



From the Rector's study

July and August are traditionally times for slowing down, going away even, but certainly resting and dreaming and I was reminded recently of the story told of a teacher asking their class, "what are your dream jobs?" Something I used to ask my classes too, as they made their GCSE and A Level choices. The usual list emerged of firefighter, astronaut, train driver, policeman, doctor, nurse, and so on....But one child said, "When I dream, I don't dream about working!" There is holy wisdom in that rather smart reaction and perhaps worth reflecting on the theology of sabbath as we come to our summer holiday period.

We learn from one of the stories in the Jewish scrolls and from the Creation stories that rest is a foundation of human nature and not a reward. After being made in the very image of God (which means we are to share the responsibility and character of God's own nature), God creates man on the sixth day and then the first real job of humanity is to rest - on the seventh day. With great responsibility comes the need for rest! Just imagine the picture: you find yourself in the garden and God says, job one is to rest! This is no accident: rest is not earned; it is given as a divine gift. Rest is not the result of our labour; it is God's first commandment to humans. We will share the Opus Dei to cultivate and care for creation and in order to do that the first step is a day of rest; indeed, one writer notes, "in God's economy, we don't rest from our work, rather, our work is the fruit of our rest". By the time of the Minor Prophets, profits were king. The economy was booming and Amos (in chapter 8) reminds us what happens when a society forgets the command to sabbath: "When will Sabbath be done so that we can offer wheat for sale?" - can we get back to business and make money?! This urge to rush past rest to get back to productivity is dangerous. Our culture of continuous connection means we never can rest - there is always something else, something more to do and get to and fit in and with smart phones we are teaching our children something quite dangerous.



Image from Pixabay

Even Jesus needed rest! In Mark 1, Jesus has been preaching, healing, and casting out demons. Early one morning, he goes to a deserted place to be alone in prayer. When his disciples find him saying,

"Everyone's looking for you," to which Jesus replies, "Let's head in the other direction!!"

Even Jesus needed care and those details in the gospels are there, intentionally, to teach us something.

Sabbath and rest remind me that the world keeps spinning without me. Having to take some time to be able to attend to grief and solicitors and Funeral Directors and so forth has reminded me that God invites me into God's work, but I am not necessary to it. That's humbling in the true sense and should remind us that, "I must become lesser so God becomes more."

May the summer be a blessing - may you see Sabbath as a Divine gift to your nature and not something you earn or deserve, rather something which is made for us to be truly in the image of God - resting as He does each Sabbath.

Fr Neil

A heartfelt thank you to so many who made it to the Cathedral for my Installation as a Canon. A joyous occasion.





Grace Beckett: *The Abundance of Summer - Down towards Cranleigh and Ewhurst*

And... I am delighted to say that this month we shall formally recognise both Craig and Jana in their lay ministry roles in the parish. God is good. Jana has attended the FiM course and is blessed as a LAM - Lay Associate Minister. Jana's focus will be on pastoral care.

Craig will be licensed as a Reader or LLM, Licensed Lay Minister, and will take his role in the liturgical ministry of the church under the direction of the Rector. As well as being able to lead at Morning and Evening Prayer, he will be able to take funerals and preach. Please do pray for their ministries as they evolve under the blessing of God. **Fr Neil**

By the time you read this, I will be St Nics' newly Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) Craig Nobbs



"A lay what?" I hear you say! Allow me to unpack the three words that make up LLM:

Licensed: we are licensed by the Bishop to a role that allows us to minister both in Church as well as beyond the traditional boundaries of Church.

Lay: An LLM is specifically called to serve the Church as a lay person; 'lay' means that the calling is not to a 'sacramental' ministry, so LLMs don't wear a clerical collar.

Minister: LLMs are called to serve the church by equipping the people of God for their role in the world; but by virtue of being lay, the Lay Minister has a ministry not limited to the parish, but service to the

Church and beyond.

I have been an LLM for ten years. When we first came to St Nics' in December 2023, we had experienced some painful times in our former parish, and after that I was determined never to take up ministry again. It seems that God had other ideas! So, what did I get up to as an LLM in that place? There were the obvious tasks such as preaching and assisting at the Eucharist, but I also got involved at the local nature reserve looking after cattle (six Sussex Bullocks!), visited the village school, prayer walking, and an informal pub ministry. If ever you want to get to know a community, head for the pub! Both Debbie and I gradually noticed folk surprising us by asking things about 'religion and stuff' in the midst of ordinary conversations, and we enjoyed times like simply enjoying a Quiz Night in the company of others.

Ministry can also take place at work: I once led a short service for Remembrance Day in an Army barracks where I was working at that time, but often ministering at work is simply getting on with your day-job, being present for the other. I am passionate about getting ordinary church members to be Sunday to Saturday Christians, and grow an awareness about just how close God is to each and every one of us, so you may hear that theme from me often.

Debbie and I would like to thank all of you lovely folk of St Nics', for the welcome on that first day, for giving us the time and friendship to heal, and for helping us to flourish once again. I look forward to seeing what God might have in store for us in the coming years, so thank you for entrusting me with this ministry. Do come and chat to me if you have any questions to ask about lay ministry: you never know where that might lead you!

The FiM course is new and my cohort are the first to finish. FiM stands for Foundations in Ministry and LAM is also, I believe, a new designation. We are being blessed rather than licensed, which means that my role is limited to St Nics, but that is certainly not a problem. Photo to follow! **Jana Phillips**

A Joyful Celebration: Josephine's Christening at St Nicolas'



Our daughter Josephine's christening at St Nicolas was a day overflowing with love, tradition, and a beautiful reflection of our family's rich heritage. With Latvian, Moldovan, and British roots, we've always cherished how these cultures intertwine, and St Nic's proved to be the perfect place to celebrate Josephine's place in this vibrant tapestry. The service was deeply meaningful, surrounded by our closest family and the warm embrace of the church community.

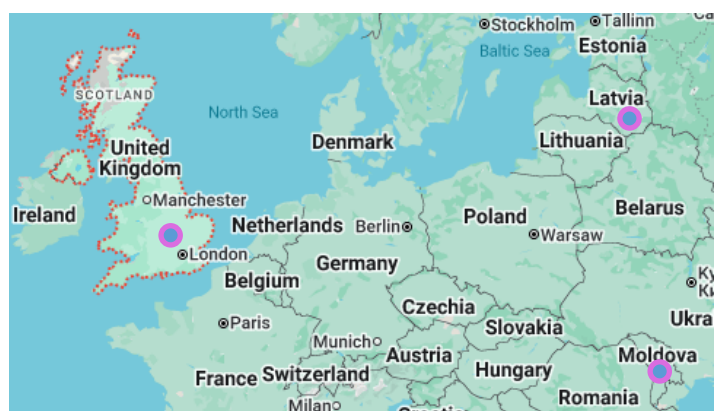
Since childhood, St. Nicolas has held special significance, not only in my life and my mother's, but also for my partner, who grew up attending another St Nicolas church in Moldova. St Nicolas always connects and appears at just the right moments to bring us blessings and wonder. Seeing this connection continue through Josephine's christening felt particularly heartwarming and memorable.

Our little Josephine was truly the radiant light of the day, and we're profoundly grateful to everyone who helped make it so unforgettable. The kindness we experienced at St Nic's mirrors the love we pray will guide Josephine throughout her life's journey.

Special thanks to Father Neil and all at St Nicholas for helping us create such precious memories.

