggested that this "exile" may have benefited his writing, helping him to go on describing an idealised England, rather than the harsher reality of the post-war years.

He died in New York, a month after he was made a Knight in the Order of the British Empire (KBE).

## A FARCE IN BRIGHT DARKNESS

*Bob Carr took part in Audrama's performance of Peter Shaffer's comedy "Black Comedy"*

Black Comedy, unlike Peter Shaffer's complex philosophical dramas such as *Equus* and *Amadeus*, is a straightforward farce which buzzes with an abundance of clever comic spark.

Throughout the play we see struggling sculptor Brindsley Miller and his fiancée, Carol having a party with the aim of impressing Carol's pompous and conservative father, Colonel Melkett and rich art collector Georg Bamberger, in the hopes that he might purchase some of Brindsley's sculptures.

Without permission, they have "borrowed" the furniture and effects of their fussy neighbour, Harrold, to make their own flat more presentable. However just before the guests arrive, the main fuse blows in the house, plunging the flat into darkness.

What follows is a frantic farce with mistaken identities, unexpected visitors, and surprises lurking in every dark corner. Only the audience can see the action that takes place in the darkness. The results are chaotic, disastrous and left the audience in stitches.



The contortions and navigation each actor performed was done with such fluidity and the right amount of clumsiness that nothing ever felt over choreographed

**Tony Fletcher's** portrayal of Brindsley Miller created an endearing stage presence making Miller seemingly likeable, which increased the audience's hope for him to have a successful evening.

**Corinne Den** delivered a fine performance as Carol delivering an excellent clipped RP accent. She encapsulated the ditsy debutante by her exaggerated mannerisms and speech throughout.

This review could not pass without mention of a stellar turn by **Chris Barcock** as Miss Furnival, a witty portrayal of an older teetotal woman who develops a taste for gin. The intricacy and precision of the performance of all of the actors was excellent and swept the audience along.

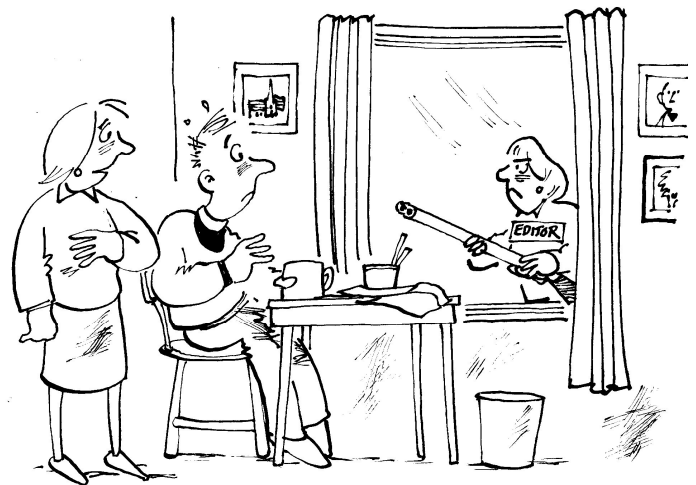
**Tim Maby's** eccentric Harold was a cocktail of gestures and looks and old British "queenliness" that never let up.



Between he and **Marjorie McConnell's** Clea, Brindsley's ex-girlfriend, this duo probably had the flashiest parts and they did not disappoint. Clea was somewhat resigned to the bedroom in the first half, but made a titanic contribution to the development of the second half.

Behind these actors are, of course, a talented production and design team led by **David Sheriton**. The bulk of the humour relies heavily upon the reverse lighting and the comedy already built into the premise of characters bumbling around in the dark. The constant switching between on and off to coincide the speed of lighting and blowing out a match not only adhered to the farcical elements of the play creating a flurry of laughter from the audience, but also demonstrated the tech teams skill carrying out such a task.

