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AWARDS SCHEME 2013

Welcome to
Methodist Central Hall

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Today's Agenda

- Awards Scheme 2013
- Keynote Address from **Rev. Tony Miles**
- Association for Church Editors' AGM
- Lunch (13:00)
- "Communicating with a Secular World"
- Q&A session (ACE Panel)
- Conclusions and Close (15:30)

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Submission Criteria:

- Black & White Print
- A5 portrait format
- Not less than 4 editions per year
- Print runs < 1200 copies

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Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design
- Overall Layout and Structure
- Creativity and Typography of Headlines
- Use of Graphics
- Clarity of the Christian Message
- Appeal to a Wider Community

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Health Warnings!

Subjective impressions

Budget & print quality

No “right” way

Fundamental principles

Some ACE preferences

Primary purpose (target audience)



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Who To Blame?!



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Sketty Methodist Church Newsletter February 2013



LENT

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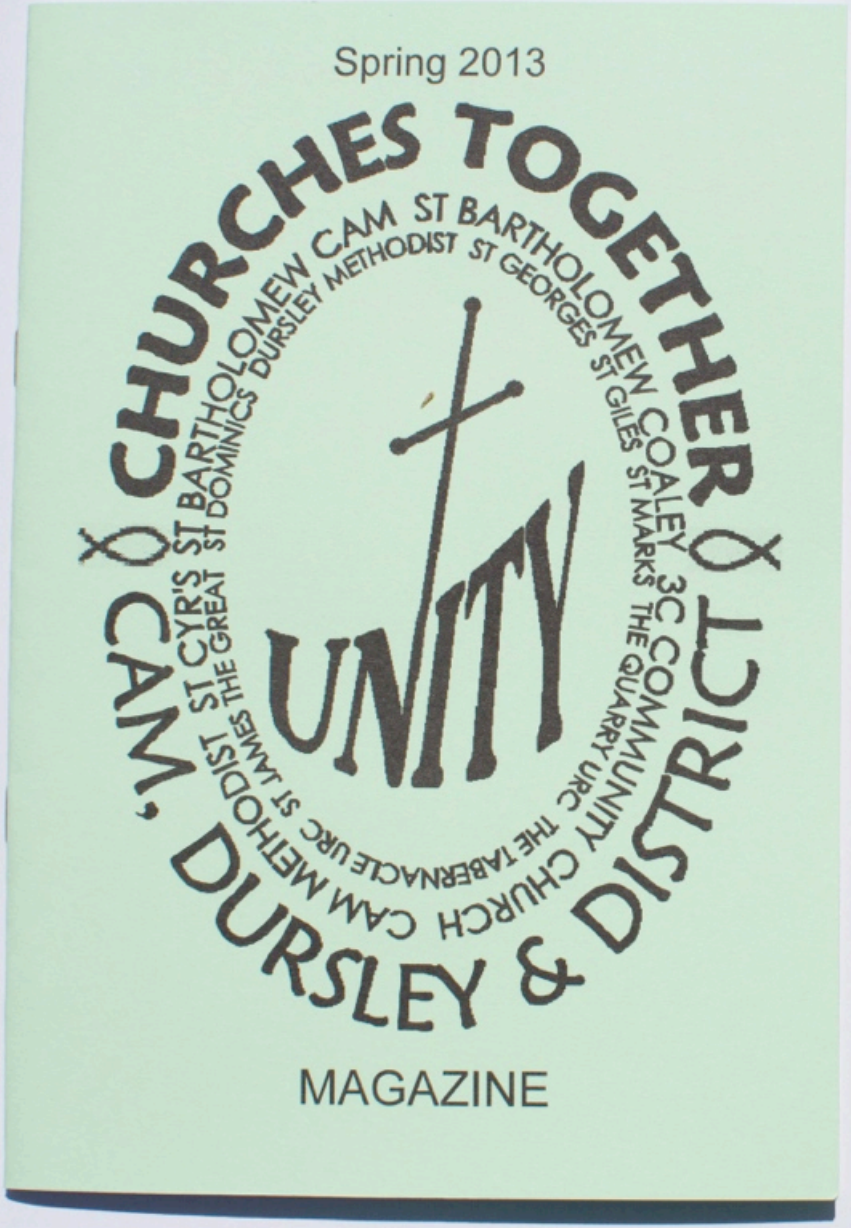
Sketty Methodist Church Newsletter March 2013

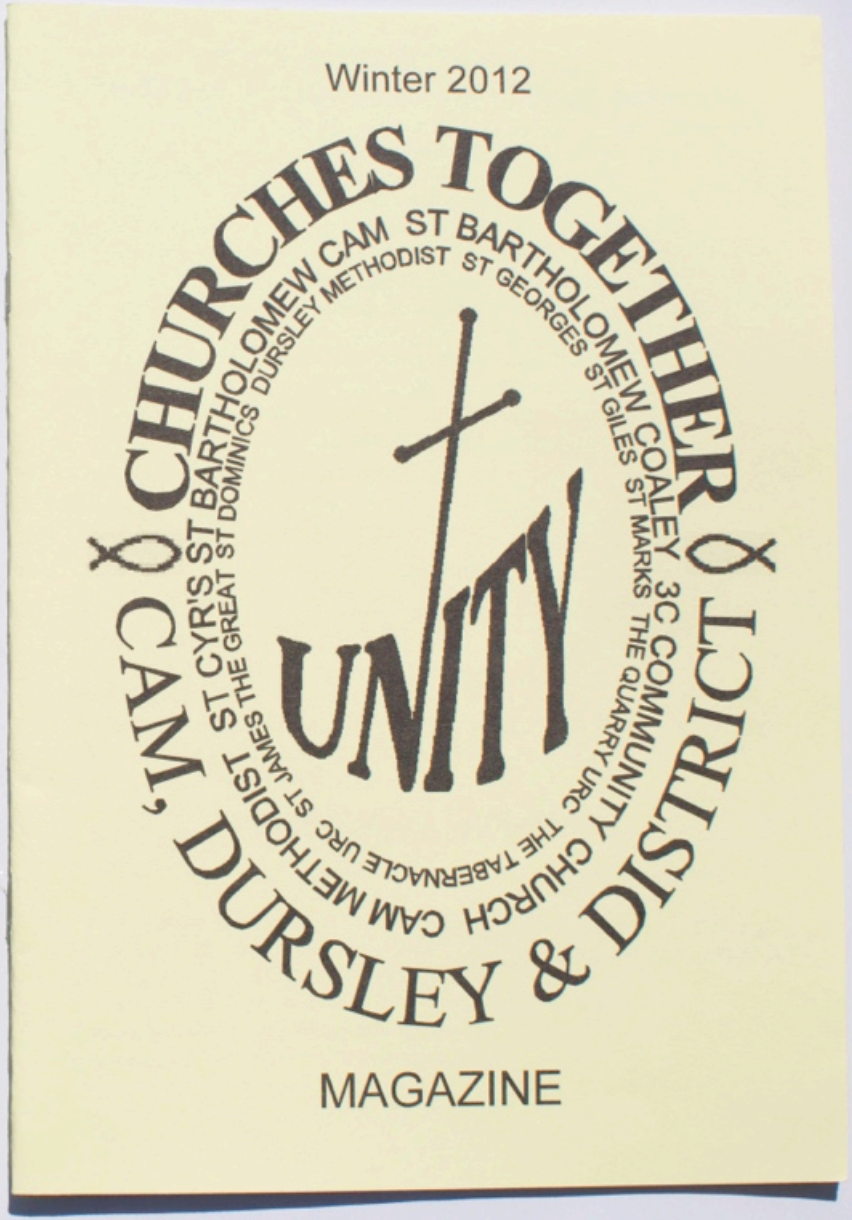


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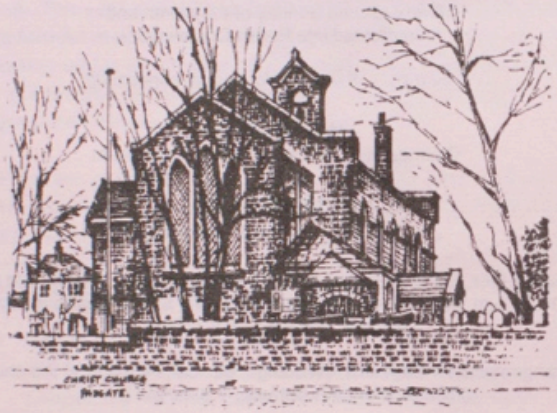
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GRAPEVINE



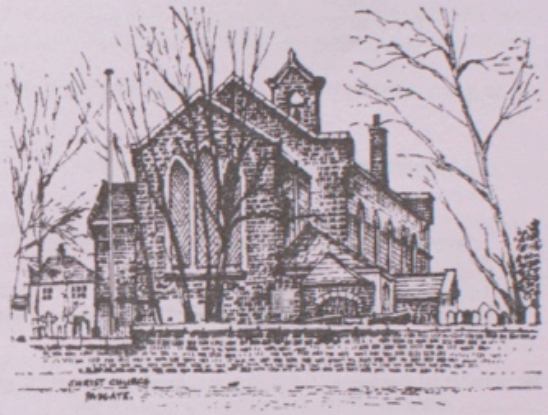
July - August 2012

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

GRAPEVINE



March 2013

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

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DECEMBER 2012

CHURCH & VILLAGE



FEBRUARY 2013

CHURCH & VILLAGE



The Old Rectory, Litcham

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BRERETON AND RUGELEY LINKS

October 2012



"And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance."
Corinthians 9:8a

The Parish Magazine

No. 66 50p

BRERETON AND RUGELEY LINKS

December 2012



Wishing you a peaceful Christmas and New Year

The Parish Magazine

No. 68 50p

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Farlesthorpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Maltby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Maltby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe

Group Messenger

The Alford Group of Parishes

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2012



Congratulations to our brilliant bellringers!
trophy winners - page 31

October - apples and cider
page 35

Summer Festival pictures
pages 28 and 29

Harvest Festival services
pages 7 and 24

Events and things to do
pages 5, 6 and 7

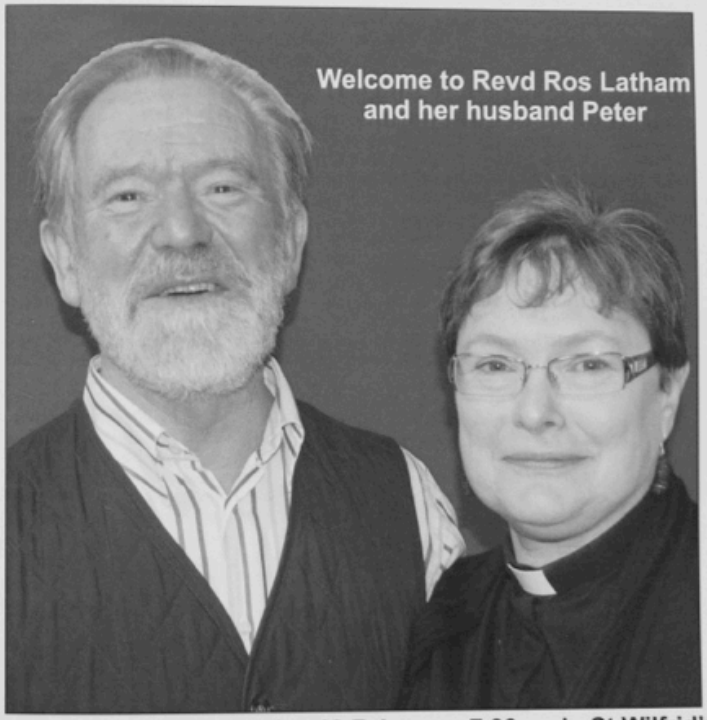
Price - minimum donation of 60p or £3 per year

Farlesthorpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Maltby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Maltby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe

Group Messenger

The Alford Group of Parishes

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2013



Licensing service Monday 18 February, 7.30pm in St Wilfrid's
faith supper afterwards in the church hall - all welcome

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Llwynderw

'a parish with a desire for church growth, mission and evangelism'



The Easter Candle

Find us on Facebook

www.parishofllwynderw.org

Holy Cross Church
Fairwood Road, West Cross

Clyne Chapel
Mayals Road, Blackpill

March/April 2013

50 pence

Llwynderw

'a parish with a desire for church growth, mission and evangelism'



Find us on Facebook

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Holy Cross Church
Fairwood Road, West Cross

Clyne Chapel
Mayals Road, Blackpill

February/March 2013

50 pence

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November 2012

Cleadon Courier



All Saints' Church Monthly Magazine

No 438 Price 50p

March 2013

Cleadon Courier



All Saints' Church Monthly Magazine

No 441 Price 50p

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GROVE VINE

The Magazine of
Grove Methodist Church
Horsforth, Leeds

March 2013



The Grove Methodist Church is called to respond to the Gospel of love in Jesus Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship, service and mission

GROVE VINE

The Magazine of
Grove Methodist Church
Horsforth, Leeds

September 2012



The Grove Methodist Church is called to respond to the Gospel of love in Jesus Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship, service and mission

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outreach

Parish magazine
of
St John of Beverley

Parish church of St John Lee

November 2012



outreach

Parish magazine
of
St John of Beverley

Parish church of St John Lee

December 2012/January 2013



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Parish of Killay

Parish Magazine

St Hilary and St Martin



February 2013 40p

Parish of Killay

Parish Magazine

St Hilary and St Martin



January 2013 40p

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Cover Design

Commendations:

- Grove Vine (Horsforth)
- Outreach (Hexam)

Category Winner:

- Killay Parish Mag (Swansea)

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Award Scheme Criteria:

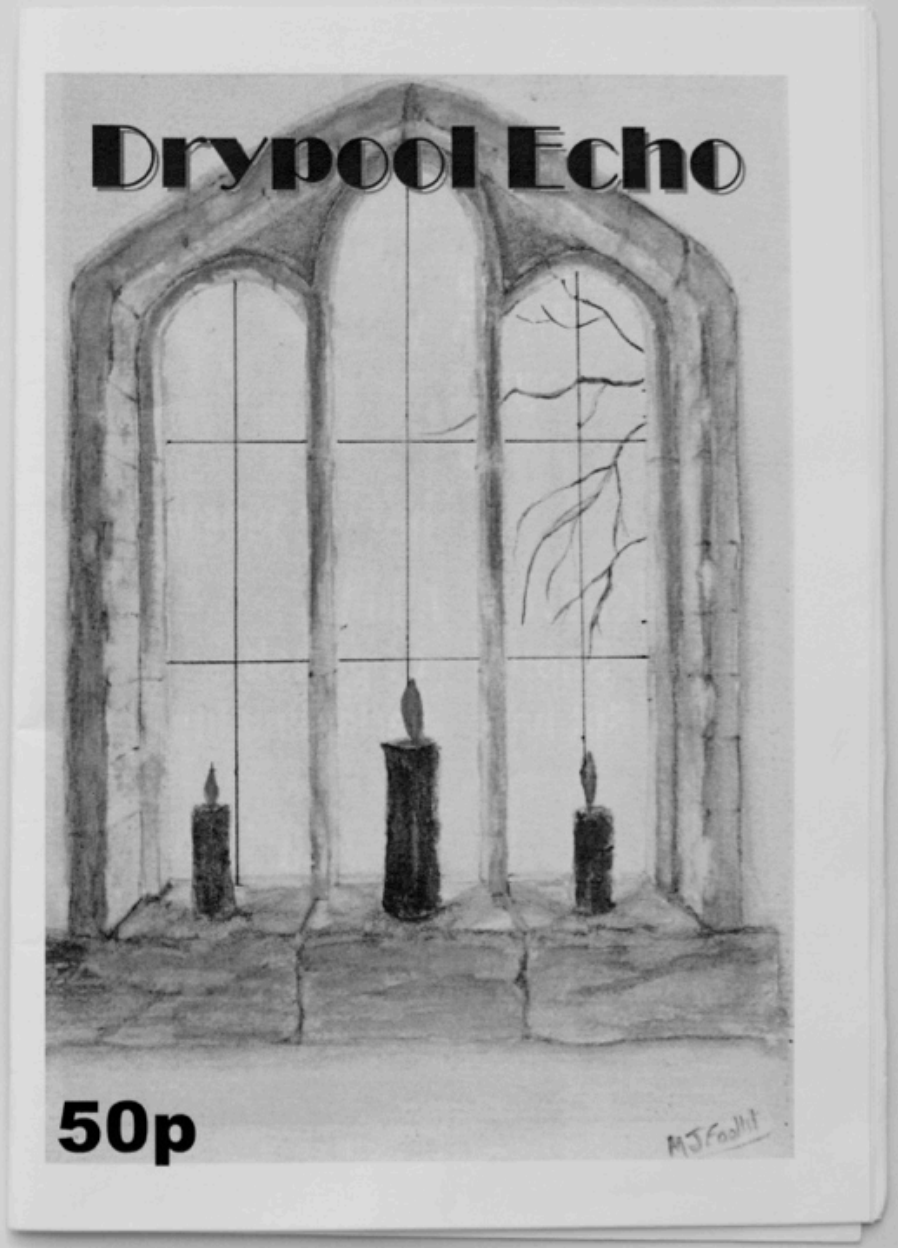
- Cover Design ✔

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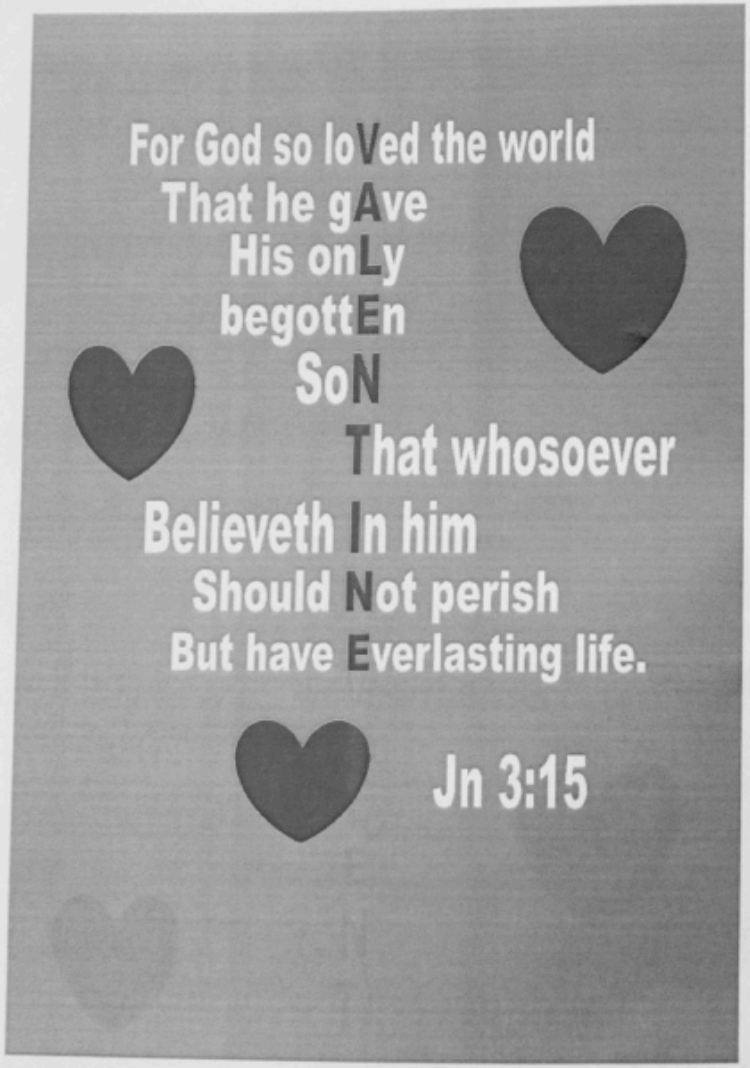
Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design
- Overall Layout and Structure

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From the Editor's Chair



Well 2013 is here. Christmas is over, the trimmings packed away and the January sales are well picked over. And the world didn't end with the Mayan calendar. This meant that the editorial team had to get to work and produce this edition. (Thanks team). As to resolutions, I have to confess I am not one for making them. But it does seem to be a time of new beginnings. This leads me to wonder just what God has planned for our parish in the coming year. Whatever it is, I know that it will be revealed in His own good time. But I can reveal something of our plans to you. We have set up a new e-mail address for the Echo. (See below) The other still exists but we felt a dedicated e-mail was the way forward for 2013.

And so, in Bishop Richard's year of mission, may we start by wishing all of you, our readers, every happiness and blessing in the year ahead. May it be a year imbued with the richness of God's love for us all.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE
SUNDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2013
TO THE EDITOR PLEASE

drypoolecho@gmail.com

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You Are Beautiful!

It's likely that many of you reading this will perhaps have already failed to keep those new year resolutions you made. If, like me, you didn't tell anyone what they were it won't be quite as embarrassing, but if you started that weight-loss blog or posted your intentions all over social media, you'll be feeling it more than the rest of us. Still, you'll have another chance soon as Lent approaches to be more self-disciplined. Perhaps you'll do a technology fast and lock away your iPad or mobile phone, maybe you will stop eating certain foods or start eating only vegetables and if you're really holy, of course, you'll be fasting the whole 40 days.*

This time of the year often finds us focussing on self-improvement or, perhaps if we are more honest, beating ourselves up over our many failures and weaknesses with a bit of self-loathing thrown in for good measure. At the risk of stating the blindingly obvious this is not a happy state of affairs - stop it!

Although we would never say aloud most of us believe, at least to some extent, (secretly) that we are unworthy and that we must do more or try harder to earn God's love. If you do think this way allow me to burst that particular bubble for you – there is nothing you can do to make God love you more and nothing you can do to make him love you less. He just loves you!

God has told us through the bible and the life, death & resurrection of his Son that he loves us (John 3:16). When God thinks about you he rejoices and sings a happy song (Zeph. 3:7)! So if the creator of the heavens and the earth who created you in his image and knows you better than you know yourself loves you unconditionally who are you to disagree?

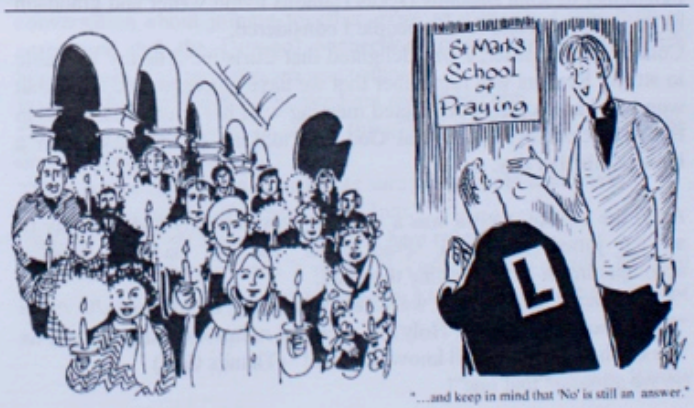
He's not impressed by your fasting (Is. 48:6), your sleek, professional worship (Amos 5:21) or your attempts to be good (Job 35: 6-8). None of it matters a jot to him in the sense of changing his attitude towards you. He just loves you!

As we continue through the new year I want to encourage you not to focus on what isn't right about your life, or the life of anyone else you know; don't worry about how imperfect Phil and I are, and we are; don't wish that such and such was or wasn't happening just focus your time and attention on Jesus. Ask him to fill you with his Holy Spirit and remind you every day that you are unconditionally loved. Be anxious for nothing but God!

God doesn't want your perfection or your strength, he wants your heart. There are good reasons to practice self-control but it's actually easier to be disciplined when you start from a place of knowing you are loved by God. If you know he loves you and only wants the best for you then it matters less that you slip up because you also know that he will forgive you. Also, once we accept that we are unable to help ourselves we can let God help us – his strength is made perfect in our weakness. In his strength, not ours, we are more likely to be able to do at least something good and then we can give him the glory and praise he deserves.

© Jason Taylor

*do not attempt a major fast or dietary changes without first seeing your GP and obtaining medical advice.



"...and keep in mind that 'No' is still an answer."

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And So We Close The Thomas Dykes 250 Celebrations

It was always going to be special. As the small group braved the mud of Hessle cemetery, and the threatened rainfall, I gave silent thanks to God. Thanks for the life and work of the man we were about to remember. The 250th year since the birth of the Revd. Thomas Dykes was about to close, and we were here to see that it did so with St John's original vicar well represented. As we trudged along though, I couldn't help but give some thought to the date. The 21st of December 2012 was in the news for all the wrong reasons. Aside from chaos in Syria and elsewhere, the talk was all about a Mayan prediction that the world would end on this very date. As a Christian, I knew that no one could predict it for it is known only to God. But people do worry, even though the Mayans did not predict the end of the world. It was simply the end of their current 5000 year plus calendar cycle. Indeed I fully expected still to have to buy presents for the nephews.

No matter, the Revd. Dykes was indeed well represented. Although only six of us attended, it was quite a mix. Assembled together were two Hull and District CMS (Church Mission Society) committee members, three DCC members from St John's church (including the secretary), two synod members, a historian of the church and a biographer of John Bacchus Dykes (famous hymn writer and grandson of Thomas). Not bad for six people I considered.
Concerning the latter, I was delighted that Christine Allenby was able to attend. Readers will remember that we have corresponded since that wonderful and totally unexpected meeting with her friend Margaret, in this very cemetery. I felt that God was looking down on us with a broad smile that day.

As to the service, well it was a little bit improvised. I had an order of service jotted down on scrap paper and we had no musical accompaniment from Antoine this time.
"No problem," said Judith "we'll sing something we all know."
"What about Holy, Holy, Holy?" I ventured rather hopefully.
"Yes," she agreed "we all know that one!" (Thanks God)
So we all sang "that one"!

