

STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH

St Mary's in the Marketplace

Churchgate Stockport SK1 1YG

Tel: 0161 480 1815

St Mary's with St Andrew's Parish Office

St Andrew's Community Church

Hall Street Stockport SK1 4DA

Tel: 0161 429 6564

Mobile: 07421 000123

 e-mail: st.marysstockport@gmail.com

www.stmarysinthemarketplace.com

 Stockport Parish Church – St Mary's

Service times at St Mary's

Sunday: 10:30am Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

Normally the first and third Sunday is Holy Communion with Morning on the second and fourth.

**Tuesday: 10.00am Holy Communion
12.15pm Lunchtime Service**

Wedding, Baptism, Funeral and other services by arrangement.

St Mary's and the Nave Café is open – Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday from 9.00am – 3.00pm

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Parish Magazine of

STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH

[St Mary's in the Marketplace]

with St Andrew's, Hall Street.



A contribution towards the cost of producing this magazine would be appreciated please – in the donations box. Thank You

Diary

February 2018

Sunday, 4 th February	Holy Communion	10.30am
Tuesday, 6 th February	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00am 12.15pm
Sunday, 11 th February	Morning Prayer	10.30am
Tuesday, 13 th February SHROVE TUESDAY	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00am 12.15pm
Wednesday, 14 th February ASH WEDNESDAY	Holy Communion	7.00pm
Saturday, 17 th February	Nave Café Charity Event – World Leprosy	
Sunday, 18 th February	Holy Communion	10.30am
Tuesday, 20 th February	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00am 12.15pm
Sunday, 25 th February	Morning Prayer	10.30am
Tuesday, 27 th February	Holy Communion Lunchtime Service	10.00am 12.15pm

Our second Sunday congregation with the Zeal Church will continue to meet at 3.30pm . Everyone welcome.

The easy way to discover your local churches

Have you visited the website A Church Near You?

It is great for searching for churches or services in your area, well any area actually. All you have to do is type in a postcode or a specific feature such as a choir, or disabled access and up it comes. Also handy to check on a parish boundary!

A Church Near You receives more than 13 million page-views throughout the year. Try it at: <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/> We are listed so why not have a look next time you are on-line.

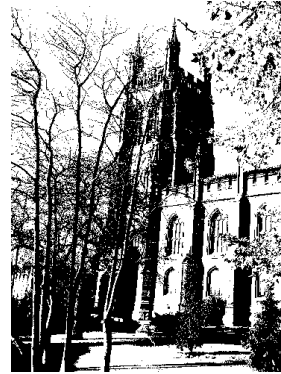
ACROSS: 1, Credit. 4, Tackle. 7, Cain. 8, Kenaniah. 9, Strength. 13, Beg. 16, Salvation Army. 17, ARC. 19, Every day. 24, Admonish. 25, Dire. 26, Sneeze. 27, Bronze.

DOWN: 1, Cock. 2, Epistolic. 3, Taken. 4, Tenet. 5, Cane. 6, Leave. 10, Erase. 11, Guide. 12, Honey. 13, Barbarian. 14, Guys. 15, Asia. 18, Rod in. 20, Voice. 21, Rahab. 22, Hope. 23, Mene.

Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to members of St Mary's congregation and friends who brought their shoe box gifts or made items or gave gifts and donations for the boxes. With those from Bolshaw Primary School I took them to the Manchester Area Processing Centre in Ashton. There over 18,000 boxes were processed and packed. The first lorry load of 9860 boxes were sent to Romania which I hope included all our boxes. The remainder of the boxes were sent to Latvia and the Ukraine. Many thanks to all for supporting the OCC campaign in 2017.

Margaret Forster



As much as it was nice to take a short break early January, the start of a new year is a busy time in the office with lots of work to complete clearing away the old year and starting the new. Ongoing is the task of preparing year-end statistics/accounts/ report and returns etc (of which there are many) and we will welcome you to join us at the Annual Church Meeting in April when all this information will be available for you to read in our Annual Report. For now all our figures are being submitted to the Diocese and information put together for our Accountant/Auditor. We have also been contacting all those who took part in our Christmas programme, inviting them to return this coming Christmas – the programme for December 2018 already filling up – the circle of church-life goes on!

