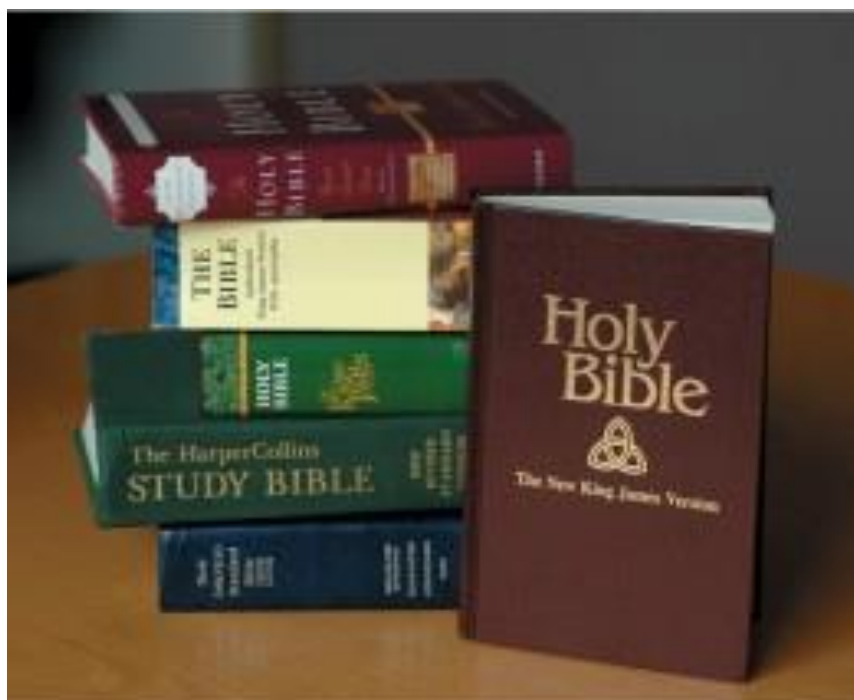


# CONNECT

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2025  
THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES  
OF THE TRUNCH GROUP



**Our theme is 'Reading the Bible Today' – how it is still relevant  
to 21<sup>st</sup> century life**



**BRADFIELD**



**GIMINGHAM**



**KNAPTON**



**MUNDESLEY**



**PASTON**



**SWAFIELD**



**TRUNCH**



**CAFÉ CHURCH**

## Rector's Letter

As many of you know I have a bit of a background in theological education. I remember there was almost a ritual to the first lecture I gave as I welcomed students to their first day of three year's study to become lay or ordained ministers. I used to hold my study bible to my heart and say: "This collection of books is powerful. It contains everything necessary for salvation; however you understand it. It is full of beautiful stories, history, law, wisdom in applying that law and of course our records of the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is stronger than anything I have ever come across and I promise you, it will not break. But used unthinkingly or self-servingly it also has the power to inflict great harm. So I want you to love it knowingly and use it wisely." I then went on to say - and each year it was so hard! "There is no donkey in the scriptural accounts of the nativity and there are two accounts of the flood which contradict each other and so cannot possibly both be understood to be literally true." There was always consternation and more often than not some tears at the revelation that St Francis rather than the bible was responsible for our much-loved crib scene. The knowledge that what had often been preached as literal truth was in fact nuanced by the rest of scripture and often influenced by the cultural understandings of the time it was written, was more often received with relief.

In our times, when the Christian faith is in danger of being hijacked by folk whose agenda certainly does not focus on the inclusive God of love, it is important that we all, not just trained theologians, understand the different ways in which the bible might be approached. With that in mind I offer this [link](#) to a lecture given by my friend and former colleague Rev Dr Bill Goodman on the subject.

Read the bible and love it. And if your reading does not coincide with a God of love, question your reading.

Please let me know if you would like a series of conversations on this subject.

- Sally

## Editorial

At the time of writing we do not know the name of the new Archbishop of Canterbury. It will probably be announced around the time that this magazine lands in your email box! There is growing speculation about who will receive the nomination, and how he or she will handle what is, frankly, a highly undesirable vocation. A senior priest recently said to me that the job of the Archbishop is utterly impossible, on the grounds that the multiplicity of conflicting demands (both within and without the Church) can never be satisfied. An interesting illustration of this was a recent poll finding which showed that 28% of the electorate thought that the new Archbishop should keep out of politics, especially avoiding comments on immigration policy. But 17% thought the new Archbishop should say more on this subject, and I suspect that this group included many regular churchgoers. In fact, it is difficult to see how any church leader who follows the imperative of the gospel can avoid commenting on matters of truth, justice and equality. Politicians may not like this, but these days they themselves are seldom guided by the gospels.