It was a great service. Dave opened with prayer and then I read the Wilberforce connection (to Dykes and St. John's). But best of all Christine (St John's) read Christine Allenby's beautiful hymn 'God's Love is All Around Us' (Featured in the August Echo). It meant much to have the author of it there with us that day. And a wonderful connection between our two churches too. Something that the Revd. Thomas would have approved of I'm sure.

Too soon it was over but to my delight Christine Allenby and her husband Ross agreed to lay the Christmas wreath upon the grave. Another thank you to God here, for I had bought the last one available that was in the shape of a cross. Reverently it was placed and we paused, before closing in prayer.

It was time for coffee. Judith, busy as ever, had to dash off to another appointment. But I was glad that she managed to be with us that day. As we strolled away I suggested Richard's café and the Allenby's agreed to join us. The coffee, as ever, was excellent and the conversation flowed easily. Personally I was glad to have the opportunity to meet and talk face to face, and was amazed by some of the things that I learned. Ross Allenby explained that he was the Chairman of a Thomas Dykes educational trust, but hadn't realized until that morning that it was the same man. Richard and I had a great conversation about joining together more as a parish. I was fully in agreement and the Drypool connection to our service (of which Wilberforce was once patron) was complete.
It was only later that Dave pointed out something else.
"You know that end of the world thing?" he asked. I love the way he does understatement!
"Yes." I replied hesitantly, not quite sure what would come next.
"Well it was supposed to end at 11.11am."
"Which it didn't!" I replied. I had him here readers!
His smile broadened. "No it didn't. I looked at my watch. Do you know we started the memorial service at 11.11 exactly? I think it's not an end but a beginning!"

© Shane Blades

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Christmas Tree Festival

In the village where I spent Christmas, there is a festival of Christmas trees every year in the church. Families and village groups provide and decorate a tree and place it in the church so that it remains on display for the best part of December. This year there were twenty seven trees all around the church, each with a different theme. I marvel at the originality and creativity of the exhibits.

They are fascinating to see. The chainsaw sculptor's tree was decorated in roughly hewn wooden decorations; the cookery writer's was done with little bundles of cinnamon sticks tied with red ribbon, preserved orange slices, miniature Christmas puddings and gingerbread men. There was a tree on one sill that was decorated with bits of sea-glass from Saltburn. These were just little bits of washed up glass, smoothed and sometimes made opaque by the action of the waves, tied on with thin silver strips. Larger pieces of glass surrounded it on the window sill. There were trees of all different sizes with many different themes and decorations of various materials. The walking group's tree was adorned with knitted decorations and they were all very life-like little cakes – maids of honour, buns and battenburg slices that I can remember.

A lot of work and preparation goes into this, both by the decorators of each tree and the organisers who put it all together. It is a village activity that is taken seriously like the advent window trail where different houses create their own window to depict a particular scene. Each window is numbered with a date between 1 and 25. Again these display different media and great ingenuity.

Here we see the church as a focal point of the community encouraging participation and commitment from everyone.

© Heather Clarke

PARISH NOTICE BOARD

The Melsa Consort
Fundraising Concert for
St Columba
Saturday 16th March at 7pm
Tickets £8
Wine & Nibbles served
afterwards

TOTAL PRAISE
GOSPEL CHOIR
Open induction at
St John's 7.30pm
Thursday 7th March

Drypool Men's Fellowship
Next Meeting
Monday 25th February in
The Crown Public House,
Holderness Road at 7.30pm

St. Andrew's Fellowship
Food, fellowship & worship
Every Wednesday
11.30am—1.30pm
In Balfour
Community Centre

Homelessness Concert by Black
Delta Movement & Guest Artists
Friday 15th February at 7.30pm
Holy Trinity Church, Hull

FLOWER GUILD
Wednesday 20th February
2 pm at St Columba

MOTHERS' UNION
Wednesday 6th February
1.30 pm AGM
at St Columba

Evening Group
Tuesday 26th February
7.30 pm at St Columba

KNITWITS
Wednesdays
13th & 27th February
1.30 pm at St Columba

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The Melsa Consort

The Melsa Consort is a group of twenty local singers from Hull and the East Riding who have sung together for over forty years. The group gets its name from the word "Mieux." In the Middle Ages, aspiring church musicians came from all over Europe in order to study church music at Beverley Minster. While here, they stayed in Mieux Abbey, near Beverley. "Melsa" is the Latin name for "Mieux."

Members of the choir are professional people who enjoy singing, but also use their interest in music to raise money for charitable purposes. Over the years, many thousands of pounds have been raised in support of charities. The choir's repertoire is very wide, ranging from early Renaissance music, through Classical, Romantic and Modern sacred music to folksong arrangements, jazz arrangements, Swingles Singer adaptations and avant-garde compositions. In the past, the choir has also performed larger works, with chamber orchestra, such as Vivaldi's "Gloria," Bach's "Magnificat" and Mozart, Haydn and Schubert masses.

The choir is conducted by David Wigley. Now retired, David was formerly County Music Adviser to the East Riding of Yorkshire, County Director of Creative and Performing Arts to Humberside Local Authority, and for twelve years was Ofsted Inspector of Performing Arts in secondary schools all over the country.

For this concert in St. Columba's Church, the choir will be joined by Peter and Sally Bolton, and their mother Margaret Bolton. Peter and Sally are at Longcroft School, Beverley. Peter is an excellent young bassoonist, and Sally a first-class oboist. Their mother, who is an outstanding flautist and pianist, will accompany them for solo items which will give variety to the programme – and give the singers a short sit-down rest between items!

The programme for this concert will last for about an hour and a half. It will start with a group of Renaissance anthems, move on to some Victorian church music, have a third group comprising a modern anthem and some spirituals, and end with some national folksong arrangements. The evening will conclude with John Rutter's arrangement of "When the Saints go Marching in," in which the audience will be invited to join.

© David Wigley

The Melsa Consort will be performing at St Columba's on Saturday 16th March at 7pm. Wine and nibbles will be served afterwards. Tickets £8

Total Praise

Finding the opportunity for real spiritual expression is hard these days, especially when increasing secular invasion in society often pushes it to the edge of people's priorities. The opportunity to combine it with fun, friendship and even entertainment is, to many minds, even rarer. Yet that is what Hull's newest gospel choir, Total Praise, is setting out to do.

In a country where almost two thirds of the population profess Christian beliefs in some form or another, our churches sit empty on Sundays, so many people being put off by a perception of stuffiness and boredom; or singing hymns that are a hundred years out of date while some bloke runs round in a frock with his handbag on fire! (Clearly these folks haven't been to any Drypool churches recently!) Total Praise is keen to change that. Through up-to-date music and relevant testimony, the choir is setting out to show that Christianity is no longer the stale faith of years gone by, when it was expected instead of unusual to go to church each week.

Having begun last September with a slightly shaky rehearsal at Holy Apostles, the choir has grown in fellowship, confidence and faith to overcome the obstacles that face many new organisations. In November we were blessed with the chance to take part in the Victory Concert in Leeds with members of our sister choir. The New Year has brought with it a move for us to St John's, where we hope to build on what has become a firm foundation, to continue in fellowship and support with our sister choir in Leeds, and to grow with God's blessing in a fun and friendly music ministry with a broad appeal to share His word in our communities.

Total Praise has a strong belief in God's work in our city (and across Yorkshire). As we begin the second phase of a journey to share in His mission, we ask for your prayers and support.

© Christine Brain

Total Praise meets at St John's on Thursdays at 7.30pm and will be holding an induction evening for new members on Thursday 7th March.

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The Message—Love One Another

"Let me give you a new command: love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognise that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other." John 13: 34-35. The Message

When I was reading this passage in The Message recently, I saw it afresh, as we sometimes do with familiar bible verses. It struck me by following Jesus' command we are employing a form of evangelism. Those words "everyone will recognise that you are my disciples" jumped out at me. I'm not very good at explaining my faith to non-Christians or backing up my beliefs with scripture. Also I don't feel very well qualified to do so. I do read my bible but I've not got the best of memories when I want to recall some of it. I can get a bit tongue tied when I'm trying to explain myself, and shyness is often a problem for me. However that is alright, because according to Jesus' command, all he is asking me to do is love others, not preach to them. Jesus says that by doing so, non-Christians will know I belong to Him.

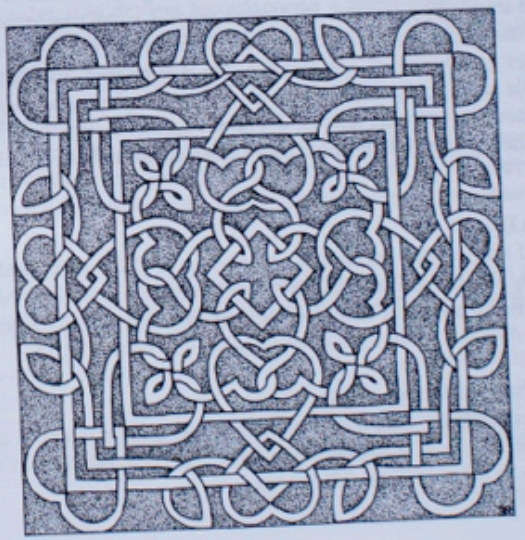
It sounds simple doesn't it? Its easy to love those close to me, those I really care about, or to pray for people I know who are having a difficult time, or for those involved in disasters that I hear about on the news. Its not so simple to love people who I don't actually like very much, or to forgive those who have been unkind to me. I'm comforted by the fact that Jesus doesn't ask me to like everyone, or condone the things they do. I've done unkind things sometimes, and I'm sure not everyone will like me. But 1 Peter 3: 8-9 says I should try to live in harmony with others, be sympathetic, compassionate and humble. It tells me not to repay evil with evil, or insult with insult, but with blessing. A recent sermon we had on being more Christ-like also seems a tall order, but surely it is based on trying to follow His example of loving everyone. After all, if he loves me, despite all my

failings, then I must forgive others, bless them and love them. We have a special friend who helps me to do so—the Holy Spirit. Jesus knows its not easy for us, but the Holy Spirit will help us to carry out the command, so that others will see him working in us, and hopefully want to follow Jesus as well.

© Carole Hardy

Prayer of St Columba

Alone with none but thee, my God
I journey on my way
What need I fear, when Thou art near,
Oh King of night and day?
More safe am I within Thy hand
Than if a host did round me stand



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NEWS FROM TRISHA WICK FOR JANUARY 2013

Happy New Year. Here is the latest news:

Travel to Uganda
I arrived back in Uganda on January 4th after long but uneventful journey. I stayed in a beautiful and peaceful Guest House near the airport in Entebbe for two nights to recover, and then moved on to Namirembe Guest House in Kampala which is high on a hill overlooking the city with a 'Million Dollar View'. I then flew to Maridi on 10th.

Family in UK
It was very difficult saying goodbye to my parents and there were tears. It has been an emotional roller coaster during the three months which I spent in UK. My mother is now getting used to living alone which is a new experience. My brother and sister visit her when they can. My father is comfortable in the Nursing Home and is looking forward to a happy reunion in August when I expect to arrive in UK for my next Home Leave. He longs to go home but unless his mobility improves greatly that is not realistic. He is very thin, fragile and eats little. His heart continues to be weak and could give up at any time. I have placed my parents into God's hands and trust him daily for their future. Being over 4,000 miles away from them in Maridi will not be easy.

Need to Diet
As usual I have piled on weight since being in UK. I now need to lose it quickly. Much will just fall off now I am back in Maridi but I also need to make an effort and also increase my exercise – longer walks with the dog and 30 minutes of exercises a day instead of 15.

Prayer Needed for New Driver
My driver, Jackson, resigned at the end of November. There is a young man called Andrew who may take over. Pray for wisdom as I interview him as others are also interested.

News of Maridi
I found things generally good. It is now the dry season so is very hot. Maridi seems secure and peaceful. I look forward to getting back into the swing of work again and am glad to have been reunited with friends both human and animal.

Writing a Book
It has been suggested that I should write a book about my adventures in South Sudan over the past 14 years. I have a long list of stories to tell and hope to get started soon.

English Service
Nine months ago Bishop Justin appointed me as the Pastor in Charge of the English service in the Cathedral. I had begun to develop this before I returned to UK and now I hear that Bishop Justin has appointed Rev. Capt. Eli Paul to be Curate and therefore my assistant. I am very happy with this as Eli is already my assistant for the Discipleship and Training and we work well together. I have come with a clarinet, flute, tenor recorder, two descant recorders and a tambourine to try and develop a small music group beyond just guitars and keyboard which we use at present.

Giving to CMS
I am so grateful to all my churches and individuals who support me and am confident that the target of money needed for my support will have been reached when the CMS financial year ends on January 31st.

Phone Contact
It is now possible to phone me in Maridi as the new 211 code has been recognised in UK. If you want to try my number is: 00211912021065

My news next month will be fuller once I have been back in Maridi for a few weeks.

May you know God's richest blessings in 2013.

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A Journey of Discovery

During the Spring of 2012, when I was receiving treatment regularly at Castle Hill Hospital, I found myself waking up early in the mornings singing hymns. Not wanting to wake the rest of the household I got out my hymn book with tunes and realised I had been singing three hymns that Rev. J.B. Dykes had written the tunes to. 'Thou God of Truth and Love', 'I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say' and 'Jesus Lover of My Soul', so I felt I had started an interesting journey to find out more about Rev. Dykes. I already knew a connection was Dykes House on Hessle Foreshore. My parents knew it had been a nuns' retreat at one time, but didn't know why it was called Dykes House. Friends who are on the computer sent me information about Rev. Dykes and I found his life story fascinating. Also the fact that he was born in Hull in 1823 to very special parents and his grandfather was Rev. Thomas Dykes, made me think I should write about Rev. Dykes life. Dykes House was really Belmont House, Hessle and was occupied in the 1890s by Edward Octavius Dykes. his sister, Mrs Cheape and her daughter, Miss Cheape. At this time, Rev. J.B. Dykes widow Susan joined this family group and ended her life with them. Ross and I have a friend who is 103 and was born in Hessle. I was talking to her about the thought of writing a book about Rev. J.B. Dykes and Dykes House on Hessle Foreshore, and our friend Peggy said "I've been there many times, as Mrs Cheape and Miss Cheape held garden parties for All Saints Church, Hessle there. I knew the housekeeper and cook well, and there were beautiful gardens which went down to the River Humber." Well that is how I came to write my story, which I hope to complete in 2013 as it will be 190 years since Rev. J.B. Dykes was born.

© Christine Allenby

That's definitely a book I'd like to read—Ed.

	SERVICES	FOR	FEBRUARY	
	St Columba	St John	Victoria Dock	Other
Sun 3 Feb 2 Before Lent	Prayer Meeting	Morning Worship	Cafe Church	
Sun 10 Feb Sunday Before Lent	9.15 Holy Communion 10.30 Family Worship	Morning Worship		
Sun 17 Feb 1st in Lent	Holy Communion	Baptism	Morning Prayer	
Sun 24 Feb 2nd in Lent	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	

Midweek Services St Columba's Tuesdays at 9.15am
St John's Wednesdays at 9.30a.m
CHECK NOTICE SHEETS FOR ANY CHANGES TO SERVICES

A Challenging Manifesto

John Wesley told the early Methodist teachers always to remember that "an ounce of love was worth a pound of knowledge" and his challenge to teacher and pupil alike was this:

Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can

His challenge still stands today.

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Mabel

The days after Christmas seemed rather flat for Mabel and her friends in the care home. But all welcomed the lighter nights and mornings. "And the birds must know something" said Rosa, "they're singing in the morning before it is light."

Mrs Timmins, the Home Manager, came into the lounge as the ladies were having their morning coffee. "I've had a visit from the Headmaster of the school across the road," she said. "The children there are doing a study of the war years. Would you ladies be interested in talking to the children about your experiences?"

"Well I wouldn't mind" said Rosa.

"I'll help" said Mabel, and soon everyone was willing to take part.

On the day, the teacher came with the children. The teacher spoke first about the children's studies and the sort of questions the children might ask. Then each of the ladies had a one-to-one session partnered with one of the children. Mabel's partner was Julie. At first the children were shy, but gradually their interest was won.

"Were you in the army?" Julie asked.

"No." Mabel told her. "I worked in a munitions factory, making shells for the soldiers to use."

Rosa had been in the WRNS and Jean had been in the Women's Land Army, so there was a good mix of experiences and the morning flew by. Half way through, Sylvia the carer brought a tray of orange juice for the children, and on the table arranged items of food in the weight and size of rations for one person.

"Is that all you got for one week?" questioned Julie. "I could eat that in one day. And what about sweets?"

Jean had a photo of herself in a Land Army uniform and Hilary had a gas mask and tin hat while Trina had brought an old ration book. After the children had gone, the ladies found they had much to talk about as memories came flooding back. A few days later they all received a nicely written letter of thanks from the children.

"That went well" said Rosa

"I think its good for the children to know how we lived in those days" Hilary put in.

"But we pray that is the only way they know about the effects of war" said Jean. A prayer that they all echoed in their hearts.

© Margaret King

Mothers' Union

The afternoon group met on Wednesday 9th January for the Annual Wave of Prayer and Surprise Packet Auction. We remembered Mothers' Union groups in Africa and also the Diocese of York. Candles were lit as we prayed for specific groups and members of the worldwide Mothers' Union.

We welcomed Keith Thompson to the meeting as our auctioneer. He was very in control as usual and the group thanked him for his time and effort.

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 6th February from 1.30 pm.

Parish Roving Reporter

St Columba's Flower Guild

The Flower Guild have decided this Easter to ask if anyone would like to give a donation of £4 for a lily in memory of a loved one. Donations for other flowers will also be gratefully received, for Easter or any other time of the year. Please see or contact Jean Clark.

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Plans? Yes, I've Got a Plan For You...

I should have known better, especially with it being this time of year. As the bus drove away from the station it was completely full and I thought to myself 'I could have walked home faster than how long it was going to take to get home'. As I got off the bus I noticed a text from Shane so I hurriedly sent him a reply. We had arranged to go to York together for a local carol service. Shane got back to pick me up a little later. As we drove off we both agreed that we may be too late to get to the carol service but still drove to York anyway. I said to Shane "if our visit is half as good as last time we should have quite a night". At first, I suggested we should just go to Beverley instead but Shane's reply "we car drivers like to stretch out our new set of wheels when we get them" made me smile.

We got to York around an hour later and started stretching our own legs with a walk around the historic city. As we passed York Minster and St Michael's we both fondly remembered our previous visit. As we walked around my growing hunger was getting the better of me and Shane and I were now on a mission to find a fish shop that sold spam burgers. We looked and looked but sadly found not one.

Nearly an hour later we decided to head back for the car. As we walked down a cobbled street, a voice called out "can you spare any change please?" We were confronted by a homeless man sat on a stone step....

© Carl Allison

Next month: Carl shares more of the story of our visit to York and our encounter with Trevor the homeless man

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"Never be afraid to try. Remember: amateurs built the ark. Professionals built the Titanic.

Anon.

Bible Sketchbook

Time to be a little less frenetic!



Let's try being a little bit less frenetic as we come into Lent. Martha was one of those people who welcomed Jesus into her house and her life but got so caught up with restless busyness that she couldn't hear what he was trying to say to her. Her sister Mary was different. She stopped. She sat at Jesus' feet. She listened and took in what he was saying. So despite all those things that need doing, let's make time to welcome Jesus into every area of our lives and go his way.

Read more in Luke 10:38-42







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THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS



Mouse Makes

After he was baptised Jesus returned full of the Holy Spirit and was led by the Spirit into the desert where he was tempted by the Devil for forty days. In all that time he ate nothing, so that he was hungry when it was over.

The Devil said to Jesus, *"If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread."* But Jesus answered, *"The scripture says,* ***"Human beings cannot live on bread alone."***

Then the Devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. *"I will give you all this power and all this wealth, it has been handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I choose. All this then will be yours if you worship me."* Jesus answered, *'The scripture says,* ***'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'***

Then the Devil took Jesus to the Temple and said to him, *"If you are God's Son, throw yourself down from here. For the scripture says, 'They will hold you up with their hands so that not even your feet will be hurt on the stones."* But Jesus answered, *"The scripture says,* ***'Do not put the Lord your God to the test."***

READ Luke 4: 1-13

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son, order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:
"Human beings cannot live on bread alone."
read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:
Read the Bible
Learn God's word.

THE DEVIL SAID:
"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me"

JESUS REPLIED:
"Worship the Lord your God and serve *only* him"
read Deuteronomy 6:13

1

WE LEARN:
Put God **first**
Worship *only* Him

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son, throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take good care of you "

JESUS REPLIED:
"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."
read Deuteronomy 6:16

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

WE LEARN:
God cares, **trust** Him
do not test Him.

Cut out the three cards and during Lent learn the bible verses

Feb13 © deborahnoble @parishpump.co.uk

Geoff Howlett's CD Review Of the month

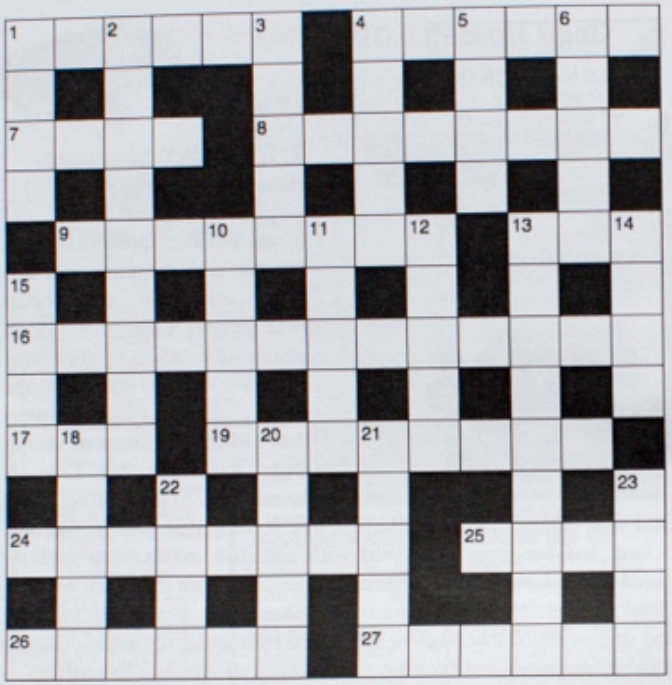




THIRD DAY : Miracle
(Essential : 83061 09462)

It will be no surprise to anyone familiar with the music of Third Day, that this is another collection of songs of very high quality. I've always loved Mac Powell's vocals, but it's the band's overall music prowess that makes me dream of seeing them live. 'Hit Me Like A Bomb' tells of that feeling when God first comes into your life. It's like nothing that you've ever felt before, and the song is littered with addictive hooks. The medium paced 'Your Love is Like a River' comes right from the heart, while 'I Need A Miracle' is THE song of the album. It is so well put together and one of those that begs to be played over and over again. There's great guitar work and backing vocals on 'You Are My Everything' – another song that I played numerous times. All the songs are very similar in style but that similarity doesn't stop the album from being up to the band's usual standard. 'Forever Yours' stands out late on in the running order, while it all ends with a great version of the classic hymn 'Morning Has Broken'. It's sensitive to the original tune, yet has a modern twist that is bright and bouncy. Fans won't be disappointed by this album. 10/10

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Last months solution

L	A	M	E	■	O	B	T	A	I	N	E	D
O	■	A	■	■	R	■	C	■	E	■	A	
O	M	I	T	■	M	E	R	C	H	A	N	T
K	■	N	■	P	■	A	■	O	■	R	■	E
B	U	R	D	E	N	S	O	M	E	■	■	
A	■	O	■	S	■	T	■	P	■	B	■	T
C	R	A	F	T	Y	■	P	L	E	A	S	E
K	■	D	■	I	■	A	■	I	■	S	■	T
■	■	■	B	L	A	C	K	S	M	I	T	H
A	■	C	■	E	■	T	■	H	■	L	■	E
S	P	L	E	N	D	I	D	■	T	I	E	R
A	■	A	■	C	■	O	■	■	■	C	■	E
S	I	N	G	E	I	N	G	■	H	A	N	D

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 gate-way 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)

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On Why Rural Churchgoers Like to Freeze in Church

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Christopher,

Winter certainly exposes the difference between those of you who live in cities and us rural folk. While you bask in your centrally heated flat, with every modern convenience that could be imagined and complain about the half an inch of slush that makes your life so inconvenient, we country folk wear overcoats in our houses, open all doors and windows to let the heat in and battle through snow drifts, measured in feet, to get the morning paper.

Colonel Wainwright has acquired a new toy: a snow blower, of sufficient power that I believe it could clear the Antarctic. He kindly volunteered to clear the paths around the church. Working outwards from the church door, the path to the church soon became snow free. Unfortunately, he only realised when his job was complete that the blown snow then formed a ten foot drift under the lych-gate. We now have to climb over the churchyard wall and negotiate buried gravestones before we can reach his pristine paths.

Miss Margison, ever helpful in the worst sense of the word, decided to unfreeze the pipes in the church hall. A blow torch was not the ideal solution, although the resulting burst did make some rather attractive ice sculptures round the kitchen equipment. The village badminton team that uses the hall has now temporarily changed sport to ice hockey.

Inevitably, congregations have soared. There is nothing like adversity for making people want to prove they have the moral fibre to overcome it. Much satisfaction seems to be obtained on discovering who has not dared venture out, which is taken as judgement on their strength of character. The Prentices upstaged most people by arriving on a sleigh. Mr Prentice was warmly wrapped in a travelling rug, while his wife pulled it. As her husband explained, he couldn't possibly let the pony work in such conditions.