We are of course preparing for Lent – and hope you can join us on Ash Wednesday (14th February) for Holy Communion at 7pm. Before then however, in support of Christians Against Poverty, join us for our pancake lunch on Shrove Tuesday after the lunchtime service at St Mary's.

Mike and John have prepared a wonderful programme for our Tuesday, lunch-time services during Lent with a host of different speakers attending between the 20th February and 27th March. We do hope that as many of you as possible will be able to join us for some, if not all, of these short services after which the Nave Café will be serving a one-course lunch (with tea/coffee) the proceeds of which will be given to Christian Aid to support their Easter Appeal. More of our Easter Programme next month.

Work continues in the background to prepare the way for advertising the vacancy at St Mary's, which we hope to be able to do in the very near future as well as to make available more detailed plans regarding the parish as a whole.



Join us for pancakes at the Nave Cafe
Tuesday lunchtime Tuesday, 13th February.

Proceeds/donations to Christians Against Poverty.

Advanced notification:

Annual Parochial Church Meeting & Meeting of Parishioners 2018

Please note that these meetings will take place after the lunch-time service on Tuesday, 17th April 1pm



Walk into the wilderness this Lent.

Count Your Blessings 2018

Will you walk in the wilderness this Lent – imagine two years without rain – and help people like Dimma.

Before drought hit northern Kenya, Dimma's life was good – her family enjoyed nutritious milk and meat from their goats and camels, as well as vital income that kept them going. But the rains stopped and Dimma's family was torn apart. Most the goats died and her son was forced to leave desperately seeking pasture for the surviving camels – he has no choice but the travel a vast 300km away and was gone for months.

“The drought has forced us from our home, our family is separated and without livestock we have no source of income. Now we're stuck here. Our lives are on the line” Dimma Gollo.

Christian Aid were able to give Dimma's family money for the food and livestock feed they desperately needed, as well as clean water. This support is keeping her family and animals alive. But many more people still need our help.

“If it wasn't for this kind of aid, we couldn't have survived” Dimma.

We will be holding a “Lent Lunch” at the Nave Café following the lunch-time service (12.45pm) on the 20th & 27th February, 6th, 14th, 20th & 27th March. Profits to be paid to Christian Aid – book early – 1 course lunch (with tea/coffee) £3.00

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple/ Candlemas

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2 February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present Him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

ASH WEDNESDAY – mourning our sins

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally came to their senses, and saw their evil ways as God saw them, they could do nothing but repent in sorrow. They mourned for the damage and evil they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head, and even rending your clothes, was an outward sign of their heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin. (See Genesis 18:27; 2 Samuel 13:19; Job 2:8, 30:19; Isaiah 58:5; Jeremiah 6:26; Jonah 3:6)

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time, and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom, and to do so at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments' (Joel 2:12-19). Ash Wednesday became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes'.

The actual custom of 'ashing' was abolished at the Reformation, though the old name for the day remained. Today, throughout the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional. Certainly the mark of ashes on the forehead reminds people of their mortality: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return..." (Genesis 3:19) The late medieval custom was to burn the branches used on Palm Sunday in the previous year in order to create the ashes for Ash Wednesday.