With deepest gratitude,

Edgars & Agnesa & Josephine



Tu	1	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	2	10:00 Mattins, The Quire, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Th	3	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	4	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel 20:00-22:00 Fizz & Friends
Sa	5	
Su	6	Trinity III 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass
Mo	7	
Tu	8	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	9	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	10	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	11	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	12	
Su	13	Trinity IV 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass
Mo	14	
Tu	15	10:00 Mattins, The Quire 19:30 Beer & Banter, Loseley Chapel
We	16	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	17	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	18	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	19	
Su	20	Trinity V 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass
Mo	21	
Tu	22	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	23	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	24	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	25	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	26	
Su	27	Trinity VI 10:00 Mass
Mo	28	
Tu	29	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	30	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	31	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel



Fr	1	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Sa	2	
Su	3	Trinity IV 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass
Mo	4	
Tu	5	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	6	10:00 Mattins, The Quire, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Th	7	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	8	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	9	
Su	10	Trinity VIII & 08:30 Holy Communion Harold Baptism 10:00 Mass
Mo	11	
Tu	12	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	13	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	14	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	15	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	16	
Su	17	Trinity IX 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass
Mo	18	
Tu	19	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	20	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	21	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	22	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	23	
Su	24	Trinity X & 10:00 Mass Bartholomew
Mo	25	
Tu	26	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
We	27	10:00 Mattins, The Quire
Th	28	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel
Fr	29	10:00 Mattins, The Lady Chapel, 11:00 Mass, St George's Chapel
Sa	30	
Su	31	Trinity XI 08:30 Holy Communion 10:00 Mass



Mission Enabler update

Busy times! St Nic's Year 2s were invited to sample Toastie Tuesday and we had 37 children in total. Looking for more volunteers to help support the increase in numbers, only once a month! The **Summer Holiday Club**, with a sizzling Rock Band theme, will run from 28 July—1 August at the Guildford URC. Already over-subscribed, this promises a happily loud welcome to the summer holidays!

Regular St Nicolas events re-start on:

Cafe Play - 3rd Sept

Messy Church - 6th Sept at St Nics

Junior Church - 7th Sept

Toastie Tuesday - 30th Sept



Nicky Geraghty

missionenabler@saintnics.com



THE ROCK BAND HOLIDAY CLUB
 28TH JULY - 1ST AUG
 AT GUILDFORD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
 Bookings open 22nd April
 CRAFTS STORY GAMES MUSIC FUN
 Faith based fun as we get creative with the world of rock music!
www.guildfordurc.org.uk | www.saintnics.com
 In partnership with **ST NICOLAS GUILDFORD**



David Greenwood has arranged

A Visit to Coventry Cathedral

All welcome! We are making our own way there to arrive in time for the Litany of Reconciliation at 12 noon; a very moving service delivered every day from the chancel steps.

After the service, we plan to find somewhere nearby for lunch and then come back for a tour of the cathedral guided by David. A good train connection runs from Guildford, if driving, allow about 2.5 hours.

Litany of Reconciliation

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, **Father forgive.**

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own, **Father, forgive.**

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth, **Father, forgive.**

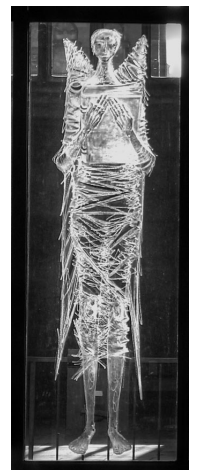
Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others, **Father, forgive.**

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God, **Father, forgive.**

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee, **Father, forgive.**

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children,

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.





The Headteacher, Christina (Stina) Witkowski writes:

Our sunny Father's Day breakfast, was followed by an enthusiastic sports day! The children delight in sharing these experiences with parents and were excited to take part. Our summer fair, was a great success too. A HUGE thank you to our amazing PSA and to every parent and community member who gave up their time to help set up, run the fair and clear away. It is events like these which are so important in bringing a community together.

Some of our year 2 pupils went for their first transition day to Holy Trinity and came back feeling positive and excited about their new school. A mixture of year 1 and year 2 pupils entered into a football festival. Each team played 4 mini matches and one of our pupils even won a trophy for star player!

The children ended one Friday by listening to local author Michael Parkin read his book, "Wrong Time Rooster," and had the opportunity to ask him questions about being an author and the book itself. Michael joined our Story Picnic to meet families and sign copies of his book.

22 July Leaver's service at St Nicolas & End of Term



The Executive Head, Deputy Head and members of the School Council



St Nicolas' Infant School Celebrates 'Good' Ofsted Rating

Published on: 13 Jun, 2025, Updated on: 17 Jun, 2025

St Nicolas' CofE (VA) Infant School, located on Portsmouth Road in Guildford, has received a 'Good' rating across all areas in its most recent Ofsted inspection, carried out earlier this term.

The report highlights a number of key strengths, including the school's inclusive environment, the quality of its early reading provision, and the promotion of positive values through its curriculum.

Inspectors noted that "pupils learn and play together happily," and that staff "ensure that pupils, and their families, feel welcome and fully included in school life." The report also commented on the school's commitment to inclusion, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), stating that "staff ensure that pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life."

The school's approach to character development was also acknowledged, with inspectors writing that "pupils are supported to become active and responsible citizens from a young age" and that children "learn about and contribute to the work of local and global charities."

Reading provision was identified as a particular strength. Inspectors observed that the school provides "effective teaching of early reading" and maintains "a strong focus on reading enjoyment," with regular story sessions starting from Reception.

The school had also been inspected in July 2024 by the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS), which returned similarly positive findings.

Headteacher Stina Witkowski and Deputy Headteacher Dina Pandis expressed their appreciation for the outcome, which they say reflects the ongoing efforts of staff, governors, and families to maintain a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

For parents interested in visiting the school, appointments can be arranged by calling 01483 561639 during school hours. <https://guildford-dragon.com/st-nicolas-infant-school-celebrates-good-ofsted-rating/>



Alister Tottle

As a child, I attended a CofE primary school and took Christianity and churchgoing as largely a fact of normal life. But then, like many I imagine, I moved on to secondary school and found out that I was the odd one out. I discovered YouTube and before long was listening to the likes of Dawkins and Hitchens and before I knew it, I was a committed atheist, well versed in its arguments.

A few years ago, however, I picked up a copy of 'Meditations' by Marcus Aurelius and found myself fascinated. Here were the thoughts of one of the most powerful men to have lived, a man who some would have considered a god; grappling with temptation, ethics, and meaning. I don't think he got it all correct but throughout the text he continuously points to this idea of a *logos* of the universe (what we would call the Word of God), as well as to what St. Paul had by this point already identified as the Athenians "unknown God" (although I hadn't yet read this). Aurelius' writings seemed to vaguely point in the direction of a singular uncreated but ultimately unknown God, and it made me start to realise that in asking my own questions like 'if God created the universe who created God?' I was making a huge category error, thinking of God as a creature not a creator.

This led me to start questioning my own beliefs and more seriously investigating the various philosophies and religions of the world, as a former Christian, the Christian Church seemed like as good a place as any to start.



What really started to convince me, though, was the problem of evil, or more accurately the reality of evil. Reading the news, it has seemed over the last few years as though we are confronted with ever increasing acts of evil and it seems quite obvious that these evil acts are wrong. I started to realise that they weren't just wrong because a few decades ago we had decided to invent international human rights. They were wrong because they were evidently wrong. Wrong regardless of time, culture, or human law. It seemed as if there was some kind of transcendent moral law that floated above us. This I would say is more a feeling or intuition than a hard scientific fact but perhaps Aurelius was right and there is in fact a *logos* and that acting against it is just wrong, not because our culture happens to say so, but because it is. I also considered the alternative: if there is no transcendent right and wrong how do we decide what we ought to do? Utilitarianism, I would say, is possibly the most 'moral' secular option. But it seems like we could - and humanity has - justify all sorts of evil on the grounds of maximising utility for one group at the expense of another. And again, I keep coming back to the concept of 'all sorts of evil' as if it is a self-evident truth but it is really hard to see how this can be so in a truly materialistic universe. It seems to me that evil is a real thing, and it follows from that that good is also.

I think the Christian world view agrees and over the course of about a year I slowly read through the New Testament and became gradually convinced that it was both historically accurate and in a deeper sense described reality. And this is why I have been going to church for the last year - because I have been gradually, and surprisingly, convinced that the essential teachings of the Christian Church are essentially true.