What I momentarily thought was applause during my sermon was merely people keeping their hands warm and the hymns were drowned out by the stamping of feet. Our organist complained that the cold made his fingers so numb that he couldn't play properly – although I didn't notice that things were much different from normal.

No, my dear nephew, you continue to fret about your church heating dropping to temperate from tropical and a few flakes of wet snow obliging you to close your car park for health and safety reasons. We shall continue to triumph heroically over adversity and return home after Matins, knowing we have proved our Christian commitment in being utterly uncomfortable.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

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.

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Email: phil.goodey@gmail.com

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Position Vacant	Rev Jason Taylor 22 Corinthian Way, Victoria Dock Hull; HU9 1UF Tel 01482 216130: email: revjasontaylor@gmail.com

Curate
Position Vacant

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Website: www.drypoolparish.org.uk

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Antoine Robinson ***Darren Wilkinson***
Richard Boniface ***Graham Wragg***

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Liz Pacey (Tel:705723)
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SERVICES FROM AROUND THE PARISH
OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2012

Baptisms

St Columba's
Joshua Lee Parkinson Macie Louise Parkinson
Hannah Magdalena Whiteman

Mia Sophia Storr Marcus Jay Synclair
Max Cavanaugh Harry Cavanaugh
Jack Peter Brown Amelia Leigh Henderby



A new online resource for Hull
Hull Churches Network
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What's on calendar
Info
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From advice on how to register a death to making all the arrangements, We're here 24 hours a day.

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Caritas

The Catholic Churches of
ST GREGORY THE GREAT & ST THOMAS MORE
Parish Magazine



Advent 2012 Issue 71 £1.00

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Lent 2013 Issue 72 £1.00

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Parish News

BAPTISMS

Jonathan Matos Cabral
Lily Rachel Hughes
Joao Guilerme Santos Fernandes
Jessica Maria Simmonds
Heidi Alice Erin Dewhurst
Willow May Hicks
Peter Anthony Francis Blewitt-Jenkins
Samuel Alexander Jeenes
Kitty Marie Kerr
Matilda Elizabeth Penhale
Filip Vijay Kumar
Phelan Christopher Morrissey
Charlotte Morwenna Uren
Isabelle Ann Taylor

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to the following who celebrated their wedding in St Gregory's Church:

Cara Josephine Mullooly to John Robert Saxon
Amanda Jane Ross to Joseph John Allen
Suzanne Alexandra Connor to Julian Harvard Rolfe

DEATHS

Please pray for the souls of those recently deceased and for their bereaved relatives:

Hazel Patricia Popplewell
William John Sullivan (John)
Lucy Margaret Curtis
Mary Ann Guinee
Siobham Margaret Woods
Clifford George Brookes
Patrick Joseph Wallace (Pat)
Ann Rice
Peter Egerton Holland
John Anthony Powell (Tony)
Anne Bevan
Margaret Christine Balster
Daniel O'Connor
Anthony John Chesson
Patrick Young

CARITAS Info

Next edition: 19th May
Submission deadline: 14th April
Please send all material to 'The Editor':
eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk
or hand in to the Parish Office.

Feedback always welcome

Corinna Turner (01242 575197), The Editor
eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk

Many thanks to proof readers Canon Bosco, Georgina, Felicity, and production team Lucy, Bryan, Margaret, Martin, Mary and everyone else involved.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition and apologies to those whose articles I was not able to include. Please keep them coming!

Thank you for reading CARITAS.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Lent is a time of reconciliation and renewal. A time when we make space in our lives to think about our relationship with our Father and the ways in which we are responding or failing to respond to his love and care for us.

You may sometimes pop into an art gallery and be more impressed with the frames than the paintings. It's not the frame that has great value but the painting, yet the frame matters. A good painting can be ruined by a bad frame. However, a bad picture can't be made good by a frame. Really the frame is the least important part of the exhibit, yet in everyday life we sometimes place more value on the frame itself than what is within it.

We often do the same with people. We judge their worth by their 'frame' and we get it wrong. Take the rich businessman who is seen at Mass regularly, attends respectable functions, and appears to be a caring and loving husband. That's the frame. What we don't see is that he is unfaithful to his wife and cruel to her at home.

On the other hand, there is a husband who is unemployed and his wife has two part-time jobs to make ends meet. This couple don't have very much and their frame isn't very impressive. But they are happy because they love each other and have each other's love. They make a beautiful picture.

What kind of a frame do we have and what kind of a picture is within it? We are to show Christ's love in our lives. Are we his frame, or his picture?

As we begin this season of renewal let us pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our Parish, that we may be more authentic in our response to God's love. Called to be a people of hope, we entrust our lives once again to the One who gave his life for us.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones in this holy season of Lent.

Canon Bosco MacDonald
Parish Priest



A gift heaven-sent ~ Sent by email

Happiness is something we create in our mind –
Not something we search for and so seldom find.
It's just waking up and beginning the day
By counting our blessings and wanting to pray.
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as a gift heaven-sent.
It's giving up wishing for things we have not
And making the best of whatever we've got.



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40 DAYS FOR LIFE

13th February—24th March
www.40daysforlife.com
Contact Anne: 01242 262 601

40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life effort that consists of:

- 40 days of prayer and fasting
- 40 days of peaceful vigil
- 40 days community outreach.

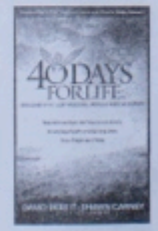
The beauty of this campaign, which is very educational and practical, is that it helps us to integrate our faith with our daily life, in a movement directed towards helping our most "unknown" neighbour, the unborn child, together with a suffering and anguished mother. The campaign is not in the least judgemental of individuals, but seeks to redress peacefully a profound injustice voted in by our legislators in 1967.

40 Days for Life is HUGE in the UK this Lent! From just four full scale campaigns last year it has now expanded to ten! Locations of full scale campaigns are: Birmingham; Brighton; Cardiff; Leamington Spa; London - Bedford Square, Ealing, Whitfield Street; Manchester; Milton Keynes; Southampton.

Here in Cheltenham we'll once again be praying outside Cheltenham General Hospital on Fridays from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm. Please come along and join us if you feel able.

We also hope that as many parishioners as possible will choose, as their Lenten effort, to fast and pray for the 40 Days for Life campaign. Sign up for daily devotionals at the 40 Days for Life website (choose one of the full scale campaign towns).

Robert Colquhoun describes the new book "Forty Days for Life: Discover what God has done": The book includes 40 fascinating stories of how babies and mothers spared from abortion at the last possible second, hearts changed on one of the most controversial issues in our culture and shocking secrets from inside the abortion industry revealed. There are many stories of how God has used 40 days for life to transform lives and to bring hope and healing after abortion. 75 workers have experienced conversions and have left their jobs.



March for Life UK—Birmingham 10th March



In January 2013 the US March for Life event drew over half a million people to the streets of Washington, to bring the pro-life message to the people and the government. The pro-life movement is growing rapidly throughout the world, we are living in a time where people's hearts are changing and are turning towards Life. We must continue to stand up and speak out and do so with even more passion and conviction, bearing witness to the beauty of life and doing all that we can to build a society which values and protects human life.

At the moment we are seeing a vicious and relentless campaign by our government to destroy life in all forms. Now, more than ever, do we need to unite in our defence of the sanctity of life. Now more than ever, do we need to be courageous in defending and protecting the most vulnerable in society. Now, more than ever, do we need to be bold in our witness. Now more than ever, are we called to be a sign of opposition to the moral relativism which is undermining people's right to life, their right to family and consequently their right to a just and peaceful society.

Last year young adults from Birmingham organised the first March for Life with a spectacular balloon release outside the Council houses. With virtually no publicity, hundreds of people turned out to give witness to the Gospel of Life. Using music, testimony, prayer and hundreds of brightly coloured balloons, they gave a powerful witness to the beauty and dignity of Life in the heart of the City. This year we invite you to join us.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE
2.15 pm: Assemble at St Michael's, Moor St
2.15 pm - Prayer in the church
3.15 pm - March through city
4.15 pm - Prayer vigil and balloon release
5.00 pm - Depart

This year coaches will be coming from across the UK, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and more! For more information see the Facebook page.

If you're interested in going, please get in touch with Corinna Turner: eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk - 01242 575 197 since we may be able to organise a coach.

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How Deep is Your Love? ~ *Stella Kinmond*

Perhaps we can remember the Bee Gees '80s Hit "How Deep is Your Love" with its dreamy melody. Or even Take That's cover version in 1996. The lyrics speak of someone seeking assurance from their loved one about commitment and the honesty of their feelings.

If God were asking that question of me, how would I answer? Do I come to Church out of habit or out of love for God? Do I belong to just a Sunday club or does it mean something more?

Gathering as God's family to give praise and thanksgiving ought to be our greatest joy. He has given us Life itself, blessings of health, home, a loving family, work and friends, and so much more besides.

However, in reality, sometimes I go to Church and don't feel like singing – there is war and chaos in the world, uncertainties over work issues, health concerns, fall-outs with friends and family … I am tempted by numerous distractions that could entice me away from going to church. Yes, there are times when I wish I could be doing something else… It is then that we need to be honest with God.



Tell Him what your feelings are.

Tell Him what's happening in your life.

If you are too upset to pray, tell Him why; ask His help.

If I can't think about what to pray for in my own life, let me look to others around me – yes, even those people in the benches beside me (the young mother struggling with a toddler, the old lady who walks with a stick and can't kneel down, a person from a different country who must be missing their family and homeland, the sick mentioned every week in our bulletin). Occasionally I have spotted people at church get upset when they think about their situation in life; I can see them discreetly wipe a little tear from their eye. Let me pray for **them**.

Some people come to Mass and don't join in the prayers or sing the hymns. I remember Gareth Malone and how he trains his choirs. Those singers who really commit themselves, who open their mouths and feel the love, they are the ones who win. Imagine what praise our congregation could raise for God, if we all participated fully in our worship!

When I kiss my husband or children, I don't always tell them I love them. But the point is that just by being in their company and close says that I love them, even if I don't say the words. In the same way, if we're there regularly in church, and we spend time with Him, God will know that we love Him. If we talk honestly with God, involving him in our lives and our decision-making, our relationship with him will grow. God wants us to walk though each day with us, to talk with us. He made us a promise to be with us always, even till the end of time. That is a powerful promise. With God with us, who can be against us?

Of course we must always remember that when we come to church we are in the presence of an almighty, everlasting and ever-loving God, who is the creator of all: King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We need to show reverence. (Remember Moses and the burning bush? He took off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground). If we were in the presence of the Queen of England would we ignore her and chat amongst ourselves? When we are in God's presence we ought to shut out distracting thoughts that pop into our heads and really focus on what is happening; we are celebrating the life, death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Through His sacrifice there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, not sin, not even death. How awesome!



At the point of communion let us truly remember we are receiving Jesus himself. This should embolden us to, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord".

Someone said, Christianity is only one generation away from extinction. **It's our job to keep the faith alive.** Parents please pray with your children daily and bring them to Mass every Sunday. Let us at St. Gregory's be friendly and welcoming to visitors. Let us take part in the life of the parish – going for coffee after mass, joining one of the many groups which need new

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members to keep them going. Why not offer to be a welcomer, reader, help with coffee, children's liturgy or church cleaning? If there isn't a group to suit you, why not start one? With the refurbishment of the Old Priory we will have a new opportunity to pull together.



We are a **big** church: Let us be a **better** community.

Something to ponder: If the church behaved as it should, bringing the love and fellowship of Christ to all, looking after the poor and disadvantaged, there would be no need for social services.

Come on Christians - **Praise, Pray and Act!**

WELCOME:
THE SPRING CHARITY CONCERT

In aid of EA: enabling Adventures for the disabled and terminally ill

Saturday 16th March
St Gregory's School Hall GL50 3QG
at 7.30 pm

Refreshments Provided

Brought to you by YSVP & Proteen youth group



For tickets call 01242-525592 or 07780-443425

Catholic Bishops brief MPs on why Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill should be opposed

~ Clifton Diocese Website



Early in February Catholic Bishops urged members of Parliament to oppose the Marriage (Same sex couples) Bill at Second Reading as it distributed a briefing to MPs and Peers.

The briefing explains why the meaning of Marriage matters to everyone, reasoning that the Bill, for the first time in British legal history, "fundamentally seeks to break the existing legal link between the institution of marriage and sexual exclusivity, loyalty and responsibility for the children of the marriage". Quoting Bertrand Russell, the Bishops make the point that: "But for children, there would be no need of any institution concerned with sex... It is through children alone that sexual relations become of importance to society, and worthy to be taken cognizance of by a legal institution." It is worth noting that in last year's government consultation on the proposal to change the definition of marriage there was no mention of children at any point.

The briefing goes on to explain why retaining marriage solely for opposite sex couples is not discriminatory. The Bishops also make the point that there is no mandate for this fundamental change to the definition of marriage. Such a change is a major constitutional change and Parliament should not be rushed into making a decision that will have far reaching long -term consequences, many of them unintended. "The British public, as a whole, did not seek this change; none of the mainstream political parties promised it in their last election manifestos; there has been no referendum; there was no Green or White Paper and the Government consultation did not ask whether the law would be changed, but how the law should be changed.

This Bill paves the way for yet more fundamental change and the proposed safeguards are inadequate, the Bishops say, concluding that the wider legal consequences of the Bill have

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not been adequately addressed. This includes the unknown implications for public and private law, the impact on freedom of expression and freedom of religion particularly freedom of religion particularly in education and an emerging gulf between religious and secular conceptions of marriage which will have profound implications for the future architecture of relations between Church and State.

First Mass at GCHQ since the War! ~ *Jo Johnston*

During the Second World War, Mass was celebrated every Sunday at Bletchley Park in Hut 12, for members of GCHQ and the services. By the time GCHQ left Bletchley Park in 1946 this practice had stopped. However, on 25 January 2013 Mass was once again celebrated at GCHQ.

Some members of the GCHQ Catholic Community who attend Cheltenham's three Catholic parishes of St Gregory the Great, St Thomas More and Sacred Hearts, as well as other churches in the area, meet regularly for lunch and although there have been two recent visits to Benhall by Catholic priests the idea to celebrate Mass had been growing. With the imminent retirement of one of our group, Maddie Read, it seemed an ideal moment to arrange a Thanksgiving Mass both for Maddie and all who work here. It was thus a historical moment when, Canon Bosco MacDonald of St Gregory the Great and St Thomas More supported by Deacon Barry Taylor from Tewkesbury re-established that link with Bletchley Park.



Maddie Read, Canon Bosco MacDonald and Barry

Helping Fr Charles ~ *Maddie Read*



Fr Charles Ohuro, who was with us last summer, is the chaplain of a Catholic Secondary School in Angal, Northern Uganda. Since secondary education is not state-provided in Uganda, many children are forced to drop out early because their parents cannot afford the fees. Fr Charles has asked for our help to support the most needy children, to offer them the chance of a better future.

Angal Secondary is a mixed Roman Catholic school of 1,100 students in Nebbi District, Northern Uganda. Nebbi is a poor rural region dependent on subsistence farming and fishing, with very bad roads and other infrastructure. It has no rail or air links to the rest of Uganda.

Most students at the school are boarders. The school provides a diet of largely vegetables, beans and a kind of maize porridge called posho; it is very proud that it provides meat or fish on Sundays.

The school lacks most of the things we would consider basic for education: books, sports equipment, pencils, paper; its buildings are dilapidated and animals wander through the compound because they cannot afford to build a fence. But the students are very dedicated, and each year some make it through the final exams and on to a further education.

The fees for the schools are just under £50 a term, £150 a year. Most of the parents of the 1,100 pupils find that money each year, but there are about 200 children that Fr Charles fears are at risk of dropping out. The school would like to keep them on, but cannot afford to. We asked Fr Charles what he would most like as help.

He said that providing stability for the children at risk of dropping out was his greatest desire – could we help him by getting people to commit to paying for the education of a child - at a cost of around £3 a week/£15 a month - to give them a better future?

A group of parishioners has

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formed a small charity, **"Supporting Ugandan Education"** to try to make this happen. We are inviting individuals or groups to commit to a donation of £15 per month for at least a year, in order to pay the fees of a needy student at Angal School. We also hope to build relationships between the students and communities of Angal and Cheltenham.

We have formed, as a parish, a strong relationship with Fr Charles. We know and trust him, so we can be sure that any money sent will be well used. He has helped us; we would like to help him. Supporting the students and community of Angal is a unique opportunity, **now**, to bring our far away neighbours close, through our special relationship with Fr Charles. And in giving young, Catholic Africans the chance of education we are giving them a gift for life, a gift they can share and pass on to their children.

If you would like to help, please contact Maddie Read on 01242-525592

Time for tea: Breakfast club at St Thomas More's

The breakfast club was set up five months ago and runs at St Thomas More Church in Princess Elizabeth Way, Cheltenham, on the first Saturday of every month. It involves breakfast (not surprisingly!) a short talk, and time to socialise.

Johannes Shanmugam, from Springbank, started it so people feeling lonely had someone to talk to and it has since attracted up to 20 people, from children to pensioners. Johannes says, "We would always like to see more people come along. It is just somewhere people can come to meet others and have some company. It might be that some people need help, in which case we can put them in touch with the relevant agencies. However, it is mostly about people making friends and making sure they are not isolated."

The next meeting will be on 2nd March from 9.30am to 11am.

Monte Cassino to Cheltenham : Connecting Journeys

~ Joanna Vials

This year will mark the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the Battle of Monte Cassino during the Second World War. Some parishioners will have visited the rebuilt monastery, once more dominating the Cassino Massif in central Italy, and in our north transept window we have representations of St Benedict in the monastery he founded and where he wrote his *Rule*.

I grew up with stories of Monte Cassino from my father who fought and was injured there as a young man; the effects stayed with him to the very end of his life when he would imagine himself 'back on the mountain' during periods of intense pain. Conditions during this campaign were reminiscent of the Western Front in the 1914-18 war. However, being invalided behind the lines to Salerno he spent two happy years in a stores camp where my mother was a twenty-year-old civilian worker. Somehow these two very shy people without a shared language became acquainted by sharing a table in the canteen and later meeting surreptitiously at Auntie Caterina's house where arrangements were made for Carmela to come to England to marry in 1947. My father's prospective parents-in-law never allowed him into their house, soldiers being unwelcome to them, but they accepted that southern Italy after the war would be poverty stricken for many years. Eventually my mother's brother, sister and two cousins came to England supported by her and my father. Through their marriages I grew up with Latvian and Ukrainian uncles, both displaced persons after 1945.

My father-in-law had a similar war, also wounded at Monte Cassino, but moving on from there to Thessalonika in Greece where he met his future wife, Marika. They also married in 1947 and settled in Cheltenham. Marika had many stories of her wartime experiences as a young woman. In a desperate situation she worked for a German army dentist and stole cold potatoes to take home for her starving younger siblings.

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When I first met her in 1991 one of her most used phrases was 'Eat, eat!' and even now, aged 91 in a nursing home, she likes to have some food rations in her handbag for security.



These memories came back to me when I was given a copy of *Community* (the parish magazine which preceded *Caritas*) dated May 1969 and read the following article by Miroslaw Ostrynski and Krystyna Bukowska:

'THE POLES IN GREAT BRITAIN'

Before the last World War, there were already a small number of Poles in Great Britain. They came to this country at the beginning of the century, usually for political reasons. At that time Poland was not a free country. But the Poles were able to organise themselves into a strong social and Catholic group, led by the mitred prelate Staniszewski; and it was this group, in fact, who built the first Polish church in London, in Devonia Road. At present, [May 1969], there are eleven Polish churches in Great Britain. In these churches the Poles are more easily able to pray in their native language – which means a great deal to them.

A great number of Poles came to these shores during the last World War. They were airmen, sailors and soldiers from the land army, who, on the occupation of Poland by the Russians and the Germans, fled in their thousands; their aim was to organise a Polish army to liberate their country and establish a free Poland. They escaped through Rumania [sic] and Hungary and reached France, where they formed regular fighting units. Side by side with the French they fought against the Germans. After the fall of France, and still patiently believing in ultimate victory, they arrived in Britain. There followed a new reorganisation of the Polish army. Polish airmen and sailors (who, in several cases, came by ship from Poland) played a vital part in defending and in bringing in supplies to these islands. When the time came for the invasion of France, Polish motorised units took a full share in the fierce fighting. Their bravery at such places as Falaise will surely go down in history. Meanwhile Polish parachutists, many of whom were over forty years old, undertook dangerous missions in enemy-occupied territories.

By far the largest group, comprising both soldiers and civilians, came out of Russia with General Anders. All these people, including the General himself, had survived the terrible conditions of the Russian work-camps and prisons. They had continually stated, often at their peril, that they were Poles. General Anders was able to bring his diplomatic skill to bear on the Russians and led 100,000 Poles and Polish citizens (Jews, White Ruthenians and Ukrainians) out of captivity. It was like the Exodus from Egypt all over again—and such a test to courage and endurance. The people were starving and on the edge of physical exhaustion, but they soon formed themselves into fighting units, trying at the same time to educate their children, to publish books in their native language and to collect documents of the military campaign of 1939 and the subsequent deportation. This group made its way through Persia, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt and finally Italy. The Italian campaign was marked by many fierce battles, of which perhaps the most important was the capture of Monte Cassino, which opened the way to Rome. This battle ensured the fame of General Anders and his army. The British and Americans alike were full of praise for the bravery and determination of the Polish soldiers.

After the War, all these soldiers could not return home, for Poland had been overrun by Russia and was now a satellite of the Communists. Many of them came to Britain through Germany, where they had been working in labour camps; they came on the basis of work permits. They have remained in this country, working in various professions and unqualified jobs. They are conscientious and loyal citizens. They fought for a free Poland and await the dawning of a better day when their dream will come true.'

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In recent years we have once again welcomed a large number of young Polish men and women to our town and parish, able to come here in the happier circumstances of a peaceful and united Europe. It is for them to tell the



story of their journey here, of their hopes and dreams for the future, but I, for one, feel an affinity to the Polish people when I remember my parents and the circumstances which brought them together.

The Filipino Rosary Circle ~ *Libby Mackie*

The Filipinos in UK

UK started recruiting nurses from the Philippines about 40 years ago to supply their need for nurses and carers of the elderly.

"A nurse often deals with patients in crisis, operates in a highly-charged and dynamic work environment, serves as the centre of a team of health-care providers, and responds daily to critical, intellectual challenges and physical demands."

Filipinos are well-known for being very caring, patient, compassionate, serving the elderly people with respect and dignity. And most of us Filipinos owe these qualities from our upbringing as Catholics.

At the moment, there are about 40,000 Filipino nurses working in the UK's health-care system, half of whom are already permanent residents or British citizens, according to Philippine Labour Attaché, Jainal Rasul.

As you know, there is no profession as demanding as the job of a nurse and/or health giver; it can be very laborious especially the long hours of service. And because of this, some of the nurses and carers sometimes find it hard to adjust their time to practice their religion, along with the other migrant Filipinos, due to hectic hustle and bustle of life in UK.

And that's where the Rosary Circle comes in. We all need to pray for each other. That we may find time to thank the Lord for the present He is giving us everyday which is "LIFE".

Formation of the Circle:

It is not easy to find yourself in a strange country where you do not know many people especially your countrymen.

And forming a religious group for a private devotion can be daunting but an interesting, fascinating and gratifying task. Though coming from the same country of the same religion, it is somewhat like threading the needle in inviting participants to join in, as most people going overseas and after realising their dreams, seem to forget the giver of them all.

But it was not that hard to get names, addresses and telephone numbers. Filipinos are pretty laid back people. They are friendly, kind, hospitable and generous. Asking a couple of Filipinas made this daunting task a challenging one.

A database of personal details as to names, addresses, telephone numbers and their available date was established after contacting them by phone and asking if they were interested. With basic knowledge of computing, the task became a passion thus making it a lot easier to do as everything seemed to fall into place. An announcement was made in the church bulletin of St Greg's. What man proposes, God disposes! A prayer guide to a simple rosary was written also with the litany of Our Lady of Loreto; the copies of which were posted to the 52

The First Announcement:
(St Gregory Parish Church Bulletin – 9th March 2008)

The Filipino Rosary Circle 2008: has started in 16th February in Tewkesbury. The Statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary will be coming to Cheltenham on 16th March. It will then move to Gloucester, Leckhampton, Stroud and Lechlade. Participants will receive the statue of the Blessed Mother into their home for the week and pray the Rosary. The main intentions of the Rosary are: World Peace and Unity, Conversion of Sinners, Spiritual and Temporal Well-being of all Priests and Vocations. Any Filipino interested in joining the Circle please call the following numbers: Libby 01242 677246 and Agnes, 01242 260939

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participants together with the rosary beads made by Michael Lawson, the former President of the Rosary Beadmakers of Bathurst, NSW, Australia.

The statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary wrapped in cloth and then with bubble wrap, the candle sticks and holders, the prayers, some rosary beads and some leaflets of information about the Mass, Reconciliation, Examination of Conscience, etc. are all provided and in a big bag for convenience of transfer.

Membership:

Members are from all over Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire and a vision to link the circle to Rome and Australia is on the agenda. The Circle can never be an exclusive one as we all need each other, praying for one another wherever we are.

The Circle became a source of social contact among the Filipinos. It widens their area of friendship both spiritually and socially.

Participants invite friends and relations to come and join in the prayer of the rosary. It is quite a glorious atmosphere hearing the group chanting harmoniously to the leader's salutations.

There are 52 of them, 52 homes representing the 52 weeks of the year. They enjoyed the visit of the Blessed Mother who stayed with them for a week. They readily accepted the Blessed Mother to their homes and the blessings bestowed on them, only they knew.