George Herbert, priest and poet 1633

If we were to name someone prominent from the 17th century, we might mention Rembrandt or Shakespeare. It is unlikely we would remember George Herbert. However, he was a prolific writer, a gifted speaker and musician. His hymns are still sung today. Herbert was born into a wealthy family in Mid-Wales on 3rd April 1593. His father was a Member of Parliament who died when Herbert was 3 years old. His mother moved her large family to London where, aged 12, Herbert entered Westminster School. In 1609, his mother remarried, and Herbert left home to be a student at Trinity College, Cambridge. By the age of 23, Herbert had graduated with two degrees. He was fluent in Latin and Greek and in 1620 was elected as the University's Public Orator. He held this position for seven years, and for a short time was MP in his home town in Wales. Although Herbert was securing an illustrious future and his speeches had gained the attention of King James 1, he was restless. He felt God was calling him to the priesthood and much of Herbert's poetry expressed his inner spiritual conflicts. When the King died in 1625, and two influential patrons also died at about the same time, Herbert responded to God's call on his life and gave up his secular ambitions. He married in 1629, and became a priest in a small Anglican church in Bemerton in Wiltshire. Here he found inner peace at last, serving God in the local community. His poetic talent continued to flourish along with his musicianship as a skilled lutenist. After only three years as a priest, he died of tuberculosis on 1st March 1633. He was 39.

Some ninety of Herbert's poems have been set to music by such composers as Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten. His most well-known hymns are Teach me my God and King, Let all the world in every corner sing and King of glory, king of peace. A number of artistic commemorations of Herbert exists in several churches and cathedrals including a stained-glass window in Westminster Abbey and a statue at the front of Salisbury Cathedral.

The Rev Paul Hardingham considers this month's unlikely link of Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day ...

'Lenten Valentines'

During this month Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day, share the same date! It seems an odd mix, yet there is an obvious link: love! Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, is about learning how to love God more, as we give Him space in our lives. It's also an opportunity to reflect on Jesus' experience in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13).

Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit (1), where He was tempted by Satan, but demonstrated the path of real love. Jesus is tempted to turn stones into bread. Love gets to the heart of human need, not just satisfying physical desires. Satan tempts Jesus to worship him. However, worshipping God is the beginning of love and results in sacrificial service to meet the needs of others. Finally, He is tempted to put God to the test, by jumping off the Temple. Only real love can change hearts by practical love and care.

Lent teaches us how to live out the love of God in practice, as we follow Jesus in the way of the cross.

Valentine was Christ's follower, committed to sharing God's love with others. We know little about him, except that he was a priest who lived in the 3rd Century AD and was martyred on February 14th. Emperor Claudius felt that soldiers in the Roman Army were distracted from their duty by their wives, and so attempted to outlaw marriage. It is believed that Valentine married couples in secret. He also helped Christians in Rome during times of persecution. He demonstrated the importance of showing real love in action. In trying to understand the meaning of her revelations from God, Julian of Norwich found: 'What, do you wish to know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well, love was his meaning.'

How often do you contemplate your toothbrush? By Tim Lenton

What's in your toothbrush?

What you put in your mouth every night changed dramatically 80 years ago, when the first toothbrushes with nylon bristles were introduced by Du Pont on 24th February 1938.

Until then, the bristles had been made from the stiff, coarse hairs taken from the back of a hog's neck and attached to handles made of bone or bamboo. Understandably, the first nylon toothbrush was called a Miracle Toothbrush.

Back in around 3000 BC the Babylonians and the Egyptians made a brush by fraying the end of a twig. The hog's neck version originated in China in the 15th century, but a more modern design was made by William Addis in England around 1780.

Pig-hair toothbrushes are still used today, sometimes by people concerned about the environment. Discarded plastic brushes can end up in places such as the gullets of albatrosses and other large sea birds.

Bread, glorious bread

Good quality sliced bread is back in fashion this year. After years of decline, when carbs were 'out', households all over the country seem to be waking up to the fact that they can easily create delicious lunches with 'craft' breads at home, and have no need to pay anything up to £15 for an 'avocado brunch' at trendy cafés. And so, inviting your friends over for a sandwich 'brunch' at the weekend is becoming a very sociable occasion, rather than going out. Pasta is also expected to make a major 'return' this year.