Perhaps, within the day to day life of our parishes, we should not worry too much about the wider concerns of our bishops and leaders. I recently asked (another) senior clergyman how lay ministers could influence the strategy of the Church of England, and was put firmly in my place. He said, 'I don't go to church to hear someone tell me about their strategy for the congregation. Ministers should preach well, imaginatively and faithfully, and love the people who are there in church, and those who are not. Local churches are households of faith. Local ministers need to be kind and wise adults who help raise all God's children to be better Christians'.

I am sure this was extremely sound advice.

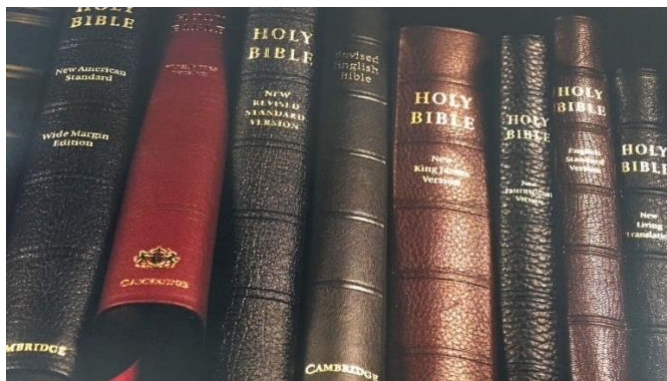
## Theme article: Reading the Bible Today



We should not be surprised that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, relatively few people read the Bible. In our busy modern society, bombarded with social media (and much disinformation), many people – and not just the irreligious – think it is irrelevant to their lives. How can documents up to 3000 years old, originally written in ancient Hebrew or Greek, provide modern guidance? How can they help us live today? Some of the narratives are clearly allegorical ('fairy stories' to some rather unkind critics), but all of the Bible was written in a remote age – therefore it surely cannot speak to us today?

As Christians we take a different view. Some regard the Bible as literally true throughout – a fundamentalist viewpoint, which is however, difficult to sustain; for any careful reading of the texts does show different perspectives and inconsistencies. But virtually all Christians regard the Bible as the 'word of God' – divinely inspired in some way, although there are different interpretations of what 'inspiration' may mean in this context. Nonetheless, a good summary of Christian attitudes to the Bible is that it provides *past experiences of the closeness of God and binds these to contemporary insights*. Hold onto that concept for a moment.

When we consider the Old Testament (perhaps better termed as the Hebrew Bible), it can be seen as a historical and religious record of the people of Israel. It uses a variety of styles or genres of writing to explain the people's relationship with God – history, poetry, allegory and prophecy. Much of the text was written at times when the Hebrew nation was at war with, or under the suppression of, its powerful neighbours: the Egyptians, the Assyrians or the Babylonians. Reflecting this, God is often portrayed as a fierce warrior-king, a God of wrath for violent times. And yet, throughout the Hebrew scriptures, and especially in the words of the prophets and the psalmists, there is another divine characteristic. We see the God of love who cares deeply for his people, even the feminine aspects of the divine nature. The Old Testament cannot be ignored as irrelevant. In any event, we must recognise that the Hebrew Bible was the Bible of Jesus and had a formidable effect on his life and ministry. He quoted from it, adapted parables and stories from its narratives and prayed Jewish prayers in his last hours on the cross. His teaching and his ministry only makes sense in the light of God's previous dealings with his people.



The New Testament is therefore full of references to the Hebrew Bible, but it fundamentally changes the focus. The gospel writers, who produced their works some 40-70 years after the crucifixion, were all devoted to setting out a record of Jesus' ministry, including eyewitness

accounts of what he did, what he achieved, but above all who he was. As the generation of believers who had met Jesus and heard him speak gradually died out, it was essential to produce a record for later generations – generations who stretch out, century upon century, to the present day. The Acts of the Apostles and the letters of the New Testament, especially those written by Paul, show how there was a religious revolution in the first century AD – sometimes called the Jesus movement. Beginning within the Jewish nation, it quickly spread into the gentile world, especially through the missionary work of Paul. Christian churches began to spring up throughout the lands of the Roman empire, as peoples of all races recognised the attractive message of Christianity – a religion of moral and ethical power, of loving communities and, above all, eternal salvation through the grace of God. It made a transforming difference to people's lives – and that message, those basic principles, still apply in people's lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The whole Bible is, therefore, completely relevant today.