Tasha Volak

When I moved away from home for the first time, I was in an unknown place, away from my established support network and slightly unsure quite what to do with myself. I came to church, knowing that here, not only can I feel God's presence, His love and His glory, I also get the fellowship and community of the congregation, who are like a second family to me now. It is important to me that on a Sunday, no matter what the week has brought with it, I return to my creator and be reminded that Jesus is the same, yesterday and today and forever.

Daniel Vines

I think Church gives one's weekend structure, meaning and a spiritual connection. It is social, I love being on Coffee and the Summer Fair!



Helen Trussler

I had suffered two major bereavements and a significant health problem with my daughter so I felt incredibly adrift, very lost, I had zero coping mechanisms. There's a word in Welsh called Hiraeth which has no real English translation other than a feeling of homesickness or nostalgia for a place that doesn't exist, it really relates to Grief and that longing for the safety of what was and I guess that's what I was looking for. Originally I tried several churches but St Nicolas felt special, safe. I had a real connection with God at an Advent service, it was a very powerful experience and quite hard to put into words but suffice to say it was very profound and made me want to explore the power of the word of God more.

The people at St Nic's are very kind and welcoming and I've made some lovely friendships which bring me back to the Church. The readings of the gospels and the sermons have all been inspiring, beautiful and confusing in equal measures! But those alone make me want to come back to learn more.

I also love sitting alone in silence, just soaking up the building and all its iconography, having conversations with the Lord and the emptiness I often feel, that Hiraeth, is temporarily filled and I can go back into my everyday life feeling a bit stronger and able to cope, knowing the church is there. The candles, the incense, the choir just make it such a special place and as long as I can and as long as they'll have me I'm sure St Nicholas will be my church, that little bit of home.

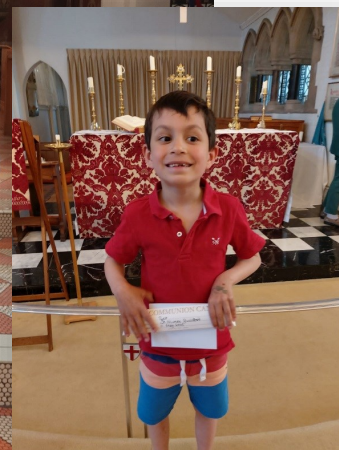


Jean Woolley

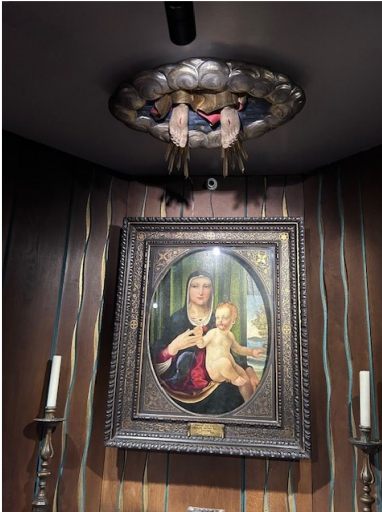
The Church is the Body of Christ. Each part of the body has its function and they all work together; this means that each person has a function to play and to encourage each other, so you have fellowship. Being a Christian on their own is not the same. The important thing is being part of the Body and being able to contribute. Some are stronger and some weaker, so helping each other both inside and outside the church community is part of the function of the Body of Christ. Praying together is a very powerful tool. In Church you have access to the Sacraments, such as Communion. The social aspect of belonging to a community is important as well, we are not meant to live in isolation. Being part of a Church gives us strength to go out and spread the Light of Christ which you can't do if you exist in your own little bubble.

Nicky Geraghty

I come to church because I want to be a part of God's family worshipping together. I love the encouragement we find in one another, the challenges we are given in a sermon and the joy of knowing our weird and wonderful church family! I like being a part of a community that supports one another and shares the good news of the gospel and I want to make sure that's still there for future generations.



This year's First Communions



Whilst waiting for my lift home from Hilary, on the Monday morning, a lady came to me as I was sitting on the bench seat at the entrance to the gardens. I asked for her name, she said she was Dorothy, which is also my middle name. She then said she was with the Birmingham Pilgrims who had just been to visit the Holy House before they left for home. She added that we are all part of God's jigsaw and whatever our rank in life, be it high and lofty or lowly, we are all needed to complete the picture as He uses each one of us with work that only we can do for Him.

Photos of interior by **Jan Durrant**



Photos of the grounds by **Jean Taylor**

I am always truly amazed how words from a stranger can resonate with me. Gratitude for all God's people, showing them love as Jesus instructed us to love one another, has meant even more here on our Pilgrimage this year. We all have so much to be thankful for. With love and prayers,

Julia Wake

Below, photo by **Darrol Radley** also from Walsingham. **Would anyone care to suggest a suitable caption?**

The Feast of Corpus Christi is a very important day in our calendar. The Solemnity of this feast or Day of Thanksgiving for the Institution of Holy Communion is kept on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. This feast originated in France in the mid 13th century and was extended to the whole church by Pope Urban in 1264. The feast calls us to focus on two manifestations, the Holy Eucharist and the Church.

This Holy Day has always been special for me in that when I was appointed Organist in 1999 this was my very first Service. At this year's Service it was very special in that the special icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary which I purchased from our recent pilgrimage to Walsingham and wished to present to St. Nicolas was blessed and dedicated at this year's Service. I very much hope that this beautiful icon will be a source of blessings and devotions for many years to come. **John Varney**





The Good Grief Club

Helen Trussler



We meet at The Cosy Club at Tunsgate on the last Wednesday of every month from 2pm. Open to men and women. **There will be no meeting in August.** Please speak to [Helen Trussler](#) or [Jean Taylor](#) for more details.



Image sent by
Wendy Gabriel

WHAT *these* NEGATIVE EMOTIONS ARE *telling* you

LEARN HOW TO HEAL

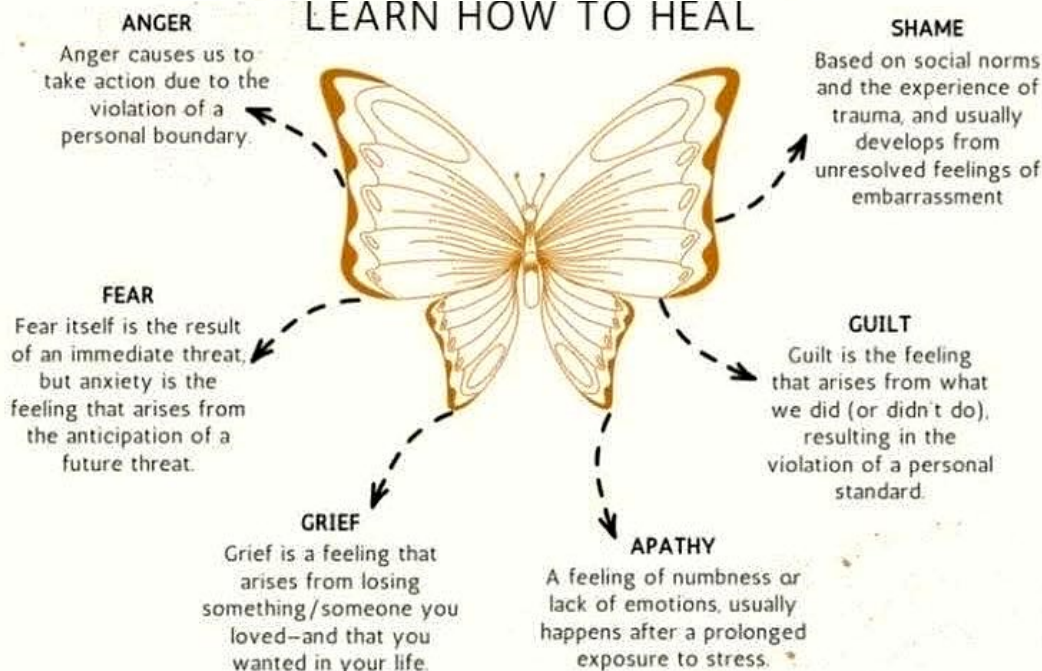


Image sent by
Jana Phillips

The Climate Science & Evidence for Human Induced Global Warming II: Arctic Ice



by **Donald Thompson**

This is the second of a series of short articles outlining some of the recent scientific evidence for the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions that have been a by-product of human activity on our planet for the last 5000 years or so, but which have accelerated since the industrial revolution of the 18th Century. This month we look at recent data on Arctic polar ice extent.