Decluttering Old Testament Style! - The story of creation, in Genesis chapter one, describes God bringing order out of chaos. God separates different things. God puts the right things in the right places. There is light and space and air, with enough to satisfy the needs of all creatures, and room to grow. This could describe the process of decluttering as well. So the first step in the physical process is to clear a space. This provides inspiration for the task ahead of you. Just look at the way things could be! Cleared space also offers a place to rest and think, until the chaos has been conquered. Decluttering always makes things worse before it makes them better, as the contents of overflowing cupboards, boxes, and drawers are spread out to sort in the light. It is tiring work too, with so many decisions to make about what to keep and what to do with the rest of it. So - cherish your space! Decluttering a whole home can be a long process, but don't let that intimidate you. Instead, get started soon! Remember that in the book of Exodus, salvation is shown as being brought out from slavery and oppression into freedom and open space. As the Psalmist wrote: 'We went through fire and through water; yet you have brought us out to a spacious place.' Psalm 66:12. Those who market products for us to consume (even space-saving "storage solutions") want us to see space as something to fill – preferably with whatever they sell. Yet God is present in the space. We can ask our Lord, in prayer, to change our attitude towards the space in our home, so we see space as a valuable commodity, something to use creatively and to enjoy. Again, the Psalmist thanks God because: 'You gave me a wide place for my steps under me, and my feet did not slip.' Psalm 18:36. Once we are set free from the burden of constantly having to sort and maintain our overflow of possessions, there will be room and time to use the creative gifts that God has given to you. What are your gifts? Baking, dancing, growing vegetables, painting, storytelling, wood carving? – the list of possibilities is endless. Look closely at the things in your house. Does each possession help you in using your God-given gifts, or slow you down by encumbering you? Aim to be set free from them for CREATIVITY, to be like our Creator God, enjoying the freedom of a simplified, uncluttered life, with time freed for what is most important.

Diary of a Momentous Year: February 1918: Canon David Winter
How long, O Lord, how long? If there had been radio or television in 1918 the British public would have been more aware that events in northern Europe and the middle East were changing the history of the modern world. Of course, people knew – it was all over the newspapers – that Russia now had a Bolshevik Government, following the Revolution, and that British forces (including the eventually world-famous 'Lawrence of Arabia') were now deeply involved in a war to free the Arab peoples from Ottoman rule. But that all seemed far away, and there were more immediately pressing things to worry about at home. The first, and for most people the worst, of these was the very effective German blockade. 'Britannia rules the waves' didn't seem very true when German submarines, the dreaded U-boats, could operate with impunity around our shores. During February, a British troopship carrying American soldiers was sunk off the Irish coast, and even more blatantly a hospital ship was sunk in the Bristol channel, both by German submarines. The city of Dover, in Kent, was shelled by the guns of a U-boat. The whole thing seemed to be getting out of hand – certainly the toll of freight ships sunk was drastically affecting food and other supplies in the shops. The result of this was that the civilian population, whose war-time fears had hitherto largely concerned their loved ones at the front line, now felt the effects of war at close hand. Over the previous two years they had gradually become aware, largely through the bombing raids by Zeppelins on British towns and cities, that in modern warfare everyone is vulnerable. By the end of 1917, the Germans had largely abandoned Zeppelin raids, mainly because they had already lost the greater part of their fleet, but the threat of raids by aircraft was very much in people's minds. The shelling of Dover was a reminder that modern war knows no borders. Not surprisingly, February 1918 saw many tentative attempts to gather support for a peace-making programme, largely encouraged by US President Wilson. Politicians were talking peace at last, and there had been cease-fires agreed in several long-lasting disputes in eastern Europe, and the middle East. But for anxious British people, some resolution of the apparently endless conflict with Germany was the main topic of their prayers.

How much do Christian charities receive?

The Salvation Army Trust is bigger than you probably think it is: it has the largest annual income among ten of the biggest Christian charities in the UK, according to recent data submitted to the Charity Commission. The trust's income for 2016 was £209 million, which includes £126 million in fund-raising, making it also the highest fund-raiser on the list.

