



## The Window

### November

### 2025



# BINGO NIGHT BONANZA RAISES £700 FOR CHURCH

It was all Shirley Merritt's idea, and what a great night it turned out to be on October 4.

She enlisted the help of her friend Simon Pritchard to be "caller" for the night, and he led the many "beginners" through the paces with admirable patience!



The cry for "more" at the end of the evening has encouraged Shirley to arrange another Bingo Night as soon as possible.



Thank you to all the helpers and the generosity of those who provided magnificent prizes for winners and, of course, the inevitable raffle.

Something in the region of £700 was raised for St Mary's Church.





## Harvest Thanksgiving



It has become a cherished tradition in our parishes to celebrate Harvest on the first Sunday of October.

This year, on the 5th, both North Stoke and Ipsden churches were beautifully adorned with flowers, fruit, vegetables, nuts, and non-perishables— a vibrant offering of gratitude to God for His abundant provision.

At North Stoke, the morning began with Holy Communion, followed by a lively auction of fresh produce, which raised **£170**.

Auctioneer Tim takes no prisoners.

On Monday, all the food gifts from both churches were carefully packed to be delivered to the Foodbank, extending our thanksgiving into practical generosity.

In the evening, Ipsden welcomed Rev Preb Jane Haslam, Associate Archdeacon of Dorchester, who preached with insight and warmth. She joined us afterwards for supper, rounding off the day with fellowship and good cheer.

Across both services, we were reminded not only of the harvest of the land, but of that deeper Harvest when the fruits of our lives are gathered in.



We reflected on the spiritual rhythms of planting, nurturing, pruning, and reaping, and how they shape our journey of faith and discipleship.

## Harvest Mouse

After all the rain and wind, I decided to take a short trip from my home in the graveyard to the Church - at least it's dry in there.

My usual split in the floorboards is just the right size for me to squeeze through. What a feast I was faced with all the fruit and Vegetables I could have dreamed of.



Was it my birthday or some special occasion I don't know about...

Sunday is usually my best day for a sugary treat but I have to wait for the singing to finish and lots of talking over coffee and cake, and then, when the Church goes quiet again, it's my turn to clear up the crumbs left behind.

But today is different, lots of fruit and vegetables on offer!

What shall I tuck into first? It all looks so tasty - perhaps a piece of everything seems like a good idea!



Wait a minute! I can hear footsteps and the sound of the big Church door being opened. Someone is coming in with a dog.

I have to leave my marvellous feast and get **HELP !** down my escape route. I hope I can squeeze my full tummy through the gap.

It's okay - I managed to safely make it home - but I now need a good sleep.



I can always try again tomorrow in the hope all the marvellous food is still there.

**Jane Watts**



## **The Roundels Of Mongewell**



When St John's Church in Mongewell closed its doors to regular worship and it became a ruin two stained glass windows were rescued by a local farmer and preserved in his barns.

They probably were originally mounted either side of the tower just above Bishop Shute-Barrington's grave.

In the late 1700s, Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham, had commissioned a picturesque Gothic-style remodelling, including the west tower, and it may well be that this included the inclusion of these windows.

The windows are an assembly of eight "roundels" which have interesting history.

Stained-glass roundels seem to have developed first in northern France in the late 13th century, but their format remained largely unexploited until the very end of the fifteenth when production exploded across the Netherlands, France, and Germany and continued unabated until just after the middle of the 16th century.

They are produced by painting vitreous pigments onto the two sides of a single sheet of clear glass before fusing them indelibly in place using the intense heat of a furnace.

Outlines and shadows are built up using differing concentrations of pigment, as well as with layers of wash, while highlights are created either by leaving the surface of the glass unpainted, or by scratching back through the paint layers to reveal the pane beneath before firing.



Roundels don't necessarily have to be round and in some instances, oval or rectangular panels are also described as roundels.

While the few surviving roundels made before around 1480 are tightly restricted in their iconographic range, late 15th and 16th century roundels display a vastly expanded repertoire of imagery, from parables and narrative scenes drawn from the Bible, to heraldry, mythological stories, battle scenes, secular subjects, or even just a single figure such as a saint.

As with the medieval artwork in St Mary's Church in North Stoke, roundels found in churches would have sought to convey a moral inference for illiterate observers.

