in a
NUTSHELL
news, views, ideas from your local church 2026 November

Do you long for the past?

People born before the turn of the century may look back a few decades with nostalgia. Maybe they also remember stories told by their grandparents of the world of Empire or of a simpler life between the two world wars.

Such sentiments may fuel hostility to some of the touted solutions to modern problems like climate change, a shrinking and ageing UK population and the effects of endless wars, famine and natural disasters. We sometimes hear angry diatribes about wind farms, acres of solar panels in our countryside, refugees, the state of the NHS – and of course, today's youth!



In the face of such outbursts, most of us opt for a quiet life. Experience has taught us that such views are not susceptible to logic or reasoned argument. So is there a solution?

For people of all faiths and none the real challenge is to do some hard, joined-up thinking. At times when we find ourselves tempted to complain about the world we experience, we need to ask if our irritation is based on reality or on a distorted world view. Are we only concerned to preserve our own monochrome little bubble, safe from all intruders? Dare we think globally? Can we be honest with ourselves, and admit that, as a nation, we cannot 'go it alone' (if we ever could) so, yes, we do need to welcome others to keep our country healthy, wealthy, young and, above all, safe.

Christians have one other lesson to keep in mind. A modern hymn-writer, Fred Pratt Green, sums it up:

God in his love for us lent us this planet,
gave it a purpose in time and in space:
small as a spark from the fire of creation,
cradle of life and the home of our race.

Thanks be to God for its bounty and beauty,
life that sustains us in body and mind:
plenty for all, if we learn how to share it,
riches undreamed-of to fathom and find.

Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl, mesmerised by the bride in her wedding dress, asked, 'Why is she dressed in white?' 'Because white is the colour of happiness and today is the happiest day of her life,' her mother explained, keeping it simple. The child thought for a moment, then asked, 'So why is the groom dressed in black?'

submitted by Jeff Wilson

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More autumn activities at St Andrew's

'Bring me sunshine'



We certainly had lots of smiles and laughter in St Andrew's United Church on Friday 25 September. (There were some serious moments as well.) Jennifer started the evening by reminding us that *It's a Wonderful World*, very movingly read to piano accompaniment by Alison.

The audience then enjoyed a medley of poems, readings and songs, most with a humorous twist, like Carrie's reflection on the daily life of a teacher . . . and who knew that Nigel can play the violin? Bruce and John's rendition of *Sonny Boy* brought the house down, as John did his level best to flatten his father. The WI choir entertained us, singing *If I'd know you were coming, I'd have baked a cake*, just before we enjoyed delicious half-time refreshments.

It's always difficult to thank people on these occasions, in case someone gets missed out, but thank you to everyone brave enough to display their talents, to help in any way (esp Alison, the accompanist, and to the Social Team for great refreshments)!

The point of the evening was not to raise funds, but to have an enjoyable get-together. Nevertheless £177.50 was raised for the church!

More pictures and credits in December's *Nutshell*.

Messy Church is fun!

Join us next time:
Tuesday
3 November
4.30-6pm
in the United Church Halls



The theme for Messy Church on 6 October was Peace – a word that conjures up many pictures: absence of war, fair shares for all, quietness . . . Well, we are glad to say that the evening was definitely not quiet!

The room was buzzing with activity and chat as over 30 people enjoyed making origami doves and paper flowers, decorating cakes, colouring bunting. In our worship time , Ian Bishop got us to think about fair sharing of the world's resources.

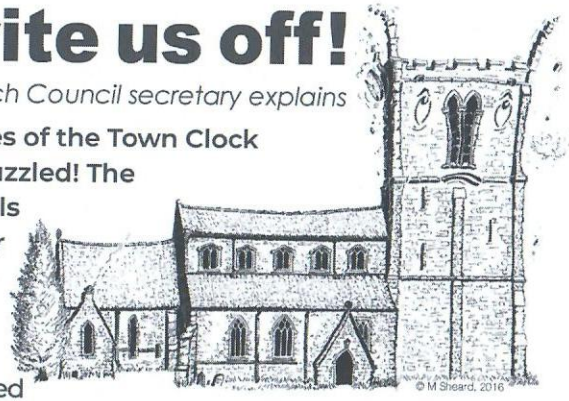
We finished with a delicious (free!) supper of shepherd's pie and flapjack.