Of course, we need to read it in the context of its times. The meaning of many biblical stories would have been clearer to the people who first read it. They knew very different times and circumstances to those we experience today, and this is perhaps most marked in terms of ethical questions. For example, slavery was a fact of life in biblical times, and was an unquestioned element of ancient society. It is virtually uncondemned within the Bible, since it was a natural way of life. On the other hand, the Bible, while it gives plenty of advice on how to run a sound agricultural economy, cannot give direct advice on some of the ethical dilemmas we consider today. Global warming and the ethical questions it raises would be meaningless to our ancestors, as would the use of drones in warfare, or the ethics of stem cell research. The Bible cannot automatically solve these problems and we have to use modern scientific reasoning alongside Christian tradition. Solving Christian ethical problems is sometimes described as the need to use 'scripture, tradition and reason'.

To conclude, we grow in maturity as Christians through reading and reflecting on the Bible. Today we have many translations to choose from – the King James or Authorised version for traditional beauty, the New Revised Standard edition – often regarded as a particularly accurate text – or versions in more modern English: the New English Bible, the Good News Bible or the Message. Many evangelical churches use the New International Version and there are many others in regular use. Choose a version which suits you, and speaks to you.

At the end of October we celebrate within the Church's calendar the day we know as 'Bible Sunday'. Let us make that a day when we resolve to read the Bible more frequently, to reflect on God's word more deeply, and to apply the inspiration it brings to our lives. Remember this overarching principle: the Bible describes past experiences but binds them together with fresh, modern insights.





## Poet's Corner

### General Gordon at Khartoum

Warm nights were the hardest times, as air  
grew stale, then foul; when the company of the prophets  
was replaced by the solace of brandy.  
Was ever a man so caught in a chasm, trapped  
by the ineluctable will of God?  
The Archbishop, once, who defied the state,  
though humbly – not with pomp: cut bloodily  
to death in his twilight nave. His brief flame  
was fanned to blaze of devotion and fame.

He wrote his final journal as dawn broke –  
that reluctant dawn when the cries of birds, the free birds,  
were drowned by drums of war.  
He sought his tunic, pristine, pure and white,  
and strode to the stair, avid to enrol  
as witness to the One who held the scroll.

I have not written poetry for some years and this is my only effort that has ever found its way into print, published in an anthology called *Spiritual Words* edited by Julie Embury (United Press, 2015). It reflects my long-standing interest in Victorian Christian history and is a poem about the dangers and temptations of spiritual pride.

Major General Charles Gordon, a renowned Victorian soldier, regarded as a hero by the public and held in high esteem by Queen Victoria, was sent to the Sudan in 1884 by Gladstone's government. His orders as Governor General were to evacuate the British troops from that country, but he found himself cut off and besieged in Khartoum. A military expedition to rescue him was dispatched too late. It arrived in Khartoum on 28 January 1885, but Gordon had been killed two days earlier by rebel forces under their ruler, or Mahdi, Muhammad Ahmad.

Gordon was a man of stern evangelical rigour – the epitome of a muscular Christian. It is clear from the accounts of his final days that, engrossed in a kind of spiritual pride, he had decided to die as a martyr. He spent his hours brooding, chain smoking cigars, reading his Bible and praying. The poem provides a comparison between Gordon's agitated religious state of mind and that of Archbishop Thomas Becket who, like Gordon, may have suffered from a kind of religious mania when facing imminent death. In his famous play, *Murder in the Cathedral*, recounting the death of Becket, T S Eliot suggested that the Archbishop was sorely tempted to welcome the prospect of martyrdom. The portrayal of Gordon's death (below) by George William Joy is an imagined reconstruction, made about ten years after the event. In my own imagination, Gordon would have donned a white tunic, representing his acceptance of martyrdom.