Unlike other forms of stained glass, which largely remained the preserve of religious foundations and were used to fill vast cloisters and church windows, roundels were to a large extent produced to cater to the tastes of Northern Europe's secular patrons who bought roundels to decorate their own homes or to give as gifts to business partners, newly married couples, and friends.

16th-century Netherlandish-stained glass roundels found in the windows of St John's Church in Mongewell likely arrived there through the art and antiques trade, a common route for such pieces.

These roundels—small, intricately painted glass discs—were originally crafted in the Netherlands for private chapels or domestic interiors. Their intimate scale and detailed imagery made them highly collectible, especially among connoisseurs of Renaissance art.

Churches, like St John's Mongewell, especially those undergoing restoration or seeking to enrich their interiors, sometimes acquired historic stained glass from dealers or donors.



Some years ago, The Churches Conservation Trust commissioned Dr William Cole, a foremost expert in this type of glass, to inspect the St John's windows. He dated them in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.

It is difficult to reproduce a detailed image of each roundel, but here are the best!



**Saint Martin** is traditionally shown on horseback, using his sword to cut his cloak in half to share with a beggar—a powerful act of Christian charity. Here, he is actively cutting the cloak, emphasizing the moment of decision and action.

The horse is richly caparisoned, suggesting Martin's status as a Roman soldier and noble figure. The beggar crouches, bowl in hand, with his crutch discarded—a poignant detail that is didactic, teaching compassion, humility, and generosity—core Christian

**(Netherlandish 1515 or possibly a little earlier)**

**Saint Louis**, as king and saint (Louis IX of France, canonized in 1297, revered for his piety, justice, and crusading zeal).

The scene includes a castle or church on the shoreline suggesting justice and sanctuary, and the fishers in the water reflecting “fishers of men”.

This roundel may evoke humility and provision, contrasting with the king’s grandeur. Louis had a reputation for fairness and care for the poor. Balance of power and humility: A king among fishers, a saint among men.

**(Netherlandish 1525)**



**A bird perched on a bough** in medieval stained glass is more than just a pretty scene—it’s a layered symbol rich with spiritual and cultural meaning.



Birds often represented spiritual messengers, bridging the earthly and heavenly realms. In Christian iconography, a dove symbolized the Holy Spirit, peace, and divine love.

Birds in flight, or perched calmly, suggest the soul’s journey toward enlightenment or liberation from earthly concerns.

They also reminded viewers of the beauty and fragility of the natural world, urging reverence for creation. A bough, especially one in bloom, symbolizes vitality, growth, and the cyclical nature of life. The tree or branch can represent divine protection or a place of spiritual refuge.

In medieval stained glass, where literacy was low and symbolism was key, a bird on a bough could convey hope and renewal, echoing the biblical dove returning to Noah with an olive branch.

A quiet bird on a branch invites reflection and serenity. Paired birds on boughs often symbolized romantic or divine devotion. This imagery was not just decorative—it was a visual sermon for the illiterate, a poetic shorthand for spiritual truths.

**(Dutch 17th century)**

**The Meal Scene** - The woman offering food to one man while the other looks disconsolate suggests a moral or allegorical theme.

The woman may represent Christian virtue, offering sustenance to the worthy or needy. Her selective offering could imply divine judgment—rewarding righteousness and ignoring sin.

There is a great deal of background detail which may be allegorical, all together offering a moral tableau involving generosity vs. neglect, innocence vs. temptation, domestic virtue vs. vanity or folly.

In a church context, it may have reminded parishioners of the importance of charity, discernment, and spiritual vigilance—even in everyday life. Flemish roundels often blended sacred themes with secular imagery, making them both instructive and relatable.



**(Flemish around 1500 or maybe even earlier)**



## **Celebrating 75 Years of Braziers Park**

In 2025, Braziers Park marks an extraordinary milestone: 75 years as a living community, centre for learning, and place of inspiration.

Founded in 1950 by psychiatrist and educational reformer Dr Norman Glaister, Braziers Park was envisioned as a space where people could explore new ways of living and working together.

Inspired by his earlier work with the Order of the Woodcraft Chivalry and the Grith Fyrd movement, Glaister saw Braziers not only as a beautiful house in the Oxfordshire countryside, but as a laboratory for community life - a place to study how groups function, how people communicate, and how society can grow in harmony.



Over the decades, Braziers has been home to a remarkable tapestry of people and ideas. Artists, educators, environmentalists, activists, and visionaries have gathered here, contributing to a tradition of open inquiry and creative experiment.

