SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2026

The Pinnacle

. . . SHARING THE GOOD NEWS!

The magazine of the Anglican, Baptist & Methodist Churches in Sandy & Beeston

The Pinnacle
The Pinnacle is published bimonthly by Sandy Parochial Church Council on behalf of the Anglican, Baptist and Methodist churches of Sandy and Beeston. It is available from our local churches and is now free of charge. If you would like to order a digital copy, please email sandybeestonpinnacle@gmail.com and we will add you to our mailing list.

Get in Touch
Please send your articles, updates, thoughts and diary dates to: sandybeestonpinnacle@gmail.com
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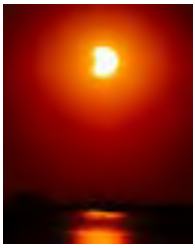
Welcome to the September/October 2026 edition of *The Pinnacle*. This magazine supports the mission and ministry of the Anglican, Baptist and Methodist churches within the Sandy and Beeston communites. In it you can hear the latest news from our churches, and find out what's on offer including service times, groups and events. We also include contact details for our local churches and people are welcome to join us at any time. Have a story to tell? Then do contact us, we'd love to hear from you.
Adrienne, Mark, Stephen & Marina

Contents

Message Revd Martin Jones, Sandy Baptist Church 3
Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals 3
News from our Churches 4
Charity Updates 8
Reflections on All Change at the Top! 10
God's Creation – River Ivel 12
God's Creation – The Healing Process 13
Luke the Evangelist 14
Obituary – Susan Sutton 15
Safeguarding 16
Into the Word: 1 John 1: 5–10 17
Church Services 18
What's On 20



Front Cover Image: Wikicommons
As the country gazed at the partial eclipse of the sun on 12 August, it reminds us of the importance of walking in the light – God's light – in which there is no darkness, as Mark Pittwood explains on p17.

Dear friends...

As the seasons change, the pace of summer begins to slow, children and students return to their studies, and many of us settle back into routines of work, school and church life. The beauty of autumn, the gathering of the harvest and the rhythm of everyday life all point us to the goodness and faithfulness of God, who created all things. The changing colours of the countryside remind us that God is at work in every season, inviting us to pause, give thanks and place our trust in Him again.

Harvest is at the heart of autumn. It is a time to thank God for His faithful provision, not only for the food on our tables but also for the countless ways He blesses us each day – through family and friends, the encouragement of our church fellowship and the hope we have in Jesus Christ. As we count our blessings, we are reminded of those who are facing hardship. Harvest challenges us to be generous with what God has entrusted to us, sharing both practical support and the love of Christ with our neighbours and our wider community.

Autumn also offers us an opportunity to renew our own walk with the Lord. Whether we have followed Jesus for many years or are still discovering what faith means, each day is a fresh invitation to listen to God's voice through His Word, to grow in prayer and to encourage one another as we journey together. Everyone has a place, and everyone has something to offer in God's kingdom.

As we journey through autumn, may it be a time of renewed faith, deeper fellowship, and joyful service as we seek to reflect the love of Christ in all we do. May we know God's peace and strength as we serve together. Let us continue to pray for one another, for our community and for those who have yet to discover the life-changing hope found in Jesus Christ. May God bless us all as we seek to follow Him faithfully, sharing His love wherever He leads us.

Revd Martin Jones
Minister of Sandy Baptist Church

Baptisms, Marriages & Funerals

BAPTISMS

Hadley Salomón Arévalo-cash 5 July

Mason Lee Sims and Caden Leo Hinchcliffe 12 July

Tarang Raymond Cooper 19 July

Arabella Jane Bunker and Agnes Sarah Sheen 23 August

All at St Swithun's Church

FUNERALS

Edith Ashwell 22 July

Susan Sutton 3 August

Gary Roy Eaton 11 August

Sylvia Challis 12 August

All at St Swithun's Church

News from St Swithun's Church

Do come along and join us on on Saturday 12 September, from 9am–5pm, for our **Heritage Open Day**.

During the day visitors are welcome to take a self-guided tour of the church, climb the tower (10am–2pm), bring children along for our stained glass window craft and friendship bracelet station, visit our pay-what-you-can cafe celebrating the international heritage of our congregation or join a heritage masterclass in traditional skills:
11am Knitting/Crochet for Beginners
1pm Art for Beginners
2pm Come and Try Bell Ringing Session
3pm Floral Arrangement Workshop

If you would like to join a class, please email office@sandyparishchurch.org or book at sandyparishchurch.org on the individual event pages. Classes are free and donations can be made on the day.