Second highest was Christian Aid, with £107 million, and in third place came the Methodist Church's Independent Schools Trust (MIST), which had an annual income of £99,868,000. World Vision came fourth, with £95,372,000, and Tearfund came fifth, with £72,162,000.



Flip a pancake - and help someone in debt

On Shrove Tuesday (13th February), churches, groups, families and friends across the country will be getting out their frying pans to host a Flipping Marvellous Pancake Party on behalf of the work of Christians Against Poverty.

Every pancake flipped will help raise money to free desperate people from the crushing weight of debt and poverty.

If you would like to enjoy pancakes, and also help others in the process, why not see what we are doing at St Mary's or if you wish to hold your own "pancake party" there is a website that can help: **pancakeparty@capuk.org** where you can download a free, fun-filled resource pack. As Beth Prescott, CAP's Pancake Party President, says, 'let's make the world a batter place!'

Royal British Legion



We are pleased to have been able to hand over to the Stockport Branch of the British Legion £61.84 being the proceeds from the collection box at the Nave Café (along with £22.19 from the box in Stockport Heritage Trust) as well as a cheque for £80 (being the proceeds from our Coffee Morning).

Our aim for 2018 is to support further the RBL in this the centenary year of the end of WW1.

Easter Faith

During Lent every Tuesday 12.15 - 12.45 a local Christian will speak about **the difference Jesus Christ makes to their life and work**

20 February - Louise Parrott-Bates
CEO Pure Innovations Ltd

27 February - Dr Natasha Fraser
General Practitioner

6 March - Councillor Adrian Nottingham
Group Leader, Independent Ratepayers Stockport Council

13 March - George Perrin
Director of Town Centre Programmes, Stockport Council

20 March - Simon Leigh
Managing Director, Allens Chartered Accountants

27 March - Geraldine Sullivan
Stockport Christian Counselling Olive ROC Centre

A lunch (main + hot drink) will be available at a cost of £3.00 – proceeds/donations to the Christian Aid Lent & Easter Campaign. Pre book if possible by the previous Friday.
email: st.marysstockport@gmail.com

.Christians Against Poverty.

christians
against
poverty

CAP

You only need to read through their website to realise that with a small donation and big faith, John Kirkby started Christians Against Poverty in 1996. He believed God was calling him to sacrifice his career in finance and use his knowledge of the industry to help the poor, and so from his hometown of Bradford, he set off on the incredible journey of CAP.

His faith adventure led him to people crippled by debt; parents who couldn't feed their children, families facing eviction and desperate people living in fear and without hope. John used his expertise to negotiate with creditors, set up budgeting systems and offer a lifeline to those trapped in debt. With the knowledge that people all over the country were struggling in the same way he began looking to replicate the work across the UK. With the vital ingredients of a church to partner with, a passionate person to be trained as a debt counsellor and the faith that God would provide, four new CAP centres were opened at the end of 1998.

So the story continues, since then, CAP has rapidly grown its debt centre network and expanded its services to tackle the causes of debt and poverty too. As well as CAP Debt Help, assistance is given to help people step into employment through CAP Job Clubs, help people get control of their addictions through CAP Release Groups and a brand new service, CAP Life Skills, to equip people to live well on a low income. The vision is to bring freedom and good news to the poor in every community through 1,000 CAP projects by 2021.

Congratulations to Ruth & Joseph

Our very best wishes to Ruth & Joseph following their marriage at Stockport Parish Church on Saturday, 20th January.