Sea ice extent is controlled by several factors, for example the global wind systems, mean atmospheric temperature and ocean currents and temperatures (Royal Society & National Academy of Sciences, 2020). Sea Ice extent fluctuates seasonally, expanding during winter and shrinking during summer. For the Arctic Ocean the maximum ice extent is usually in March, and the minimum in September (See Fig 1). However, if we look at the monthly extent of Arctic sea ice from the 1990's to 2025 it becomes apparent that a worrying trend is in progress. The graphs show the changing proportion of the Arctic Ocean with at least 15% ice cover through the year. Each line shows a specific year, with the top line representing the average of data for the period 1979-1989. The continuous pink line represents the data for 2017, a year when record-low sea ice maximum was recorded. The thicker red line shows the 2025 data up until this spring. The ice extent reached it maximum on 22nd March 2025, but you will see that this is below the previous minimum of 2017. 2025 therefore has the lowest maximum Arctic sea-ice extent since satellite recording began 47 years ago (Scott, 2025).

Arctic Sea Ice Extent

Area of ocean with at least 15% sea ice

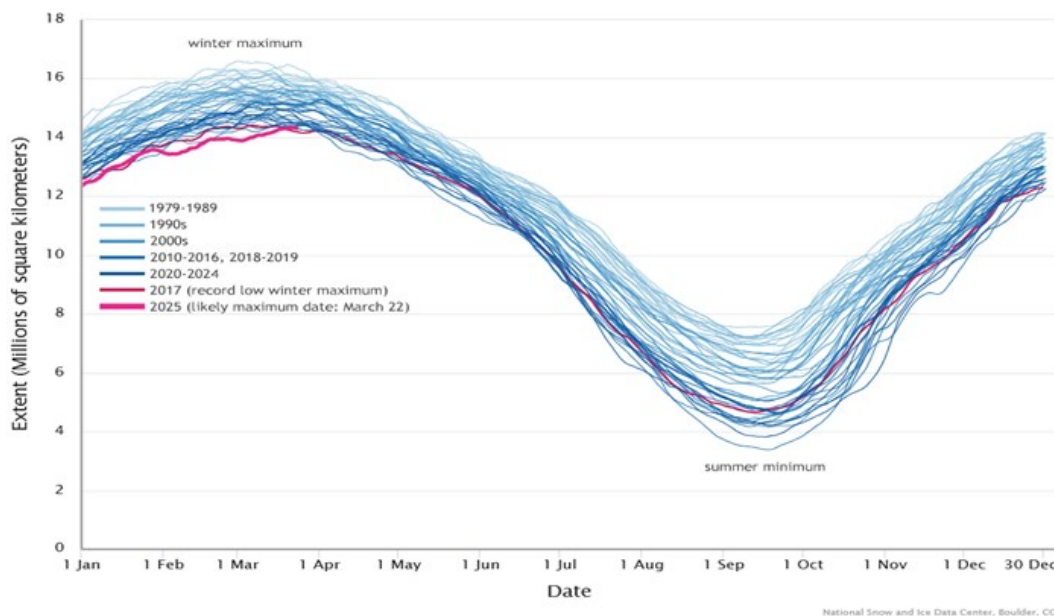


FIG 1: Source: Scott (2025) NOAA Climate.gov.

Since the satellite record began the Arctic minimum ice extent (in September) has declined by around 40%. Whilst the ice extent expands each winter, the thickness of the ice is less than in the past. Figure 2 shows the recent trends of the March maximum ice extent and September minimum. Notice that the declining trend seems to have steepened since the turn of the millennium. The decline in the September minimum ice extent also seems to be steeper than that for the March maximum. The rate of decline in the September minimum extent is around 12.8% per decade, compared to about 2.5%/decade for the March maximum extent (Scott, 2025). This is because higher summer temperatures are causing more ice melt than the succeeding winter can replace. We have probably all noticed the increase in the frequency of summer heat waves in the last twenty years or so, and the same is happening in the Arctic.

Arctic sea ice extent in winter and summer (1979–2019)

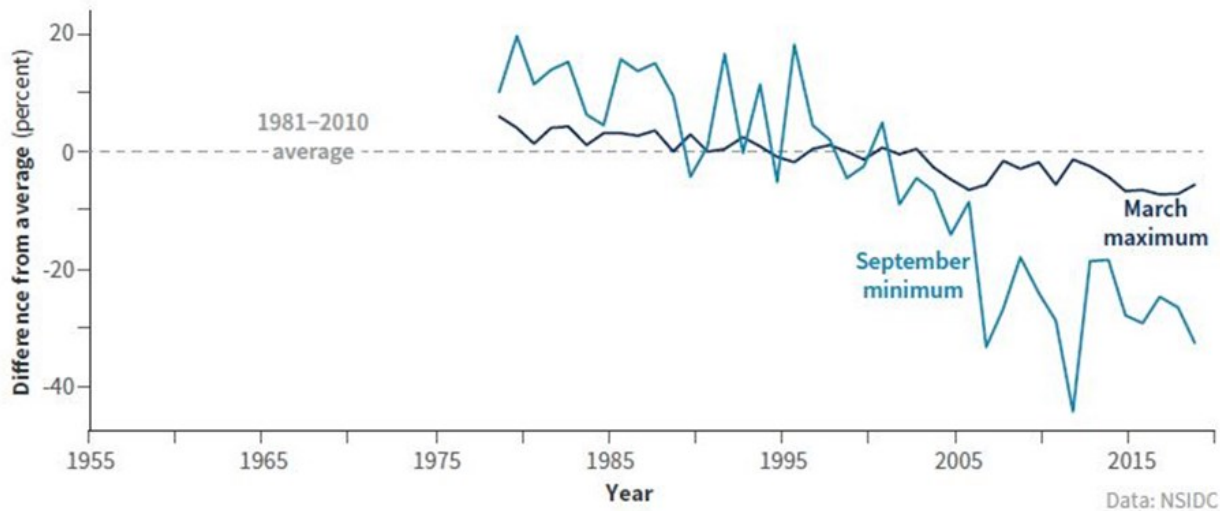
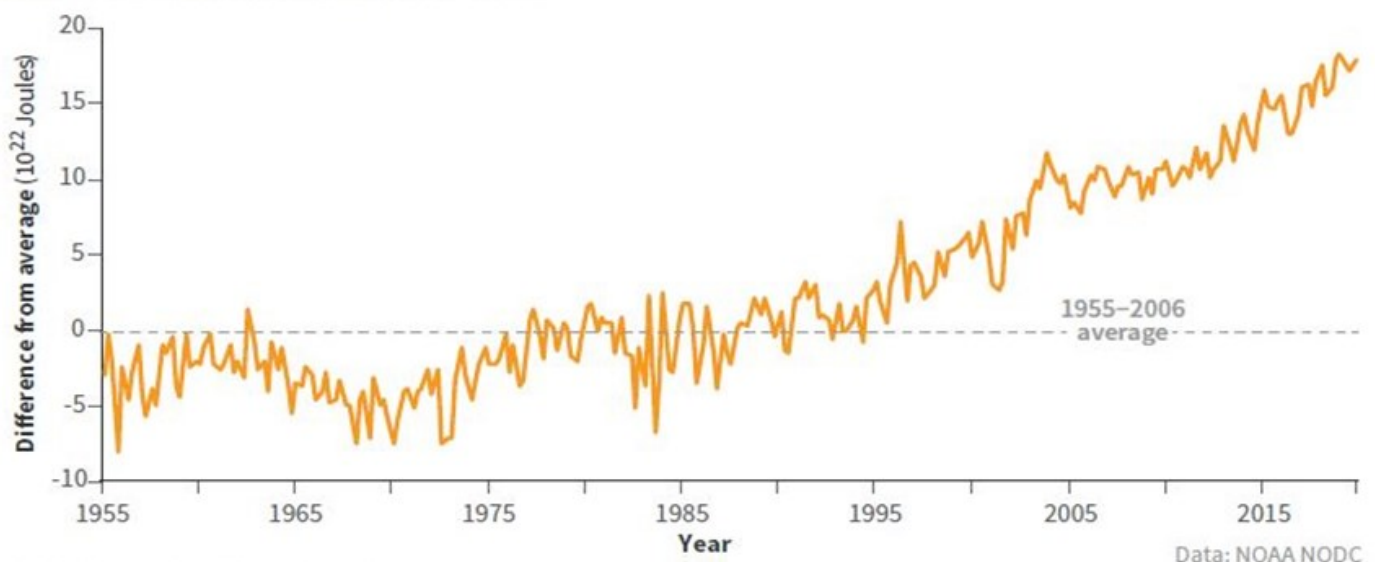


