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St Mark's

PARISH MAGAZINE

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September 2026

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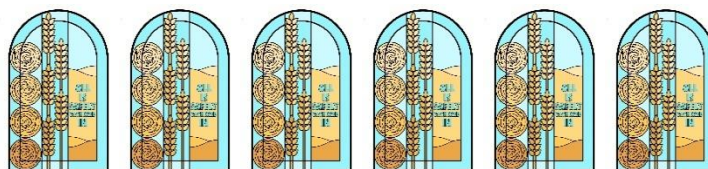
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Donations to cover the cost of this publication are welcome



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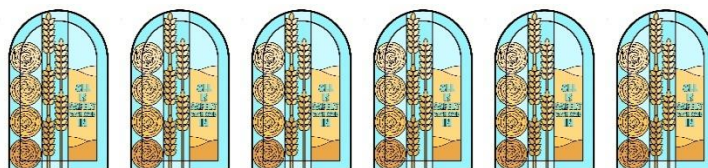


Your Views & Contributions

Next issue will be available from
1 October 2026

All contributions to the editor by
Tuesday 15 September 2026

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LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends

September – a month of endings and beginnings. As summer draws to a close, and shorts and t-shirts are put away for another year, the usual rhythm of life returns with children heading back to school, youngsters packing up for university or college, and the TV is full of ads for all the new programmes about to begin.



In the church, we look towards all that lies ahead in the next few months – Harvest Festival, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday, Advent and then, of course, the culmination of it all, Christmas! But before we get to Christmas, we enter the season of autumn – a time of thanksgiving. Maybe you want to give thanks to God for a lovely summer holiday, for weddings, for friends and family or for new beginnings.

Throughout this month in our church we give thanks for God's creation which culminates in Harvest on 4 October. Living lives of thankfulness, however, doesn't mean that we should just ignore our sufferings or the suffering of others and say they don't matter, because they do matter. There is a time to laugh and a time to cry.

So many people say they mustn't grumble and imply that their sufferings are too small to be of value compared to other peoples, but that is not true. All of our struggles and sufferings matter to God, however small they are. If we can learn to be positive and thankful during the good times, then that will help to sustain us through the difficult times.

Each new day brings with it a new beginning and a challenge. So how about a challenge – a challenge to be thankful! To make the effort to see the positive in a situation rather than the downside. To stop us when we start moaning and give thanks instead. And I think that if we can do that, we'll discover that whatever life may bring, it will be the better for having consciously tried to live it in an attitude of thankfulness.

With my best wishes



CHURCH NEWS SMART

On Thursday 6 August, members of SMART gathered to learn about our historic Father Willis organ and its fascinating history. Revd Martin Colton brought the instrument to life, sharing his knowledge and giving us the opportunity to hear the beautiful sound of this remarkable organ.

A brief history on the organ at St Mark's Church

In 1860 Gray and Davison built a two-manual and pedal organ for the new church at a cost of £220 (equivalent to £26,400 in 2018). Nothing more is known about this instrument apart from the fact that in 1881 the organ builder Hill and Sons carried out various remedial works and also made some additions to the organ. Further work was carried out in 1887.

The present organ was built in 1899 by the then foremost organ builder of the day, Henry Willis. Each pipe organ is unique, designed for its specific location. At the same time as building the St Mark's organ, Henry Willis was also building the instrument for St John's Redhill; these two organs were amongst the last to be overseen by Father Willis himself. The new organ was completed in July 1899 and cost £1,444 plus £10 carriage (equivalent to about £180,500 in 2018). The organ cases are thought to be the work of Dr Arthur Hill, an eminent designer. It is a large instrument of three manuals and pedals.



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From 1925 to 1930 the organ builder Hill Norman and Beard had care of the organ and made several changes. A new 16-foot Trombone stop was added to the Pedal Organ. On the Swell Organ a set of pipes to complete the bottom octave of the Vox Angelica was provided, together with the addition of an Octave Coupler. On the Choir Organ the original Willis Cor Anglais was replaced by a Clarinet stop.