If you haven't yet been to Messy Church, please join us any time between 4.30 & 6pm on 3 November, when we'll be thinking about 'Light'.



Don't write us off!

St Andrew's United Church Council secretary explains



If you've noticed the odd chimes of the Town Clock recently, you may have been puzzled! The clock uses the same church bells that ring on Sundays. At regular intervals they are inspected to make sure that they are safe and chiming properly.

At the last inspection, we discovered that the gudgeon on one of the bells had worked loose. (The gudgeon is the metal pivot on which the bell swings.) So, that bell has been lowered and the headstock sent away for repair, leaving a gap in the regular chimes of the clock. But don't worry – it will be back shortly.

This is not the only item in church awaiting repair! Some of you may remember that in May 2025 some plasterwork fell from the ceiling above the altar. Repairs have now been approved, but we are not yet sure when they will start.

The situation isn't dangerous: there has been no more falling plaster. A similar problem has occurred in other places. The dry summers have caused old plaster to shrink and drop away from the lath frames.

People more than plaster

Meanwhile, we assure everyone that the church building is safe and we are waiting to welcome you to some of our special activities in the next couple of months. After all, it's the people in the church who matter – not the bricks and mortar.

Early winter in St Andrew's . . .

- November is a time of remembrance: On **Sunday 1 November**, at 6pm, we hold a quiet evening service when people can remember loved ones and perhaps light a candle in their memory.
- On **Remembrance Sunday** (8 Nov) we know most people like to attend the Remembrance ceremony on The Green, so instead of our usual 11am service there will be a short service in church at 9.30am, followed by a cup of coffee (or tea), leaving plenty of time to walk up to The Green.
- December is also a busy month. You can find details of our Christmas activities and worship on page S7...
- We hope to see lots of you at the **Christmas Tree Festival**. This year the church will also be open on the Friday evening (11 Dec) from 6-8pm, with a chance to see the trees lit up in a darkened building!
- Then, on Saturday afternoon, we hold our **Christingle service** at 4pm. Don't forget to come along beforehand to make your own Christingle!

Sebastian Spider's *Puzzle Corner for all ages*

Peace Word Search

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

Find the words below in the box. Words are hidden → and ↓ and ↘

COLUMN 1	*COLUMN 2*	*COLUMN 1 (contd)*	*COLUMN 2 (contd)*
EIRENE	DANISH	PAZ	GREEK
FRED	ENGLISH	PEACE	HINDI
FRIEDEN	FRENCH	POKOJ	ITALIAN
PACE	GAELIC	SHANTI	POLISH
PAIX	GERMAN	SIOCHAIN	SPANISH

- When you have found the words, can you match the word for 'peace' in column 1 with the language from which it comes, somewhere in column 2?

A Word Ladder

Climb from FLOCK to PEACE changing just one letter at a time, without disturbing the order of the remaining letters. But the clues for the steps are not in the right order.

PEACE	CLUES
	• Length of wood
	• Opposite of white
	• Put something down carefully
	• Game show: 'Blankety ____'
	• Child's building toy
FLOCK	• Carpenter's shaving tool

- Divide 30 by one half and add 10. What do you get?
- How can you add eight 4s together so the total is 500?
- How many times can you subtract 5 from 25?
- A shopkeeper buys an item for £60 and sells it for £70. Then he buys it back for £80 and sells it again for £90. How much profit did he make?