Some of them do not know each other until the BVM is transferred to his/her home. Though it may sound awkward that sometimes the transfer happens anywhere, the Blessed Mother will not complain as she only wants the participants to say the rosary/ prayers while in their homes. Her coming to their homes is only a reminder that our Creator is looking after them through her.



We are in a group, in an association looking after each other like a family. As a family, to save the world, we must first save the home. The rosary can do this. Everything that one turns in the direction of God is 'prayer'. (St Ignatius of Loyola)

And so, with Bishop Sheen let us say:

"Though hammers beat and sickles cut and atoms burst and warfare blusters at red satan's and hell's command – lift up your hearts, for has not God promised through a Virgin's foot to crush these cobras of the night?"

Monastery of Our Lady and St Bernard, Brownshill, Stroud, GL6 8AL

Celebrate Lent with us in this Year of Faith...

Weekend Retreat: *15th-17th February*
"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."
Faith and Service in the Light of Vatican II
Suggested offering £85

Schools of Prayer... *Wednesday evenings 7.00–9.00 pm*
20th Feb: Jesus at Prayer
27th Feb: ...at the school of St Benedict
6th March: ...at the school of St Francis
13th March: ...at the school of Carmel
20th March: ...at the school of Pope Benedict XVI

Gospel Sharing: *Sunday afternoons*
3.30 Talk by a Sister
4.15 Tea
4.45 Vespers (Optional)

It all depends on your point of view! *~ Sent by email*

English prayer: O Lord, grant that we may not be like porridge - stiff, stodgy and hard to stir; but like cornflakes - light, crisp and ready to serve.

Scottish prayer: O Lord, grant that we may not be like cornflakes - lightweight, empty and cold; but like porridge - warm, comforting and full of natural goodness.

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Gloucester Mystery Plays – The Director's Vision

~ Sheila Mander

To be performed in Gloucester and Worcester Cathedrals in April 2013.

Having spent my whole working life as a Professional Actor, Teacher, Director and University Lecturer, it seems an incredible coincidence to be offered the opportunity to act as artistic director of The Passion - the 2nd Cycle of the revised Mystery Plays.

Coincidence, because my very first performance in a professional production was in a Passion Play at the Kingston Empire, where at 14, I played the boy Mark.

Incredible, to be able to use the skills that I have gained in my long and exciting career to tell 'The Greatest Story Ever Told' - The story of the Life, Death, Resurrection of Jesus and The Last Judgement.

Being a Christian makes the task even more special.

Having spent the past 6 weeks preparing for this enormous task, I fully appreciate the challenge facing me.

I suppose the biggest challenge is the beautiful venues of Worcester and Gloucester Cathedrals. In fact the beauty of these wonderful buildings is one of the problems. These lofty places of worship, though excellent for music and singing, make the spoken word, without the benefit of microphones, very difficult to be clearly understood.

But undaunted I set about allowing my vision to develop.

My task is to present the revised script in such a way that is would be accessible to a modern audience. At the same time to give a large cast, choir, musicians and all the artistic team and backstage crew the opportunity to create together a stimulating visual, aural and vocal retelling of this amazing story. All in these two magnificent settings!

This is the stuff that Directors' dreams are made from.

First decision was to find ways to help the words to be clearly heard, and the action seen by everyone. I decided to have a proscenium- style performance in terms of set, so that a backing could provide a sounding board, as well as



create atmosphere. The setting would be of a substance and colour to make it possible to create scenes and moods with lighting and projection. The seating would have some raised seating in both Cathedrals to allow full vision at all times. And having taught voice training for 40 years I will train my actors to develop their ability to improve their projection.

Inspiration: There were two major influences that inspired my thinking on set costume and lighting design.

The music commissioned for the Cycles by Robert Perry had an Eastern feel. Somehow in the first cycle, with a small quartet, Robert was able to suggest a Jewish timeless atmosphere. This inspired the desire for a Mediterranean influence in the set and costume designs.

Rachel Murray, who wrote the translation, said in the programme of the first Cycle that she was "interested in the concept of God being outside time" and she observes how similar "the medieval mind is to our own way of thinking"

These two thoughts led me to the decision that I would talk to the Designer about a timeless non-period style for the costumes.

Apart from the Supernatural characters, all of the cast will wear similar Mediterranean, timeless, natural earthy and citrus coloured costumes.

I have assembled a large cast, many members of St Gregory's parish are taking part or are on the costume sewing team. There are many different denominations of believers and non-believers of all ages working together to bring this story to life.

There are 65 speaking parts, most of them with only a few lines.

That only becomes a problem if those members of the cast are allowed to feel minor in their role in the presentation. So the first decision regarding the way the play will be acted, and one from which I am now reaping the benefit in rehearsals, was to make the whole show an ensemble piece.

This means that everyone

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except Jesus and Satan play crowd and merely move out of the crowd to become the various characters in the play. They may pick up an article of clothing or a prop that will help to create the status of their character.

This means that the whole cast with the audience is at the centre of the action.

I visualise a bright colourful presentation in which the music and crowd help to enhance the drama of the plays by linking a seamless story. They constantly play out for us the fickleness of human beings showing how we love and worship and then deny and reject God in our lives. Nothing changes. We may have better technology available than when these plays were first performed, but our motivations and loyalties are very similar.

I hope that, as well as giving a moving and sincere interpretation of the stories, I may provide an opportunity for reflection on these familiar stories.

There are lots of problems still to be solved. But with the wonderful creative team working on this production I know we will find an imaginative way to create them.

One huge problem has been solved since I wrote this piece.

God, is being portrayed by the voice of famous actor Jeremy Irons.

Watch this space.

Volunteers needed ~ *Sent by email*

The sacristan was discussing the need for more volunteers with the priest after doing some research on numbers. He said, "There are 450 members in our church, but 100 are frail and elderly, so that leaves 350 to do the voluntary work. However, 50 are young people who are either away at university or studying for other examinations, which leaves 300.

"Around 150 of them are business people who get home late feeling tired, so that leaves 150. We think 80 are housewives with children to look after and they have enough on their hands, which leaves 70. And we know that 50 members are busily involved with other charities, leaving 20 to do the volunteering. But 10 of these live too far away to be here regularly, which leaves 5, and 3 of these have said they do enough already. So frankly, Father, that leaves you and me and I'm afraid I'm exhausted, so I can only wish you well.

The New Altar in Saint Thomas More's Centre

~ Deacon Frank

During the renovations at Saint Thomas More we were blessed with the gift of a new altar and matching celebrant's chair. These two items were given by the Poor Clare nuns as they were leaving their convent in Woodchester.

From the earliest days of Christianity it has been the custom to celebrate Mass on altars which contain the relics of a saint or a group of saints. In the first centuries Mass was often said in the catacombs in Rome on top of the tombs of the first martyrs of the Church. It then became the norm for relics to be sealed into a new altar.

The altar in Saint Thomas More's is of a modern design and is perfectly suitable for our present form of liturgy. The altar was a gift to the Poor Clares on the occasion of the Solemn Profession of Sister Ruth Agnes in the Woodchester chapel. It was generously funded by Sister Ruth's former school in Barrow in Furness. The altar is made of local beech wood and instead of being sealed into the top of the altar, the relics are housed in a bronze casket underneath.

The five relics in the altar are of:

1. Saint John Wall. Born in Preston in 1620, he studied and was ordained as a Franciscan priest. On awaiting execution in 1679 at Worcester Assizes he was told that his crime was that of functioning as a Roman priest. He wrote at that time to a friend in Gloucestershire, "This will be the last persecution that will be in England; therefore I hope God will give us all the grace to make the best use of it".



2. Blessed Thomas Bullaker hailed from Chichester and was born in 1604. Having studied abroad, he was ordained a Franciscan priest and spent ten years working among the poor in London. Writing about his arrest, which took place as he was saying Mass, he said: "Just as I was intoning the 'Gloria in excelsis' the apostate pursuivant Wadsworth came into the room and laid hands on me at the altar. Being thus unexpectedly, though not unwillingly, made a prisoner, I wished to take off my sacred vestments but Wadsworth

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refused. He seized books, rosaries, images and silver vessels of holy oil and then took me before the Sheriff of London." He was martyred on September 11th 1642.

3. Blessed Henry Heath was born in Peterborough in 1559 and studied at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Some time after his studies he became a Catholic. On the day of his arrest near London Bridge in 1643 he had walked forty miles barefoot. In court he said, "I asserted that it was a great honour to have received the Priesthood of our Saviour." He was executed on 17th April 1643 at Tyburn, reconciling in the cart on the way one of the criminals who were executed with him.

4. Blessed Arthur Bell was born at Temple Broughton near Worcester in 1590. After ordination as a Franciscan and 10 years in Brussels he returned to England and was very quickly arrested. He wrote from prison: "They have committed me to Newgate for a Franciscan confessed and a Roman priest suspected. I hope nobody shall have any harm by anything I have said, and for myself the worst they can do to me is the best and most desired. God's holy will be done." On his way to execution in 1643 he sang the 'Te Deum' in a loud clear voice.

5. Blessed John Woodcock came from Leyland in Lancashire. After studies and ordination to the Franciscan priesthood he begged his superiors to let him return to England. He was captured very quickly and spent two years without trial in Lancaster gaol. He was hanged in 1646.

What a blessed coincidence that three hundred or so years later a newly formed parish in Cheltenham was named after Saint Thomas More and that the new Blessed Sacrament chapel is named after the brave Saint John Fisher, the saintly Bishop of Rochester and the only Catholic Bishop not to cave in to the demands of the reformation.

We are told that the Church is built of people not bricks and mortar. Saint Thomas More's will possibly never be mistaken for a basilica, but in its patrons and in the relics of its altar, we are reminded of some of the greatest living stones in the history of English Catholicism.

When the altar was being moved from storage to the new sanctuary area one of the workmen said to me, "Altar! it looks more like a butcher's chopping block!" I replied, "You are much closer to the truth than you realise."

NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Local Primary School Aiming High for its Pupils ~ *Charlotte Blanch*

The past two years have seen a lot of changes at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School in Lewis Road, Hesters Way. In July 2010, the school was in crisis. Not only had it been placed in Special Measures by HMI but it also faced a huge financial deficit, pupil numbers were down and it was poorly perceived within the local community.

Now two years on the story is very different. Serving the Parish of St Thomas More, the school draws pupils from Reception Class to Year 6 to this smaller than average voluntary aided Catholic Primary School in the heart of Hesters Way.

Since July 2010, thanks to the pivotal roles played by Interim Executive Head Teacher Andy Darby, the newly appointed Governing Body and teaching staff, the school is striving towards future standards of excellence. Leaders, at all levels, are now able to bring about improvements because they have ambition and the expertise to convert this into practice. Teaching has improved considerably through the school, so children make good progress in lessons with good literacy and numeracy across all years.

Following the Ofsted Inspection on the 7th December 2011, HMI reported that St Thomas More Catholic Primary now provided a good quality of education with some outstanding features and was no longer in special measures. Pastoral care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable was found to be outstanding. Efficient systems which are now in place to ensure equality of opportunity concentrate effectively on vulnerable groups to make certain they achieve well.

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School's faith-based ethos ensures good spiritual development leading to enhanced social skills and good behaviour. Her Majesty's Inspector reported: "I was impressed with how well the

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pupils behave, how hard they work and how polite and courteous they are - these attitudes have helped this school improve. Pupils can help it further by continuing always to work hard and do their very best."



A Section 48 Inspection conducted in April 2012 by the Clifton Diocese also judged the school to provide a good level of religious education with some outstanding areas.

Congratulations were also received from Bishop Declan, Bishop of Clifton who said: "I would like to offer my congratulations for the way in which St Thomas More School has come through special measures in such good time. I appreciate the challenges you have had to face and can only admire the governors, teachers and children for taking on this task and succeeding."

Children are given a good start to their primary school education, receiving a broad and balanced education whilst sharing in God's love. Pupils are taught using a Creative Themed Curriculum based on active learning where they will learn through a range of practical and purposeful activities, which fully capture their imagination and interest from the start. Each individual is encouraged to realise their full potential: spiritually, academically, physically, socially and emotionally.

Parents and carers have been very positive about the school's performance in a recent survey; many reporting big improvements in the quality of education at the school. All said their child/ children enjoyed school immensely and were taught in a safe, secure and happy school community.

Changes at St Thomas More Catholic Primary not only cover the way the school is run and how pupils are taught, but with significant financial support from the Clifton Diocese they have carried out an extensive refurbishment programme to the buildings and grounds. Now it provides a more comfortable environment where pupils can learn, play and be creative, both indoors and out. The £300,000 refurbishment programme to the structure of the building concluded in February 2012 with the replacement of the hall roof.

In addition to support from the Clifton Diocese, the school has received considerable backing from companies in and around Cheltenham. Not only have employees from GCQH helped set up a reading scheme to help children with their literacy, but when Zurich Community Trust invited staff to take up various community challenges at the school, they did so with enthusiasm. Staff from Zurich, Capita and Endsleigh Insurance in Cheltenham completed the refurbishment of the grounds this summer, taking on a number of community challenge projects for which they raised funds. These included refurbishing the Reception Class play area, painting all the fences and play equipment and creating a new Jubilee Courtyard Garden for the children to enjoy.

The school is also looking to develop an allotment garden, following a donation by the Hesters Way Neighbourhood Project in early 2012, which will enable the children to start learning about how to grow their own vegetables. Now, thanks to grant funding from both the National Lottery Awards for All and the Gloucester Community Foundation Ecclesiastical Insurance fund, they plan to get their new gardening club underway early in 2013.



STM Children on a trip to Parliament

At the start of another year, the school has more exciting times ahead of it. New head teacher, Mrs Charlotte Blanch, joined the team and is ready to lead them on the next part of the journey. The article passes over to her for a more personal viewpoint...

The past two weeks have been a settling in period where I have had the chance to spend lots of time with the staff and

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children getting to know them. They have all made me feel so welcome already and I have quickly felt at home.


Charlotte Blanch

My vision for this school is that it becomes an 'outstanding' Catholic primary school and the staff very much share in this vision. We have already started to put plans in place for the short term and long term to help us on this journey. Children at this school make incredible progress – this is because of the wonderful enthusiastic teaching from every member of the team and our first priority will be to make sure that this progress (and fun) continues.

In recent years, with the drive to be removed from Special Measures, the school has been lead by a non-Catholic leadership team, with the governors being the guardians of the Catholicity of the school. This leaves a wonderful opportunity for myself, as a Catholic head teacher, to have a renewed emphasis on making the Catholicity of the school more high profile and this is a task that I began on my first day during assembly time where we discussed the Gospel and prayed for support in using the many talents that God has given us.

We are also looking to continue to work alongside other corporate and community supporters within the local area to ensure our children have the very best learning opportunities. We are constantly appealing to parishioners who would like to help out in our breakfast club and with listening to children read – if you're interested, please contact the school on 01242 513339.

As we begin the next part of our journey as a school, we thank you for your ongoing support and we ask you to continue to remember us in your thoughts and prayers as we work to do the very best for the children in our care. All at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School wish you a very happy and healthy new year.

The Men who would die for the Pope

~ Joanna Moorhead

They're some of the best-known figures in Rome - the Swiss Guards, who have been protecting the Pontiff for more than 500 years. But who are the young soldiers standing to attention at the Vatican's portals - and what is their life really like? Joanna Moorhead goes behind the scenes to find out.

Every year they erect a life-sized nativity in the centre of St Peter's Square; and every December 31, in the final hours of the old year, the Pope goes out to pray there. It's a moving moment - the shepherd of the flock joining the thousands of pilgrims to contemplate the wonder of Christ's birth. And as a backdrop, there's music provided by the band of the Swiss Guard.

For the band, the performance is the culmination of many months of practice. And this year, it will have special significance because, for the first time in its history, the band has marked the Christmas season by recording an album of festive tunes.

'We wanted to share our music with those beyond St Peter's Square, and we thought this was a good way to do it,' says Franz Hurlimann, who plays the saxophone in the band. 'And we wanted our music to benefit others - some of the proceeds raised from the sales of the CD will go to a charity helping drug addicts, while another portion of it will go to development projects in Zimbabwe.'

For the band, the nativity ceremony on December 31 is one of three big events in the calendar. The others are the Swiss Guard swearing-in ceremony each May, when new recruits are formally admitted to the battalion, and April 16, Pope Benedict's birthday, when they play in the Vatican gardens while the Pontiff takes a walk. 'They're all very significant occasions for the band, and we spend a lot of time getting ready for them,' says Franz.

The band is young in Swiss Guard terms. It was founded in the 19th century, 350 years or so after the guard itself was formally established (it had already existed for many years before it was made official by

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Pope Julius II in 1506). The Popes had come to rely on the stoicism and solidarity of the young Swiss mercenaries who had the added attraction - during the years of Papal wars and European feuds - of being politically neutral. 'Popes through history knew we were discreet, and that we would give our lives for them,' says Franz. 'During the sack of Rome in 1527, 147 Swiss Guards were killed defending the Pope. To this day, when we are sworn in we pledge to give our lives, if necessary, for the Pope - and if we had to, we would die for him.'

These days there is little fighting in a Swiss Guard's life, unless you count the occasional tussle with a persistent tourist intent on gaining admission to the Vatican City, which is the world's smallest independent state. Only those who live there, or work there, or have business there may enter (except for St Peter's Basilica and Square, and the Vatican Museum, all of which are open to visitors); so most of Franz's time, and that of his colleagues, is spent guarding the four entrances to the city, checking papers and issuing instructions to visiting bishops and clerics.

Today, though, I am one of the lucky few allowed into the Vatican - and Franz is showing me round the Swiss Guard armoury, packed with proof that the history of the force has indeed been violent and bloody. Suits of silver body armour line the walls, and in the centre of the room there are rows of muskets, halberds, staffs and swords. Franz shows me one halberd with a row of notches carved onto it: each notch, he explains, represents a life taken with the weapon. It's a sobering thought, and a reminder that Papal history has had its fair share of spilt blood.

Beside the armoury there's the uniform store, laden with rack on rack of the famous red, blue and gold Swiss Guard uniform. 'People say it was designed by Leonardo but in fact that's not true, its creator was a Swiss commander and the colours are those of the Medici family,' explains Franz.

For daily use there's a dress-down version featuring a dark blue cape and blue breeches. 'It makes us less attractive for tourist photographs, and that means we have more time to get on with our work,' he says.

Like all members of the guard Franz, who's 26, was born in Switzerland and did military service there. He's also Catholic, unmarried, and more than 174cm tall - all requirements for a member of the Swiss Guard. So what made him volunteer to serve in this, the world's longest-standing army? 'I thought it would be a terrific experience, and I also thought it would be a great spiritual adventure,' he says. He arrived here in summer 2010 and plans to stay until June next year - the usual pattern is for soldiers to have two or three years in Rome before going back to pick up their lives in Switzerland. 'I'll probably go back to study and then take up a career,' he says. 'But my life here will always be a part of me, it will always be in my heart.'

According to Fr Alain de Raemy, who's chaplain to the Swiss Guard (and is, of course, Swiss himself) there are different reasons for joining the force. 'You get young men who are very keen Catholics, and they're looking for something spiritual, and you get those who want an adventure in another country - and for most, of course, there's a bit of both.' All the soldiers, he says, are immensely proud of being Swiss and of the service they've given the Popes through history: but on a human level, many of the young men haven't lived so far from home before, and they get homesick. 'Some of my work is supporting them, helping them through if they're having a tough time,' says Fr Alain. 'The temperament of the Swiss is very different from the temperament of the Italians - we are much more organised, Rome can often seem like a place of chaos, and sometimes getting used to the differences can be difficult.'

Being in the guard isn't for the fainthearted - it is, says Franz, hard work. 'When you're guarding one of the main gates there's always something happening and there are always tourists around wanting to take your picture,' he says. 'But there are other duties inside the Vatican, away from the public, and you can find

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yourself in a quiet doorway for hours on end with nothing happening...it can be quite boring.'

How much contact do the soldiers actually have with the Pope? 'Not as much as you might think - most of the time he's inside the palace, in his apartments, so we don't see him,' explains Franz. 'The only times you get to meet him are the day before your swearing-in, when you are presented to him and can introduce your parents to him, and then when you leave you have a private audience when he thanks you and says goodbye.

'Other than that, the main times we see him are when he's moving around, leaving the palace to go to the basilica, or when he's leaving the Vatican to go somewhere. We're standing by the door saluting as he leaves, and he is blessing us as he passes by - it's a very moving moment.'

'We all love the Pope,' says fellow soldier Roland Bircher, who's 27 and has been in the Pontiff's guard for the last six years. 'I came on a trip to Rome when I was a boy, and I knew it was what I wanted to do when I was older. This isn't a job, it's more of a vocation.' Like Franz, he plays in the band - his instrument is the clarinet. 'If you're musical, that's something extra you can bring to the guard, because the band is an important part of it,' he says.

Most of the Swiss Guard are young men in their twenties who serve for two or three years in Rome; but a handful make it their entire career, rise through the ranks, and are allowed to marry and raise a family inside the Vatican City. 'It's a very unusual situation, and there are only about five or six families here,' says Tiziano Guarneri, 38, a sergeant who has been in the Swiss Guard for 18 years. He and his wife Simona, 34, have three children - Lorenzo is seven, Alessio is four and Ludovica is two - and live in an apartment within the Vatican City. 'It's very different from life in the rest of Rome - it's very safe, for one thing,' says Tiziano. 'You never need to lock your doors in here, and you know the children are fine to run around. They cycle their bikes and play football in the Vatican gardens - sometimes there are bishops and even cardinals walking past - and we also have a community of nuns who live in the flat above us who often babysit for us if we're going out.' The Vatican has its own supermarket and pharmacy for its residents, and there's a doctor on call; but there's no school, says Tiziano, so the children are educated at a school in Rome.

Back at the barracks - where the courtyard, unsurprisingly, is dominated by a large Swiss flag - the band members are gathering for a practice. 'This is a busy time of year for us, because as well as everything else we're preparing for our performance on St Peter's Square on December 31,' explains Franz. 'We take it very seriously because the Pope himself will hear us, and we want to do our very best for him. That's what it's all about, for us.'

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Shrewd Planning *~ Sent by email*

An elderly woman told her minister and her solicitor she had two final requests. First, she wanted to be cremated, and secondly, she wanted her ashes scattered over the stretch of grass outside Sainsbury's. When asked the reason for this rather strange request, she said, "I'll be sure my two daughters visit me twice a week."

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December's Christian Ecology Link ~Martin Davis

Catholic writer and *Tablet* journalist Ellen Teague came to the Old Priory before Christmas, to talk to a group of Christian Ecology Link supporters on the theme of *"Christian ecology? An imperative for our times!"*

She laid out her credentials with the aid of slides she had taken whilst teaching in Nigeria, working for CAFOD during the period of the 1984 Ethiopian famine and in more recent times advocating on climate change with the Columban Missionaries. Ellen also chairs the National Justice & Peace Network's Environment Group.

During her 30 or so years' involvement in campaigns by Catholic organisations, Ellen said she had witnessed a growing awareness that development and the environment were connected. But it was not just those living now on the margin with whom Christians should show solidarity. The problem is this: so many are only getting through today by compromising tomorrow. Showing an image of Nepalese women carrying wood for fuel, she asked: "What happens to those dependent on firewood when all the trees have been cut down?" The poor are so often forced to destroy their environment just to survive.

And yet how little do we hear in our media about modern Rainforest martyrs, Chico Mendez and Sister Dorothy Stang, murdered in Brazil! Or the priests and people of Mindanao in the Philippines, mounting pickets to halt large-scale mining, and risking their lives to celebrate Mass together on the route heavy vehicles are using to open up new mines.

Columban Father Sean McDonagh has described the Eucharist as the sacrament of ecology: how can Christians preach the good news of life in abundance, without being concerned for the disappearance of the glaciers in the Andes, the melting water of which is vital for the water supply of the eight million citizens of Lima?

Ellen wondered why the Church was so slow to embrace initiatives, fully in accord with Catholic Social Teaching, such as Creation Time: in recent Autumns, this has been celebrated by other Christians throughout Europe. One reason? The Church's anthropocentric vision.

ChristianEcologyLink

Humans are effectively edging others off the planet. When considering the plight of the unborn, well, there we clearly see abortion as a sin. But how do we describe a tragedy such as Bhopal? Someone's "sin"? No, our reaction is more like, "A pity!" We seem to lack any moral code to cope with biocide or ecocide: it's as if there's a failure of communication between religion and science.

And in a clergy-centred Church, what matters so much is the lead priests and bishops give within their parishes and dioceses: an enquiry was made to one of our leading seminaries, "How much time do you give to teaching creation theology and about climate change to your candidates for the priesthood?" "Half a day," came the reply. Half a day a week? Half a day a month? No, half a day in the whole six-year course!

But maybe, Ellen thought, the biggest obstacle we face is simply this: priests don't have children and grandchildren. It's through these eyes we (who do have them) can so easily see the future!

"The environment is not something you can dip into," Ellen told us. What we have to develop is a sustained focus upon the meaning of God's covenant with creation, as outlined in Genesis. Quoting theologian Mary Grey, she urged us to become "a prophetic community working for our own transformation." As people of faith, we need to step up.

Ellen's words, the audience agreed during the plenary session that followed her talk, were some challenge. We reflected upon this at Compline, with which the evening ended. Deacon Robin had most helpfully selected as our reading a passage from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians, concluding: "God has called you and he will not fail you."