Following these modifications the general maintenance contract went back to Willis. New couplers (Swell to Choir, Choir to Great, Swell Sub-Octave and a Swell Tremulant) were added. The pipework was re-voiced to blend better with the new Pedal Trombone. The Lever Swell Box mechanism was replaced with a balanced pedal positioned centrally. The original hydraulic blowing apparatus was removed and an electrically powered blower was installed. The organ was repaired in 1947 after war-time damage, and more extensive repairs were carried out in 1953 when

Willis altered the pitch to concert pitch. Apart from regular tuning and minor repairs, no other major work was carried out until 1970.

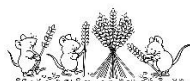
In February 1969 Reigate suffered a very severe storm and a considerable quantity of rainwater penetrated the roof of the organ chamber damaging the wind chests, soundboards and pneumatic action as well as some of the pipework. There was also superficial damage to the console. The organ was rendered unplayable.

An organ fund and committee was already in existence as there were long-term plans to renovate the organ. The PCC asked the Organ Committee to update the plans for restoration with the firms that had already been consulted. Revised schemes were drawn up by Henry Willis and Son (for a new two-manual and pedal organ), Hill Norman and Beard, and NP Mander (both for restoring the organ). The contract was awarded to Mander after additional funds (an interest free loan from a Parishioner) had been secured. Work began early in 1970. Most of the original Willis pipework was used, the pneumatic action was replaced with electro-pneumatic action and a new console in dark oak provided with adjustable pistons. The restored organ was ready for the Christmas services in 1970.

From 1982 until 1996 the instrument was in the care of Rushworth and Dreaper Ltd. A full clean and overhaul was carried out with some re-voicing of the pipework to bring back the distinctive Willis tone that had been lost in the Mander rebuild. In 1992 one of the Pedal Organ wind chests was repaired, damage having been caused by further water damage. During 1996 a humidifier was installed in the organ chamber to maintain the proper level of humidity in the organ to counteract the effects of the new heating system.

From 1998 to 2007 the organ was in the care of Percy Daniel of Clevedon who carried out a clean and overhaul in 2002. Since 2007 BC Shepherd and Sons have had the care of the organ. In 2009 the low voltage transformer rectifier installed in 1970 had to be replaced.

This organ is a fine instrument and one of which the parish is rightly proud.



CAFÉ CHURCH

On Sunday 6 September, we are launching Café Church at 4pm in the Hall. This is a relaxed, informal service for all ages, with tea, coffee, cake and a chance to come together in a friendly setting. Everyone is welcome, and if you would like to help, we would love to hear from you!





NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

AI can act for the common good but only if Governments remain sovereign

The Bishop of Oxford has backed calls for the right of Governments to set policy and regulate big tech as he warned of the risks posed by rapid technological change.

Making his valedictory speech in the House of Lords, Bishop Steven Croft said there were 'many gains' from new technology but there were also risks to society in areas such as mental health, social cohesion, truth, and patterns of work and distribution of power.

Speaking of advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI), he said the risks posed were partly a product of its accelerating speed of development.

"The speed of change, and the significant power unleashed, make this revolution distinct from other technical developments in the past, because there is a risk that the speed of change will itself undermine the very benefits that change brings," he said.

"There is simply no time for public trust and confidence to grow, and you have heard of the growing public awareness of risk and the desire that something be done."

Bishop Steven said there was an urgent need for a 'clear standard and statement of intent' from the Government, asserting sovereignty for Governments over the implementation of new technologies, that was "ethically shaped and in the interests of our whole society".

He added that there also needed to be moves towards drawing together the "combined and collective power of nation states" to act on this issue for the good of all.

"The most important part of a building is its foundation, the most vital part of a boat in a storm is the keel giving stability in the water," he said.

"As the world navigates the transition to the age of AI, we will need more than ever before the values and ethics of our common tradition, rooted in centuries of Christian faith and practice. AI can be a tool for the common good, a source of great benefit, but only if Governments remain sovereign."

Bishop Steven was speaking in a debate brought by Baroness Kidron on national sovereignty and digital and technology policy, making his final speech after nearly 13 years in the House of Lords.

He told peers he was 'immensely grateful' for having had the chance to serve in the House of Lords and on the Select Committees on Artificial Intelligence and Climate Change.