An Autumn Crossword

Clues across

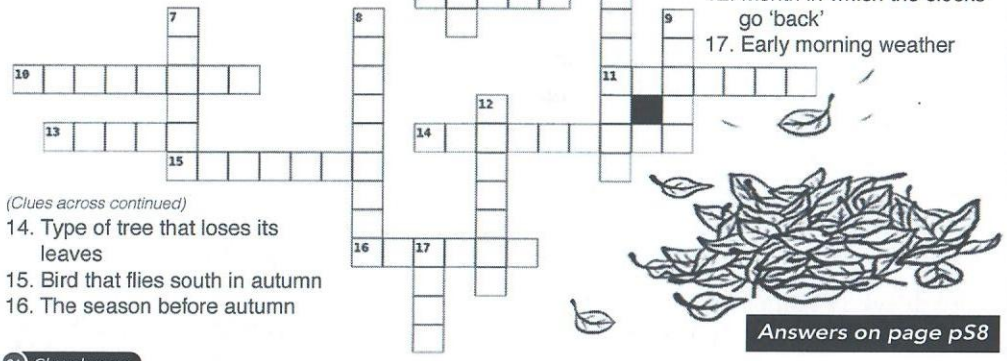
3. Go to sleep for the winter
4. Horse _____ (conker tree)
6. Flower of remembrance
10. Popular sport
11. Vehicle that pulls a plough
13. Fruit used in pies and crumbles

(Clues across continued)

14. Type of tree that loses its leaves
15. Bird that flies south in autumn
16. The season before autumn

Clues down

1. On puddles on very cold mornings
2. Prickly creature
5. Fungus growing in woodland
7. Turn colour in the autumn
8. A conspirator in the 'Gunpowder Plot'
9. Poet who wrote 'Ode to Autumn'
12. Month in which the clocks go 'back'
17. Early morning weather



Answers on page pS8

Sebastian's friend in danger!

Hi everyone!

I've got a horrific story to tell you this month! It's about my friend Cedric. He's sitting beside me at the moment – and I am so glad he is here! I nearly lost him!

It happened like this . . . We were playing outside in the churchyard, enjoying the sun. 'I'm just going to explore behind that tree,' said Cedric. 'Okay!' I replied. And I settled down for a nap, dreaming of supper.

I was awoken by a faint squeak. 'Help! Help! Can you hear me, Sebastian?' It was coming from behind the tree. It was Cedric. I rushed across to see what was wrong.

Oh no! He was stuck inside a plastic drinks bottle. I could see him squirming and wriggling around.

'Try to get to the mouth of the bottle,' I shouted helpfully. 'I can't!' gasped Cedric. 'Every time I try to move, my feet slip. I can't get a grip on this plastic.' I didn't know what to do. The bottle was far too big for me to tip up so that Cedric could slide out. I was absolutely helpless – as helpless as Cedric. We both sat there in a panic.

Then, we heard voices. Some children were coming along the path. I ran out and waved at them. 'Oh, look,' said one. 'What a lovely spider!' I scuttled over to Cedric and, fortunately, they followed me and spotted the bottle. 'Oh, the poor spider,' said one boy. 'I'll shake the bottle and get him out.' And he did just that. I'm not sure how keen Cedric was on being dropped out of the bottle from a great height, but he was very glad to be free.



'Here, clean up after yourself.'

© Doug Hill / Cartoonstock

We waved goodbye to his rescuers and ran back to the church.

Later, as we talked, we got very cross. We'd noticed all the litter lying around – plastic bottles, cans, crisp packets, not to mention cigarette ends and dog poo. 'How can humans be so careless and dirty?' we wondered. 'Haven't they read the Bible? Don't they remember that God made the world a beautiful place and put them in it to care for all he had made?'*

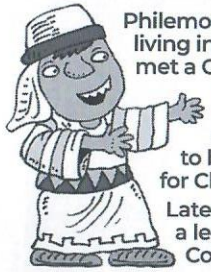
Please, friends, help take care of the world, so that we can all enjoy it – including spiders.