### **A place of learning, belonging and valuing the individual**

Braziers Park is a working community, where members live and share responsibilities together - from cooking and gardening to welcoming visitors and hosting events.

This way of life has kept alive the founder's vision of cooperative living, while constantly adapting to the needs of new generations.

For three quarters of a century, Braziers has also been a centre for education. Its current programme, inspired by Soil, Soul, Society - the work of peace activist and environmentalist Satish Kumar, continues this tradition by bringing people together around ecology, creativity, spirituality, and community.

### **A Heritage of Creativity**

Braziers has been a setting for films and music, a retreat for writers and artists, and the birthplace of festivals and cultural projects. Its grounds, gardens, and woodland have provided inspiration and sanctuary for generations of visitors.

This creative heritage continues today with art residencies, craft workshops, music events, and heritage projects that make Brazier's history accessible to schools, families, and local communities.

### **Looking Ahead**

We look back with gratitude to all those who have left their mark on this unfolding experiment in community, while we look with hope into the next chapter.

It remains a place where the past and the future meet, a historic house alive with possibility, rooted in its heritage yet always reaching forward.

We warmly invite you to join us in celebrating this milestone, whether by attending an event, exploring our heritage, or simply walking in the gardens that have held so many stories over the past seventy-five years.

## Garden of Remembrance

I hope you have all had a good summer.

With Autumn now here, it's a good time to start thinking about planting spring bulbs in the Garden of Remembrance at the Church in Ipsden.

With the money collected in the donation box in Shirley's shop, and thank you to everyone that kindly donated, we have purchased some bulbs.



We have 300 mixed colour crocuses and 200 miniature daffodils/narcissus which will hopefully give a lovely show of colour to welcome in the Spring.

Being bulbs they should multiply over years to come to give a carpet of colour every year going forward too!

During the summer we also planted some hollyhocks by the brick and flint wall at the back of the garden, together with various plants in the grave garden which we have been working on.



Wild flower seeds have been scattered in the longer grass behind the bench seat, again hopefully they will add colour come spring.

Thank you again for all the donations received. Whenever you are at the church, take a moment to look at work in progress on the garden.

**Wendy Conway**





## **Murder Mystery in Ipsden**

Last month saw Ipsden's Murder Mystery crew present two performances of a new play to the residents of Millbrook Care Home and then Waterside Court Care Home.



Revealing her hidden talents, the brilliant script was written by Lottie Rundall.

Liz Yates directed and, as ever, added her magic touch to the performance.

Both also joined the cast, alongside Siobhan Bennett, Steve Daniels, Harry Francis, Jesse-May, Kate Moberly, Richard Moberly.

The Murder mystery takes place in a quiet English village (very Midsomer Murders!) mainly in the pub, where locals are discussing the discovery of yet more crop circles. What could possibly go wrong....?

My lips are sealed! We very much hope to perform in Ipsden's village hall early next year, when you will have a chance to guess "whodunnit"



We were made to feel very welcome at both homes and it was great to see residents interacting, guessing who the murderer was, or simply just watching the performance.

We are looking forward to doing it all over again next year!

**Siobhan Bennett**

## November Wildlife



### Bees in Winter

Heading into the cold winter months, we need to be even more considerate to our local bees than usual.



In winter, honeybee queens remain in their hives with the exception of particularly sunny days. Bumblebee queens may also emerge from hibernation if prompted to by mild weather.

Solitary bees will leave their nests once ready to mate. When bees do emerge during winter, they need to have access to nectar, or they risk dying of starvation.

In order to help these pollinators survive the winter, we recommend you plant winter bloomers in your garden.



These include:

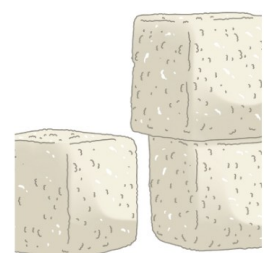
- Single flowered Hellebores. The open face gives great access to pollen and nectar
- Crocuses make sure to plant them in an area with lots of light so they fully open
- Snowdrops
- Aconites
- Ivy also works well as a late nectar source



If gardening isn't your thing, you can make natural spaces bee friendly by creating twig and leaf piles. This can be as easy as not raking your garden when fallen leaves drop.



Care for wayward queen bumblebees by either carefully relocating them to flowers or offering her a 1:1 sugar and water solution.