Speaking at the start of the debate Baroness Kidron paid tribute to Bishop Steven's leadership in campaigning for digital systems to reflect ethics and values.

Responding on behalf of the House of Lords, Lord Clement Jones, the Liberal Democrat peer, paid tribute to Bishop Steven's record describing him as an 'influential and instrumental voice' in the Lords on AI.

"It is very fitting that his last contribution to this House should be in a debate on digital sovereignty," he said.

"With his insights, collaborative spirit, friendship, and enduring dedication to ethical innovation and policy making, he will be greatly missed."



All in the month of **SEPTEMBER**

It was:

200 years ago, on 5 September 1826 that John Wisden, British cricketer was born. Founder of *Wisden's Cricketers' Almanac*. Launched with 112 pages in 1864, it now runs to 1500 pages and is the bible of cricket.

175 years ago, on 19 September 1851, William Lever, 1st Viscount Leverhulme, was born. Co-founder of Lever Brothers with his brother James. Now called Unilever, this global consumer goods company operates in more than 190 countries.

125 years ago, on 29 September 1901 that Enrico Fermi, Italian-born American physicist was born. Creator of the first nuclear reactor, he became known as the 'architect of the nuclear bomb.'

90 years ago, on 7 September 1936 that Buddy Holly, the American rock and roll singer and hits was born. Killed in a plane crash in 1959.

70 years ago, on 25 September 1956 that the world's first transatlantic cable, TAT-1, went into service. It could carry 36 simultaneous calls, later increased to 72. It was retired in 1978.

65 years ago, on 11 September 1961, that the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wide Fund for Nature) was founded in Switzerland. Nowadays it is the world's

largest conservation organisation, operating in nearly 100 countries with over 35 million supporters.

60 years ago, on 8 September 1966 that the Severn Bridge was officially opened. Linking Wales and England over the rivers Severn and Wye, it carries about 32,000 vehicles a day.

50 years ago, on 5 September 1976 that the first episode of the Muppet Show was broadcast on ITV in the UK. It attracted 15 million viewers and ran for five series until March 1981.

40 years ago, on 7 September 1986 that Desmond Tutu became the first black Archbishop of Cape Town. Retired in 1996.

30 years ago, on 27 September 1996 that the Taliban seized control of Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. Mullah Omar was installed as Head of the Supreme Council and ruled until 2001.

25 years ago, on 11 September 2001 that the terrorist attacks on America took place. Al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four planes and crashed them into the World Trade Centre's Twin Towers in New York, into the Pentagon, and into a field in Pennsylvania (following a passenger revolt – the intended target was Washington DC). 2,973 people were killed.

20 years ago, on 3 September 2006 that Andre Agassi announced his retirement due to back problems. He was 36, a former world number one in tennis, and the 1996 Olympic champion.

Parish Pump



Prayer for September 2026

Dear Lord, September – the month of new starts!
New terms, new groups, new friends, new hopes, every year.
Lord, be with us!

Lord, thank you for the new start you offer us when we put our trust in Jesus. A new start that we make once – and then can renew every day. Every time we falter, you pick us up. Every time we come back to you, you forgive us and accept us.

Thank you, Lord, for never letting us down, for never leaving or forsaking us, that new starts with you are always possible, not just in September.



In Jesus' name, **Amen.**

Daphne Kitching

CALENDAR FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

Wednesday 2 nd Sept	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
Thursday 3 rd Sept	12.45pm	Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 6th Sept	14th Sunday after Trinity	
	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
	4.00pm	Café Church – in the Hall
Wednesday 9 th Sept	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
	3.25pm	T-Time Tales
Thursday 10 th Sept	12.45pm	Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 13th Sept	15th Sunday after Trinity	
	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
	10.00 am	Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
	1.00pm	Community Lunch
Monday 14th Sept	Holy Cross Day	
Wednesday 16 th Sept	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
	3.25pm	T-Time Tales
Saturday 19 th Sept	8.00pm	Social Dance
Sunday 20th Sept	16th Sunday after Trinity	
	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
	4.00pm	Messy Church
Monday 21st Sept	St Matthew, Apostle	
Wednesday 23 rd Sept	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
	3.25pm	T-Time Tales
Thursday 24 th Sept	12.45pm	Holy Communion (Iona) in Church
Sunday 27th Sept	17th Sunday after Trinity	
	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
	10.00am	Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
	6.00pm	Taizé Prayer
Tuesday 29th Sept	St Michael and All Angels	
Wednesday 30 th Sept	9.00am	Prayer Meeting
	3.25pm	T-Time Tales

Please remember that planned services are subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.