FIG 2: Source: National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society (2020)

The thinner sea ice that results from higher temperatures has both positive and negative impacts. Easier Arctic-ocean navigation may have beneficial economic effects but competition for access to ice free routes between Russia, China and the USA is a source of geopolitical instability in an already dangerous period of our history. Less sea ice may benefit some whale species as feeding will become easier due to greater phytoplankton blooms in a sea that receives more sunlight. However, Polar bears require ice to hunt (Scott 2025). Reduced sea-ice extent could also accelerate warming of the planet. Ice is highly reflective of sunshine so, as the extent of ice reduces and is replaced with darker water, more sunshine will be absorbed. Warming will therefore be amplified (National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society 2020). This is what scientists call positive feedback. The reduction in sea ice may also be related to increasing ocean temperatures. Figure 3 illustrates the record of upper ocean heat content from 1955–2019. The graph shows that prior to about 1985 the heat content of the upper ocean was below the 1955–2006 average (cooler than average) and seemed to fluctuate in waves. However, from 1985 the trend has been uniformly increasing and from about 1990 the ocean heat content has been consistently above average and is increasing steadily.

FIG 3: Source: National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society (2020)

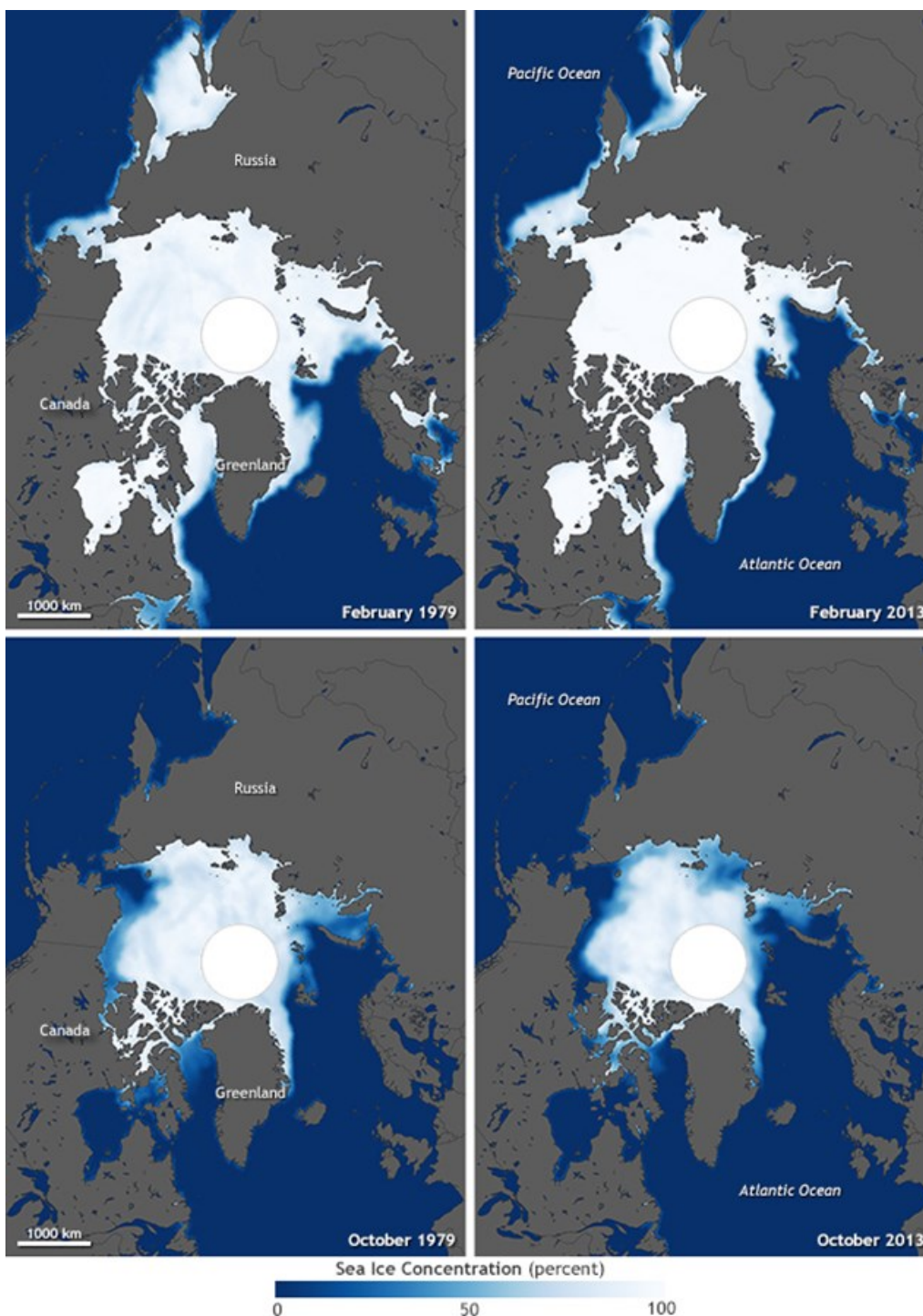
Upper ocean heat content (1955–2019)



We have concentrated on the changes to Arctic Sea ice in this article, but a warming atmosphere is already reducing the extent of glaciers in the Alps and Himalayas. The climate of Greenland is also becoming warmer. Accelerated melt or destabilisation of the Greenland Ice sheet could release huge quantities of cold water into the northern Atlantic Ocean. The potential consequences for sea-level rise and the climate of Western Europe, currently warmed by the gulf stream, could be serious and will be discussed in a later article. I will also have more to say about Antarctica, the planet's largest Ice store, but will end with a map showing changing ice extent in the Arctic Ocean. Figure 4 shows the geographic extent of maximum/minimum arctic ice extent between 1979 and 2013.

As stewards of Our Lord's creation, we should all familiarise ourselves with the increasing evidence of climate instability so that we can make informed decisions about our own response.

FIG 4: Arctic Sea Ice February & October, 1979 & 2013. Source: Carlowicz, M & Viñas, M-J (2019) NOAA Climate.gov



References:

- National Academy of Sciences & The Royal Society (2020) Climate Change: Evidence & Causes: Update 2020. An overview from the Royal Society & US National Academy of Sciences.
- Carlowicz, M & Viñas, M-J (2019) <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/features/despite-antarctic-gains-global-sea-ice-shrinking>, Accessed 14/06/2025.
- Scott, M (2025) <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/event-tracker/2025-winter-maximum-sea-ice-extent-arctic-smallest-record>, Accessed 14/06/2025.