## Tips for looking after our hedgehogs this winter

### Move your burn piles before you light them

Hedgehogs and frogs often use them to sleep in.

This is, after-all, how hedgehogs were once upon a time cooked to be eaten.

Thankfully it is now illegal to eat this endangered species.



### Found a sick or injured hedgehog?



**Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue centre** on 07549322464

**Iiggywinkle's wildlife hospital** on 01844 292292

### Leave some areas untouched



Messy log piles, long grass and fallen leaves are great for hibernating hedgehogs.

Please leave a wild area in your garden so our hedgehogs can hibernate in peace - nice and cosy and safe.

### Put out a shallow dish of water

Make sure your ponds are easy to get out of for hedgehogs, so they have water to drink.



Sometimes hedgehogs come out of hibernation to eat and drink, especially in warmer weather, so even at this time of year, putting out water can help.

**Avoid using pesticides or herbicides** as this will make hedgehogs very ill.

Find out more at [www.hedgehogrescue.org.uk](http://www.hedgehogrescue.org.uk)

To find out more about Hedgehogs head over to the Wild Oxfordshire website at [www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk) and have a look in guidance for mammals.

**Rhiannon Young**  
**Wild Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Engagement Officer**

## November reflections from the vicarage

November draws us into Remembrance with a hush that is almost liturgical. At the heart of North Stoke, St Mary's Church offers a different kind of memorial: not a statue of a soldier or a long list of names, but a stone sundial.

Quiet. Unassuming. Yet profoundly symbolic. It marks time, yes—but more than that, it marks the memory of those who served, and the mercy of God who holds all time in His hands.

The sundial teaches us something that statues cannot: the interplay of light and shadow. Where a carved figure freezes a moment, the sundial invites waiting and watching.

It asks us to notice how sunlight—the very image Scripture uses for God's presence—still finds places of ruin and sorrow and sheds meaning there. In the words of Jesus, **"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4).**



That beatitude does not erase grief; it promises consolation in the midst of it.

Remembrance in November asks for two actions: to remember faithfully and to act mercifully. Remembering faithfully means more than reciting names or recounting dates.

It means allowing memory to shape how we live now—making hospitality where there was estrangement, tending the vulnerable where society has hardened its heart, and refusing the lie that sacrifice was meaningless.

Acting mercifully is the Gospel's practical outworking of memory: feeding the hungry, speaking for the lonely, listening to veterans and families whose scars remain.

The sundial's dependence on sunlight is a poignant liturgy. There are seasons when the sun seems distant; the gnomon casts only a faint mark, and our recollection grows dim. Even then, the sundial endures.

Its existence is testimony: that time moves on, but mercy does not expire. Grace persists beyond the clarity of our memories, and God's compassion threads through generations.

And perhaps that's the message in the sundial: even in the shadow of war, even in the silence of loss, God's light still falls. Time passes, but mercy endures.

This November let us gather around all our memorials—stone, wooden, and human—and offer our prayers. Let our silence be purposeful, not empty.

Let our words be prayers of thanks and petitions for peace. Let our actions be the kind of mercy the sundial points toward: modest, steady, and luminous when light returns.

St Mary's sundial quietly tells us what Remembrance means for the Church: that even in silence, God speaks. Let us listen, remember, and live mercy.



**Canon John Blair**



## What's on?

### Remembrance Sunday Curry Lunch



**WHEN:** Saturday, November 9

**WHERE:** North Stoke village hall

There may be a few tickets left so see Anne Millsop or John Blair

### Cholsey Repair Cafe

**WHEN:** Saturday, November 15 from 10am to 12.45pm

**WHERE:** Cholsey Pavillion



Items to bring include, bicycles, garden tools and electrical equipment, which can be electronically PAT tested. Gluing, ultrasonic cleaning and sharpening are usually available.

No charge is made for help or advice on repairs although a contribution towards running costs is gratefully accepted.

### Ipsden Parish Council meeting

**WHEN:** Thursday, December 4 at 6.30pm

**WHERE:** Ipsden village hall



Should residents wish to bring issues to the parish council's attention, please contact the clerk at [ipsdenpc@gmail.com](mailto:ipsdenpc@gmail.com) or visit [www.ipsdenvillage.co.uk](http://www.ipsdenvillage.co.uk) for the agenda

### Watercolour courses



**WHEN:** Saturday, November 15 and December 13 from 10am to 1pm

**WHERE:** Ipsden village hall

Paint a Christmas card of a log cabin with holly in November or create a jolly snowman in December.