We are also looking forward to enjoying a mixture of faith, fun and fellowship at our **Parish Weekend Away**, from 18–20 September, at The Greenhouse, Barnes Close in Bromsgrove.

Other activities

On 22 August around 40 of us enjoyed a delicious **Cream Tea** in the Rectory garden. Thanks to Rev Jodie's husband James for his sterling baking efforts.

Hosts Rev Jodie & James...

On 16 August the **HCPT** (Hosanna House and Pilgrimage Children's Trust) Group 104 held a **cake sale** in the church to raise funds for their mission taking disabled and disadvantaged children on pilgrimage holidays to Lourdes at Easter.

Thanks to everyone who supported our annual **Summer Fayre** on 18 July. Much fun was had by all who attended and it raised a fantastic £1500 for the church.

Facepainting at the Fayre

St Swithun's Summer Fayre raffle

... and guests at the Rectory cream tea

Thanks also go to Andrew Holford for his thought-provoking **Are there dustbins in heaven?** course on CHuRCH and Climate Change.

On 12 July, we held a **GraveTalk** session at the Brew & Renew Café for anyone of any faith to have a relaxed discussion about death, dying and your funeral, and ask any questions.

A wonderful evening of music was enjoyed at the **St Swithun's Singers Midsummer Melodies concert** on 15 July.

Our **wildlife cameras** installed by the Eco Church Committee have recorded muntjac deer and bats visiting the churchyard. The next Eco Church Meeting is on Thursday 3 September at 7.30pm.

Pizza & Chat

Our young people's group is held on the last Wednesday of the month from 6–8pm. It's a chance for 11–18-year-olds to meet, eat pizza, play games and talk about life, faith and the big questions.

Tuesday Home Groups

We have two Tuesday groups in Sandy homes, one from 8.15–10am and another at 6.30pm. All are welcome to join for tea, coffee, fellowship, Bible discussion and prayer. For more details, speak to Andrew Holford 07915 125875.

Wednesday Communion

There is a Holy Communion Service each Wednesday in the Church at 10.30am.

Evening prayers

Rev Jodie holds evening prayers in the church at 5pm on Mondays to Thursdays for half an hour. All are welcome to join.

Pastoral Care

Contact Revd Jodie or a Church Warden for home visits, prayer, Holy Communion; weddings, funerals and baptisms.

St Swithun's Parish Church
30 High St, Sandy SG19 1AQ
sandyparishchurch.org 07845 735880
revjodiebrown@gmail.com
For service times, see pp18–19

Sandy Baptist Church

We had a great **August Fun Day** with 70–80 people coming along. The bouncy castle, table football and table tennis were all popular. In the hall we had clay model making, painting sun catchers, glitter tattoos and games. There was lots of cake, a BBQ and the afternoon ended with a donut challenge. We were so busy we didn't take any photos!

Many of you know **Tom and Edwige Turner**, who have now moved up to Liverpool to be close to their family. They have been such a key part of Sandy Baptist Church and the Sandy community for many years that they will be greatly missed. I am sure many of you have stories of being fed by Edwige or welcomed into their home.

We had another **Baptism** in August and thankfully the hosepipe ban didn't apply to religious services – it would be impossible to fill the pool up by hand! We are so amazed by the way God is blessing us after so many years of struggle.

We are looking at **installing heating** in the main church so we can worship in there throughout the year (and it will be warm for the Easter Story Trail if it is held next year – I can hear the teachers and presenters cheering!). We just need to raise enough money to do so and take out the ancient broken heating system.

Even though the harvest has been early this year, we are waiting until Sunday 4 October to hold our all-age **Harvest Festival**. Any produce collected will go to The Need Project.

On Sunday 11 October at 10.30am we have a special guest from **CHIPS** (Christian International Peace Service). Alex Cameron is sharing about the work of CHIPS in Brixton and Northern Ghana (chipspeace.org). Everyone welcome.

We are tentatively planning a **Family Light Party** on 31 October from 3–4.30pm. Look out for details on posters and facebook.

