

Vol.66 No 10 October 2026 Online Edition

ST PETER'S CHURCH BRACKLEY



**"LOVING GOD,
LOVING EACH OTHER,
LOVING BRACKLEY"**



Revd Rich writes.....



Artificial intelligence has been dominating the headlines lately and mainly for the wrong reasons. Taking as a given its many potential benefits, I thought I should pen some reflections on AI's potential harms to humanity.

Human dignity

Is it just me who (absurdly) feels bad about asking AI chatbots too many tricky questions, as if that might inconvenience them somehow or tire them out?

Asking lots of tricky questions is bad for the environment, but I don't think ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot or Alexa 'mind' one bit. I know it's not just me that includes 'please' and 'thank you' in my prompts and responses out of courtesy (rather than fear of robot backlash!). And many take all this anthropomorphism much further. A 2025 survey by the UK AI Safety Institute found that 33% of UK respondents said they used AI for emotional support and social interaction in the previous year. 8% did so weekly and 4% daily.

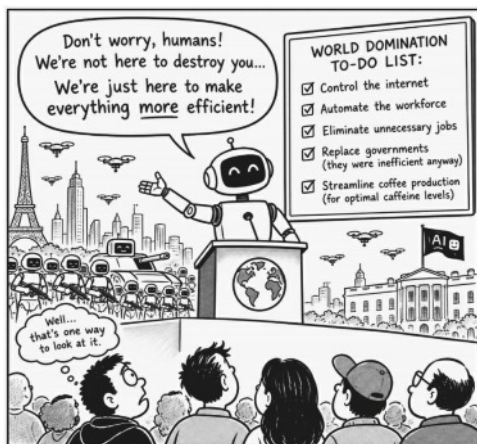
One danger then of these large language models mimicking humans so well is that we humanise them further and blur the boundaries between mankind and machine. That erosion of humanity's special place in the world, as uniquely made in God's image, is only going to increase. When I asked ChatGPT this week how it might jeopardise human dignity and distinctiveness, it responded, "The better I become at appearing humanly competent, the more important it may become to preserve awareness of the ways in which I am not a human being." Well said, machine.

Human autonomy

Pope Leo's encyclical, 'Magnificent Humanity', recently highlighted the dehumanising effects of mass unemployment that could be caused by AI. This is already being felt by younger workers and there is far more to come. But loss of human autonomy could extend much further. Soon, it is thought an artificial general intelligence might be able to rewrite its own computer code (known as 'recursive self-improvement'), and at that point, without a reliable 'kill switch', humanity could lose control entirely.

Some say this Frankenstein scenario is just doom mongering and that it's similar to any other technological revolution in history. Previously though, humans have only ever invented better tools. But it seems AI is not just a tool. It is also an agent. Instead of upgrading a plough to a

combine harvester, we could be trading the plough for a combine that can drive itself and engineer its own weapons systems.



Giving away that level of agency or autonomy, if untethered from moral responsibility and accountability, would be deeply concerning, especially if the tech has been made in our imperfect image. As King Charles recently told gathered AI leaders, "Those in our world who value our humanity and its vital moral component are anxiously seeking your reassurance that we will not lose control of our destiny."

Human survival

All this has led many, including those in the AI industry, to raise the prospect of an existential threat to humanity. Quite aside from the environmental impact, there are many scenarios proposed that could threaten mankind's survival altogether.

So where does all this leave a Christian? What might the Bible have to say?

Human victory

Threats to human dignity, autonomy and survival needed to be treated incredibly seriously, precisely because of humanity's infinite worth in God eyes: we are those made in his image (Genesis 1:26-27), loved to the heavens (Psalm 36:5) and worth the death of his only Son (John 3:16).

Yet, the Bible offers an indestructible hope to an ever more scary world: that humanity already has the victory. You see, Jesus Christ, the perfect human, is on the throne of the universe 'far above all rule and authority, power and dominion' (Ephesians 1:21). That means, no matter how tall this particular Tower of Babel becomes, it can never reach his heavenly throne.

By taking on human flesh, God has confirmed his commitment to the flourishing of humanity and so, even as Christians pray and campaign for the responsible development of AI, we can also know that peace that passes all understanding (Philippians 4:7). Christ has won the victory. Hallelujah!

Ride, Stride & Drive 2026

Although we won't yet know how much we raised until all the sponsorship money has been collected, we were blessed with a perfect day for Riding & Striding:- there was warm sunshine and most importantly the rain stayed away. Very ably and safely led by Ken & Christine Watts, some 24 hardy souls walked from St Peter's to St Mary's at Turweston where we hungrily consumed the picnics we had with us. At approximately 1.00 o'clock all but about four people set off for St George's church at Evenley



(after first braving a field of cows and bullocks!). Fortunately, the livestock seemed unconcerned!