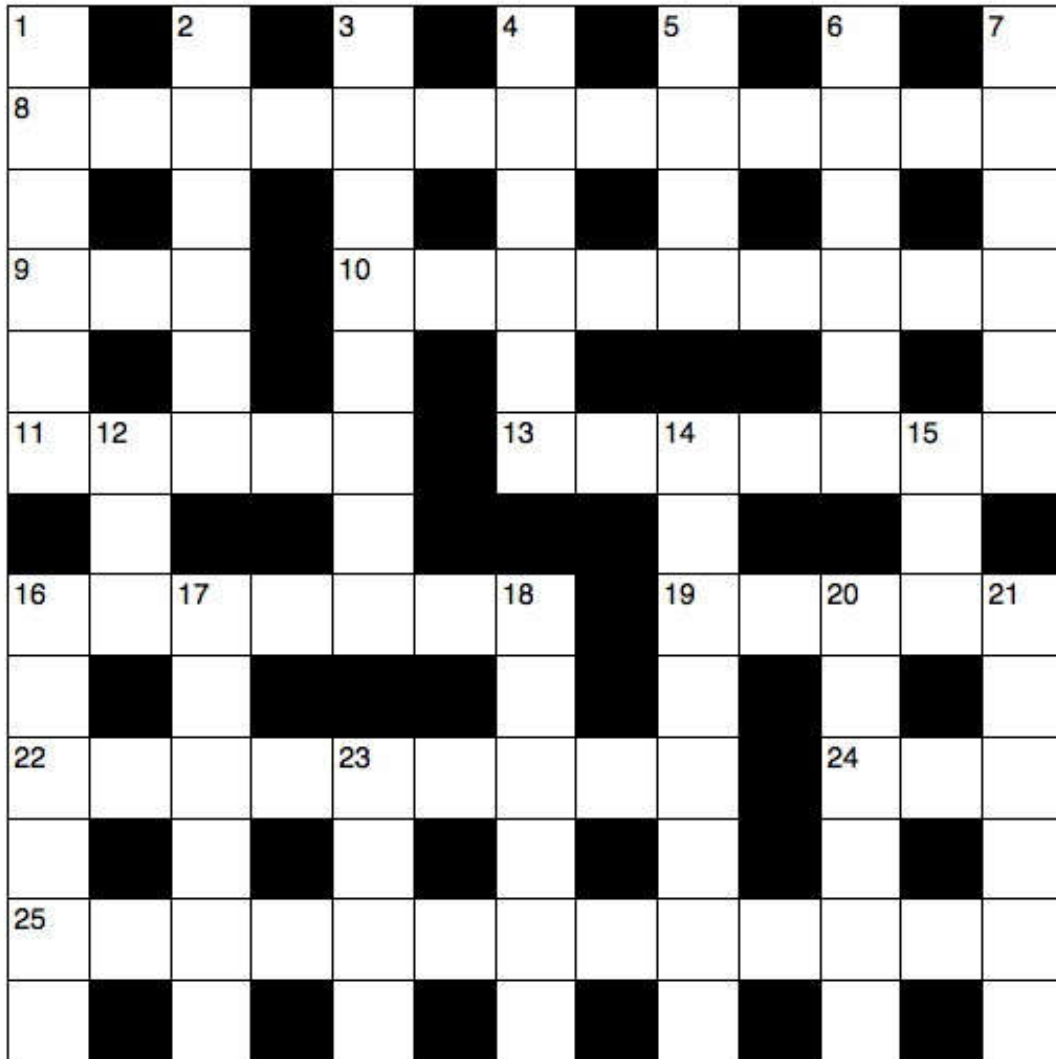
This is the third Audrama production over the past 2 years. Each one has been more challenging and intriguing than the last. We wait with bated breath for what the next one will bring!



*I think ECHO's Editor wants you to hurry up and finish your article for next month's edition, Geoffrey...*

# The ECHO Church and Bible Crossword

Can you solve this crossword ? Answers are at the bottom if you get stuck  
with thanks, as usual, to our crossword compiler John Capon



## Across

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)  
 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)  
 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)  
 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)  
 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)  
 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)  
 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)  
 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14  
 Down: 'On — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)  
 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

## Down

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)  
 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)  
 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)  
 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)  
 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)  
 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)  
 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)  
 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)  
 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)  
 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)  
 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)  
 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)  
 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)  
 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)  
 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (9)  
 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

DOWN: 1, Oceans. 2, Hophni. 3, Islamist. 4, Exhort. 5, Omar. 6, On spec. 7, Add all. 12, CBI. 14, Plotting. 15, Awe. 16, Vanish. 17, Starve. 18, Daub it. 20, Furrow. 21, Recede. 23, Cure.  
 ACROSS: 8, Cross-examined. 9, Ash. 10, Apocrypha. 11, Sci-fi. 13, Typical. 16, Visited. 19, Offer. 22, No account. 24, RAC. 25, Sovereign Lord.