Christian Ecology Link's next local meeting takes place on Friday 10th May. Fr Tom Cullinan, who works in the Liverpool Archdiocese, came to speak to us three years ago, on *Learning to tread lightly on God's planet*. He was well received, and has agreed to come again. His subject this time will be *A Year of Food &*

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Faith, the title referring to the fact that in October last, two "years" were launched. The Year of Faith (marking 50 years from the start of Vatican II) and The Year of Food (called by Overseas Aid agencies from all the churches). Fr Tom will say Mass in St Gregory's at 7.00 pm prior to his talk, which will take place in the Old Priory. Admission free, all welcome.



Did you know? *~ Chris Bentall*

The famous actor Sir Ralph Richardson was born in Cheltenham and baptised at St Gregory's; his birth on December 19th 1902 was followed by his baptism on Sunday February 1st 1903. The officiating priest was Fr O'Hear and Amelia Josephine Louisa Phillips is named as his godparent in the parish register. Ralph's father Arthur was senior art master at Cheltenham Ladies College (1893-1911) and his parents were devout Quakers. Ralph's mother Lydia was a Catholic and took her faith seriously. The family were comfortably off and lived in a rented villa in Tivoli Rd, where Ralph was born and where he unveiled a Civic Society commemorative blue plaque to himself in November 1982.

In 1906 Lydia took Ralph away to Sussex, raising him as a Catholic. He attended the Xaverian Brothers Catholic College in Brighton and although Lydia wanted him to be a priest he wanted to be an actor. With his distinctive voice Ralph had a long and distinguished career, mainly on stage but also in films, on TV and radio. One biographer says he was never satisfied with a single one of his performances. He made his London West End debut in 1926 and performed for the first time on Broadway in 1935 in *Romeo & Juliet*. Among his films were *The Four Feathers* (1939), *Dr Zhivago* (1965) and *Time Bandits* (1981). Knighted in 1947, he opened the first Cheltenham Festival of Literature in 1949. A keen motor cyclist well into his 70s, he died in London in October 1983; his funeral was held in Westminster Abbey and he was buried in Highgate Cemetery.



Children's Corner — Youth Page

Writer's Corner — For the young and the young at heart!



Theodolf – Guardian Angel in training ~ C. Turner

The Guardian Angels felt ill when forced to play for their people's souls in underground caverns, so the Soul Boards were set out on top of a cloud. It was big, white and fluffy, and a very comfortable place to work. *If* you were an angel. The Custodian Demons claimed *they* felt ill playing in bright sunlight, but God had said tough, and reinforced it with the threat of a whole host of Domination angels. Strangely enough, there were no further complaints.

So each Guardian Angel faced their nemesis over the Soul Board of their parish. The boards looked rather like giant chessboards, except there were far too many pieces. The pieces looked like little people, completely oblivious to their surroundings. Occasionally, an Angel or Demon would remove one of their own pieces and the patrolling Archangels were constantly adding one here or there as new souls came into being.

The Angels and Demons grappled to move their pieces closer and closer to their end of the board.

At the Angel's end, the board disappeared into pure light. No colour left.

At the Demon's end, the board disappeared into nothingness. No colour there, either.

At one board, a Demon removed a soldier. In a jungle, a marine had stepped on a mine.

At another board, an Angel took a ruthless millionaire. An expensively-dressed man slipped self-consciously into the back row of a church, trying to look as if he knew what he was doing.

At yet another board, a young Angel called Theodolf eyed his board anxiously. One piece in particular. It stood very close to the middle of the board, where the light began to fade away. The Demon opposite him laughed, his red eyes glinting happily.

"Come on," he crooned to the piece in question, "just *laugh* at him, you know you want to. Why shouldn't you laugh at him? He's just that sad loser boy with no friends. Why not laugh at him? Everyone *else* is… If you don't laugh, what will they think?"

Theodolf gripped the young girl's piece, trying desperately to lift it, to move it closer to his side of the board, towards safety. But he was powerless to move the piece without the soul's consent.

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"Don't laugh at him!" he urged the piece in turn, bending closer as though the soul would hear him better. "What if you'd just spilled that squash all down yourself? How would you feel?"

"*Laugh*," hissed Yagoda persuasively. "Everyone's laughing. It's funny, after all. If he had a sense of humour, he'd laugh too."

"Don't laugh!" cried Theodolf, feeling the piece growing slippery as he tried to hold it. "It's not that kind of laughter! It's *nasty*! Don't do it!"

"It's *nasty*," mimicked the demon, "Ooh, that's going to stop her!"

Alas, the demon proved correct. Theodolf was forced to accept that he could no longer even grip the piece, let alone try to lift it. He sat back on his hump of cloud, wings drooping, as Yagoda cackled and shifted the piece a little further away from the angel. Somewhere, another voice joined a gale of cruel laughter and another drop of misery entered the world.

"Ooh, yes," purred Yagoda, watching the piece intently. "Yes, that's just the thing to say. Everyone will think you're so funny. The good kind of funny..."

Theodolf's deep brown eyes widened in dismay.



"No, don't say that! Why would you want to say such a thing? What's he ever done to you? If they'd find that funny, what do you even want to be friends with these people for!"

"Poor, poor Dolfy," mocked the demon. "That was you in school, wasn't it? That sad little loner? So boringly angelic even then, did no one want to be around you?" He cackled gleefully and shifted the piece towards himself as destructive words flew from heedless lips. "No wonder you can't protect your souls," hissed the demon. "How could you possibly? You can't even understand their temptations!"

Theodolf flicked his wings nervously, then reached up a hurried hand to stop his halo of light falling off. He tried to block the demon's vicious words from his heart. But the shadow touched the young girl now, and he felt such a failure.

It wasn't over yet. He could hear more words shaping themselves, feel horrible emotions of scorn and pride flooding the soul's body. But also a momentary pause, a glimpse of a face choking on the edge of tears and a fleeting stirring of pity. He touched the piece and found it once again in his grasp. His move again. If he could persuade the soul to actually let him make it.

"Getting your hopes up, are we?" sniggered the demon. "You're never going to move that one. You haven't the words or the understanding. But if you ask me nicely I might drop in the odd good word for you. For an unfair price, of course!"

Theodolf made no move to ask the demon anything, let alone nicely and tried very hard to ignore him. Determined to take his time and marshal the best possible argument, he gazed thoughtfully at the board for long moments.

Of course, there were no true moments in heaven because there was no true time. 'Heaven Time', as it was known, existed entirely for organisational purposes. Heaven Time was in fact logically, physically, scientifically, metaphorically and even spiritually impossible. Those physicists and mathematicians who made it to heaven became gleefully engrossed in the study of the phenomenon; which had been being studied since the first physicists and mathematicians had come into existence and arrived there. There was a secret pool among the lower angels on how long it would take them to realise that the only way in which Heaven Time made any sense whatsoever was *theologically*.

Anyway, Theodolf could sit there pondering his move for several years of Earth Time (or E. T. as it was humorously designated), without a second passing for the person involved. Rather desperately, he began to chew one of his wing feathers, then stopped as he realised what he was doing.

Problem was, he couldn't seem to frame any stronger arguments. He knew the mockery was wrong, knew it to the very core of his spiritual bones, but persuasive words eluded him.



The Demon started cackling again, distracting him.

"Be quiet!" he appealed.

"What, so you can think better? Hmmm," the Demon pretended to consider. "*No!*" He went on laughing. Theodolf strove to maintain his angelic calm, but he was only a guardian Angel, after all, and he soon started to simmer gently. "Oh, hurry up," said the Demon after a while. "I can't wait to get my hands on that girl again!"

Theodolf felt helpless. He was sure his nemesis's greater experience was going to overwhelm him. Or rather, the girl. He pulled the feather from his mouth for a second time. He wouldn't manage to move the girl, he knew it...

"Oh, come *on*, Dolfy. Think of my quota!"

Theodolf snapped. He jumped to his feet,

"Shut up, Yagoda! And if you dare..." A sharp cough told him there was an Archangel behind him. He sat hurriedly back down on his hump of cloud and studied the board with all the diligence he could muster. After a moment he heard the soft swish of feathers that told him the Archangel had moved on.

Yagoda was rolling on the cloud with legs, arms and black wings flailing with

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mirth. His halo of darkness had fallen off. Scowling, Theodolf struggled to think. There had to be a way! But he just couldn't see it.

After quite a while the Demon slid back into position on the other side of the board.

"Well, Dolfy, ready to move, uh, sorry, *try* to move?"

Theodolf chewed his feathers wildly, fighting down rising panic. He couldn't see it, he just couldn't.

"Oh, come on Dolfy!" groaned Yagoda, clearly getting rather bored. It was a fact that Demons did not possess any patience. Patience was a virtue, after all. Normally it was useful, as it made them rush into everything. Right now it was just distracting.

Theodolf looked at the board again, wishing he could regain some measure of calm. She wasn't going to listen and he was afraid to try and fail again. It hurt so much. He took a deep breath, aware he was getting himself in rather a state.



"Oh, Dolfy, come on. It's only a few nasty words. What harm can it do? Only edge her a little closer to me. We'll say nothing about how delightfully slippery-sloping my half of the board is!" The Demon came close to rolling on the floor again at his own joke.

Theodolf could feel his lip trembling at the demon's words. Because he knew they were true. How many times could he fail before he lost the child entirely? Such a beautiful creature, like all young souls, alive with life and goodness and potential...

The young Angel swept his wings forward over his head as the first tears escaped his tightly closed eyes. Oh, what was he going to *do*?

An Archangel called Raphael spread his snowy wings and flew over to Theodolf. Yagoda had realised that his nemesis was crying and was being almost unbearable, but the appearance of the Archangel made him pick himself hastily up off the ground. The archangel patted Theodolf's shoulder comfortingly, only to be pushed out of the way by a rather motherly Archangel of the name Gabriella.

"Now, Theodolf," said Raphael gently, when Gabriella had briskly mopped the young angel's eyes with a small square of cloud handkerchief. "What's up with you?"

"Sorry," sniffed Theodolf, "I'm being so silly... it's just... I simply can't think how I can persuade this girl not to do horrible things because everyone else does them and she's getting further and further from me and I just don't think I can stop her!"

"Well, of course *you* can't," said Raphael bluntly.

Theodolf clapped his hands and wings to his mouth so fast he got a mouthful of feathers.



"Oh!" he gasped. "I am a silly fool! Why am I relying on myself? I can't do a thing, I'm just a... a... sad little boringly angelic loner!" He met Yagoda's eyes fiercely and clapped his hands in delight. "Of course. There is someone infinitely more influential than me and I shall rely entirely on Him from now on!"

Yagoda scowled at Raphael.

"What did you have to go and do that for? I've been meeting my quota devilishly well since I got paired with this pathetic ex-mortal!"

Raphael stared at the demon and his expression was no longer the least bit gentle.

"Would you like to be reunited with your pal Asmodeus, perchance?"

Yagoda furled his wings as tightly as he could and tried to look very small.

"Meant no disrespect," he muttered. He was lying, of course, but he was a demon, so what did one expect?

Raphael clearly had better things to be doing than attempting the impossible and wasted no time trying to draw an honest answer from a demon. He patted Theodolf encouragingly on the shoulder and was gone in a blaze of white wings. Gabriella gave the young angel a big hug and followed.

Theodolf reached out a hand and took hold of the piece. He closed his eyes and imagined himself as nothing more than a conduit. The piece lifted in his hand, and he moved it a fraction. Back towards the light.

He opened his eyes again and looked challengingly across the board at Yagoda.

"It's your move."

Note from the author: *This piece, as a work of fiction, does take artistic license with certain Theological truths – so no, in reality, people do not become angels when they die, and yes, each of us has a guardian angel of our very own! Just to avoid any confusion!*



A Very Secure Password! *~ Sent by email*

During a recent password audit by an IT company, it was found that a woman was using the following password:

PeterJohnJamesBartholomewAndrewPhilipThomasLondon

When asked why she had such a long password, she said: "They told me it had to have at least eight characters and at least one capital."

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PARISH INFORMATION

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Anne Harriss	01242 693378
Association for the Propagation of the Faith (APF)	Chris Bentall	01242 517568
CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development)	Sharon Carr	01242 516446
The Catenians	Kevin Rollason	01242 238222 kevinrollason@btinternet.com
Celebrating the Liturgy	Parish Office	See below
Charismatic Prayer Group	Dominic Meigh	01242 578991
Cheltenham Catholic Adults	Margaret Barker Damian Barker	07515 805015 margaretbarker@rocketmail.com 07908 105787
Christian Ecology Link	Martin Davis	01242 575779 martinmdavis@gmail.com
Children's Liturgy Group	Jo Johnson	01242 227937
Choir	John	stgregorychoir@gmail.com
Church Cleaning	In church	10.00 am Tuesday mornings
Church Flowers	Shirley Pattenden	01242 238345
Coffee	In Old Priory	After Sunday Morning Masses
Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Deacon David McDonald	01242 233894
55+ Social Club	Hugh Greenhalf	01242 518426
Legion of Mary	Michael Slevin	01242 513453
Marian Society	Jo O'Shea	01242 244213
Marriage Care - Glos	Anne Fry	annefry4@hotmail.com
Music Group		01242 523929
Natural Family Planning	Linda Hayes (B'ham) Jane Knight (Oxford)	linda.hayes@uce.ac.uk jknight@fertilityuk.org *www.fertilityuk.org*
Newman Association	Stephanie Jamison	01242 539810
The Parish and the Sacraments	Parish Office	See below
Parish Library	Ann Warren	01242 517614
Parish Project	Chris Barrell	01242 513992
Pot Luck Meals	Una Nunan	01242 673227
St Gregory's Childcare Trust	Caroline Forde	01242 515387 9.00 am - 12 noon term time childcare@st-gregorygreat.gloucs.sch.uk *www.stgregschildcare.co.uk*
St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)	Parish Office	See below
Teams of Our Lady	Anna Cotta	01242 519307
300 Club Jericho Appeal	Mike Harriss	01242 693378
PARISH OFFICE	9.00am - 1.00pm Weekdays	*01242 523737* *gregchurch.cheltenham@cliftondiocese.com*

For more information about Parish groups and activities, please pick up a welcome pack from the table by the Church's side door or contact the Parish Office on:
01242 523737
Weekdays 9.00 am—1.00 pm

SCHOOLS

The Catholic School of St Gregory the Great,
Knapp Road, Cheltenham. GL50 3HQ
Headteacher: Mrs Sharon Aston
Telephone: 01242 513659
Fax: 01242 237870
Website: www.st-gregorygreat.gloucs.sch.uk

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School,
Lewis Road, Hesters Way, Cheltenham. GL51 0HZ
Headteacher: Mr Andy Darby (Interim)
Telephone: 01242 513339
Website: www.st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk

St Edward's Junior School,
London Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham. GL52 6NR
Headmaster: Mr T J Mooney
Telephone: 01242 538900
Fax: 01242 538901
Email: mainoffice@stedwardsjunior.co.uk

St Edward's School,
Cirencester Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham. GL53 8EY
Headmaster: Mr P Harvey
Telephone: 01242 538600
Fax: 01242 538610
Email: info@stedwards.co.uk

All Saints Academy,
All Saints' Academy, Blaisdon Way, Cheltenham. GL51 0WH
Headteacher: Mr Peter Kingham
Telephone: 01242 711 200
E-mail: admin@asachelt.org
Website: www.allsaintsacademychelt.org

YOUTH



Proteen
Contact: Parish Office 01242 523737 between 9.00 am and 1.00 pm or email gregchurch.cheltenham@cliftondiocese.com
A group for young Catholics (14-18). Come and socialise, pray and discuss the Catholic Faith. Meet downstairs in the Old Priory after 6.00 pm Mass on alternate Sunday evenings. See the Newsletter for next meeting.

Youth SVP
Contact: John Willson 01242 576462
A group for young Catholics (14-18) committed to finding those in need and serving them through person-to-person contact irrespective of age, colour, creed, gender or ideology. Activities include visiting care home residents, prayer and socialising. Meetings during the first half hour of Proteen meetings (see above).

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Unfortunate church bulletins:

EVENSNOG: Saturday 5.30pm - all are welcome. Come and enjoy an evening of fellowship.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM. Please use large double door at the side entrance.



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SPRING SAINT – *St. Bernadette*

Bernadette was born into a humble family and suffered ill health from an early age. Having just escaped being a victim of the cholera epidemic of 1855, she experienced painful attacks of asthma.

When she was fourteen, she was sent with her younger sister and a friend to gather firewood, and Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to her in a grotto at Lourdes. Bernadette fell on her knees, took out her rosary and began to pray. Our Lady appeared to Bernadette seventeen other times and told Bernadette that she should pray for sinners, do penance and have a chapel built. Many people did not believe Bernadette and the civil authorities tried to frighten her into recanting her accounts, but she remained faithful to the vision.

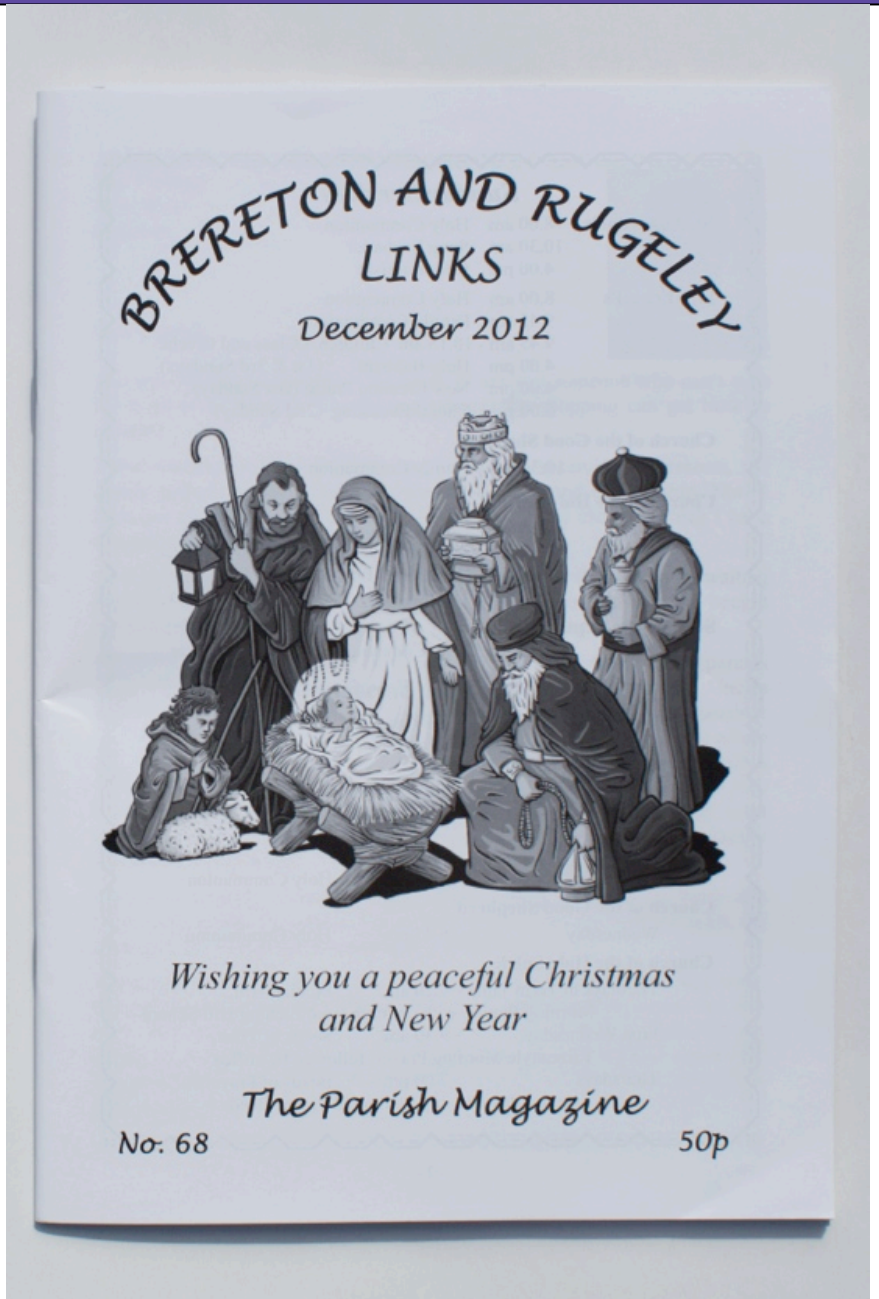
One day Our Lady told Bernadette to dig in the mud and a spring emerged from the cave. Many miracles happened when people began to use this water. After Bernadette announced that the vision stated that she was the Immaculate Conception, many authorities tried to shut down the spring and delay the construction of a chapel but building continued.

Bernadette's ill health almost prevented her from entering the religious life. When asked by Monsignor Forcade to take Bernadette, Louise Ferrand, the Mother Superior of the Sisters of Nevers, replied: "Monsignor, she will be a pillar of the infirmary". But she became a nun. She was always very humble. More than anything else, she desired not to be praised. Once a nun asked her if she had temptations of pride because she was favoured by the Blessed Mother. "How can I?" she answered quickly. "The Blessed Virgin chose me only because I was the most ignorant."

At least three times during her life, she received the last Sacraments. She was gradually struck by other illnesses as well as asthma: among them, tuberculosis of the lung and a tubercular tumour on her right knee. She died on April 16th, 1879, age 35. Her body was later found to be internally incorrupt.

Her feast day is April 16th.

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Sunday Services

St. Augustine's	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	10.30 am	Sung Eucharist
	4.00 pm	Holy Baptism
St. Michael's	8.00 am	Holy Communion
	9.45 am	Family Communion
	9.45 am - 10.15 am	Children's Class and Crèche
	4.00 pm	Holy Baptism (1st & 3rd Sundays)
	4.00 pm	New Creation Praise (last Sunday)
	6.00 pm	Choral Evensong (2nd Sunday)
Church of the Good Shepherd		
	10.30 am	Family Communion
Church of the Holy Spirit		
	10.00 am	Family Communion/Sunday School
	7.00 pm	Lucernarion candlelit service of prayer
	8.00 pm	Gospellers' Fire (2nd Sunday)
	8.00 pm	Theologically Speaking (4th Sunday)
St. John the Baptist		
	9.00 am	Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

Weekday Services

Weekdays	8.40 am	Morning Prayer
(Alternate months at St. Augustine's & St. Michael's)		
St. Augustine's		
Tuesdays in Term Time	3.30 pm	Treasure Seekers
Thursday	10.00 am	Holy Communion
St. Michael's		
Wednesday	10.00 am	Holy Communion
Church of the Good Shepherd		
Wednesday	6.45 pm	Holy Communion
Church of the Holy Spirit		
Tuesdays in Term Time	9.20 am	Etching Hill, Morning Prayer, with children from Etching Hill School
First Wednesday	9.30 am	Seeds of Trust, Taize style Morning Prayer, followed by coffee
Thursdays	7.00 pm	Beads of Prayer, Evening Prayer using traditional Prayer Beads

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Dear Friends

Are you, like me, excited by Christmas, or are you someone who can't wait for it all to be over so that life and particularly shopping can get back to normal?

I love Christmas, I always have, the giving and receiving of presents, the family gatherings, the Christmas films on the TV and the worship. Now I have put them in that order because I think that is the order in which I have recognised Christmas as I have grown up.

As a child, of course I looked forward to the presents that would be waiting for me at the bottom of my bed and under the tree, seeing if Santa had bought the presents that I had been hoping for.



I would look forward to Christmas dinner at my parents house when my Grandparents and Aunts and Uncles would come around, and there would be fun and laughter and at some point in the day there would be a game where we had to cut a Christmas pudding made of flour with a 5p coin on top. If you made the coin fall you had to pick it out with your mouth, someone usually sneezed and the flour went everywhere. I am sure that we all have similar stories to tell of our family Christmas celebrations.

Christmas is made special by those family celebrations, but we know that what really makes Christmas special is the reason that we celebrate at all; the great gift that God gave us in His Son, Jesus Christ.

If we look at our Christmas decorations in our homes, full of decorated trees, decorations and cards and compare that to the scene in which our saviour was born. Not the sterile, clean image we see on the Christmas cards, but the reality of a cattle shed at a very busy Bethlehem Inn, it really does prove the extent of the Love that God holds for us, that he would humble himself to such an extent as that.

(Continued on page 4)

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(Continued from page 3)

He did just that of course to reach out to those in society who had been ignored and oppressed to show that everyone is a child of God and has a place in His heart.

In the midst of my celebrations this year, I will be enjoying the time with my family and friends and I will also be thinking of the friends I made in South Africa. You can bet that they will be celebrating just as much as we will, but without any of the frills that we attach to the celebrations. Please spare a thought for all of those in countries who don't have what we have and pray for them.

We have many services around the parish which will help us to connect with the truth of Christmas, from Christingle through to Christmas day. Please do try to come along and help us celebrate the Gift of Christ this year.

God bless

Brian





St Michael's Church, Brereton

The 2013 Calendar is ready, priced at £4.50

(plus 50p if you need an envelope).

The glossy calendar contains colour photos of the Olympics-themed flower arrangements created in June 2012 and is approx. 14.5cm wide by 42cm tall.

For more details, or if you would like one or more calendars, please let me know as soon as possible, so you won't be disappointed.

If you leave a message or send an e-mail, please give your first name, surname, address and telephone number, so that I can call you or arrange delivery. Many thanks. Val Templeton

01889-804-461 stmevents83@yahoo.co.uk

STABLE TRAIL

Saturday 15th December 2012
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between 10am-12pm and 2pm-4pm

Please come along for a free incredible 20 minute interactive journey through the Christmas story!
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Before settling on the name of Tiny Tim for his character in "A Christmas Carol," three other alliterative names were considered by Charles Dickens.
They were Little Larry, Puny Pete, and Small Sam.