CALENDAR FOR OCTOBER 2026

Thursday 1st October 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 4th October Harvest Festival

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
4.00pm All-age Service for Harvest – in Church
5.00pm Harvest Supper

Wednesday 7th October 9.00am Prayer Meeting
3.25am T-Time Tales

Thursday 8th October 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 11th October 19th Sunday after Trinity

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
1.00pm Community Lunch

Wednesday 14th Oct 9.00am Prayer Meeting
3.25am T-Time Tales

Thursday 15th October 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Saturday 17th October 8.00pm Social Dance

Sunday 18th October St Luke, Evangelist

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
4.00pm Messy Church

Wednesday 21st Oct 9.00am Prayer Meeting

Thursday 22nd October 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Sunday 25th October Bible Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP) – in Church
10.00am Sung Eucharist – in Church and Online
6.00pm Taizé Prayer

Wednesday 28th Oct 9.00am Prayer Meeting

Thursday 29th October 12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) in Church

Please remember that planned services are subject to change at short notice so please check the details on our website or with the Parish Office.



25th Anniversary of 9/11

Twenty-five years ago, on Tuesday 11th September 2001, terrorist attacks demolished the Twin Towers in New York. They killed 2,996 people and injured more than 6,000. Events like 9/11 raise the inevitable question: *Why does God allow such suffering to take place?*

There are no easy answers to this question! We cannot fully understand why such things happen, although we live in a fallen world, where people make real choices. Yet the Bible affirms that God identifies with our suffering, supremely when Jesus experienced suffering and death.

It is on the Cross that God knows what it is to lose a loved one in an unjust attack. *'I could never myself believe in God if it were not for the Cross. In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?'* (John Stott). What does this mean? We cannot know why God allows evil and suffering to continue, but we do know that He does love and care for us: *'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'* (John 3:16). God loved us enough to fully engage with the mess of the world.

We also can view such events in the light of resurrection. Jesus said: *'I am the Resurrection and the Life. The one who believes in Me will live'* (John 11:25). Resurrection points to the restoration for us of the life we lost. New heavens and new earth point to a world and relationships restored and perfected! In *The Lord of the Rings*, Sam Gamgee exclaims: *'Gandalf! I thought you were dead! But then I thought I was dead! Is everything sad going to come untrue?'* The answer of the Bible is *Yes!*



Back to School - facing that first Day

No matter how old we are, we can probably remember our first day at school – being left at the door, meeting children we did not know, separated from the adults we did know and had trusted since the day we were born. But on the other hand, there was the excitement: a big step along the road of life, new friends to make, another adult to become important in our lives. Yes, quite a lot to handle when you are rising five!

And that is what hundreds of thousands of children are going to experience this month. Parents may have prepared them for it, and they may in a slightly apprehensive way be looking forward to it, but it must feel to the five-year-old like a massive step into the unknown.

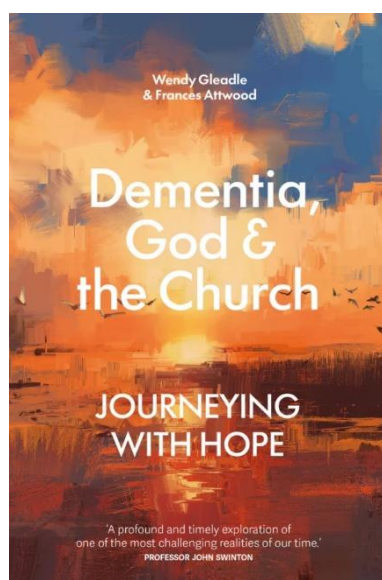
Not much less is the anxiety of mum, who leaves her precious child, proudly resplendent in their new school uniform, in the Reception class-room. Will he or she suddenly panic, and cry for that familiar parental cuddle? Will they feel abandoned in an alien setting? Will they like the teacher?