### Peter Clough



## MEANDERING: The Gospel in the Village

**Betty Taylor writes:**

As our '*Gospel in the Village*' at Gimingham draws to a close, we will be 'lowering' the Gimingham flag and 'hoisting' the one for Paston. In true Olympic fashion, our torch will make its journey across the Trunch Benefice. Please join us in church as we reach your village.

### The Week of 'Meandering'

**Monday October 20th 10am Morning Prayer at Bradfield**

Ps 121, Gen 12:1-9, Luke 2:1-7

**Tuesday October 21st 10am Morning Prayer at Trunch**

Ps 122, Exod. 13:17-22, Matt. 4:12-25

**Wednesday October 22nd 10am Holy Communion at**

**Mundesley;** lectionary readings; homily on 'Psalms of Ascent'

**Thursday October 23rd 10am Morning Prayer at Swafeld**

Ps 123, Deut. 31:1-8, Acts 9:19b-31

**Friday October 24th 10am Morning Prayer at Knapton**

Ps 125, Ezra 1:1-6, Acts 28:11-16

**Sunday October 26th 10am Holy Communion at Paston**

On Sunday morning (26<sup>th</sup> October) the torch will arrive at Paston in time for the service there. Within our morning services, we will also remember that the 60th anniversary of the Trunch Group draws near. Our prayers during this 'Meandering' week will centre on thanksgiving for past blessings, and our celebratory plans for the end of November.

Please make sure to watch this space for 'Paston Revealed' - our Spring and Summer monthly times together in 2026. Details will appear in future editions of Connect.

## 'Paston Revealed'



# Memory Lane

**The Memory Lane Team are seeking new volunteers in order to make  
Memory Lane Café a weekly event!**

Memory Lane Café is designed to be a place where people living with dementia, their carers and those who are socially isolated can enjoy a warm, friendly, safe environment with music, activities and refreshments.

**If you have a heart for community and have any time available on  
Wednesday afternoons (even if it is just once a month) please do get in  
contact with our team at [memorylandcafeundesley@gmail.com](mailto:memorylandcafeundesley@gmail.com) or  
give Bob White a call. Thank you!**



**Memory Lane Café**

📍 All Saints Community Rooms, Mundesley, NR11 8BE

Where people living with dementia,  
their carers, and those who are socially  
isolated can Enjoy a Warm, Friendly,  
Safe Environment with Music,  
Activities, Refreshments and More...

**Free** for all to attend  
*Donations Welcome*

**1:30PM - 4:00PM**  
Entertainment from 2pm till 3pm

**Every other Wednesday**  
*Starting January 8th, 2025*

|                                                               |                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| January - 8 <sup>th</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup>                  | July - 9 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup>                       |
| February - 5 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup>                 | August - 6 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup>                     |
| March - 5 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup>                    | September - 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup>                  |
| April - 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup> | October - 1 <sup>st</sup> , 15 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> |
| May - 14 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup>                     | November - 12 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup>                  |
| June - 11 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup>                    | December - 10 <sup>th</sup>                                     |

Come along and meet our Trained  
Dementia Friendly Volunteers who  
would love to get to know you

*for further information, or if you'd like to volunteer with us,  
please contact our team at*  
[MemoryLaneCafeMundesley@gmail.com](mailto:MemoryLaneCafeMundesley@gmail.com)

## Music and Faith: Special reviews of two new offerings from Church House Publishing



### **The Gift of This New Day** St Martin's Voices Church House Publishing £14.99 CD

If you are a regular listener to the Church of England's Daily Prayer podcast you will be familiar with the excellent choral music at each service from the choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields or 'St Martin's Voices' as they are properly known. They provide at least one psalm or canticle or responsory for every service, adding atmosphere and beauty to the liturgy. This CD, directed and produced by Andrew Earis, is a compilation of 31 choral pieces from Morning Prayer, including the Benedictus, Benedicite and the Venite, and a host of seasonal canticles to augment worship in 'Times and Seasons'. I was especially impressed by the recordings of the canticles designated for special occasions, notably the glorious 'Song of the Bride', used on All Saints' Day, with music from Hildegard of Bingen. Several of the canticles are world premiere recordings. The range of liturgy is impressive, the quality of the voices is stunning and the entire offering is spiritually uplifting. The recording lasts over 76 minutes and is excellent value for money – highly recommended.