Church ambles

**David
Greenwood's
All Saints, Tudeley**



One of the pleasures of visiting churches is discovering fascinating stories and great art in the most unassuming places. Our country is honeycombed with beautiful buildings, large and small, ornate and simple, which are all, to a greater or lesser extent, houses of art and memory. And it's all free !

The Church of All Saints, Tudeley, on the outskirts of Tonbridge is a good example. A pleasant but otherwise undistinguished church in fields of oilseed rape holds an extraordinary set of stained glass windows by one of the most influential artists of the late 20th century, Marc Chagall.

Sarah, the daughter of Sir Henry and Lady Rose d'Avigdor-Goldsmid, was drowned in a sailing accident near Rye in 1963. Her grief-stricken family commissioned Chagall to design a new east window, which was installed in 1967. At its dedication, Chagall, seeing his completed work in its setting for the first time, exclaimed "C'est magnifique, ferai les tous." ("It is magnificent, I shall do them all").

The remaining windows appeared over the next 18 years, the last being installed in 1985, soon after the artist's death.

The result is an extraordinary tour-de-force up a Kentish country lane in a simple building, waiting quietly to delight the visitor.



Favourite Furniture



When my 3 siblings and I had cleared my parents' house after they died, there was one thing that I particularly wanted - Grandma's table. I don't remember it at her flat but I have so many happy memories of Sunday afternoon tea in Mum and Dad's lounge and lots and lots of card games played around it. We think it might have come from India where my grandma lived for a time in the 1960's. The carving around the edge is beautiful and I had never realised, until my mother-in-law pointed it out, each quarter is a different style of leaves. We wonder if it was perhaps a piece made by somebody practising their carving skills. We still play cards around it now.

Catherine Ferguson

My favourite piece of furniture is our dining table. It is made of 18th century mahogany, with two D ends and two leaves in the middle. Forty years ago my parents gave us this table and I love it, not only because it reminds me of my childhood family celebrations as we gathered around it, or because it is very beautiful (which it is), but because it has a wealth of history attached to it.

When I was about 7, my father bought the table from an elderly and rather eccentric lady called Miss Taylor, who lived near us in Bury, Lancashire who was in her late 80s/90s in c. 1963. I say 'bought the table' but in effect he bought only half of it, because when it came to the table leaving her house, Miss Taylor couldn't bring herself to part with both of the D ends at the same time. It was three years before the table was complete, during which time Miss Taylor had kept her D end in the sun and it had become bleached. My father had to keep moving the table round and assiduously polishing it until it became a uniform colour.

The table had belonged to Miss Taylor's grandfather, and her family, whose surname was Thistlethwaite, came from Hawkshead in the Lake District. I know exactly which house the table came from, because occasionally we used to drive Miss Taylor to stay with her cousin who lived there. The family had been well-established in Hawkshead and had been friends of William Wordsworth (d.1850), who used to dine with them. Miss Taylor once showed us a poem which Wordsworth had written to one of her forebears. In the 20th century, William Heelis (d. 1945) a local solicitor and husband of Beatrix Potter, frequently dined with them.

As a girl, I used to lay my cheek on the table and look along the surface to see if I could see any pressure marks from pens or pencils which might have been made by these illustrious literary connections whilst they dined on their roast lamb in Hawkshead. But the table is discreet and keeps its secrets. The only odd thing is that it is slightly lower than most tables and I am told that this was a feature of Westmorland tables of that era. Why? No idea. Perhaps it is for anatomical, digestive reasons peculiar to that part of the world...



Favourite Furniture

Memories of Gordon Russell by Jean Taylor

When I first went to work as a secretary in London in the 60's I went to a firm called Russell Furnishings Ltd. Which was the London outlet of Gordon Russell Ltd. They supplied 'special' furniture to Heal's, Habitat etc. and beautiful specially designed boardroom tables and office furniture, among others, to the Middle East. Their main claim to fame was designing the 'Coventry Chair' for the new Coventry Cathedral. Quite a few churches around the country now have variations of this same chair. I spent a lot of time up there with my boss.

They also furnished the first study bedrooms up at Guildford University, never did I realise I would live here! God works in a mysterious way. My daughter slept in a wooden study bedroom bed at home for many years.



My Gordon Russell
dining chairs and
coffee tables.



I have a glass fronted bookcase in mahogany given to me as a wedding present and in later years bought a set of coffee tables in walnut at an antiques fair.

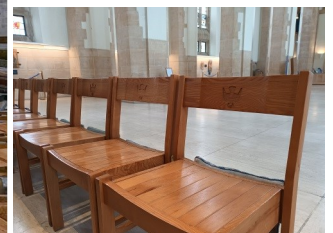
David and I have always liked wooden furniture and he was a brilliant carpenter, only as a hobby, but helped to start one of the first 'Men's shed' out at Normandy. To get men out of the house - I think a lot of tea and cake was consumed too.

Gordon Russell Ltd still make some furniture at their factory in Broadway Worcester and have a museum there. I have a book about them if anyone is interested. They used to grow asparagus (don't ask me why) at the factory and send bundles of it to us in the office and showroom for the 'poor' in London - my mother had never seen it before and didn't know how to cook it! Bless her.

Coventry Cathedral (below left) with the original "Coventry Chairs" designed by R.D. Russell in 1960. The chairs were notable for their modular design, allowing them to be used individually or joined to form pews. They were originally crafted by Gordon Russell Limited in English oak, and some are still in use today. (Image from the Gordon Russell Museum website.) An updated version went back into production in 2015 by Luke Hughes Design.



Winchester Cathedral (below) had a variation on the chair by R.D. Russell, now replaced. Guildford Cathedral chairs (right), in a similar design were not in fact from Gordon Russell Ltd.



Are you sitting comfortably? by Jenny Austin

Can you date these? Which is the youngest item? OK. Easy Peasy; it is the one on the right of the picture BUT only because I happen to know it is a copy and was made by a firm of joiners in 1980s from whom I acquired it. Potentially all three might have been bought in the same period, circa 1920.

The Rocking horse; a faithful friend is made by Lines Bros and dates from circa 1920. My Mother bought it at auction in 1957. My Grandmother's Hall chair; who knows? Georgian??? It is phenomenally uncomfortable. The Red and Blue chair was designed by Rietveld 1917/1923.

All are made from WOOD. Yay! Lets hear it for wood. How many plastic chairs will be around in 100 years time? Jenny Austin; proud daughter and granddaughter of Timber Merchants!



The Dutch architect and furniture designer Gerrit Rietveld designed his Red and Blue Chair in 1917 and it has become an iconic piece of modern furniture. Apprenticed as a joiner and hoping that much of his furniture would eventually be mass-produced rather than handcrafted, Rietveld aimed for simplicity in construction. In 1918 he started his own furniture factory and changed the chair's colours after becoming influenced by the De Stijl movement, of which he became a member in 1919.

In 1923 the chair was painted entirely black with areas of primary colours. This colour scheme made the chair almost disappear against the black walls and floor of the Rietveld Schröder House in Utrecht (above left), where it was later placed. The blocks of colour appeared to float, giving it an almost transparent structure. (see Chat GPT AI-generated image below right).

The thinking powering the De Stijl (The Style) group's work was defined by the painter Piet Mondrian as finding expression in the abstraction of form and colour. Limiting itself to the colours red, blue and yellow, "non-colours" black, white and grey, and initially only squares, rectangles and straight horizontal or vertical lines, the De Stijl movement later admitted diagonals too.

Rietveld's Red and Blue Chair embodies the De Stijl principle of balancing opposing forces, such as verticals and horizontals, and contrasting colours. He believed that unity could be achieved through the careful positioning and size of these elements. The chair uses the Rietveld joint, an overlapping joint of three battens in the three orthogonal directions.