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The National Parish Magazine Awards

Salisbury-based firm Parish Mag Printers has been hosting this competition for a few years, open to all parish magazine editors all over the country

It was suggested to me that we should enter for 2012, and I submitted two copies of the magazine to them as requested.

The results have been published, and out of a massive 890 entries we came 36th! Quite a respectable finish I think. The winner was The Dove magazine, from Somerset.

As ever, if you have any comments or suggestions to make about the magazine, please feel free to contact me (details on the back page).

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

Jane Simkin, Editor

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A SERVICE, A SALMON SANDWICH AND A SORE TOE

As you may well know, our Reverend Wendy recently decided to seek pastures new and moved to St John the Evangelist Church at Essington where she was licensed on Monday the 22nd of October. I, together with lot's of others from St Michael's and other local churches took a ride over to attend the service. Dave and Sue Burgwin very kindly offered me a lift which was just as well for by the time we got there the Church car park was full so one car less was a good thing. Dave eventually found a parking space on the road side. It was a dark, damp miserable evening but inside the Church was nice and warm. St John's is a large, quite modern brick built Church with no plaster on the inside walls, just the bare bricks. They look trendy but I bet they gather the dust. Wendy is winding down by working a three day week in readiness for her eventual well deserved retirement.

Looking at the service sheet gave the impression that the service would go on for ages. In fact, it lasted just an hour.

The service was led by the Bishop of Wolverhampton, and after the service we were told that if we made our way to the Church Room, refreshments would be waiting for us. The Church Room is quite a large building and all down the centre of the main room was tables which were laden with food; it was a banquet. Across the other side of the tables from me stood Rev Newman. He was talking to somebody but I could tell that at the same time he was eying up the fodder. The trouble is, no one likes to be the first to wade in do they? I think one of Wendy's team set the ball rolling and away we went, walking slowly round the tables stacking our cardboard plates up with lovely nosh.

As in any buffet, this one contained salmon sandwiches which taste very nice but they do tend to make your breath rather pongy, that's why I steer clear of them. I stick to cheese, egg and cress, pork pie, sausage rolls quiche, ham rolls and cheese straws etc. But I find that the people who do eat salmon make a bee line to talk to me, and all the time they are speaking to me I have to hold my breath for as long as I can, I'm sure that most of the people eating salmon form a queue to breathe on me.



I looked around the room and spotted Barbara Astley - Barbara Birch as was. She was standing in a corner resting on one of those walking sticks with arm supports on them. I made sure that she wasn't eating a salmon sandwich before making my way over to her for a chat. When I asked why she had got the stick, she waved it in the air and told me that it was to stop me getting too close, maybe she thought I had been eating salmon sandwiches. Then I noticed that she still had her right foot in plaster with her big toe sticking out of the end. She's had it on for weeks now but I have never plucked up the courage to ask her what she had done as her reply would have been `Mind your own business,` so I pretended to step on her sore toe - but - I misjudged the distance between her big toe and the sole of my shoe and touched it. Now, Hell hath no fury like Barbara with a stepped on sore toe and she let out a little squeal - It's been years since I made a girl give a little squeal - she then let me have it with both barrels and demanded an apology, in print, in this magazine. I don't know whether or not she was serious, but I'm taking no chances so here goes. Barbara, I deeply apologise for pressing one of my size 9s on to your dainty big toe and I will never, ever do it again. I would have got down on my hands and knees and kissed it better, but I didn't want to make too much fuss. x x x



I was going to Ghuman's store this morning and outside the shop, tied to the railing sat two medium sized dogs patiently waiting for their owner. A lady came out of the shop, saw the dogs, stopped and said hello to them. They just ignored her and kept their gaze fixed firmly on the shop door. As she walked toward me I started to smile in preparation to saying good morning but she walked straight past me without a glance. Maybe I should have barked at her.

Merry Christmas everyone.

John Vernon

On This Day - in December

2nd - Mr Blobby's Christmas hit was voted the most irritating Christmas song of all time, 2002.

22nd - The 70mph speed limit was introduced in Britain as a temporary measure, 1965.

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Haughton Village Hall ST18 9EZ
2nd Thursday of the month 7pm - 9pm

Rugeley - St Joseph's Church Hall WS15 2EH
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Rugeley

Dear Friends

"O Come let us adore him Christ the Lord"

We say that Christmas is a time for children yet we live in a society that is making its children invisible.

The late Michael Jackson was paranoid about his children to the extent that he covered them in dark shrouds to protect them from prying eyes. Ridiculous we say! Is this any more bizarre than parents with cameras being barred from school Nativity plays?

The Christmas message is simple. The Bible has this to say. "Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given." Christian people rejoice in "the word made flesh." In other words the love, goodness and creative power of God is revealed in the form of a child.

As we know visitors came at night to see the child in the manger. The shepherds were probably a "health and safety hazard" and later wise men came bearing gifts without CRB clearance. It could have all gone wrong but it didn't. Lives were transformed just as lives continue to be changed when people come face to face with the living God.

In our daily relationships it is vital to be both open and vigilant. This is something we must all be aware of with recent abuse scandals in mind. Yet to be deprived of looking upon another's face is both dangerous and cruel. The face is the window of the soul. It is by looking at each other, as adults and children, that we learn to love and to trust what is good and to discriminate against what is evil.

Over the centuries this is why artists have tried again and again to capture afresh the face of Jesus in their work. It is why we continue to gather around the crib at Christmas to gaze with awe and wonder.

In a similar way we ought to be putting our children back at the heart of Christmas and finding the courage to gaze upon their faces without fear, except for the Godly fear of discovering in the infant the image of our Saviour.

"O come let us adore him Christ the Lord"

With every blessing.

Michael J Newman



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MOTHERS' UNION
St. Augustine's

One of our own members, Mr Roger Francis was our invited speaker for the meeting on Wednesday 7th November.

We began our meeting as normal with a service, which included a reading of Psalm 119 and the singing of the well known hymn, 'Take my life and let it be', together with intercessions, The Lord's Prayer and the Mothers' Union own prayer.

Loving Lord,
We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.

We pray for families around the world. Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage and family life.

Empowered by your spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship, and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world. In Jesus' name.

We were treated to a most interesting illustrated talk on the joys and hazards of horse drawn coach travel in days gone by. One member unfortunately took a nap not realising what she was missing and Roger was thanked by Mrs Joan Redfern.

Birthday greetings were extended to Joan Birch and Alison Tabernor.

Members discussed food choices for our meeting at Sneydlands on 5th December.

We received an invitation to St Luke's Carol Service at 2.30p.m. on Monday 3rd December.

Good News ! Subscriptions would remain at £18 for 2013.

Thank you to everyone who had supported Christmas cards for prisoners this year and also to the mysterious person who puts a bag of coins in our AFIA Bucket of love at times.

I wish you all Peace and Joy for Christmas

Jill Francis, Branch Leader

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The Friendship Club - October Meeting

It was a pleasure to welcome Betty Johnson, now feeling a little better. We began with our usual prayer which is based upon Mary Sumner's Prayer.

Our speaker was Debbie from Age UK and she gave us an interesting talk on the programme of service. Their aim is to "improve later life for millions of people." If you have a problem, phone 01785 788 499 and they will try to help - in some cases the name of the appropriate organisation will be given along with their phone number.

Home Help is available. There is a charge for this, but help is given in claiming from Social Services. Resource Centres give help with a variety of mental, physical and therapeutic activities. There is befriending support for those who are lonely or support when home from hospital.

We were impressed by the variety of help available - just phone the number above for advice.



We ended our afternoon with sampling Lemonade Scones, a new recipe very much enjoyed.

At our next meeting we shall be making small baskets for sweets. These will be decorated and placed on the Christmas Tree for the Sunday School children.

Please come and join us on the last Thursday of the month at 2pm at 8 Etching Hill Road. All are welcome.

Joan Redfern



It is a British Christmas tradition that a wish made while mixing the Christmas pudding will come true only if the ingredients are stirred in a clockwise direction.

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Passing on Presents- what to do with gifts you simply don't want!

The Americans call it re-gifting, but it's nothing new: people have always passed on things to someone who would appreciate them.

Birthdays and Christmas are the usual time when unnecessary items appear: a tie which makes us wince, bath salts when we prefer to shower, kitchen gadgets and so-on. You probably have your own list of items which you dread receiving.

Once you have thanked the giver properly– after all, it was nice of them to bother! - what do you do with the gift? People with no storage space often pass things straight to charity shops, but many of us have a drawer of nice new socks/soap which we raid throughout the year when a present has to be sent in a hurry.

No matter how organised you are, unexpected events do occur, and the best way to deal with them is to be prepared.

You need to start with a fairly big container: a deep drawer or a lidded plastic box which can be hidden from visitors at the back of a cupboard. Into this you then put your unwanted gifts… but when you're searching desperately for something you can give your cousin, it's hard to remember which hand cream she gave you last time. And she'd be sure to notice if you gave her the same one back…

To avoid this situation, wrap each thing in a plastic bag, with a slip of paper saying who gave it to you and when. Post-it notes tend to fall off after a session of rummaging, and a plastic wrapping helps to avoid mess if anything leaks.

If you are sufficiently enthusiastic to be super-organised, you can go further and work out who could be given what out of your current stash of items.

Arm yourself with your birthday book, and make lists. Write down all the people you need to give things to. When you've worked out who you have things for already, you'll be left with the people for whom you have nothing suitable, and the things that aren't suitable for anyone (and things you can't pass on, like the personalised mug and the notelets with the box damaged).

The answer to these is: a) make a shopping list, and b) donate these to a charity or the church fete. If there is any danger that the original givers of these completely un-givable gifts will see them, try to pass them on. (I swap with a friend in Wales, and her parcel goes to my local charity shop.)



And finally- if something you've re-gifted makes its way back to you… say thank you and laugh!

Malinda Law

Hands at Work – Africa Trip

I said last month that I would try and introduce you to some of the communities and people that we met while we were in South Africa, but I would like to start by talking about Hands at Work itself.



The main site for the charity is based in White River, South Africa, where it reaches out to 8 countries in Africa including South Africa itself. It was in this base, which is called the hub, we stayed for the first 3 nights after we arrived in Africa and for a couple of days following our return from Hvulukani.

The hub is staffed by 35 people and we saw only a small number of these except for the Monday morning prayer group where they all come together to pray for their work and the people they meet.

There is always a mix of people at the hub including very short term visitors like us, short term volunteers who may stay for a few months, long term volunteers staying for a year or so, and permanent staff. No matter how long you were there, you were valued equally and met as part of a large family. It was truly a wonderful place where you could feel a sense of God at work.

While there we met George and his wife, Steve an Australian who cares for the grounds. Elisha who looks after all of the visitors and organises the activities they will undertake while they are there. David from England whose parents live at Salt, who maintains all of the vehicles and is part of the security team. Emily from Zimbabwe, who trains the care workers. And many more whose names I have forgotten or did not know.

The work that all of these people do, all self financed, is amazing; reaching out and caring for the same people George witnessed 10 years ago, but now in 8 countries. Tens of thousands of children's lives have been improved through their work, and thousands of grandparents lives have been made a little easier through the care given.

It was a privilege to have been part of their work while I was out there and I hope to be able to continue to help while I am back at home, through this magazine, telling their story and through fundraising.

Hands at Work AFRICA

God bless *Brian*

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St Paul's Methodist/United Reformed Church
Lichfield Street

At St Paul's we are all looking forward to a busy December, with lots of events happening to help us through Advent, as we prepare for Christmas.

On Wednesday December 5th at 7.30pm we have the Salvation Army Band from Cannock coming to help us get into the Christmas mood. That is the first of our musical celebrations.

Then on Sunday December 9th at 6pm we meet with other Methodists around the circuit at Chasetown Methodist Church to enjoy our second musical feast--- a Christmas musical "While Shepherds Watched", performed by Christian Music Ministries. This production is currently on tour around the Midlands.

Then, to round off our enjoyment of Christmas musicals, in our morning service on Sunday 16th December at 11am, 'Bello Canto', a choir from Chadsmoor Methodist Church, are leading our worship by performing "Night of Miracles".

Our Christmas services are:-

Sunday December 23rd at 6pm Carol Service

Monday December 24th at 11.30pm Holy Communion

Tuesday December 25th at 10.30am Morning Service for Christmas morning

The congregation of St Paul's wish you all a joyous Christmas and a peaceful New Year. May the light of Christ dwell within you at Christmas and always

Rev Kate Cook, St Paul's Church and Brereton Methodist Church

A traditional Christmas dinner in early England was the head of a pig prepared with mustard.

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ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH

St. Augustine's Snippets

Is it because there have been so many unique events this year that 2012 seems to have gone quicker than ever? It has been a year filled with world wide celebrations for our Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the privilege of our country hosting the magnificent Olympic Games and the wonder of the Paralympics.

The Pathway project wrote to say how grateful they were for the foodstuffs which we gave to them after our harvest. A very big thank you to all who donated towards the repair of the organ. Because of your generosity it is now paid for.

Preparations have been made for The Stable Trail, taking place in St Augustine on Saturday 15th December, 10.00am - 12.00pm and 2.00pm - 4.00pm. Do come along and bring your children or grandchildren for a real fun time.

There are many events to look forward to this month; the Christingle service at 4p.m. on Sunday 2nd; and the Christmas Lunch at 12.30p.m.on Sunday 9th.

We are pleased to host the various local schools for their Christmas services.

Our Christmas Hamper Draw takes place on Sunday 16th. Make sure you have your tickets, You've got to be in it, to win it, as the saying goes.

As Christmas Day draws closer we have the Carol Service by Candlelight at 6.0p.m. on Sunday 23rd, and at 5.00p.m. on Christmas Eve the ever popular Family Crib Service .

We welcome Christmas Day with Midnight Mass at 11.30p.m. and services of Holy Communion at 8a.m and 10.30a.m.

Why not make this Christmas special? Come to our church.

A very happy Christmas to you all.

Jill Francis

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It wouldn't be Christmas without...

Every so often, you hear people say that it wouldn't be Christmas without something – it could be a turkey dinner, the big movie on telly or having a Christmas tree. But most of our traditions over the festive season are newcomers. Here we look at some of the things that make people's Christmasses.

Father Christmas

Also known as St Nicholas, the red-robed figure who lives at the North Pole who brings presents to all good boys and girls is a modern incarnation of a fourth century Turkish church leader. Legend has it that he dropped money down the chimney of a poor family; his gift landed in the stocking put out to dry by the fire.

Christmas cards

Everyone loves receiving Christmas greetings – the tradition started in the 1840s when Sir Henry Cole arranged for some cards to be printed to save him time rather than handwrite greetings to his friends. The idea caught on, thanks to the Penny Post deliveries.

The big film on telly

Watching TV on Christmas Day is still a reasonably new tradition. The blockbusting soap episodes that we now take for granted started in the 1990s, and the big film dates back to the 1970s. For many years, entertainment for Christmas Day on the gogglebox included a circus and a variety show.

The Christmas tree

Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, brought the first Christmas tree to the UK in the 1830s. A picture of the queen's family dancing around the tree set the template for our modern Christmas celebrations.

The evergreen tree in the homes has several origins – it's thought to be pagan, Roman and Christian, each with their own traditions.

Since 1947, the people of Norway have donated a Christmas tree every year to the UK. This is erected in Trafalgar Square.

Boxing Day

The first working day after Christmas Day is always Boxing Day (some years it's on December 27, rather than December 26) and dates back to the middle ages. The Church's alms boxes were opened after a year of receiving donations from parishioners. The money was divided up among poor people, hence the Christmas box which is given in thanks to people who serve us such as dustbin men.

Christmas crackers

Thomas Smith invented the cracker in 1847. The London sweet maker was suffering a sales slump: customers weren't buying. So he inserted mottos in to the sweet wrapper which gave sales a boost. He then inserted the crack, and, to prevent copying from rivals, dropped the sweet for a gift and added a paper hat.

Turkey

The traditional Christmas dinner sees us enjoy a massive feast – Christmas Day is a feast day after all. But the centrepiece hasn't always been a turkey. In years gone by, geese, swans and duck have all been popular choices.

But there is one thing that it wouldn't be Christmas without...

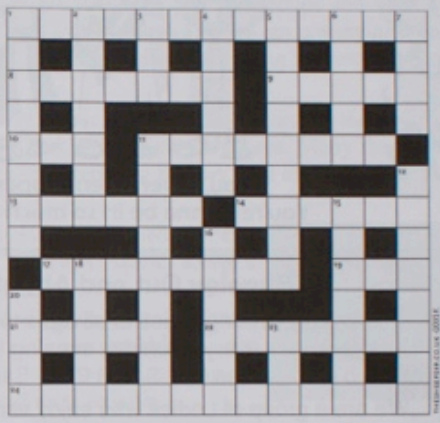
A baby, born in Bethlehem just over 2,000 years ago. Visited by Angels, shepherds and Magi, lavished with gifts and proclaimed a King, the prince of Peace and our Saviour. He is so important that history was divided into dates before he arrived and after.

His name is Jesus.

Have a very happy Christmas

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD





ACROSS

1. Start of a much-loved Christmas carol (4, 3, 6)
8. 'If a house is divided — itself, that house cannot stand.' Mark 3:25 (7)
9. Keen (5)
10. Before (old English) (3)
11. Sweet treats from years ago (8)
13. Pay attention (6)
14. Religious address (6)
17. Person who believes God's Word as summarised in the Book of Concord (8)
19. Uncooked (3)
21. 'The rock on which I build my church' (5)
22. Create a mental picture (7)
24. Its boughs are green, in sommers glow and do not fade in winters snow (9, 4)

DOWN

1. 'Suddenly a great company of the — host appeared with the angel, praising God' (Luke 2:13) (8)
2. They do much more in an Anglican church than the name suggests (7)
3. 'He then made — bronze basins, each holding 40 baths' (1 Kings 7:38) (3)
4. Tacked on the end (6)
5. 24 across is one of these (9)
6. 'Would he — with useless words, with speeches that have no value?' (Job 15:3) (5)
7. Repair (4)
11. 'And there were — living out in the fields nearby' (Luke 2:8) (9)
12. 'Not a locust was left — in Egypt' (Exodus 10:19) (8)
15. 'The more the — ' (7)
16. An inarguable fact (6)
18. Complete (5)
20. Great drama (4)
23. May have been found in the stable (3)





Answers to Crossword No. 139

ACROSS: 1. Inspiration 8. Eliel 9. Attempt 10. Lion 11. Defender 13. Elijah 14. Fields 17. Canticle 19. Icon 22. Profess 23. Beech 24. Interregnum
DOWN: 1. Ideal 2. Shiloni 3. Isle 4. Abates 5. Intrepid 6. Nomad 7. Starts 12. Manifest 13. Escape 15. Lectern 16. Closer 18. Naomi 20. Nahum 21. Able

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You never listen properly.
You're gonna be in so much trouble!

Rugeley Out and About Club

We are inviting ladies of all ages to join our club.
Our meeting is every Thursday evening from 8.00 o'clock to 10.00 o'clock at Lea Hall Social Club, Sandy Lane, Rugeley.

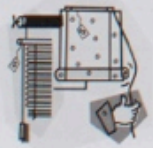
We are a group of Ladies who enjoy various activities, our interests are many and we have a good programme of speakers on a variety of topics. We also enjoy outings, visiting places of interest, hold bring and buy evenings and sometimes play bingo.

We look forward to seeing new faces, please come along and join us - you'll be more than welcome.

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Church of the Good Shepherd, Pear Tree Estate

On Saturday 13th October we had a taster of Living Simply / Simply Living at the Church of the Holy Spirit. The day, which was study and lunch (home made soup, special bread, cheese and apple, plus tea and coffee) was over too fast. We had been put into groups and went to different outlooks when Rev Lynsay range a bell. I am not saying what we wanted to do with that bell; everything was getting interesting when it rang!

This was a taster of a study course to come. We all enjoyed the day and meal and fellowship. We look forward to the course. Many thanks to Lynsay for all the hard work preparing the day, and all who made the meal. Bless you all.



On 19th October Kevin Bales performed his 'The Bible in an hour' at the Holy Spirit. Kevin's energy and acting skills made us feel tired at the end. The children loved all the scenes. The most moving was the crucifixion - you could hear a pin drop. Even the children had been caught up on everything beforehand and were so quiet.

It brought home to us the suffering of our Lord, and then Easter Day. What joy of our risen Lord. God has given Kevin a wonderful gift which he is using in our Lord's service, reaching adults as well as children. May God bless you, Kevin, in the years ahead.

The Messy Church at Good Shepherd was poorly attended - only five children came. Many thanks to Kevin, Theresa and Joy for all their help.

We are looking forward to the Autumn Fayre and Murder Mystery Evening at the time of writing.

We at Good Shepherd wish all our sister churches a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

We hope to see you all on Wednesday 19th December for Carols around the Christmas Tree at 6.45 pm. All very welcome, with mince pies and tea and coffee.

Happy Christmas to all, and God bless.

Mollie Robinson

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Church of the Holy Spirit, Etching Hill



We have almost reached the start of Advent, the period of reflection before Christmas . We have much to reflect on here, as we celebrate successfully paying our Diocesan Quota along with last year's loan. Recent weeks have been busy with the launch of 'The Manna House Café' with it's increased opening hours and our Christmas Craft Fair.

Our Advent reflections start on Saturday 24th November at 4pm, with a further session on each of the following three Saturdays. A chance for us to work out where we will be when the world turns. Our Christingle service is on Advent Sunday and a 'surprise event' will help to mark the day. Later that week at St. Nicholas Tide we will be welcoming school groups on two days to 'The Christmas Mystery'. Whilst our Simply Living Course doesn't begin until January, some of the themes will feature in the 'Advent Conspiracy' programme for our Sunday services. Over the following two weeks many special services will be held for community groups as they come together to celebrate the approaching Christmas season. Finally, if you have a smart phone you will be able to access an interactive Advent Calendar from our notice board.

Many blessings *Sue Whitehouse*

When the Bishop of Chester said there should be a religious message on Christmas stamps, Punch magazine suggested, "Lord deliver us."

St. John the Baptist Church, Slitting Mill

When I was young you would often see signs in shops saying "Join our Christmas Club". Deciding to buy something as a present and then paying for it in small instalments until Christmas, and at least it was paid for in full and no debt attached. Unfortunately since then people, particularly the young have been encouraged to have what they want when they want it, live now, pay later, so sad when they just cannot find the money to pay. Sometimes people with money problems are described as "robbing Peter to pay Paul" knowing the meaning of this phrase but perhaps not knowing how these two names came to be associated with each other. They were first used in 1550 when some land and property belonging to Westminster Abbey was taken away and transferred to St. Paul's Cathedral which was in need of repair.

Of course the money saved in a Christmas Club could be spent on other things - it was a good way of saving for all the rich food we enjoy at Christmas time. Some charities were set up to help out at Christmas. Years ago there was a charity in the Village called the Clarkson Cup. It had started when a villager donated a silver cup, in memory of his airman son, as a trophy for a game of football between the young men of the village and the married men. For a time the charity grew and in the 1970's it became a very active part of village life. The charity held events to raise money to benefit the pensioners, children and the village church. A driving force of the Committee was Len Evans who sadly recently died. Len with his wife Peggy gave a great deal of time to the charity in particular organising the firework display and bonfire which attracted people from miles around. Christmas parties held for the village pensioners and the children were highlights of each year. But times change and the activities of the charity ceased and the money dispersed for the benefit of villagers but the Cup is still somewhere in the village.

The Christmas Carol Service will be held on Tuesday 18th. December at 7.30 in the church, followed by seasonal refreshments. Christmas Service on 25th will be at 9.00am. The monthly Coffee Morning will be on Wednesday 5th December at 10am. in the church - £1.50 for tea/ coffee and cake. Come and enjoy these social, community activities.

Sheila Simpson

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For Your Diary — December 2012

(For all regular services, see inside front cover)

The Parish of Brereton and Rugeley
First Wednesday of each month 2.15 pm *Mothers' Union at St. A.'s*
10.00 am Saturday 15th Stable Trail *(see page 5)*

St. Augustine's Church, Rugeley
3.30 pm Tuesdays in Term Time *Treasure Seekers*
2.00 pm 2nd & 4th Wednesday *Young Children's Service and Playtime*
10.30am-12.00noon Alternate Thursdays *Chat & This 'n' That*, Church Hall
9.00 am - 10.00 am Mondays *Tea & Toast*, Church Hall

St. Michael's Church, Brereton
12.00 noon 3rd Wednesday of each month *Lunch Bunch (please book)*
1st Monday of each month 7.30 pm *Beetle Drive*
3rd Monday of each month 7.30 pm *Bingo*
Last Saturday of each month 9.15 am *Big Breakfast (not in December)*
7.00 pm Thursdays *(Check in church for dates)* Alpha Course

The Church of The Holy Spirit, Etching Hill
First Sunday of each month *Fairtrade Stall*
Tuesdays 10.00 am - 12.00 noon *Community Café & Stay & Play*
Tuesdays in term time 3.15pm-4.30pm *'Jesus and Me'* at Etching Hill Sch
Last Thursday of each month 2.00 pm *Friendship Club*, 8 Etching Hill Rd

The Church of The Good Shepherd, Pear Tree Estate
7.30 pm Every Tuesday *Bingo*

St. John's Church, Slitting Mill
First Wednesday of each month 10.30 am *Coffee Morning*

There are Christmas Services and events at each of our churches.
Please see separate insert for details

(Parish Diary details also at www.breretonandrugeleyparish.co.uk)



The Church of the Holy Spirit, Etching Hill

THE COMMUNITY CAFE HAS CHANGED!!

A new name and new opening times.....