Regular activities

Little Angels Toddler Group – Tuesdays at 9.45am, term time only, restarts 15 September with spaces available jennykvass@gmail.com

Bible Study Groups – Sunday evening (grow in faith Bible study) 6.30pm and Tuesday evening (traditional Bible study) 7.30pm in the church hall

Prayer Meeting – Monday 7.30pm in the main church

Men's Breakfast (full English) – second Saturday of the month at 8.30am (but not in September). Any men are welcome to join (no charge but by donation). Email Phil via deacons@sandybaptistchurch.org so he buys enough food.

Ladies' Breakfast – third Saturday of the month at 9am (no charge but by donation). Text 07766 089794

Our website is now regularly updated with activities and sermons. Do check it out.

Pastoral Care

Please contact Revd Martin Jones, Minister (see details, right)

Sandy Baptist Church
Bedford Road, Sandy SG19 1EJ
Revd Martin Jones 07717 286288
minister.sandybaptist@gmail.com
Hall Hire: sandybaptisthallhire@gmail.org
sandybaptistchurch.org
facebook: SandyBaptistChurch
Service times on pp18–19

Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy

Yes, we are finally using our new name! Sunday 6 September is the launch day of our new multisite church – Beacon Methodist Church serving the communities of Sandy, Beeston and Upper Caldecote.

As Beacon Church, we will continue to hold regular services across the three chapels. We will still host our coffee mornings, charity teas and other outreach efforts in our different communities. We will also still continue to work with other churches in the Churches Together fellowship: going into schools with Open the Book, hosting Messy Church and walking together on Good Friday – as well as generally bringing a taste of God's Kingdom to those we know and meet. The changes that have come (and will continue to come) are a sharing of the workload of running a church, a broadening of our outlook, a sharing of burdens and also our hopes and dreams – and possibly being in a better place to realise them.

Finally, as part of this exciting new chapter of worshipping and serving, we welcome our new minister Rev Zena Smith at a special service on 6 September. May we all grow together in the fellowship of the Lord.

Jenny Endersby

Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston

The church was beautifully decorated with 13 shop-themed floral arrangements for our well-supported **Flower Festival** on 4 July.

The **Farewell Service** for Revd Leslie Noon, retiring after 20 years in ministry, was held on 5 July. Members from the seven churches of the Eastern Section of our Circuit filled our church and a presentation was made to Leslie.

At **Bake a Cake and Bring a Chair** on Saturday 25 July, the Beeston, Sandy and Upper Caldecote Churches enjoyed tea, cake and games in the sunshine at Beeston.

Meredith Major is taking our **Harvest Festival Service** on Sunday 27 September. Traditionally, members bring eggs, which then go to Sue Ryder Hospice, Moggerhanger.

Cynthia Dent

Fellowship Group

Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy, Thurs 2–3pm.

Community Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings at Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston, 10am–noon first Thursday of the month and at Sandy on the third Wednesday from 10am.

Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
St Neots Rd, Sandy SG19 1BP 01767 683498 sandy.methodist@gmail.com
Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
4 The Baulk, Beeston, Sandy SG19 1NR
northbedsmethodist.org.uk
Service times on pp18–19

Charity Updates

The Need Project

This ongoing and increasing ministry relies on the love, prayers and generous donations from the local church community.

Operating out of Sandy Baptist Church, it provides families in need in the Sandy & Beeston communities with support, food, toiletries and other provisions.

Urgent needs include cereals, tinned meat and fish, UHT milk, fruit juice, coffee (small jars), squash, canned, bottled and packeted food, pulses, cleaning products, larger-size nappies and toiletries.

Donations can be left in the box in the entrance of all our churches, or brought to Sandy Baptist Church during The Need project top-up shop on Tuesday mornings.

NEED provision is available for anyone who is struggling to make ends meet for whatever reason. Please speak to a church warden who will refer you to the NEED project coordinators. theneedproject.org

The Leprosy Mission

We have now sent off a fantastic £18,099 towards our £25,150 pledge for the 'I Am Nisha' Project, which aims to end child leprosy. This is funding school screening of 30,000 children, plus support for reconstructive surgery, prosthetic limbs and vocational training for ten children.

Recent events

At our **Gardeners' World Live** event at the NEC Birmingham on 18 June, 43 people had a lovely day and the raffle raised £105. Nearly 50 people attended our **Afternoon Tea Party** on 21 June and raised £497. We took 59 supporters to Georgian **Peckover House and Gardens**, in Wisbech on 24 June and the raffle raised £169. We are planning a return trip in October (see below). Blessed with perfect sunny weather, but not too hot, our annual **Coffee Morning** at Leeds Smith Drive on 1 August was attended by 150 people and raised a fantastic £1,843.