This chair is found in the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Brooklyn Museum in New York City, the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Toledo Museum of Art in Toledo, Ohio and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.



Favourite Furniture

Utility Furniture by Julia Wake

This is my sideboard (right) and my Tallboy and chest of drawers (below), both made of English Oak. On the back of each is stamped a red **CC41**. At that time, during the Second World War, people had to wait until there was furniture available. I remember as a child, my sister and I had three foot single beds with oak headboards and oak at the foot of the bed with iron springs to support the cotton padded mattress. This mattress could be rolled and tied up and this happened



when we came down from Streatham to Guildford as a family in 1954 when I was nine years old. All this oak wood was British and we were proud of it. To realise that it has lasted all these years is remarkable, I believe. In recent years the two pieces of furniture in my workroom were painted with ECOS Lakeland Paints which are environmentally friendly and have no smell. I used them to lighten up my workroom, a place that has seen many items made including my narrowboat covers. Also embroidering many a name on a flannel from my embroiderer machine to give as gifts.

Throughout the war, Gordon Russell (who founded the famous furniture company), played a major public role. Appointed by the government to lead the design panel for manufacturing utility furniture (CC41), he faced the challenge of coordinating hundreds of small workshops to produce good quality, standard furniture for those who had lost homes to bombing or were newly married. Despite material shortages, Gordon ensured the furniture was well-designed and well-made, with much of it still in use today. For his contributions, Gordon was awarded a CBE. (Source: Gordon Russell Design Museum.)



The logo used for the furniture scheme

Utility Design Panel dressing table made by Heal & Son Ltd., London, 1947. Oak. Design c. 1943. Victoria & Albert Museum item number W.114-1978.

Tasha Volak one of our young Servers, is studying Dance at Italia Conti Academy of Theatre Arts. Her first year performance is coming up in July, see press release below.

Italia Conti Summer Show 2025 - From Page to Stage

Come along and watch the first and second year Musical Theatre and dance students from Italia Conti, Woking in their end of year showcase! "From Page to Stage" will include reviews of 8 different musicals based on books, including 'Wicked', '& Juliet' and 'Mary Poppins'.



Produced by leading industry creatives and performed by some of the UK's most promising young talent, you certainly won't want to miss it!



Showing at the Rhoda McGaw theatre, Woking on 10-12 July. Tickets available from ATG tickets or the Ambassadors box office.

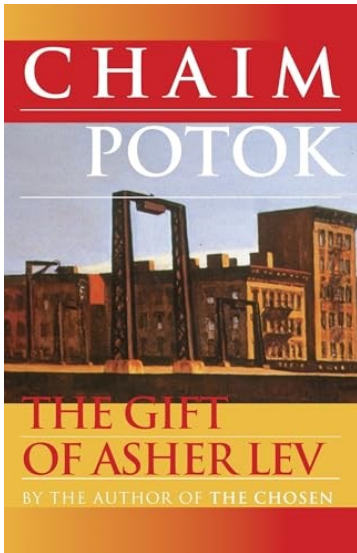
Tasha will perform in **SHOW 1** on the following dates and times:

Thursday 10 July at 2.30pm

Friday 11 July at 7pm

Saturday 12 July at 2.30pm

Once in a TV interview John Habgood, the then Archbishop of York, responded to a question from Jonathan Dimbleby by asking one of his own: "Has it ever occurred to you that the lust for certainty is a sin?" **Sally Lowe**



Book review *The Gift of Asher Lev*

by Chaim Potok, pub. by Heinemann, 1990

A young man belongs to a (fictitious) fundamentalist Hasidic sect, the Ladov. He has huge potential as an artist but the strength of his community's disapproval means that he has to move away to be able to pursue his gift. The ties are never quite broken, however, and years later he's partially drawn back to the community of his birth, but at great cost.

Potok writes hauntingly vivid descriptions of places, especially the suffocating heat of a Brooklyn summer and the refreshing contrast of Lev's home near Nice.

What really struck me was that although the story was about a very specific community, it had a lot to say about characteristics common to any all-enveloping, cult-like organisation – be it political, social or religious. To be accepted you have to buy into it completely – and I do understand that some people feel the need of that kind of certainty and security – but the warmth can be swiftly withdrawn if you ask questions or dare to challenge the leadership. The alternative can be cold and lonely, but for me it would be the price of my integrity.

Some novels retain an aura long after I've forgotten the details. I'd be surprised if this wasn't one of them.

Sally Lowe

Guildford Homeless Walking along Guildford's North Street last week, I spotted a frightened girl sitting on a pavement outside M&S, wrapped in a sleeping bag. She looked Near-Eastern; possibly from Syria, Iran or somewhere in that region. Stopping to enquire how she was, she explained that she and her sister had been sleeping outside for 2 weeks which, from her demeanour, was clearly scary. Her English wasn't brilliant but I understood that she would like to work, doesn't have the required permit and someone is helping her with that. This all sounded dangerous on several levels. In such situations, it is best to call **Guildford Action** on **01483 56003** who arrive quite promptly to help. You don't need to stay, but do give an accurate location. GA are a local charity, partly government-funded, whose members are trained to deal with practical assistance for individuals and families who are homeless, may have experienced trauma or are in a complex situation. GA also provide a **Day Care service** at Haydon Place (near Waitrose), where homeless people can have a bath and a meal. **Jana Phillips**

info@guildfordaction.org.uk **www.guildfordaction.org.uk**



Daniel Lucas, who has reliably attended to St Nicolas' Parish Centre plumbing in the past, has formed

Prime Boilers Ltd and now offers all the following services:

- All aspects of plumbing and heating
- Boiler supply and installation
- Installation and Maintenance

T 01483 829036

M 07896 184358

info@primeboilers.co.uk



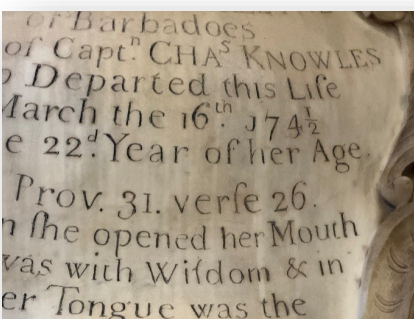
Gas safe registration no.
556986



Tuesday Group members have continued to enjoy friendship and a varied programme of activities over the early part of the Summer.

Two of our recent meetings shared a focus on the sea. Did you know that rope work and knots commonly used by sailors could be so useful in the garden? The different types of Sea Shanty were described and illustrated by Julia Wake. On that morning an extensive display of artefacts helped to set the scene.

Art and Craft activities and games have provided us with plenty of opportunities to share thoughts and ideas whilst joining in. Lively conversation is often a feature of such meetings! More formal reminiscences were sought from members when recalling "The Sweetshops of our Childhood". We learned of some experiences in other countries, but as most of us are retired, ration books and sweet coupons featured in a number of our memories



This mystery photo is linked to the talk given by John Vines

from Britain. We remembered ice cream, bought for immediate consumption only, as homes then did not have freezers. We wondered, "What would the children of today think?"

A highlight at a recent meeting was a visit by guest speaker John Vines, who treated us to some fascinating insights into the life and achievements of Sir Isaac Newton. John also explained the wider effects of Sir Isaac Newton's mathematical discoveries, and their implications for the world in which we now live.

The following speaker was Rory Fenner, who writes so eloquently in this magazine. Rory related stories behind some of the constellations of stars seen in our night sky.

There is much more in store.

Our programme for July offers:-

- 1st - Craft and colouring, for the Summer Fayre Plant Stall.
- 8th - "Something to talk about" - bring and discuss an object connected with the seaside.
- 15th - Learning about the charity "Care for Guildford" from a Guest Speaker.
- 22nd - "A Summer Bouquet" - individual contributions on the subject of "Summer flowers."