On arriving at Evenley we were treated to ice creams on the village green, courtesy of Rosemary Leeper and then continued on to St George's where

we were greeted warmly by members of the church and given cakes, biscuits, tea, coffee & fruit juice. We finally arrived back at St Peter's just after 3.00 o'clock.

Very many thanks to all who took part and especially to Ken and Christine who made sure everyone was safe and to those who stayed at St Peter's providing refreshments for the 28 visitors that came to see us.

John Carter

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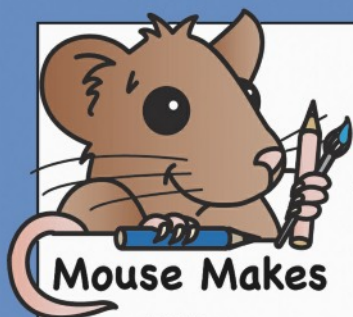
Our annual service to remember those who have died. All welcome.

3pm, Sun 1st November



Everyone who has lost a loved one in the past three years (August 2024 to August 2026) and the funeral was conducted by a member of St Peters Clergy will be invited to this service and the names of their loved ones read out.

Anyone is welcome to attend this service and if you would like the name of a loved one read out during the service there will be a memorial book placed by the font from 1st October for you to write the names of a loved one in.



The **Bible** is a collection of books, written by many different people who were helped and inspired by God. The **Bible** includes books of history, law, poetry and songs, wisdom, testimony, letters and prophecy.

The **Bible** encourages us, corrects us and teaches us about God and how we can be friends with Him.



2. Which book of the Bible has the shortest title?

1. How many books are there in the New Testament?

2



3

3. The Word of God is sharper than a two edged

Hebrews 4:12



B I B L E S U N D A Y

4. He was an Old Testament prophet that has a book named after him.

5. The first book of the Bible.



6. God's word is like? A _____ and a _____ Psalm 119:105

8. The last book in the Bible.

5

6

7

9. The Old Testament book of poetry and songs.

9

10

11

12

11. The last book in the Old Testament.

10. Who wrote the third book of the New Testament?

13

14

7. What are the first four books of the New Testament known as?



12. Which book tells the story of the spread of Christianity?



13. The Bible is also known as the

of God.
Hebrews 4:12

14. A book of the Bible named after a woman



Upcoming Events for Your Diary



Thursday Nov 26th 6.30-8.30pm

price of £40

Saturday Nov 28th 10am-12 noon

Contact

Tuesday Dec 1st 6.30-8.30pm

Sally Hughes to book your place
on 01280 700778

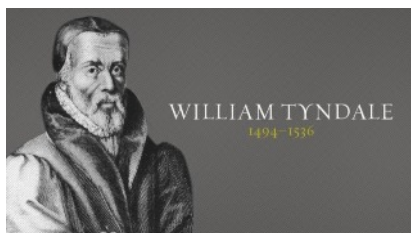
Please bring secateurs/scissors. All other materials supplied

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

We are looking forward to holding what has now become an annual event of displays of YOUR wonderful Christmas Trees displaying local groups, schools, play schools, nurseries, Church groups and anyone else who might like to help make our Church stunning for Christmas.

More details to follow but dust down your 3 ft trees, start planning ready to place your tree on a window sill of your choice on Saturday 28th November Please remove by Sunday 3rd January 2027
Caroline

How Tyndale affects what you say - today



It is 500 years since William Tyndale printed the very first English translation of the New Testament.

And hundreds of millions of people today are still quoting him, though they don't know it. For in 1526 Tyndale in-

vented what would become some of the most famous idioms in the English-speaking world.

For instance –

"The salt of the earth"; "Go the extra mile"; "The powers that be"; "Eat, drink and be merry"; "A city on a hill"; "The apple of his eye"; "In the twinkling of an eye"; "Signs of the times"; "My brother's keeper"; "Fight the good fight"; "Broken-hearted"; "Fallen flat on his face."

These phrases were all invented by Tyndale, during his translation from the original Greek of the New Testament.

As a young Catholic priest in England, Tyndale had been inspired by Martin Luther's groundbreaking translation of the Bible into German, and he went to work doing the same for English speakers. No wonder that the Bible Society describes Tyndale as a 'background radical' during Henry VIII's reign (he's mentioned in *Wolf Hall* but doesn't get involved in the action).

Tyndale invented words, too, when he couldn't find a direct English equivalent for a Greek or Hebrew concept. Here are just some: *Scapegoat*: To describe the goat burdened with the sins of the people and sent into the wilderness.

Atonement: Literally "at-one-ment", created to describe being at one with God.

Passover: Coined to describe the Jewish holiday where the angel of death passed over the homes of the Israelites.

Busybody: Invented to describe someone who meddles in other people's business.

Tyndale's work has survived multiple revisions of the Bible down the centuries. It is found in the Authorised Version of the Bible, the RSV, the ASV or the ESV, among others.

More at Bible Society's website: <https://www.biblesociety.org.uk>
Just type 'Tyndale' into its 'search' box.

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