Upcoming events

- **Afternoon Cruise** – Our afternoon cruise and tea on the John Bunyan Community Boat downstream along the River Ouse on **Tuesday 8 September** is full, but a waiting list is available.
- **Autumn Quiz Competition** – Quiz sheets for 'An Englishman's Home' will be available from 18 September, still just £1 each.
- **Outing to Buckingham Palace** – This is on **Friday 25 September**. The coach is full with several on the reserve list.
- **Outing to Peckover House** – We are running a second outing to Peckover House on Friday 9 October – full details from me.
- **Autumn Quiz Evening** – This is on Friday 23 October at 7.30pm in the Scout HQ for teams of up to six persons.
- **Fundraising Stall** on our drive at 2 Leeds Smith Drive, daily 10am to 5pm, weather permitting. Contributions welcome.

Colin Osborne

The Children's Society Collection Boxes

The collection boxes were emptied for the spring period and a total of £695.99 has been sent to the Society. Thank you for your contributions, particularly in the current difficult economic climate.

I know that these days loose coins are in short supply, but the money from the boxes is much appreciated and always put to good use. If anyone would like to have a collection box, please do let me know and I will organise this.

Jennifer Watson, Box Co-ordinator

The Ivel Sprinter

The Ivel Sprinter community bus service, operated by East Beds Community Bus, is a volunteer-led transport link, operating a flexible 'hail-and-ride' service within a 20-mile radius of Biggleswade and Sandy.

It was established in August 1991 to facilitate trips to doctors, shops, libraries and market towns, with scheduled timetables running Monday to Saturday, connecting residents across Biggleswade, Langford, Sandy, Potton, Everton, Roxton, Tempsford and Sutton to regional hubs such as Bedford, St Neots and Cambridge.

The charity's unpaid team manage operations, raise funds, ensure legal compliance and drive the routes. To sustain this vital regional asset and support underutilised weekly routes – such as

the Monday service to Bedford and the Tuesday, Friday and Saturday morning links to Sainsbury's in Biggleswade – the organisation is seeking new volunteers. Rota commitments are highly flexible, requiring as little as one drive per month.

To find out more about the services and volunteering opportunities visit ivelsprinter.org.uk

BIKE 'N' HIKE 2026

Don't forget that the 2026 Bike 'n' Hike is on 12 September. The challenge is to walk, cycle, drive or take any form of transport to as many churches and chapels as you can between 9am–5pm and collect sponsor money for the Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust. This helps churches and chapels that apply for much-needed grants towards the huge expense of upkeep on their buildings including St Swithun's.

You could visit our local churches on bike or foot; go by bus to Bedford; or travel by train to Hitchin or London, for example. Many churches are open on the day and serving refreshments. More information and sponsor forms are available at St Swithun's or bedshertshct.org.uk

Last year we raised a magnificent total of £1,242.47, of which half was returned to our church. A huge thank you to those who joined me, to all who sponsored us and to the team who manned St Swithun's Church for the whole day.

Jean Peckham

All change at the top!

The Rt Reverend Dr Andrew Rumsey

On Saturday 19 September The Right Reverend Dr Andrew Rumsey is being installed as the 11th Bishop of St Albans at St Albans Cathedral. At the end of the year The Right Reverend Richard Atkinson will retire from the post of Bishop of Bedford and acting Bishop of St Albans (which role he obviously releases to Bishop Rumsey).

I've met Bishop Atkinson twice (he came to a PCC meeting shortly before St Swithun's former rector Huw Davies retired and visited St Swithun's again to preside over a service where I and five others were confirmed in 2022). He turned out to be the most agreeable and interesting man you could meet. However, let's focus on Bishop Rumsey for this edition of *The Pinnacle*, though, and write about Bishop Atkinson in the next as these editions coincide respectively with their installation and retirement.

Homecoming appointment

So, what do we know about our new Bishop? His father was a parish priest at St Martin's Church, Knebworth – a part of St Albans Diocese – which is why he speaks of his appointment as a "homecoming". He graduated with a BA in History from the University of Reading. It seems Dr Rumsey has an artistic seam, after recording an album of Psych-folk songs (Evensongs) to accompany his book *English Grounds: A Pastoral Journey*. The intention was for album and book to be a single creative project. This received very

positive reviews and secured the Bishop a Guest Slot on the BBC Radio 2 folk show. This was followed by another album – *Collodion* – and another book (not joint projects this time) titled *Strangely warmed – Reflections on God, Life & Bric a Brac*, which have both enjoyed a warm reception online.