Your friend,

Sebastian

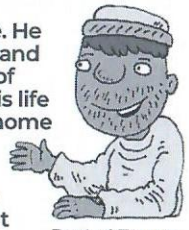
* Read Genesis chapter 2 verses 4-15

The story of the runaway slave!

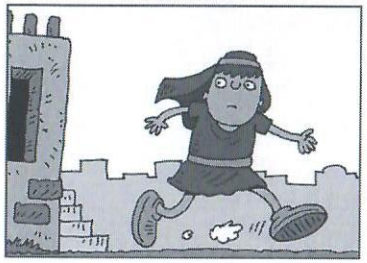


Philemon was a rich man living in the city of Colossae. He met a Christian called Paul and became a follower of Jesus. It changed his life and he opened his home to be used as a place for Christians to meet.

Later Philemon became a leader of the church at Colossae.



Paul of Tarsus



Philemon had a slave called Onesimus. He may have been just one of several slaves in the household. Slaves had no rights at all, no time off. They could be treated cruelly!

One day, Onesimus decided he no longer wanted to be a slave and decided to run away. He may have stolen from his owner, Philemon, to help pay for his escape.



He hid from people wherever he went, for if a runaway slave was caught he faced terrible punishment, even death.

To get as far away from Philemon as he could, Onesimus left the country and set out for Rome.

There he heard that Paul (who had visited Philemon) was in the city under house arrest.

We don't know why, but Onesimus decided to go and talk to Paul.



Paul welcomed the runaway and listened to his story. Paul told Onesimus how Jesus had changed his (Paul's) life.

Onesimus became a Christian even though he knew it would mean going back to Philemon, to ask forgiveness. It was a risk: slaves who ran away or stole could be branded or even executed, it all depended on how cruel or angry their owner was.



Paul wrote a letter telling Philemon that Onesimus had become a Christian and wanted to say sorry for running away.

He asked Philemon both to forgive the runaway and to welcome him back as a fellow Christian and member of God's family. Paul also offered to pay for anything Onesimus had stolen.

You can read this letter to Philemon in your Bible!

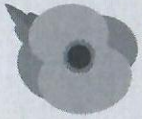
What happened to Onesimus after this?

Paul's letter to Philemon was probably written about 60-61AD, less than 30 years after the death of Jesus. Paul pleads for Onesimus – he doesn't question the institution of slavery. But the most frustrating thing is that we don't know how Philemon responded and what became of Onesimus. ***What do you think?***



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Some dates for your diary at St Andrew's United Church



8 November Remembrance Day 2026

09.30 *(in Church)* Service of Reflection & Prayer

10.45 *(at the Town Memorial)* Remembrance ceremony *led by the British Legion*

Saturday 12 December CHRISTINGLE Service 4pm



Come early to make your own Christingle and have refreshments

(see advert below)

St Andrew's United Church, Kirton in Lindsey

Christmas Tree Festival 2026

Friday 11th December



6 - 8pm
with festive nibbles and mulled wine

Saturday 12th December 10am - 4pm



Craft activities for all ages
Christingle at 4pm

Sunday 13th December



12 - 4pm
with carol singing at 3pm

Come and marvel at the ingenuity with which both town and church organisations have decorated their trees. Something for all ages.
Refreshments served all day, Saturday and Sunday.
For more information contact Janet Caughley: 07855 120896

St Andrew's United Church

Christmas Services

- 24 December at 6pm Our annual Carol Service
- 24 December at 11pm 'The Midnight'
- 25 December at 10am Christmas Day Worship
- 27 December at 11am Worship with Carols

Does the *date* matter?

The real date of Christmas is unknown. Many historians think Jesus was born in the spring. (And, if the angels sang to shepherds in the fields, this too would most likely be in spring, in the lambing season!)