Women's World Day of Prayer

Friday, 2nd March 2018

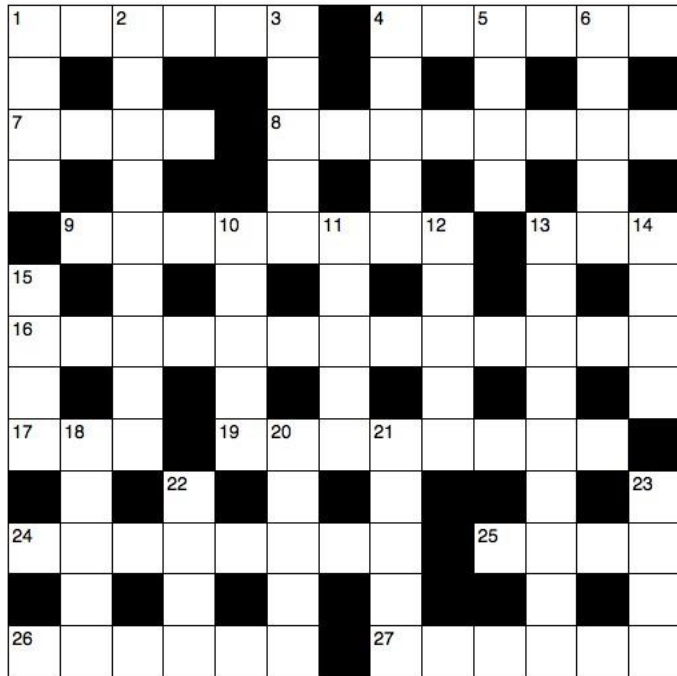
To be held at St Peter's Church, St Peter's Square, Stockport on Friday 2nd March at 2 pm, the service has been written by the Christian women of Suriname, South America.



It's open to all, and all are welcome.

Ann and Catriona say a big thank you to all who supported and took part in the Fashion Show and the Christmas Fayre, raising a total of approximately £1200.

A note for your diary that Fizz Fashion will be back with us on Thursday, 8th November and St Mary's Christmas Fayre on Saturday, 1st December 2018.



Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 'If you love those who love you, what — is that to you?' (Luke 6:32) (6)
- 4 'They threw the ship's — overboard' (Acts 27:19) (6)
- 7 The first murderer (Genesis 4:8) (4)
- 8 He was the head Levite in charge of the singing when the ark of God was brought back to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 15:22) (8)

- 9 Samson was noted for this (Judges 16:6) (8)
- 13 Solicit money or food from passers by (Acts 3:2) (3)
- 16 What William Booth's Christian Mission became in 1878 (9,4)
- 17 Alliance of Religions and Conservation (1,1,1)
- 19 'I will praise your name for ever and ever. — — I will praise you' (Psalm 145:1-2) (5,3)
- 24 Simon had (anag.) (8)
- 25 Desperate (Deuteronomy 28:48) (4)
- 26 Elisha witnessed the boy he was seeking to resuscitate do this seven times before opening his eyes (2 Kings 4:35) (6)
- 27 The belly and thighs of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream were made of this (Daniel 2:32) (6)

DOWN

- 1 'Before the — crows, you will disown me three times' (Matthew 26:75) (4)
- 2 Relating to the books of the Bible between Acts and Revelation (9)
- 3 'They have — the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!' (John 20:2) (5)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 'Take the following fine spices: ... 250 shekels of fragrant — ' (Exodus 30:23) (4)
- 6 'Do not — Jerusalem, but wait for the gift' (Acts 1:4) (5)
- 10 A seer (anag.) (5)
- 11 'Even there your hand will — me' (Psalm 139:10) (5)
- 12 The wild variety was part of John the Baptist's diet (Mark 1:6) (5)
- 13 A non-Greek speaker who was looked down on by civilized people (Colossians 3:11) (9)
- 14 Famous 1950s musical whose characters included members of
- 16 Across, — and Dolls (4)
- 15 The province from which Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 16:19) (4)
- 18 'He was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring — — his hand' (Ezekiel 40:3) (3,2)
- 20 'Today, if you hear his — , do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion' (Hebrews 3:15) (5)
- 21 The Jericho prostitute who hid two Israelite spies on the roof of her house (Hebrews 11:31) (5)
- 22 'And now these three remain: faith, — and love. But the greatest of these is love' (1 Corinthians 13:13) (4)
- 23 'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end' (Daniel 5:26) (4)