The Manna House Café

Tuesday mornings: 10.00 am to 12.00 noon.
Come and have a cuppa, a cake and a warm welcome.
The church will be open from 9.00 am for the school service at 9.20 am, to which everyone is welcome, then after the service the café will be open, serving teas, coffees and home-made biscuits/ cakes.
Babies & Toddlers bring your Mums/Dads.
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AND

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THE PARISH REGISTERS



St. Augustine's, Rugeley

Baptisms

October	14th	Noah Matthews	
		Harry Bolas	
		Jayden Bolas	
		Samantha Lane	

Weddings

October	20th	Graham Jones and Claire Pierpoint	

Funerals

October	2nd	Phoebe Price	80 years
	5th	Joyce Saunders	86 years
	16th	Elsie Greetham	90 years
	17th	Baby Alfie Bland	

St. Michael's, Brereton

Baptisms

October	7th	Elisha Mai Timmis	
November	4th	Jack James Garner	

Funerals

October	2nd	Thomas Raymond Evans	89 years
	4th	Anthony Yearsley	84 years
	22nd	Mavis Jean Sutton	75 years
	27th	Thomas Askew Cottier	85 years

Church of the Good Shepherd, Pear Tree Estate

Funerals

October	19th	Kath Burley	88 years

Lord Jesus,
You are my righteousness, I am your sin.
You took on you what was mine;
yet set on me what was yours.
You became what you were not,
that I might become what I was not.

Martin Luther

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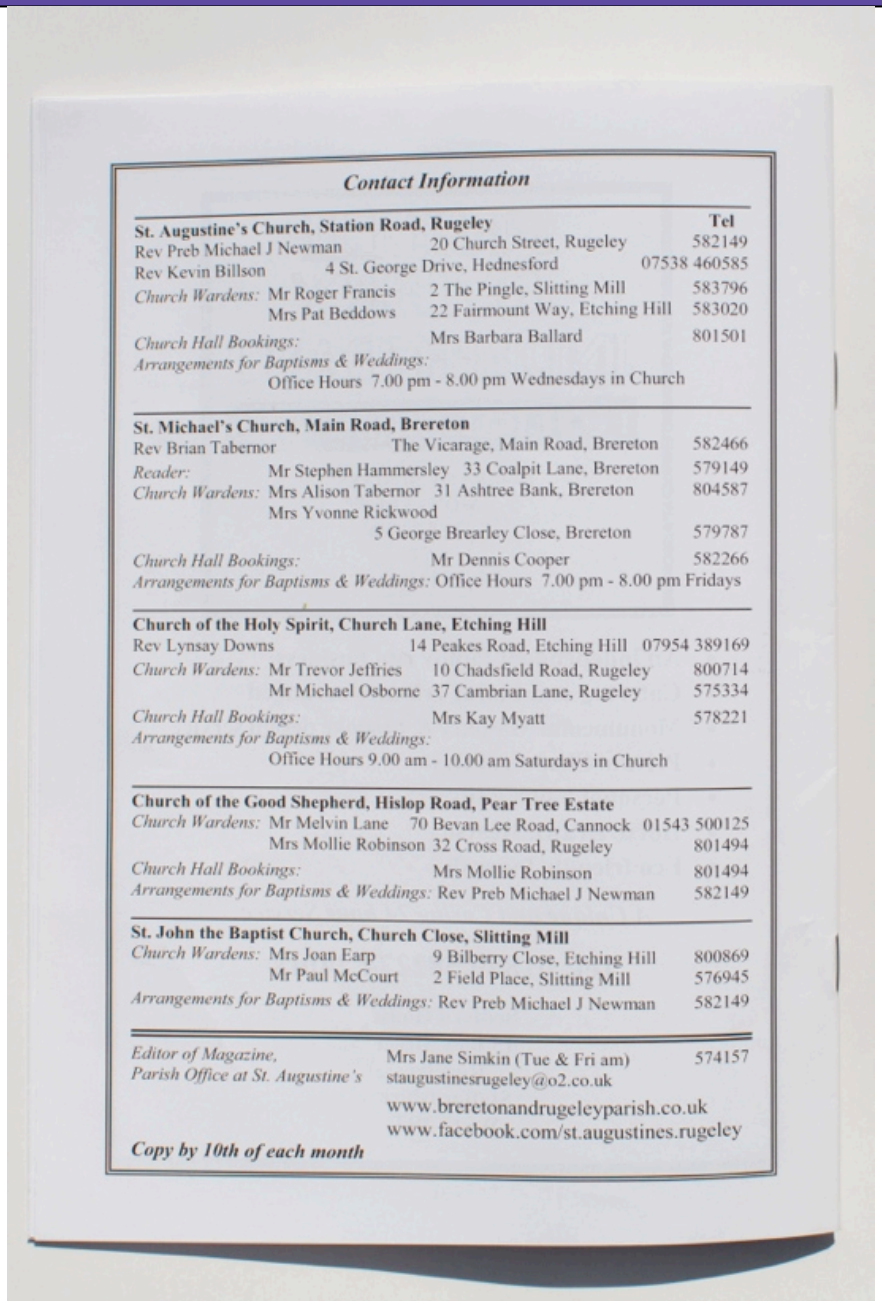
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Contact Information

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Arrangements for Baptisms & Weddings:
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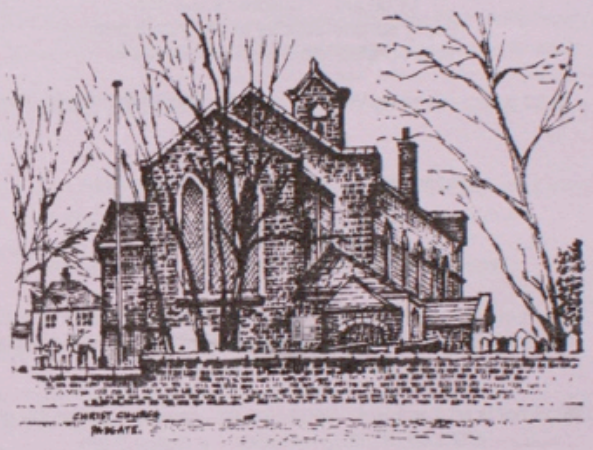
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GRAPEVINE



March 2013

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE
PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

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CHURCH SERVICES

SUNDAY

8.30 am Holy Communion

11.00 am Parish Communion

11.00 am Children's Service
(Every second Sunday of the month and incorporated into Parish Communion).

6.30 p.m. Evening Worship (2nd Sunday of the month only)

WEEKDAYS

Wednesday 10.45 a.m. Holy Communion

SAINTS' DAYS

Weekday services suspended during interregnum

Junior Link (Sunday School) for children 3 years and over is held at 11.00 am each Sunday (except the second Sunday in the month) in Christ Church C of E school.

Arrangements for Baptisms, Weddings, etc. can be made at the church office on Mondays between 7 p m and 8 pm.

A copy of this magazine costs approximately 25p to print but comes free through your door. If you would like to give a donation for the cost of the magazine, please send it to:
Debbie Jacques, Treasurer, 3 Sage Close, Padgate WA2 0UG

If you live in the parish, would you like to have Grapevine delivered to your door? Please contact Wendy Thomas: tel 824003.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE
www.padgatechristchurch.org.uk

WARRINGTON DEANERY: www.warringtondeanery.wordpress.com
LIVERPOOL DIOCESE: www.liverpool.anglican.org



An Easter Letter from the Rt Rev James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool **March 2013**

Diocese of Liverpool

I love Easter Day. We often have family or friends staying. I'm usually up early and once I hear others stirring I put on a CD (at a moderate volume!) and play "Jesus Christ is risen today, Allelujah!"

I love that hymn that rings out a melody full of hope. It puts a song into my heart and fills the house with the music of faith and causes the pigeons loitering under the eaves of Bishop's Lodge to fly off into the trees.

In this edition of Grapevine

- An Easter letter from the Bishop of Liverpool
- Wendy Thomas tells her story
- Bishop James to retire
- A "Goodbye" to Stephen
- Reports from Group Council and Churches Together
- An Australian Christmas
- Women's World Day of Prayer
- From our School – Alisha Dolan's work on the Ancient Egyptians
- Crossword

Copy for the April edition to be with me by ***noon - 17 March*** *please.*
Thanks to all who have contributed to or distributed this issue.
Sue Robinson - Editor
Tel: 01925 823130 E-mail: rgjandsjrobinson@btinternet.com
(I will endeavour to acknowledge promptly all e-mailed copy. If you don't receive a reply, please contact me to confirm receipt).

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The sight of the birds taking flight also speaks to me of the Resurrection. There will come a time for us all to depart this mortal coil and find our rest in God's heaven. Like a homing pigeon with that mysterious inner programme that drives it homeward so our souls have in their DNA a deep mystical instinct to find their rest in God. Throughout life there are moments when we get a taste or a glimpse of that union with the divine – when worshipping, or praying or through silence or in nature or listening to music or a poem or hearing someone else's story. These are intimations of what is to come when one day the soul set free from all distractions finds perfect rest in God's presence.

This isn't just wishful thinking about some pie in the sky when we die. It is founded on fact. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Turn to the end of any one of the four Gospels and read the story of the disciples, depressed by the killing of Jesus, discovering his grave empty then meeting him face to face, not just a ghost or an illusion, but visible, audible and tangible, a spiritual body that they could see, hear and touch.

This is God's sign to the world that death is not the end. As Pope John 23rd wrote, "Death, like birth, is only a transformation, another birth". Easter is God's invitation to put our hand into his and to follow Jesus through the door of death out of the land of the dying and into the world of the truly alive.

As I step down in August from being Bishop of Liverpool it is my heart's desire that we let our lives be loved by God.

As I step down in August from being Bishop of Liverpool it is my heart's desire that we let our lives be loved by God. The Gospels tell us "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life".

God's desire is for us to trust him throughout our life for forgiveness of the past and for all that lies in the future.

This prayer I often pray and with it I wish you a Happy Easter.

"O Lord Jesus Christ
who hast created and redeemed me
and hast brought me
unto that which now I am.
Thou knowest what thou wouldst do with me
Do with me according to thy will
For thy tender mercy's sake".

Lent 2013



Padgate Methodist Church again invites us to join them for their Lent course which will be led by Rev Mark Coles.

All held on Wednesdays at 7.30 pm at Padgate Methodist Church in the Guild Room .

Session (1) 27 February **The God who hears our cry**

Session (2) 6 March **The Shepherd who guides and guards his people**

Session (3) 13 March **The Son who is the Way, the Truth and the Life**

Session (4) 20 March **The God who shares our pain**

Session (5) 27 March **The God who calms our fears**

All are Welcome.

For further information, please contact Mark on 266537

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Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 24 March

8.30 am Holy Communion (Celebrant Rev John Macaulay)

10.50 am Palm Sunday Procession from the Subway to Church for the Eucharist Service (Celebrant the Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

No evening service

EASTER 2013

Monday 25 March

There will be no service

Tuesday 26 March

7.15 pm Stations of the Cross and Eucharist at Cinnamon Brow (Celebrant Rev Denise Williams, Preacher The Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

Wednesday 27 March

10.45 am Holy Communion at Christ Church (Celebrant T.B.C.)

7.30 pm Agape Meal at Woolston

Maundy Thursday 28 March

7.30 pm At Cinnamon Brow - The Commemoration of The Last Supper and Washing of the Feet followed by The Watch until 11 pm

Good Friday 29 March

10.30 am Children's Service (Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

2.00 pm The Last Hour on the Cross (The Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

6.30 pm The Way of the Cross

Saturday Easter Eve 30 March

8.00 pm The Easter Ceremonies held at at Christ Church led by Rev Denise Williams

Easter Sunday 31 March

8.30 am Holy Communion (Celebrant Rev. John Macaulay)

11.00 am Festival Eucharist (Celebrant Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

12.45 pm Baptism

Easter Monday 1 April

No services held at Christ Church

Verses for Palm Sunday 24 March



Ride on, ride on in majesty
As all the crowds 'Hosanna!' cry:
Through waving branches slowly ride,
0 Saviour, to be crucified.

Ride on, ride on in majesty
The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on, ride on in majesty.
The last and fiercest foe defy:
The Father on his sapphire throne
Awaits his own anointed Son.

Extract from the hymn by H. Milman 1791-1868

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Wendy Thomas



Last month our profile was of Nathan Thomas at Uni; this month Grapevine has asked Nathan's mum Wendy for her story.

My Name is Wendy Thomas. I was born on 15 October 1962 to Lilian and Geoffrey Lewis. My elder sister Christine was sent to the cinema with a packed lunch while I was being born at home - in Dickenson Street, just off Orford Lane Warrington.

It was planned that I would attend a new Infants School at Bruche, so we moved to Westover Road when I was five. I have wonderful memories playing and riding my bike around Padgate in what seemed like endless sunny days in the summer holidays.

I attended Sunday school at Padgate Methodist Church and was involved in the Walking Day for many years. The build-up itself was very special, and wearing a new dress always added to the excitement.

I attended Confirmation classes here at Christ Church, led by Revd. Roger Wikeley. I enjoyed the sessions and remember the little pink card we were given that would be signed by the Reverend each time we attended a church service.

After Bruche I attended Woolston High School. During this time we went to visit Monks's Offices off Green Lane, which gave me an interest in office work. On leaving school I went to work for Warrington Borough Council in the Rates department. I had a brilliant superior officer - guess who? It was Bernard Shovelton. I really enjoyed it there, although things changed when the Poll Tax was introduced.

In 1980 I met Peter at Wilderspool Night Club in Warrington. A disco was held there every Friday and it was love at first sight, well for me anyway. On 19 October 1985 we were married here at Christ Church just before Revd. Wikeley left. Nathan was born in 1991 and Kieran followed in 1997. Family life is so very special - they are wonderful boys and we are very proud of them.

I now work for another brilliant person, well some of the time! My husband Peter has his own company and I am responsible for the clerical side of things. There are many advantages of working from home, not least of which have been to be around the home while the boys have been growing up.

On Friday mornings I try to attend the Playtimers as much as possible. I was introduced to it by Pat Lord. It's a lovely session and that includes the families and helpers alike. Christ Church is such a special church and you are always made to feel very welcome.

Many thanks Wendy for your kind words and for your interesting account of your family life and work. Wendy has not said that last year she took over organising the distribution of "Grapevine"- thank you Wendy.

Mothers' Union

10 March at 11.00 am is "Mothering Sunday". Members of the Mothers' Union will be participating in the service.

14 March at 7.30 pm. Stations of the Cross, followed by our meeting with speaker Rev. Pam Lovatt

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Bishop James to retire as Bishop of Liverpool

Rt Rev James Jones has announced that he will retire as Bishop of Liverpool on his 65th birthday in August. In a letter to the Diocese the Bishop says that his leaving will "give my successor the opportunity in due course to form his own leadership team to take the Diocese forward."

The Diocese will hold a farewell service for the Bishop in Liverpool Cathedral on 3 July.

Bishop James and his wife Sarah will leave the Diocese in August. The Bishop will remain as adviser to the Home Secretary on Hillsborough, will continue to write and broadcast and will be involved in a number of other national projects.

In his letter Bishop James said "Throughout my time in Liverpool I have found the willingness of the parishes in the Diocese to rethink and to reshape our common life for the service of others has been inspiring. Our Diocese is growing and there is still huge opportunity locally to make a difference to our communities with the Gospel of Christ.

It has been a privilege as Bishop to serve the wider community not least in chairing the Hillsborough Independent Panel. The Diocese has recognised the rightness of me doing this which has given me great strength. The way the families and survivors have received the Panel's report and the way truth is now opening up the path to justice affirms the worth of the Panel's work."

It has been a privilege as Bishop to serve the wider community

The Bishop concluded "Sarah and I are very conscious of God's providence over the last fifteen years. We are constantly humbled by the commitment of the laity and by the dedication of the clergy. It has been a joy to serve you all as bishop. As together in the Diocese we thank God for his providence we renew our trust in him and pray that he will continue to guide the Diocese especially in the appointing of a new Bishop of Liverpool."

Paying tribute to Bishop James, the Bishop of Warrington, Rt Rev Richard Blackburn said "I give thanks and praise to God for the fifteen years of exceptional and inspirational leadership that Bishop James has given to the Diocese of Liverpool. We have been enormously blessed by his gifts and energy. I shall miss him as a wise colleague and a true Father in God."

The Dean of Liverpool, Very Rev Dr Pete Wilcox said "Bishop James has been an extraordinary servant of the Diocese of Liverpool, the city and the region, as well as a significant voice on a national stage, for well over a decade. He has been a wise pastor, a thoughtful and thought-provoking preacher and teacher, a courageous prophet, a champion of justice and a faithful friend. We wish him and Sarah a fulfilling new phase of life and work in what will surely be an active and fruitful retirement."

Extract from the Liverpool Diocesan website

Donations

We acknowledge the following donations with thanks:

In memory of Len Jones from Jean Jones
In memory of Graham Austin from Frank and family
Richard and Moira Wilson
Mrs I D Chorley
Mrs E Delaney
Mrs Dudley

If you would like to ensure that your acknowledgement appears promptly in the next issue of Grapevine, please contact the Editor (823130) before the deadline given on page 3.

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From the Parish Registers

BAPTISMS

We welcome into the Lord's family:

20 January	Sam Buckley Joe Buckley
3 February	Ava Rose Gandy Madeleine Lily Smith Jemima Iris Blackwell Harrison Finlay Ward

FUNERALS

Our sympathy and prayers are with the families of:

24 January	Edna Lyons
30 January	Gladys Edith Buckley

A "goodbye" to Stephen

Sunday 3 February, as most of our readers will know, was Canon Stephen Attwater's last service as Rector of Christ Church as he begins his retirement. Following the service Stephen was joined in a celebration by many members of our congregation and our friends from neighbouring congregations.



Stephen with Churchwardens Jean and David

photo: John Baguley

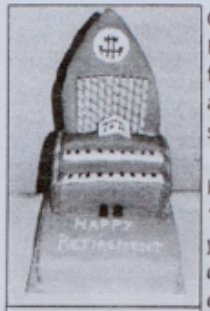


photo: David Magrath

Our Churchwardens David Magrath and Jean Rathbone presented Stephen with a retirement gift from us all in the form of a cheque, and Stephen cut a cake in the shape of a pipe organ presented by staff and pupils of Christ Church Primary School.

Here is the text of David's tribute to Stephen:

"When I was appointed as a Church Warden four years ago, Stephen didn't warn me that he was considering retiring during my term of office; otherwise I think that I would have looked into what happens during an Interregnum.

Once he had decided that he was going to retire and that his last service was to be today, Jean and I started looking at what that meant to us. It's only then that you can see how much he interacts with Parishioners in all kinds of ways and I'm sure that one of the things that he will miss in his retirement is the daily contact with so many people.

Stephen has had a close connection with Warrington for a good deal of his Ministry, as Curate at St Elphin's, at Christ Church as our Rector, and a period as Area Dean. This leads me to a puzzle, that as a person from Southport and with these connections with Warrington he decided to be a St Helens Rugby League fan. The only conclusion that I could come to was that he was more likely to refer to The Saints in his sermons than he was to The Wire. I have to say that it hasn't gone unnoticed that his last service and retirement coincides with the start of the Rugby League season.

It's good that you have all found the time to come and celebrate this special occasion with Stephen and Denise, and no doubt Stephen as a

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resident of Cinnamon Brow will be seen around and about from time to time, although I'm sure that he will want to spend some time at their new home in Chester.

I've only got to know Stephen personally over the last ten years and I know that some of you here have known him for much longer. I've seen some of the work that he has done during that time, the impact that he has made on people's lives and the relationships that he has developed with the local schools both here at Padgate and also with Bruche County Primary. I'm sure that they will miss him as much as he will miss them. I had the privilege of seeing the children from Christ Church Primary leaving the Church last Thursday after the school Eucharist and each one of the children saying good bye to Stephen.



photo: David Magrath

Well it's very nearly our turn to say good-bye but before I do Jean and I have a presentation to make to Stephen on behalf of the Congregation and Parish. Having enquired what he may like to remember us by we were told that he was looking to replace his keyboard. With that in mind we are presenting Stephen with a cheque and a card with our good wishes to him for a long, healthy and happy retirement."

Churches Together

Churches Together in Padgate and Woolston

Fourteen people attended Churches Together in Padgate and Woolston (CTPW) in St Peter's Catholic Church Presbytery, Woolston on 4 February. Unfortunately, Val McIntosh has resigned from CTPW, leaving a vacancy from Christ Church. Val was thanked for her service to CTPW in recent years, including during *One World* Weeks.

Fred Thomas of Padgate Methodist Church, CTPW's longest-serving member, who will be eighty-eight on 6 July, announced that he wishes to retire from organising the Christmas and Easter service leaflets. Ethel Brocklebank of The Ascension agreed to take over at the Woolston end.

Rev. Mark Coles was concerned that the police have withdrawn from the *Thank God Its Friday* Youth Project at Fearnhead. CTPW will send a letter expressing this concern. He also drew attention to the 20th anniversary of the Warrington bombings over the weekend on 16 / 17 March.

The Women's World Day of Prayer is at 7.30 pm on 1 March at Cinnamon Brow. The Various possible future projects were discussed, including a musical / choir event, and Pentecost walks.

Richard Robinson

Group Council

Our Warrington East Group Council met on 23 January at Cinnamon Brow.

The draft of the scheme for formation of the Team is still with the Church Commissioners, who are reported to be making a priority of issuing the scheme for the final round of consultation. The Council agreed that the three Readers in the Group (Diana Bennett and Fran Humphrey of the Church of the Resurrection and Alan Clayton of Christ Church) should be members of the council *ex officio*.

The Group Confirmation by Bishop Richard Blackburn in November had been very enjoyable and successful, and a good template for the future. Group plans for Holy Week and Easter were reviewed, along with the Women's World Day of Prayer (1 March), *Fairtrade* Easter Eggs and Group Finances. Continuation of the Group's Nurture Course will be held over until a later date. Canon Stephen Attwater (at his last Group meeting) reported that the monthly sung BCP Evensong at Christ Church will be led by the three Group Readers in a rota.

Val McIntosh and Richard Robinson

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An Australian Christmas



Rachel, Iris, Todd and children enjoy Christmas together

In last month's Grapevine we asked you to tell us about memorable church services. Before the magazine was back from the printers, Edward and Iris Collinson had arrived home from their family holiday in Australia where they experienced a Christmas drawing on the best from a variety of cultures...

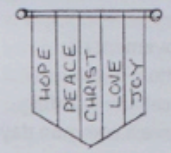
We have just spent Christmas and New Year with our daughter Rachel, husband Todd (who is German) and grandchildren Benjamin, Samuel and Olivia. They live in Holloways Beach, North of Cairns in Queensland – where the typical mid-day shade temperature was 34°C.

Domestic festivities followed German and English traditions. On Christmas Eve, in German style, we exchanged presents and lit candles on a real fir Christmas tree decorated with ornaments collected over the years. On Christmas Day we breakfasted on stollen cake and after Church had a roast turkey dinner with all the usual trimmings. More presents were exchanged and we watched the Queen on TV - ten hours before the English programme. We played lots of new games with the children.

Church services were designed to fit the climate. We attended a nine-lesson combined church carol service in the grounds of the Anglican school at Kewarra Beach. We sat under a palm tree on a balmy evening singing carols, some familiar, others new. The light

We sat under a palm tree on a balmy evening singing carols

faded and the moon, Jupiter and a myriad of stars appeared in all their glory, including the Southern Cross. The highlight was a guest Fijian choir, and "O come all ye faithful" sung in the Fijian idiom was very memorable. "In the bleak midwinter" was far from our minds!



The family attend the Uniting Church of Australia – which is evangelical and of Methodist style. Their church is open-plan and airy, with louvred glass side walls and ceiling fans. They didn't have an Advent Ring as the fans blew the candles out! Instead was a banner with five handing strips, purple with white for Christ. We saw the introduction of "Joy" and "Christ".

Services were based on hymns and songs, interspersed with Bible readings, prayers and two sermons – one a talk to children gathered around the front. For the adult sermon, children had a clip-board, paper and crayons to occupy themselves. All words were projected onto a large screen above the altar.

The congregation were very friendly and we soon felt at home. There was a good mix of children, teenagers, young and older adults and several different ethnic backgrounds. There was no Communion on Christmas Day – the service included carols, readings and prayers.

Communion was added to the end of an ordinary service at New Year – even very young children participated. We all went to the altar to receive the bread (from a bun) and a thimble of wine, and we consumed it together back in our seats.

We enjoyed coast, outback and city. Even though it was roasting hot the true spirit of Christmas was everywhere. There was a huge Christmas tree in Cairns close to the magnificent out-door "Lagoon" swimming pool with activity like Blackpool beach!

Iris and Edward Collinson.

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Women's World Day of Prayer

1 March marks the international and inter-denominational *Women's World Day of Prayer (WWDP).*

WWDP is a global, ecumenical movement of informed prayer and prayerful action, organised and led by Christian women who call the faithful together on the first Friday in March each year to observe a common day of prayer.

Each year a different country takes responsibility for producing resources and a service on a designated theme. That country then becomes the focus of the world's prayers on the day itself.

The first service of the day will take place on the Island of Samoa and the last service will take place on American Samoa. From the time that dawn breaks over the Island of Samoa until the last services of this special day, the world is circled in prayer for 36 hours.

In 2013 is responsible for putting together the service and resources, which have the theme *I was a stranger and you welcomed me.* The theme is explored in relation to the host country and others, and this year's resources and prayers allow for meditation on the issue of immigration – an emotive issue which is very pertinent to France and other countries including Britain.