Ecclesiastical Patron

2025 seems to have been a busy year. In July our Bishop was appointed to the Board of Trustees for the Churches Conservation Trust. This is a national charity for saving historic churches at risk (visitchurches.org.uk). Then, on 30 August, he was one of three Bishops appointed to be an Ecclesiastical Patron of the Prayer Book Society (pbs.org.uk), under the PBS's Royal Patron, King Charles. "The Book of Common Prayer is a treasury for today's church: a 'goodly heritage' with an enduring capacity to renew the Christian imagination of our country," Bishop Rumsey commented, adding that a well-travelled BCP sustains his own daily prayers.

Before his "homecoming" to St Albans Diocese, Dr Rumsey was the Bishop of Ramsbury (a Suffragan position in the CoE's Diocese of Salisbury) from 2019 to 2026. To explain, a Suffragan Bishop acts as a Second in Command to a Diocesan Bishop and, as Bishop of Ramsbury, he oversaw the Archdeaconries of Sarum and Wiltshire – part of the Salisbury Diocese.

Now, as he takes over the post vacated by The Right Rev Dr Alan Smith, who retired in May 2025, and covered since then by Bishop Atkinson, what can we expect? A brief (1min, 49 seconds) video clip on the Diocese website introduces our Bishop and gives a hint of his plans and intentions for the future. It's worth a look:

Bishop Rumsey shares 'sermons, lyrics and academic bits & bobs' in his Down in the Effra blog (andrewrumsey.wordpress.com)

stalbansdiocese.org/news/andrew-rumsey-next-bishop-st-albans-announcement

We're told his prayer is that "many more" across the Diocese will join the Church and find this to be a place where they can belong and begin again. We see a brief moment where our Bishop dons a pair of wellies at Ivel Springs and performs a biblical reading standing up to his ankles in our river! Surely this demonstrates that he sees the connection between the River Ivel, as part of God's creation, and the role of the church in helping us all to be stewards of our local ecosystem. These teasers are encouraging:
"We will begin these rites, As we do trust they'll end, in true delights".
(*As You Like It*, Shakespeare!)

Stephen Snow

Tales from the River Ivel banks

Our local stretch of the River Ivel includes the weir at Blunham (above) **and the picturesque view from Girtford Bridge** (right)

As we continue north, the River Ivel passes through Biggleswade, Sandy and Blunham. You might well know more than me about this stretch of water so I decided on a change of tack – let's get a submarine to find what is under the surface!

My submarine comes in the form of Graham Palmer, Secretary for both Blunham Angling Club and the Ivel Protection Association and also a Warden for St Mary's Church in Oakley. A huge thank you goes to him for kindly answering some questions about the stretch of the Ivel we enjoy here in Sandy. The diversity of aquatic life we are blessed with here is astonishing.

"The river now has a head of carp ranging in sizes up to over 20lbs," explains Graham. "The usual river fish are all there with chub, bream, roach, perch, dace, minnows and a few barble. The old Mill Pool is a very popular venue for anglers as it is deep and holds some excellent fish. The Dead River (ie that part of the Ivel that was not diverted into the Millstream) also can be very productive for anglers seeking some big fish. Crayfish are present the entire length of the river but are less now as otters have a taste for them."

I love that there are otters living off the Ivel and have eyewitness accounts of otters in the Riddy (thank you, Peter H)! Any body of water, be it a river, pond or lake, attracts and sustains wildlife. As I write this the Environment Agency have just announced that half the UK is in a drought. Our reservoirs and rivers including the Ivel are in trouble.

In May 2026 OFWAT (which the Government promised to replace a year ago!) launched a water-efficiency campaign, for which OFWAT provides the regulatory and policy framework. Please visit their website (**letssavewater.com**) to see what you can do to save our precious water supply.

Stephen Snow

The healing process

Psalm 24: 1 states that the earth and everything that belongs in it is the Lord's. Genesis 1 says that God created the earth and made humanity stewards to care for it, cultivate it and protect it. Yet we continue to exploit it recklessly.

This summer's sustained heatwaves, which have left two-thirds of England in drought, with over 26 million people impacted by hosepipe bans, thousands of excess heat-associated deaths and over 90 square miles of countryside burnt in wildfires, might have finally rung alarm bells that the planet is suffering from our over consumption, neglect, waste of resources, laziness and unwillingness to change to sustainable and ethical choices.