The earliest mention of December 25 as Jesus' birthday comes from a mid-4th century Roman almanac that lists the death dates of some Christian martyrs. The first date listed, December 25, is marked: *natus Christus in Betleem Judeae*: 'Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea.'

But does our concern for 'historic accuracy' matter? The early church wasn't interested in *birth* dates: this was a pagan Roman practice. Jesus's love and sacrifice, the crucifixion and his resurrection, was what they celebrated! ***So the date doesn't matter!*** At Christmas we focus on God's love, sending his son to save us, and to heal our broken world.



Your local churches

St Andrew's United Church, Kirton in Lindsey
www.standrewsunitedchurch.org.uk
St Radegund's Church, Grayingham
www.achurchnearyou.com/grayingham-st-radegund



Ministry Contacts: November 2026 - KIRTON

- **01724 647789 The Revd David Swannack** *(Anglican Vicar)*
- **07395 453246 The Revd Robert Roberts** *(Methodist Superintendent)*
- **01472 466824 The Revd Dr John Schofield** *(Methodist Minister)*
- **01652 649365 Dr Pat Frankish** *(Baptist Deacon; Anglican Lay Reader)*
- **07855 120896 Mrs Janet Caughley** *(Baptist Deacon)*

Ministry Contact: Nov 2026 – GRAYINGHAM

- **07738 356048 The Revd Charles Thody** *(Anglican Priest in Charge)*

Other enquiries

Church Council Secretary, Kirton, 01652 648846
Church hall bookings, Kirton, 01652 648573
Church Warden, Kirton, Mrs Fiona Munn, 07733 166321
Church Council Secretary, Grayingham, 01652 640157
Church Warden, Grayingham, Mr Clive Marshall, 01652 648125

SAFEGUARDING (Kirton) 01652 640740
SAFEGUARDING (Gray'm) 01652 640157

Baptism bookings (Kirton) – 07776 487791
Wedding bookings (Kirton) – 01652 648846
Funerals (Kirton) – 01652 648573

Worship in our buildings in November 2026

- St Andrew's United Church, Kirton, 11am Sunday; 9.30 every Wednesday
- St Radegund's, Grayingham, 9.30 1st Sun HC; other Sundays 9am

Please visit our websites/Facebook or phone one of the contact numbers above for other information about our churches and activities.

Join us for Worship on Zoom: every Sunday at 9.30am

* To join – on computer, tablet or phone – contact **heather.bunker@btinternet.com**

Prepare for 2027!
St Andrew's United Church
Annual Covenant Service
Sunday 3 January at 11am
BOOK THIS DATE

PUZZLE ANSWERS *(page S4)*

Word Ladder. FLOCK, BLOCK, BLACK, BLANK, PLANK, PLANE, PLACE, PEACE

An Autumn Crossword. ANSWERS:
ACROSS: 3) hibernate 4) chestnut 6) poppy 10) football 11) tractor 13) apple 14) deciduous 15) swallow 16) summer
DOWN: 1) ice 2) hedgehog 5) toadstool 7) leaves 8) Guy Fawkes 9) Keats 12) October 17) mist

Four maths puzzles. ANSWERS:
(1) 70 (2) 444 + 44 + 4 + 4 + 4
(3) ONCE (4) £20

Peace word search answers Eirene-Greek; fred-Danish; frieden-German; pace-Italian; paix-French; paz-Spanish; peace-English; pokoj-Polish; shanti-Hindi; siochain-Gaelic

'Love in a Cup' Community Café

Every Thursday, 2-5pm:
St Andrew's United Church Halls

Get a full-size colour *Nutshell* : only £1
from Paynes Chemist
Local pics, cartoons, puzzles, What's On, town history - and more.

In a Nutshell **is published (1) as an insert in *Kirton First (IaN)* and (2) bi-monthly in A4 format *(StAN)* *(single copies £1 each)***

Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the editorial group

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Copy deadlines:
StAN, 9 November 2026
IaN, 7 December 2026