Of course we will be praying for them, and we know that like millions of others before them they will very probably eventually decide that their schooldays were among the best of their lives. But end of class cannot come soon enough for mum on that first day! How wonderful when they come running out, laughing and excited, clutching a piece of paper with some obscure crayon marks on it – written evidence of their first day's education.

Parish Pump



Book Review



Dementia, God and the Church: Journeying with hope

By Wendy Gleadle and Frances Attwood

Dementia is one of today's most feared health conditions, and Christians with the condition may also worry about losing their faith and their connection to God. However, there is still hope: those living with dementia can still find meaning in their life and their faith.

Written by two practitioners in this field, *Dementia, God and the Church* aims to show how person-centred approaches to dementia can provide hope. Wendy Gleadle first examines the difficulties of maintaining religious beliefs as cognition declines, and the implications of this if faith is equally emotional as cognitive. She explores other forms of spiritual awareness, such as relationships, the arts and creativity.

Frances Attwood asks how churches can better support those living with dementia, through examining what they and their families and carers find helpful and want most. Throughout, space is given to first-hand stories of those with dementia, those working with them and those caring for them.

*Have you recently read a good book? Tell us about it.
Email office@stmarksreigate.co.uk with your book review.*



A Lasting Gift for St Mark's Church

Leaving a legacy

Legacy gifts can make a huge difference to churches. Each year, gifts in wills, ranging from £100s to £100,000s are received. Faithful witnesses leaving generous legacies have enabled churches to invest in their buildings, pioneer new ministries, and sustain a welcoming presence in their communities.

Why should you write a will?

Writing a will means you choose:

- How you would like to share your property and possessions;
- Who you would like to look after any children under the age of 18;
- How to support any charities or churches that are important to you.

Without a will, these decisions will be made according to pre-ordained rules, and by the courts, which may be different from your wishes. Leaving a will gives you peace of mind and lifts a burden from loved ones after you are gone.

To make it easier the Church of England has partnered with Farewill, the UK's favourite will-writer, so anyone can write a simple will online for free, in as little as 30 minutes. You can find out more by visiting <https://farewill.com/southwarkdiocese>

We strongly advise seeing a solicitor for more complicated wills, or for people wishing to review their existing will or add a codicil.

A gift for future generations

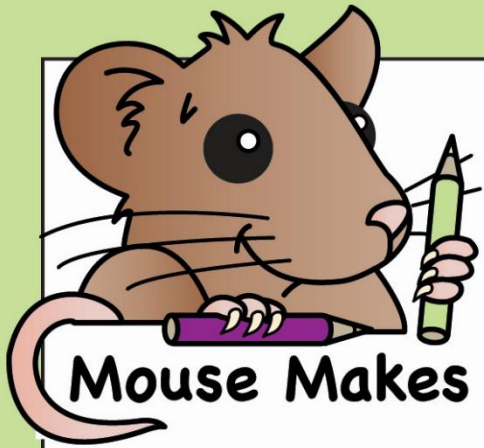
After you have made provision for your family and friends, we hope you'll also consider leaving a gift in your will to St Mark's. A legacy is a valuable expression of how meaningful a church has been during your time there. It's a way to give thanks - a lasting testimony to the faithfulness, goodness and generosity of God.

The policy of the PCC is to use legacies to help fund additional mission or development projects in the parish, whether buildings, equipment or staff. Circumstances change over the years, so church members are encouraged to leave legacies for the general purposes of the parish. The PCC will discuss the most appropriate use of the legacy in the light of current projects and the donor's known areas of interest in the church (for example, children and youth, music, buildings).

You may also receive tax benefits for including a gift to St Mark's in your will. A gift in your will to a charity is free of inheritance tax and may also reduce the amount of tax payable on the rest of your will. <https://www.gov.uk/donating-to-charity/leaving-gifts-to-charity-in-your-will>

Please consider leaving a legacy to St Mark's.

Mel Crighton, PCC Treasurer



Mouse Makes



READ
John 15:1-17

THE TRUE VINE

Who is the vine?