The incredible news is that our planet has a God-given ability to repair and regenerate despite the abuse that we humans throw it. When the rains finally come, those yellow areas that were once lawns and roadside verges will soon regain their cloak of green, the roots waiting patiently for the reviving moisture to return. Trees that shed their leaves in the height of summer to conserve energy will unfurl fresh buds to photosynthesise once again. Empty ponds and waterways will refill to welcome the awakening aquatic life lying dormant in the sludge. And seeds will recolonise wildlife-ravaged areas fed by the nutritious ash left behind.

Better stewards

But there are ways we can help this process and be better stewards of our own patches of earth.

1 Invest in a water butt – or more. (We now have eight after our original four all ran dry this year.)

2 Install a drip irrigation system for your crops and baskets to deliver water slowly and consistently just where it's needed.

3 Improve your soil – add lots of organic compost this autumn, which will help it hold on to moisture better. And spread a mulch after planting, which helps stop water evaporating as well as weed growth.

4 Plant sun-loving Mediterranean plants that require less watering. Lavender, woody salvias, echinops and sedums are all drought-tolerant and popular with pollinators.

5 Allow fire-damaged areas to regenerate. Keep to the paths and avoid stepping on vulnerable re-establishing plants. Take litter home and avoid disposable barbecues in nature.

Marina Rugg

Luke the Evangelist

On Sunday 18 October we celebrate the feast of Luke the Evangelist. We know, of course, that Luke was one of the four Gospel writers. We also know that, of this select group, he was the only one afforded a sequel – the Acts of the Apostles. Therefore, through the combination of Luke and Acts, this makes Luke the biggest contributor to the New Testament canon – even more than the apostle Paul's contribution via the Epistles. But what of the man? Who was Luke, and why do we venerate him?

Luke was a physician by trade, thus highly educated, likely a Gentile, and a trusted companion of Paul on his missionary journeys. But it is his role as historian where Luke made his most important contributions. Having not witnessed Jesus' ministry, Luke was most concerned with accurately recording testimony (some believe the gospel contains the recollections of Mary, Jesus' mother), and it is thanks to him that we have an accurate account of Jesus' life – no doubt his vocation granted him an incredible eye for detail. As he succinctly put it at the beginning of his gospel, he "decided to write a careful account… so you can be certain of the truth". It is primarily through Luke's gospel that we read of Jesus' birth, and a sizeable number of Jesus' core teachings can be found in his gospel alone – events such as the sending out of the 72, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and the classic 'Return of the Prodigal Son' parable.

Luke the Evangelist by Jan de Stomme

In the collect for Luke the Evangelist, we are reminded that God called Luke 'to be an evangelist and physician of the soul'. With this in mind (possibly as a convert himself), Luke showed particular concern for the poor, women (who were introduced at key moments of Jesus' life), and those living on the fringes of the mainstream. Yet they all had significant roles to play in the story of Jesus. Luke was also fiercely loyal. A heart-rending line in the Epistles is attributed to him, when Paul, in a bind in Rome, morosely remarks: "Only Luke is with me" (2 Timothy 4: 11). Despite his exalted position, Luke put others before himself – time and time again. This October 18th, may we remember Luke's dedication to others, and may he serve as an example to us all.

Mark Pittwood

Susan Sutton

Susan Sutton was a beloved mother and grandma and a real force for good in our Sandy community.

Born on 2 February 1959 to Terence and Shirley Williams, Susan was the eldest of four. She and her siblings Theresa, Trevor and Kevin grew up in Wrestlingworth, where she would enjoy watching her father working at the farm.

Susan married Martin Pitts in 1978 and their son Damien was born on 20 June 1983. The family lived on St Neots Road, where Martin and Susan took pleasure in growing and eating their own produce. Tragically Martin died on 2 July 1994.

Susan later married her neighbour David Sutton in 1999 and in 2001 moved to David's family home in Bedford Road. David renovated the house and Susan planned out the garden, which brought her much joy and the garden was opened for charity as part of the National Garden Scheme.

She started working for the RSPB at the factory in New Road, became a secretary at the headquarters, helped set up the London office and became a fundraising officer.