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### **We Believe: Exploring the Nicene Creed**

Anon Church House Publishing £3.99 pbk

1700 years ago, in 325 AD, a council of bishops met at Nicaea, in what is now Turkey. It was attended by the first Roman Emperor to be a Christian, Constantine. The enduring outcome of this historic meeting was agreement on a statement of faith, the declaration we know, and recite, as the Nicene Creed. This helpful little book marks the anniversary and provides, in twenty-four separate studies, line by line explanations of the creed, using Bible readings, reflections and prayers. If you have ever pondered, for example, what exactly is meant by *'begotten, not made, of one being with the Father'*, or other credal expressions, then this book will enlighten you. By going back to scripture, we see how the ancient fathers resolved misunderstandings and discrepancies between different branches of the faith. The Council at Nicaea was a model for theological discussion and reconciliation. This book will help those who are fairly new to the Christian faith, or those taking Alpha courses, but also those who have been reciting the Nicene Creed for many years.

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## **Services in the Trunch Group, October and November 2025**

*Do not miss our special Pet Services, marking the end of the Season of Creationtide, on Sunday 5 October.*

### **Sunday 5 October Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, All Saints' Church, Mundesley

**Pet services:** 11.00 am Knapton

3.00 pm Mundesley

3.00 pm Trunch

### **Sunday 12 October Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, St Botolph's Church, Trunch

### **Sunday 19 October Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, St Peter's & St Paul's Church, Knapton

### **Sunday 26 October Last Sunday after Trinity (Bible Sunday)**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, St Margaret's Church, Paston

**10.00 am Morning Prayer**, St Botolph's, Trunch

### **Sunday 2 November All Saints' Sunday**

**9.00 am Holy Communion** (said) All Saints' Church Gimingham

**10.00 am Holy Communion** All Saints' Church, Mundesley

**3.00 pm All Souls' service** (Commemoration of the faithful departed)

All Saints' Church, Mundesley

### **Sunday 9 November Remembrance Sunday**

**10.00 am Holy Communion and Act of Remembrance**, St Botolph's Church, Trunch

**10.00 am Act of Remembrance**, All Saints' Church Mundesley

**10.00 am Act of Remembrance**, St Peter's and St Paul's, Knapton



## **Services in November (continued)**

### **Sunday 16 November Second Sunday before Advent**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, St Peter's and St Paul's Church, Knapton

### **Sunday 23 November Christ the King**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, St Margaret's Church, Paston

*We shall be celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the Trunch Group Benefice. The service will be followed by a bring and share lunch. Parking has been arranged and there is easy access for those with limited mobility*

### **Sunday 30 November Advent Sunday**

**10.00 am Holy Communion**, All Saints' Church, Gimingham

**3.00 pm Advent Evensong**, All Saints' Church, Mundesley

**Café Church meets at 11:00 in the Mundesley Community Rooms on Sunday Mornings (5, 12, 19, 26 October, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 November)**

**The 10:00 Wednesday morning Holy Communion will be in the Mundesley Community Rooms on 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 October and 5, 12, 19, 26 November.**

**See also the special 'Meandering' services of Morning Prayer in the week of 20-26 October (page 9)**

## For your Diary: Forthcoming Events

**Our next issue of Connect will be a special edition for Advent and Christmas 2025 , due out in the third week of November**

### Trunch Cinema and Concerts

**Saturday 8 November** Ilya Kondratiev – piano recital.

**Saturday 13 December** Candlelit Christmas Concert, St Botolph's Trunch.

### Regular Events in the Mundesley Community Hub

Tuesday        9:30 - 11:30 **Mundesley Together Children's Club**

Wednesday    10:00 **Holy Communion**  
                     13:30 – 16:00 **Memory Lane Café** (currently fortnightly: 1, 15, 29 October, 12, 26 November) – but see page 11.

Friday            9:00 **Community Café**  
                     10:00 - 12:00 **Community Larder**

## Some Parish Contacts

**Rector:** Revd Dr Sally Myers (Sally)  
rectortrunchgroup@gmail.com 07840 399185

**Canon John Carr** 01263 720788 carr.ide@btinternet.com

**Revd Jenny Lodge** 01263 649020  
(working days; Tue, Wed, Fri, Sun)

**Safeguarding Officer:** Allison Jackson 01263 720826  
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