John 15:1

What does Jesus
ask us to do?

"Go and bear

John 15:16

What happens
to the branches
that do not remain
in the vine?

Thrown into the

and

How many
times does Jesus
use the word
FRUIT?

What does
Jesus command?

To _____
one another.
John 15:12,17

How many
times does Jesus
command us
to LOVE
one another?

H T H R O W N A W A Y
I R A B I D E W I S B
D U F R U I T F U L U
N E R A J S I A M J R
C V U N F C U T V P N
L J I C W I T H E R S
E O T H O P J E S U S
A Y V W R L C R O N V
N G A R D E N E R E I
O S F J E S I S W S N
E R E M A I N F I R E

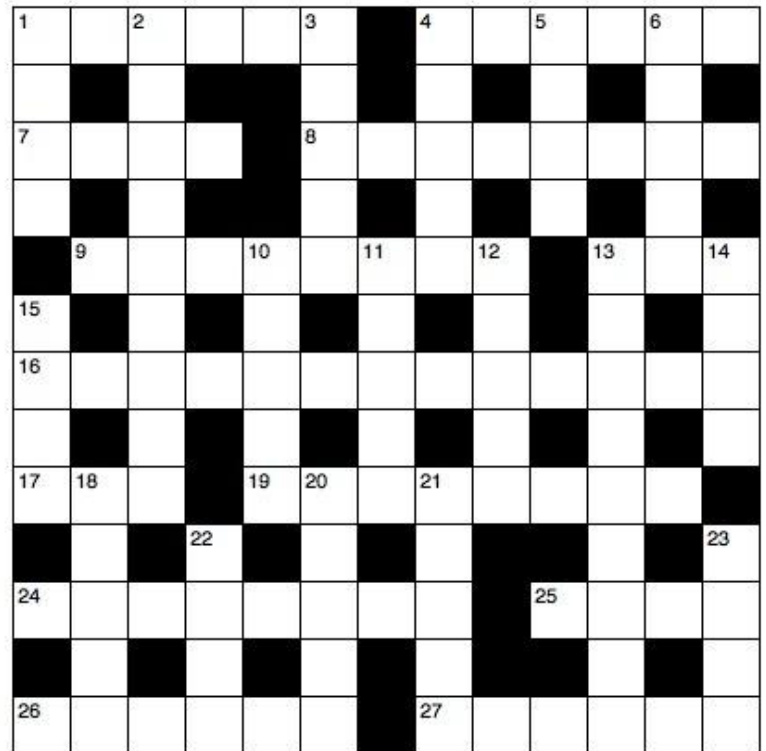
JESUS • I AM • TRUE • VINE • FATHER
GARDENER • FRUIT • FRUITFUL
BRANCH • PRUNES • CUT • WITHERS
CLEAN • THROWN AWAY • FIRE • BURNS
REMAIN • ABIDE • DISCIPLES • JOY

September Crossword

Biblical references are from the New International Version

Across

- 1 'Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders — in vain' (Psalm 127:1) (6)
 4 Season of the year (Psalm 84:6) (6)
 7 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. — here and keep watch with me' (Matthew 26:38) (4)
 8 It came over the whole land from the sixth to the ninth hour on the first Good Friday (Luke 23:44) (8)
 9 Paul invariably did this in the synagogues he visited on his missionary journeys (Acts 17:2) (8)
 13 'It is God who works in you to will and to — according to his good purpose' (Philippians 2:13) (3)
 16 Members of the Church of Scotland (13)
 17 'Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountain side and — down' (Matthew 5:1) (3)
 19 Mock(Luke14:29)(8)
 24 Disgrace(Psalm44:13)(8)
 25 First month of the Hebrew calendar (Exodus13:4)(4)
 26 Christianity of the Britons before Augustine arrived from Rome(6)
 27 Mean (Numbers 35:23)(6)