Susan really served this community, and the town of Sandy will miss her contribution greatly. She joined Sandy Town Council as a councillor in 2005 – the first woman to take on this role – and went on to serve as Deputy Mayor and then Mayor of Sandy, chairing committees and organising events. She was also a governor at St Swithun's Primary School, and was involved in the Air Cadets.

Susan's father Terence founded the Royal British Legion Wrestlingworth Branch and, after his death, she joined the Sandy Branch and later became president. She organised various events through the year and was a key part of the Remembrance Day Parade.

Susan was an immensely creative woman and her homemade cakes, jams, chutneys and pickles were legendary. She sold them to raise money for The Leprosy Mission, the NEED Project and other good causes. They also formed many of her entries in the Sandy Show, where last year she won two trophies.

Susan at a Remembrance Day Parade

Family mattered to Susan. She was so happy when her son Damien met his now wife Samantha in 2018 and her granddaughter Grace was born in August 2024. They made many happy memories together as a family.

Susan knew both love and loss, joy and sorrow. And through it all, she remained hard working, determined, playful and loving. Many have said of her 'she was a force to be reckoned with'. And so we give thanks for the woman she was, the lives she touched and the memories that will be treasured. May she now find peace, resting in green pastures.

Rev Jodie Brown, Rector, St Swithun's

Holding safeguarding high

Every summer, it's a great priviledge to spend a weekend with my choir singing in a cathedral (when their own choristers are away during the school holidays). My long-suffering husband is an architect so is fascinated by the structure of the building while I consider the 'feel' of the place especially in its regard for safeguarding.

At this year's visit to Brecon they fared very well. There was a safeguarding noticeboard, like ours at St Swithun's, and lots of references to the cathedral being a safe place (churches have historically been considered a place of sanctuary for centuries). The Canon who conducted our services prayed on the topic too, more than once over the three days. Most impressive was that the volunteers working there had a good knowledge of safeguarding and what their role was.

I believe this is also the case for us at

St Swithun's. Simply because of our size we have a huge proportion of the church family who have completed their safeguarding training. I'd like to think that even when Jodie and I are away from Sandy there are lots of people you can turn to for help: the PCC, all those helping with youngsters (including the summer club), and all our alternative preachers, to name but a few. And you can always reach me via email. More safeguarding information is available on our website too.

Sandy Stopher, Parish Safeguarding Officer

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1 John 1: 5–10

Sandy Drone Photos

Unsplash/Michael Underwood

As crowds gathered to watch the partial eclipse at the Sandy Pinnacle (above left)**, so we are reminded to walk in the light of God, in whom there is no darkness** (above right)

I am writing this just as the UK has experienced its most significant partial solar eclipse since 1999. Back then, I was out of the country, so 12 August 2026 was my first experience of such an event. I must admit it was rather strange to witness, as if God had turned down the dimmer switch, but I hear that total eclipses can elicit much stronger natural responses. People often notice the sudden silence as birds stop singing the moment darkness falls. There is also a temporary drop in temperature, and even wind patterns can change.

You may be wondering what this has got to do with this issue's Scripture? Well, just as (most of) the natural world is dependent on the light from the sun, so we too (as Christians) should live in the light – the light of God, that is. One of the highlights of John's first letter is this very premise: 'This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practising the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.' (1: 5–7).

Although this is what John says on the matter (he continues to talk about the reality of sin in verses 8–10), as with all things biblical, the context of the message is key. At the time, John's letter was an attempt to counter false teaching. One such line was that we can satisfy every earthly desire because our bodies will eventually be destroyed anyway. This of course misses the point, which is this: just as darkness cannot exist in the presence of light, so sin cannot exist in the presence of God – therefore if we want to have a true relationship with God, we must put aside sinful ways of living. So just as the birds need the light to sing their hearts out, so we need the light to let our hearts sing.

Mark Pittwood

Church Services

SEPT			
Wed 2	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 6	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10am	Together at 10 Joint Back to School Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Communion Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Launch Service of Beacon Methodist Church	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
	3pm	Rev Zena Smith Circuit Welcome Service	Trinity Methodist Church Biggleswade
Wed 9	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 13	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Sunday Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Harvest Celebration	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
	11am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
	11am	Contemporary Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
Wed 16	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 20	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Communion Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	11am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
	3pm	Tea@3 Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
Wed 23	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 27	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Sunday Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
	11am	Contemporary Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	11am	Harvest Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
Wed 30	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church