Contact Denny Webb: [www.dennywebb.com](http://www.dennywebb.com) / [redkites1@gmail.com](mailto:redkites1@gmail.com) / 01491 680942 / 07827 581363

## **Church Services**

*The churches of Ipsden and North Stoke open daily for visits and private prayer*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Ipsden</b>	<b>North Stoke</b>
<b>Sunday, November 2</b> (All Saints)	9.30am - Holy Communion	11am—Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday, November 5</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, November 9</b> (Remembrance Sunday)	10.45am in North Stoke Joint service followed by curry lunch in North Stoke village hall Wreath laying in Ipsden at noon	
<b>Wednesday, November 12</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, November 16</b> (Second before Advent)	9.30am—Holy Communion	11am - Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday, November 19</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, November 23</b> (Christ the King)	9.30am—Morning prayer	11am—Morning prayer
<b>Wednesday, November 26</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, November 30</b> (Advent Sunday)	9.30am - Holy Communion	11am - Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday, December 3</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, December 7</b> (Second Advent)	9.30am - Holy Communion	11am - Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday, December 10</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, December 14</b> (Third Advent)	10am Service of the Word—Zoom meeting ID: 188 513 761	
<b>Wednesday, December 17</b>	5pm Evening prayer—Zoom meeting ID: 410 935 129	
<b>Sunday, December 21</b> (Lessons and carols)	6.30pm	4pm
<b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b>	Midnight Communion in Ipsden at 11.30pm	
<b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	Holy Communion with carols in North Stoke at 10am	



## **Advent Sunday**

**Sunday, November 30** marks the beginning of the Church's year—a time of expectation and preparation as we await the coming of Christ. Rooted in the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "arrival," this season looks both backward and forward: to the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, and to his promised return in glory.



Traditionally observed over four Sundays, Advent invites us to reflect on The Four Last Things: Death, Judgement, Heaven, and Hell—not to dwell in fear, but to awaken our hearts to God's justice and mercy. The lighting of the Advent wreath, with its growing circle of candlelight, reminds us that Christ is the light who shines in the darkness.

Purple vestments and simple church decorations signal a time of quiet watchfulness. On the third Sunday—Gaudete or "Rose Sunday"—a pink candle and lighter tone offer a glimpse of joy to come.

In a world rushing toward Christmas, Advent calls us to slow down. To pray "**Maranatha—Come, Lord Jesus,**" and to make room in our lives for his presence. Whether through scripture, song, or silence, may this season deepen our longing and renew our hope.

## **Ipsden Lottery**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Winner</b>
<b>September 13</b>	<b>Shirley Merrett</b>
<b>September 20</b>	<b>Maria Longden</b>
<b>September 27</b>	
<b>October 4</b>	<b>G Magill</b>

There are **???** available for the Ipsden Lottery, which helps fund our Village Memorial Hall.

A ticket is £1 per week, payable in 10-week blocks, with the winning number worth £25 each week.

The winning number is the Saturday night bonus ball number in the National Lottery.

## **Distribution of the Window**

The Window is available online on the Ipsden village website and some paper copies are held in the Ipsden shop for individual collection.

The copy deadline for the next **DOUBLE EDITION** will be **Friday, November 14**

**Email:** [revjwblair@gmail.com](mailto:revjwblair@gmail.com)

## Milan, New York, Ipsden?

When people hear the names of the first two places, they think of trendy fashion and the glamour of the catwalk.

When hearing the name of our beloved home in the Oxfordshire countryside, the reactions are usually quite different, "Interesting, now where might that be?" probably being the most common one.

A new creative hot spot in Ipsden is in the process of taking the world of fashion by storm.

Well, at least my **LinoLeoArt shop** is online now.



I cut linoleum and print the design, using potato printing, simple stencil techniques or the computer to create nature inspired artwork, including:



- A majestic red kite
  - A lazy sloth
- Simple wolf designs
- Heartbroken sunfish

I always try to bring my inspiration into the artwork.

And then I have it printed on a T-shirt or hoodie for people to buy. With this shop I want to share my creative output and give my customers the chance to wear something truly special.



Check out my shop at [linoleoart.etsy.com](https://linoleoart.etsy.com)

Get touch with me via the shop for a special local-parish-code for a **20% discount** on your order.

**Allen Lüdtkke**