Down

- 1 'Whoever finds his life will — it' (Matthew 10:39) (4)
 2 'My lord the king, let the — — on me and on my father's family, and let the king and his throne be without guilt' (2 Samuel 14:9) (5,4)
 3 O raid (anag.) (5)
 4 'If two of you on earth — about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven' (Matthew 18:19) (5)
 5 Take care of (1 Samuel 17:15) (4)
 6 What the older son heard as he came near the house the day his prodigal brother came home (Luke 15:25) (5)
 10 'Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with — judgment' (Romans 12:3) (5)
 11 Do ten(anag.)(5)
 12 Architectural style first used in Greek temples in the sixth century BC (5)
 13 Capable of being used(1Kings7:36)(9)
 14 'Each one should — his own actions'(Galatians6:4)(4)
 15 Among the items imported by Solomon's fleet of trading ships (1 Kings 10:22) (4)
 18 'But I am afraid that just — was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray' (2 Corinthians 11:3) (2,3)
 20 Outstanding 18th-century hymn writer, — Watts(5)
 21 One of the four sons of Asher(Genesis46:17)(5)
 22 Be distressed(Proverbs24:19)(4)
 23 He was the father of Gaal, who threatened rebellion against Abimelech (Judges 9:28) (4)

August answers

ACROSS: 8. Prince of Peace 9. INF 10. Unmarried 11. Gulag 13. Treason 16. In aid of 19. Arena. 22. Calvinist 24. Pad 25. Moses and Aaron

DOWN: 1. Spring 2. Sinful 3. Scourged 4. Commit 5. Spur 6. Matins 7. Feed on 12. Urn 14. Erastian 15. Own 16. Income 17. At last 18. Friend 20. Empire 21. Adding 23. Inst

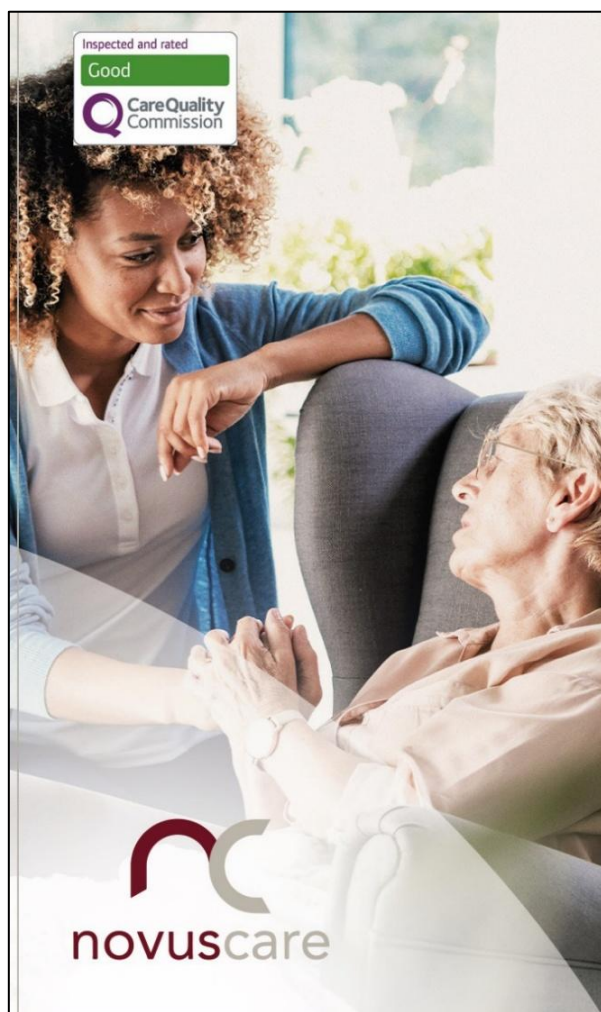
Puzzles

September Sudoku

	3			4	8	9		2
		8		3			1	5
		5			7		8	
1	7	2	4				5	
4								8
	8				3	2	9	4
	5		8			6		
3	6			5		8		
8		4	3	7			2	

August Solution

5	7	1	4	9	2	3	6	8
2	8	3	1	6	5	9	7	4
9	4	6	8	7	3	1	5	2
4	2	7	9	5	1	6	8	3
3	6	9	7	4	8	5	2	1
8	1	5	2	3	6	7	4	9
7	9	2	5	1	4	8	3	6
6	5	4	3	8	9	2	1	7
1	3	8	6	2	7	4	9	5



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