Church Services

OCT			
Sunday 4	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10am	Together at 10 Joint Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Family Harvest Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Beacon United Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
Wed 7	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 11	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Sunday Service with Alex Cameron of CHIPS	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Chapel Anniversary Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
	11am	Contemporary Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	11am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
Wed 14	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 18	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Communion Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	11am	Contemporary Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	11am	Local Worship Service led by members of the congregation	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
	12.30pm	Feast Your Faith Service with lunch	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
Wed 21	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
Sunday 25	8.15am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	9.30am	Traditional Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church
	10.30am	Sunday Service	Sandy Baptist Church
	10.30am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
	11am	Contemporary Service	St Swithun's Parish Church
	11am	Worship Service	Beacon Methodist Church at Beeston
Wed 28	10.30am	Holy Communion	St Swithun's Parish Church

What's On

To list your church or community event in our next issue, email Stephen at sandybeestonpinnacle@gmail.com by 15 September

September

Every Wednesday, 9.30am
Wellbeing Walk
Meet at the Bandstand for a 10am guided short walk (1hr) or longer walk (1½hrs) with refreshments in the Library

Thursday 2, 10am–noon
Community Coffee Morning, Beeston Chapel School Room
Enjoy coffee, tea and a chat or play card & board games

Saturday 5, 10am–12noon
Birdwatching for Beginners, RSPB The Lodge
Learn how to spot & identify birds on a guided walk. Bring your own binoculars. £13
events.rspb.org

9am–5pm
Heritage Open Day, St Swithun's
Enjoy a day of history & learning with bell ringing, floral arrangements & knitting & crocheting workshops (see p4)

2026 Bike 'n' Hike
Visit churches & chapels to fundraise for The Beds & Herts Historic Churches Trust (see p9)

Tuesday 15, 10am
Gemstones & Jewellery of the Rich & Famous with Sandy WI, Conservative Club
Hear a talk by international gemstone buyer Jason Middleton, £4
Email: sandywibeds@gmail.com

Wednesday 16,10am
Coffee Morning, Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
Enjoy a chat over coffee in the church

Friday 18
Launch of TLM Autumn Quiz Competition
'An Englishman's Home' quiz sheets from Colin £1 in aid of The Leprosy Mission

Friday 18–Sunday 20, 9am–5pm
Bedfordshire Steam & Country Fayre, Old Warden
Attractions & displays from the Bedford Steam Engine Preservation Society. From £17
shuttleworth.org

Saturday 19, 9am
Ladies' Breakfast, Sandy Baptist
A chance for ladies to meet together over breakfast. Text 07766 089794 to book

Tuesday 22, 6pm For Men to Talk, Roundabout Club
A chance for men finding life tough to meet and chat.
formentotalk.co.uk

Friday 25:
2–4pm Sandy Rollers, Sandy Library
A social group for users of wheelchairs, mobility scooter, strollers and walkers

7.30pm
The World Turned Upside Down, Stonecroft Lounge, St Swithun's Way
Sandy Historical Society talk by Stuart Orme on the effect of the British Civil Wars, Cavaliers and Roundheads. £5
Tel: 01767 680171

Tuesday 29, 10am–12noon
Never Alone Support Group, Shires Funeral Directors
Everyone is welcome to pop in to 3 Belfry Court Sandy SG19 1JR for a drink, cake & a chat

October

Every Wednesday, 9.30am
Wellbeing Walk
See September entry for details

Thursday 1, 10am–noon
Community Coffee Morning, Beeston Chapel School Room
Enjoy coffee, tea and a chat or play card & board games

Friday 9
TLM Trip to Peckover House
Full details from Colin, in aid of The Leprosy Mission

Saturday 10, 8.30am
Men's Breakfast, Sandy Baptist Church Hall
Book with phil.vass@sky.com

Saturday 17, 9am
Ladies' Breakfast, Sandy Baptist
Text 07766 089794 to book

Wednesday 21, 10am
Coffee Morning, Beacon Methodist Church at Sandy
Enjoy a chat over coffee

Friday 23, 7.30pm
TLM Autumn Quiz Evening
Sandy Scout Hut with raffle. Book teams of up to 6 with Colin, £3 per person

Tuesday 27:
10am–12noon
Never Alone Support Group
See September entry for details

6pm For Men to Talk, Roundabout Club
See September entry for details

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We are most grateful to **G&H Seamer Funeral Directors** of Sandy for printing this edition of *The Pinnacle*.
For more information about their funeral services tel: **01767 680519** or visit **ghseamer.co.uk**