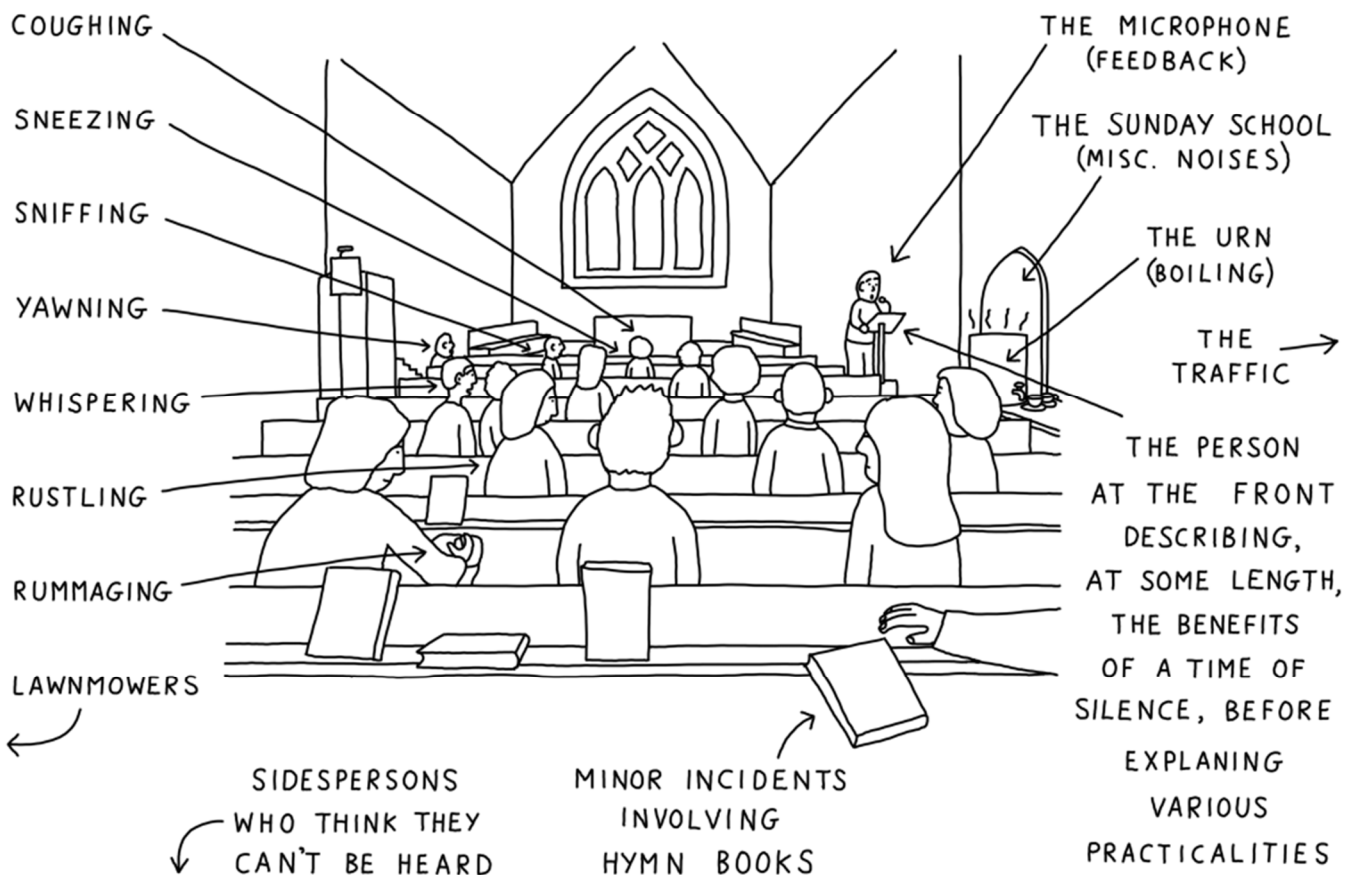
# ECO WORSHIP CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2025

| SUNDAY  |       | MONDAY | TUESDAY                       |       | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY  |       | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|-------|--------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------|---|-------|--------|----------|
| 2   | 10:30 | 3      | 4                             | 20:00 | 5         | 6   | 20:00 | 7      | 8        |
| Online Morning Prayer<br>for the Feast of the<br>Presentation of Christ |       |        | Online Service of<br>Compline |       |           | Online Service of Prayer<br>for Healing                                 |       |        |          |
| 9   | 10:30 | 10     | 11                            | 20:00 | 12        | 13  | 20:00 | 14     | 15       |
| Online Communion for<br>the 4th Sunday before<br>Lent / Proper 1        |       |        | Online Service of<br>Compline |       |           | Online Service of Prayer<br>for Healing                                 |       |        |          |
| 16  | 10:30 | 17     | 18                            | 20:00 | 19        | 20  | 20:00 | 21     | 22       |
| Online Morning Prayer<br>for the 3rd Sunday<br>before Lent / Proper 2   |       |        | Online Service of<br>Compline |       |           | Online Service of Prayer<br>for Healing                                 |       |        |          |
| 23  | 10:30 | 24     | 25                            | 20:00 | 26        | 27  | 20:00 | 28     |          |
| Online Communion for<br>the 2nd Sunday before<br>Lent / Proper 3        |       |        | Online Service of<br>Compline |       |           | Online Service of Prayer for<br>Healing<br>&<br>Lot House Group Meeting |       |        |          |

**DAVE WALKER RELECTS ON WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IN CHURCH DURING**

## A TIME OF SILENCE

PLEASE IGNORE ALL DISTRACTIONS



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