We then break for the Summer. **Meetings resume on September 9th.**

You would be very welcome to join us for some or all of our meetings from 9-45am on Tuesdays in the Parish Centre. We meet from 10am - 11am, and always enjoy tea or coffee and chocolate biscuits. Do remember that while there are no Tuesday Group meetings we can still socialise at the Friday Coffee Mornings, please see "Pews News" for details. We look forward to welcoming you.

Written by **Hilary Fletcher**, photos by **Chris Goodwin**



This board shows every type of knot used by sailors



The Sea Shanty display

Vegan Ginger Loaf Cake

I love making my school Gingerbread recipe which has featured in a previous newsletter. But with an increasing number of vegans and those intolerant to eggs and/or dairy, I needed a cake recipe for Scout camps when my homemade cake is now expected! I found this recipe in Good Food magazine and it proves to be very popular.

Ingredients:

100ml vegetable oil, 275g self-raising flour
150g dark muscovado sugar
1 tsp baking powder,
1 Tbsp ground ginger
50g treacle,
170 ml cold water
50g stem ginger from a jar, finely grated, plus 1 tsp of the ginger syrup
150g icing sugar, half a lemon, juiced
4 crystallised stem ginger pieces, sliced

Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Oil a 900g loaf tin and line with a long strip of baking parchment (or use a loaf tin liner).

Mix the flour, muscovado sugar, baking powder and ground ginger together in a large bowl. Tip in the oil, treacle, grated ginger and 170ml cold water, then beat together until smooth.

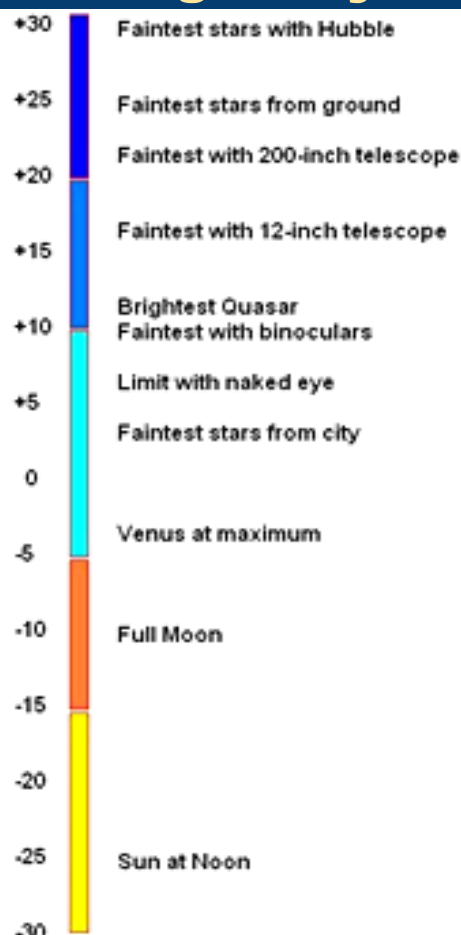
Pour into the tin and bake for 45-50 minutes until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 5 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool fully.

Sieve the icing sugar into a bowl, add the ginger syrup and just enough lemon juice to make a thick, pourable icing that can coat the back of the spoon. Remove the cake from the paper lining and drizzle over the icing. Scatter over the stem ginger.



The night sky in July & August

Rory Fenner



July The **Sun** moves from Gemini into Cancer on July 23. **Mercury** may be seen west north west after sunset. **Venus** is a morning object and will be sitting 20 deg. above the horizon before sunrise. **Mars** will be running into daylight, fading to magnitude +1.6. **Jupiter** is emerging into the pre-dawn sky at magnitude -1.9 and lies around 10deg. 40min. above the horizon before sunrise at the end of July. It is in conjunction with the Sun next month. **Saturn** makes welcome progress in visibility in the early morning hours in the constellation of Pisces. **Uranus** is a morning object near Pleiades (M45) in Taurus. **Neptune** is a morning object close to Saturn.

August The **Sun** moves from Cancer into Leo on 23 August. **Mercury** reaches Greatest Western Elongation, providing a good pre-dawn apparition. It lines up with the **Moon** and **Jupiter** on the 21 August. **Venus** climbs to its highest altitude in the pre-dawn sky but a very close conjunction with Moon and Jupiter steals the show. **Mars** is running into daylight so you will need binoculars to see it. **Jupiter** is now a brilliant morning object and will be 30deg high before sunrise at the end of August. **Saturn** is a morning object with good visibility, high up before sunrise. **Uranus** is a well placed morning object in Taurus. **Neptune** is observable most of the night before midnight, will come into opposition next month.

The Stellar magnitude Scale from spacemath.gsfc.nasa.gov

LADYWELL RETREAT CENTRE AWAY DAY

OASIS IN THE DESERT

An ecumenical day of refreshment, encouragement and food for thought for women of all ages, in the peace and beautiful surroundings of Ladywell Retreat Centre, Godalming



Saturday 20th September 2025 10 am - 4 pm Led by Linda Chamberlain

- * Who would wish to live in a desert?
- * Such an extreme environment - vast, dangerous, lonely and barren.
- * Is there any beauty or benefit to be found in such a harsh place?
- * Many Christians experience "spiritual deserts".
- * Let's explore together some aspects of desert life through worship, the Word, testimony and creative activities.
- * Let's discover God's presence and purpose in desert times.

To reserve a place (£28) including a cooked lunch & refreshments) please contact Sally Pollard email: pollard3@hotmail.co.uk, tel: 01483 428646 **by Friday 22nd August**



Notes...

Frances Farmer

recently retired after 18 or so years of keeping St Nicolas' premises clean and tidy. Wishing you a happy retirement!

Heritage Open

Day 2025 falls on
Saturday the 13th September

2026 Celebrations

This will all become more apparent later in the year, but we have lots planned for the 150th anniversary of our current church building in 2026:

Dinner & comedy evening

Talks

Special guest preachers at Corpus Christi,

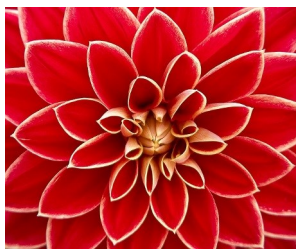
Dedication Festival....

And commemorative items: teatowels, calendar, GIN & more...

The 101st Glastonbury Pilgrimage this year takes place on **Saturday 6 September** in the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey. If interested, please see **Philip Hooper**

Daniel Lowe Gardening and Tree Services

so you can sit back and enjoy your garden



- Landscaping
- Garden maintenance
- Hedging & Fencing
- Tree surgery
- Jungle clearance & new planting
- Logs for sale

07947 769189
01483 613574
dlowegardens@yahoo.com

Advertise with us for £5/quarter page, £10/half page or £20/full page



St. Nicolas Parish
Church, Bury St, Guildford,
GU2 4AW saintnics.com
Rector Canon Neil Roberts
rector@saintnics.com
Curate Fr Alistair Milne
curate@saintnics.com
Parish Administrator
Cath Anderson
01483 564 526
parishoffice@saintnics.com
Newsletter editors
Canon Neil Roberts &
Jana Phillips
janagg@btinternet.com
Please email or telephone
your material to Jana 07970
934325, post to the Parish
Office or give to Fr Neil or
Jana at church. **Next copy**
deadline is Sunday 14
September for October/
November 2025 issue.



ECO CHURCH
AN A ROCHA UK PROJECT

NOT JUST SUNDAYS

Tuesdays

Tuesday Group @ 9:30

Social Group for adults

Toastie Tuesdays @ 5

for School Years 3 - 6 (monthly)

Beer & Banter @ 7:30

Men's Group (monthly)

Curry & Questions @7:30

Exploring Faith over Food
(quarterly)

Wednesdays

Cafe Play @ 10

Pre School Toddler Group

Fridays

Coffee Shop @10:30

Monthly Lunch &

Bible Study @11:30

Fizz & Friends @8

Women's Group (twice a term))

Saturdays

Messy Church @4

(monthly)

www.saintnics.com

ST NICOLAS
GUILDFORD