This year's service challenges people to consider their own standpoint and actions towards strangers, as we remember that, "There are no strangers; there are only women and men who have not yet met." It also emphasises the importance of welcoming others into our midst. The colours in this year's picture symbolise this welcome. The reds and yellows are symbols of warmth and acceptance while the grey gives the

impression of being left out in the cold. The services around the world will also use Leviticus 19:1-2, 33, 34-7,and St Matthew 25:31-4 and be interspersed with real life stories.

The origins of *WWDP* date back to the 19th century when Christian women in the USA and Canada initiated a variety of cooperative activities in support of women's involvement in mission, at home and abroad. In 1922 two separate united days of Prayer, one in Canada and one in the United States, came together with a common date - the first Friday of Lent. In the second half of 1926 the women of North America distributed the worship service to many countries and partners in mission. The response worldwide was enthusiastic and *WWDP* came into being, reaching Britain in 1928 when Scotswoman Grace Forgan learned about it at an international missionary conference in Jerusalem.



Image from the cover of this year's service

The current symbol of the *WWDP* was designed in 1982 for the service prepared by women of Ireland, both north and south, and was then adopted as the International Logo. The design comprises arrows converging from the four points of the compass, four figures kneeling in prayer, the Celtic cross, and a circle representing the world and our unity through all our diversity.

Future themes include Streams in the Desert (2014, Egypt): Jesus said to

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them: "Do you know what I have done to you?" (2015, The Bahamas); and Receive Children, Receive Me (2016, Cuba).

Find out more about *WWDP* at:
www.wwdp-natcomm.org

Andrea Young, Communications Officer, Diocese of Liverpool

In East Warrington the WWDP service will be held at The Church of the Resurrection, Cinnamon Brow, on Friday 1 March at 7.30 pm, and Rev Denise Williams will be the Preacher.



Flowers were not allowed in church during Lent

Church banners by Phyllis Haskey - Part 3

Last autumn we read about several beautiful banners and altarcloths designed and made for Christ Church by Phyllis Haskey (1911 – 2006). Phyllis also produced banners for other local churches, as described by her son John Haskey in this continuation of his story of his mother's work

....



In addition to her banners produced for Christ Church, Phyllis was also asked to design and produce a banner for the Mothers' Union at the Church of the Transfiguration in Birchwood in 1978 when it was consecrated by Bishop David Sheppard. The banner shows Mary holding up the infant Jesus with joy in a loving act of thanksgiving. The pair are set in a wood of silver birch trees, representing Birchwood. Somewhat unusually, Mary is depicted with a long chestnut plaited pony tail! More conventionally, though, she is shown in a blue gown (unlike the green of the 1964 MU Banner at Christ Church referred to somewhat irreverently by Phyllis as the "Persil banner" - as described in October 2012's *Grapevine*.)

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From our School

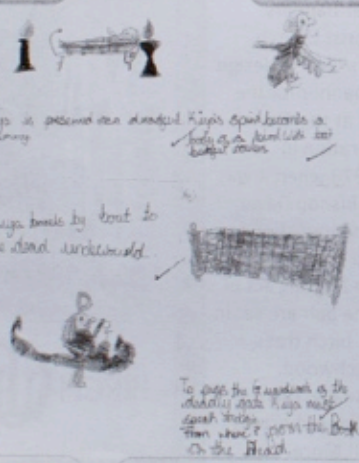
Alisha Dolan (Class 9, Mrs Ryan's year 4) has been learning about the Ancient Egyptians and their beliefs about the afterlife.

Thank you for sharing this with us.

Journey of the Dead

1. Kiya is preserved as a dreadful mummy.

2. Kiya's spirit becomes a body of a bird with beautiful colours.



3. Kiya travels by boat to the dead underworld.

4. To pass the Guardians of the deadly gate Kiya must speak magic. From where? From the Book of the Dead.

Padgate Scouts and Guides

Girlguiding UK
girls in the lead

Group Headquarters, Station Road, Padgate,
Warrington, WA2 0QJ

Please return to:

Doug Berry
3 Nook Lane
Fearnhead
Warrington WA2 0RT

Any Unit Leader

Mavis Lowe
29 Chapel Cross Road
Fearnhead
Warrington WA2 0PP

February 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians/Friends,

Hello, and welcome to a new hopefully drier year for our **ANNUAL SALE OF BEDDING PLANTS.**

We are once more offering a wide selection of quality bedding plants for collection from the Scout and Guide Headquarters, and no price increase. Unfortunately our growers are still unhappy with the reliability of the Impatiens (Bizzy-Lizzy), and have again withdrawn the plant. The alternative **Begonia (Non-Stop)**, which gave an excellent performance last year, is still available. The popular and excellent value Patio Bowls, Hanging baskets and Surfinia baskets are available once again, along with the **Fuchsia Hanging Basket.** The high quality Selection of six plants to refill your patio pots and baskets is always good value.

PADGATE SCOUTS AND GUIDES ANNUAL SALE OF BEDDING PLANTS 2013

PROPOSED COLLECTION DATE 18th MAY WEATHER PERMITTING

BETWEEN 10.00am and 12.30

Form presented by: Scouts/Guides/Cubs/Brownies/Beavers

PLANT TRAYS @ £2.30 PER TRAY	Colour	Tray Quantity	Number	Price
African Marigold	Mixed	9		
Ageratum	Blue	12		
Antirrhinum	Mixed	12		
Alyssum	White	12		
Begonia	Mixed	6		
Dahlia (Bedding)	Mixed	9		
French Marigold	Mixed	12		
Gazania (Kiss)	Mixed	6		
Lobelia (Upright)	Blue	12		
Lobelia (Upright)	White	12		
Lobelia (Trailing)	Mixed	12		
Mesembryanthemum	Mixed	12		
Nemesia (Carnival)	Mixed	12		
Nicotiana	Mixed	12		
Pansy	Mixed	9		
Petunia	Mixed	12		
Salvia	Red	9		
Silver Leaf	Silver	6		
Stocks	Mixed	9		
Verbena	Mixed	12		
ALSO AVAILABLE IN POTS				
Begonia (Non Stop) pack of 4	Mixed	£3.00 each		
Geraniums (Upright) pack of 4	Red	£3.00 each		
Geraniums (Ivy trailing)	Various	£1.00 each		
Sweet Peas (10 per pot)	Mixed	£1.00 pot		
Basket Plants Selection (pack of 6)	Mixed	£5.00 pack		
Individual Surfinia	Mixed	£1.00 each		
Fuchsia (Trailing)	Assorted	£1.10 each		
Fuchsia (Upright)	Assorted	£1.10 each		
BASKETS AND BOWLS				
Plastic Hanging Basket 10"	Mixed	£8.50 each		
Rattan Hanging Basket 12"	Mixed	£9.00 each		
Surfinia Hanging Basket 10"	Assorted	£8.50 each		
Fuchsia Hanging Basket 10"	Mixed	£8.50 each		
Balcony Bowl 10"	Mixed	£6.00 each		
Patio Bowl 15"	Mixed	£9.50 each		
VEGETABLE PLANTS				
Tomato	Moneymaker	80p each		
Tomato	Gardeners Delight	80p each		
Tomato Basket	Tumbler	£7.00 each		
Cucumber	Fem Spot	80p each		
ORDERS OVER £12 RECEIVE A FREE FUCHSIA (One per order)				
PLEASE TICK Trailing Upright				
		GRAND TOTAL		

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER
PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF IT AND
MAKE PAYMENT WITH ORDER
Please make cheques payable to
Padgate Scouts and Guides

Name, Address Telephone

.....

.....

.....

Please return by FRIDAY 29TH MARCH 2013

GV

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Tomato plants, cucumber and Tomato baskets are still available for all the salad growers out there!

Please pass extra forms to neighbours, friends, workmates, relatives, and help us raise funds for the upkeep of our Headquarters. **THIS IS OUR MAIN FUND RAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR – PLEASE SUPPORT US—YOUR PURCHASE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO US.**

We are offering a **FREE FUCHSIA ON ORDERS OF £12 AND OVER**; make your choice, on the order form. **PLEASE NOTE – ONE PER ORDER ONLY.** The competition for our younger members always proves a great interest; £15 token as a prize to the child who brings in the highest value of orders, and prizes for 2nd and 3rd always goes down well, **MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD'S NAME AND UNIT IS ON YOUR FORMS.**

The completed form together with payment should be returned to your Unit Leader as soon as possible **and at the latest by 29th March** to enable us to finalise supplies of plants with the grower.

Plants will be available, weather permitting, on **SATURDAY 18th MAY; PLEASE COLLECT FROM HEADQUARTERS ON STATION ROAD BETWEEN 10.00 AND 12.30 ON THAT DAY, PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOUR NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER IS ON THE FORM, in case there is a delay or problem, together with the Unit (if applicable).**

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

If you are unable to make use of this form – please pass it on

5. In the hall of Two Truths her warm heart is judged against the feather of truth.

6. If Kiya lies the Devourer will swallow Kiya up in a deep dark tunnel forever.

7. If Kiya tells the truth she will be taken to see the great god Osiris and live forever.

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Football Crazy

Once again the Men's Society were let off the leash without a minder to guide us into the big city of Manchester and the Football Museum. We congregated on Padgate station and after roll call began the wait for the Manchester train. Our thoughts were interrupted by a crackling noise over the intercom at the station which was totally incomprehensible, but the rumour spread about the platform that the slow train had been cancelled.

Plan B: we all dashed up and over the bridge to catch the Liverpool train together with two of the ladies from church who wondered what we were doing. When we reached Warrington, we rushed from the train, sprinted down the steps and crossed to the Manchester platform where we caught the express to Piccadilly. There we descended to the tram station and eventually caught a tram to Victoria station where we alighted and headed towards the Museum.

The only problem was that we were unsure where the Museum was, and we set off like sheep towards a new glass building, which eventually proved to be an insurance company building which was only partly built. One of our number did know that we were heading in the wrong direction, but didn't like to mention the fact (he had previously been the lookout on the canal boat which entered the tunnel at the wrong time - he must be more forceful in future).

One of our number did know that we were heading in the wrong direction but didn't like to mention the fact

Eventually twelve of us entered the Museum and enjoyed a couple of hours walking around the exhibits, which many of us remembered when they first happened. Players and grounds that have passed into history - but we still remember them as though they were only yesterday. Then it was time for for lunch and once again we had to retrieve our members from the various floors.

We thought of using the restaurant, until we saw the prices - so the café it was - sandwiches and crisps. Two or three members decided to stay at the Museum while the rest of us retired to the one of the hostelries which were moved after the IRA bombing.

The two pubs are twenty yards apart and the doors face one another, but still the move did not go smoothly.

The first pub was packed, but we all managed to get a drink (but no seats) so we decided to go to the other pub for our second drink. The two pubs are twenty yards apart and the doors face one another, but still the move did not go smoothly. The group had reduced from twelve to nine when we left the Museum, but when we were all seated in the second pub with a drink - there were only six of us! Eventually one found us and said that the other two were outside waiting - however when he stepped outside, they had disappeared and nobody saw them again until the following Sunday in church!



The good news is the heating is working again!

The area around Manchester Cathedral is obviously twinned with the Bermuda triangle. New members are welcome but a GPS may be useful.

Don Binks

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Fairtrade News

This year Fairtrade Fortnight runs from the 25 February to 10 March.

Christ Church is holding a coffee morning on **7 March** to promote and educate about Fairtrade and also to raise badly needed funds for the church. If you would like to bake or have donations for the raffle or bring and buy, they would be most welcome. You might like to look at the Co-op's *Fairtrade* recipes:
www.cooperative.coop/membership/changing-the-world/blueberry_tour/fairtrade-recipes/

The following activities are taking place in Warrington town centre.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT: Activities at *Fair 4 All*
All through Fairtrade Fortnight there will be free daily tastings at *Fair 4 All* in Warrington Market. Customers spending £5 or more will also get a free raffle ticket for a *Fairtrade* Hamper and other prizes.

Saturday 23 February: Warrington Market, 10 am - 4 pm
"*Fairtrade*, More Than Just a Mark"
Try the Quick Quiz, *Fairtrade* Sculptures - craft activity and Blind Tastings Challenge (can you pick which is *Fairtrade*?) Also check out our huge range of fairly traded gifts and cards - find that special Mother's Day present (or drop a hint!) and give a gift that gives a fair deal to its producer.

Saturday 2 March: Golden Square, 9am - 5pm
"Take a Step for *Fairtrade* in 2013"
Games, activities, free samples and visits by the Mayor (and Wolfie). Add your Step for Fairtrade to our huge Step-o-Meter, and help raise awareness of the injustices facing many of the people who grow the food we love.

Barbara Clayton

FAIRTRADE

FAIRTRADE COFFEE MORNING

THURSDAY 7TH MARCH
10.00A.M. - 12.00 NOON
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Proceeds in aid of Christ Church

Admission £1.00 to include refreshments

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Stall 38/39 Warrington Market

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Congratulations



Annabelle (L) and Harry (R)

Congratulations to Christine and Derek Houghton as they celebrate the safe arrival of twin grandchildren, Annabelle and Harr, to Andrew and Charlotte Houghton. Cousins for Nikki.

Congratulations to all the family

Calling all crafters



If you are interested in "crafting" items for this year's Garden Party you are invited to join us in the Coffee Shop on Tuesday 12 March at 10.30 am to share in chat, ideas and materials.

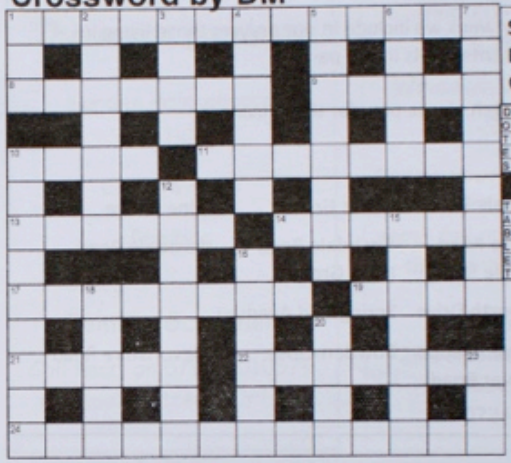
We are always on the lookout for more ideas* and inspiration so if you would like to join us you would be made very welcome.

Advance notice – the 2013 "Garden Party" will be on Saturday 6 July. Although the date has been fixed ,the venue has yet to be decided so it may not be a "Garden" Garden Party .... so watch this space!

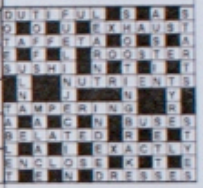
Sue Robinson

**Please note that by law we are not allowed to sell homemade children's toys – they have to carry the "CE" mark.*

Crossword by DM



Solution to February's Crossword



ACROSS

1 No alternative (7,6)
8 taking care of one's money (7)
9 room constructed in roof space (5)
10 jaw (4)
11 playhouses (8)
13 hurting (6)
14 beat (6)
17 defined length (8)
19 portent (4)
21 rule (5)
22 fruit (7)
24 depart from accepted norm (4,3,2,4)

DOWN

1 strike (3)
2 polish (7)
3 rough,clumsy and unintelligent
4 tool used for cutting grass or corn (6)
5 pain or problem (8)
6 bury (5)
7 smugglers' enemies (9)
10 Scottish broadswords (9)
12 words with hidden meaning (8)
15 kettle drums (7)
16 leave (6)
18 similar (5)
20 sport or pastime (4)
23 poem (3)

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Street prayers



Every week we include in our prayers those living in different streets in our parish.

In March please pray for those living in:

3 March	Southdale Road	Cedar Grove	Pine Grove
10 March	Parkdale Road Westdale Road	Birchdale Road Holly Grove	Eastdale Road
17 March	Kenilworth Drive	Springfield Avenue	
24 March	Belgrave Avenue Westover Road	Bowden Close	Devonshire Road



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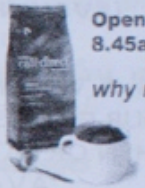
Car boot sale last Sunday of each month 12 till 3, inside and outside, refreshments - contact Jim for details.

Contact The Manager on 01925 819700 to discuss your requirements

The League of Friends of Warrington Hospital are looking for volunteers.

If you can help by giving a few hours of your time please ring 818787 or 662418 for details.

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Special Arrangements during the Interregnum

While we are without a priest at Christ Church there will be no one at the Rectory to receive messages. All correspondence and enquiries should be sent to the following members of our congregation who will make sure that you are directed to the correct person.

Churchwardens:

Jean Rathbone
21 Belgrave Avenue
Padgate
WARRINGTON
WA1 3JN
tel: 815334
a_rathbone@tiscali.co.uk

David Magrath
16 Tweedsmuir Close
Fearnhead
WARRINGTON
WA2 0EL
tel: 822675
david@dmagrath6.orangehome.co.uk

Treasurer: (invoices, donations etc.)
Debbie Jacques
3 Sage Close
Padgate
WA2 0UG
tel: 827726
debbie.jacques@btinternet.com

Verger:
(if Churchwardens are not available)
Bob Higham
tel: 811273

Please do not send any messages, donations etc to the Rectory

WHO'S WHO

Ministers	All the people of Christ Church	
Priest	Position vacant	
Reader	Alan Clayton, 30 Oban Grove	814322
Reader Emeritus	Cliff Green	
Churchwardens	David Magrath, 16 Tweedsmuir Close	822675
	Jean Rathbone, 21 Belgrave Avenue	815334
PCC Secretary	Nigel Bacon, 10 Braemar Close	820164
Treasurer	Debbie Jacques, 3 Sage Close	827726
Organist	John Baguley, 23 Whitchurch Close	850881
Verger	Bob Higham	811273
Gift Aid Secretary	Peter Thomas, 9 Westbury Close	824003
Magazine Editor	Sue Robinson, 31 Burnet Close	823130
Magazine Distribution	Wendy Thomas, 9 Westbury Close	824003
Child Protection	Dave Perfect, 39 Solway Close	822224
Safety Officer	Dale Johnson, 30 Burnet Close	812710
Electoral Roll Officer	Dave Perfect, 39 Solway Close	822224

CHRIST CHURCH CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Head Teacher	Ian Williams	492422

CONTACTS FOR CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

Junior Link	Edward Collinson	810470
Children's choir	Barbara Binks	815343
Choral Group	John Baguley	850881
Servers	Rhiannon Lawrence	831428
Mothers' Union	Afternoon Group: Olive Johnson	813283
	Evening Group: Hazel Yarwood	811279
Men's Society	Alf Clark	812788
Cricket Club	Les Byrne	815361
Guides, Brownies,	Mavis Lowe	822506
Scouts, Cubs, Beavers	Doug Berry	821440
US. (was USPG)	Joyce Ashcroft	812913
The Children's Society	Olive Johnson	813283
Playtimers	Barbara Binks	815343

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What's on at Christ Church
March 2013

Friday	1 March	7.30 pm	*Women's World Day of Prayer* service at Cinnamon Brow
Monday	4 March	7.30 pm	PCC meeting in the Meeting Room
Wednesday	6 March	7.30 pm	Lent course at Padgate Methodist Church
Thursday	7 March	10.00 am - noon	*Fairtrade* Coffee Morning in the Coffee shop
Tuesday	12 March	10.30 am	Craft group meeting in the Coffee Shop
Wednesday	13 March	9.30 am	Tea and Praise *TAP* service in church for young families
		7.30 pm	Lent course at Padgate Methodist Church
Thursday	14 March	7.30 pm	MU Stations of the Cross followed by meeting and talk by Rev. Pam Lovatt
Sunday	17 March	11.00 am	Junior Church
Monday	18 March	7.30 pm	Bible Study at 50 Pasture Lane
Wednesday	20 March	7.30 pm	Lent course at Padgate Methodist Church
Palm Sunday	24 March	8.30 am	Holy Communion
		10.50 am	Palm Sunday Procession to Church
Tuesday	26 March	7.15 pm	Stations of the Cross and Eucharist at Cinnamon Brow
Wednesday	27 March	10.45 am	Holy Communion in Church
		7.30 pm	Lent course at Padgate Methodist Church
		7.30 pm	Agape meal at Woolston
Maundy Thursday	28 March	7.30 pm	Commemoration of the Last Supper at Cinnamon Brow
Good Friday	29 March	10.30 am	Children's Service
		2.00 pm	The Last Hour on the Cross
		6.30 pm	The Way of the Cross
Saturday Easter Eve	30 March	8.00 pm	The Easter Ceremonies
Easter Sunday	31 March	8.30 am	Holy Communion
		11.00 am	Festival Eucharist

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Parish of Killay

Parish Magazine

St Hilary and St Martin



January 2013

40p

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Parish of Killay

Vicar:	The Revd. Timothy J. Williams The Vicarage, 30 Goetre Fach Road, Killay, Swansea ✆ 01792 204233	

St Hilary's

Readers:	David Morgan,	
Eucharistic Assistants:	Gillian Hutchinson, David Morgan, Eileen Nielsen, Alan Pickard	
Churchwardens:	Valerie Beynon Roy Chapman	✆ 204352 ✆ 204766
Church Treasurer:	Alan Pickard	✆ 204717
Sacristan:	Tom Bartley	✆ 204915
Servers:	Beryl Claybrook, Catherine Swain, Tom Bartley, Steve Lewis, Howard Phillips, Bryan Smale, John Williams	
PCC Secretary:	Eileen Nielsen	✆ 520685
Parish Centre Booking Secretary:	TBA	✆ 07902844379
Envelopes/Gift Aid Scheme:	Ken James	✆ 205963
Junior Church Enquiries:	Father Tim	
Organist/Choirmaster:	Peter Carder Please send text message to 07530025275 Or email sesquialtera@hotmail.com	

St Martin's

Churchwardens:	Elaine Graves Colin Williams	✆ 207126 ✆ 201364
Organist:	Bill Riseborough	✆ 205935

Parish Magazine

Editor:	Fr Tim
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The Vicar Writes .....

January 2013

Dear Friends

As we come to the beginning of a new year it is a good time to take stock. To examine our lives. To look to the future and learn from the past. This is as true for our spiritual life as anything. In II Cor. 13:5 we find these words *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you– unless, of course, you fail the test?"*

In today's society, it seems that when it comes to an examination, everyone is always looking at the other person instead of themselves. It's amazing when something goes wrong, all of a sudden the finger pointing starts. It's always someone else's fault and not ours.

A story is told of a man who called the doctor and told the doctor that his wife was having problems of hearing and he wanted the doctor to check her out. So the doctor said "check her out at home and see how bad it is before you bring her in". The man said "how do I do that?" Doctor said "ask her something from the other side of the room and keep getting closer until she responds back to what you said". So the man goes home and she is in the kitchen making supper and from the other side of the kitchen husband says "Is dinner about ready love?" He didn't hear anything. So he goes to the centre of the kitchen and says "Dinner about ready love?" Still didn't hear anything. So he gets up right behind her and says "Dinner about ready love? and at that point she turns around and says "for the third time -Yes."

It seems that we are always willing to jump on being critical of others yet, maybe this year is the year that you and I should be willing to examine ourselves a little more closely. Go back to II Corinthians 13:5: *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves..."*

The Corinthians have had it in for Paul. They have been insistent on testing Paul, the very one who had brought them to the Christian faith.

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And now Paul was coming to them encouraging them to stop looking at others and to look at themselves. What Paul was asking them to do was to examine themselves and to see if it was true that through their actions and words Christ Jesus was living within them. One of the methods of assessment in schools is to let the pupil mark their own tests. What is the point of doing this? - it gives them the opportunity to examine themselves; to see if they really know the material. It is not just take the test, be done with it and see what happens. Each time the question is read and the answer given, it gives them a chance to examine themselves and pledge to do better on the next test.

I am sure that we are aware of the phrase soul searching, but have we ever really done it. Have we taken time to look at our life both inside and out and marked ourselves given ourselves grades. The bible tells us to test ourselves so let's test ourselves and you can mark yourselves: 1) When was the last time you prayed and did not need something or was in trouble? 2) When is the last time you shared Jesus with someone who is not a Christian? 3) When is the last time that you sat down and meditated on a passage of scripture? 4) When is the last time you sacrificially gave without expecting something in return?

How did you do? Did you pass with flying colours or did we just get by or did we fail? Examining ourselves can be hard but can also be helpful because it helps us to see the things that need to be changed. If we are Christians then we should realise that Christ Jesus is within us and that should cause us to want to study God's word. It should compel us to want to share God's word with others. But it demands that we examine ourselves and our actions. Do others see Jesus living in us?

And finally after being willing to examine yourself and noticing the changes you need to make, are you willing today at the beginning of a new year to come to church and to begin the spirit of restoration. May 2013 be the year in which Christ Jesus is not just within us but that Christ Jesus can be seen through us. I wish you all a very happy and healthy and every blessing for the coming year.

Yours in Christ FR TC

Our Vision: *A family, rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by:*
Gathering as God's people – Growing more like Jesus – Going out in the power of the Spirit.

Christmas Eve - *The Crib Service*



Baby Jesus Alicia surrounded by a cast of hundreds



Daniel Vaughan joins in the festivities



Father Tim prepares to give the Blessing



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Monthly Diary

January 2013

HAPPY☆NEW☆YEAR

6th	10.30am	**Epiphany**
	6.00pm	Evensong
11th	2.00pm	Monthly Prayer Meeting, Choir Vestry Led by Eric Thomas
13th	10.30am	**Epiphany 2**
	6.00pm	Combined Evensong with Siloam
20th	10.30am	**Epiphany 3**
	6.00pm	Evensong
27th	10.30am	**Epiphany 4**
	6.00pm	Evensong

Pram Group	every Monday 1pm - 3pm (term times only)	Brownies	every Tuesday 6pm
Interviews	every Monday 6pm – 7pm	Luncheon Club	every Wednesday 11am - 2pm
Music Society	2nd Monday 7.30pm	Ladies' Guild	every Wednesday 7.30pm
Mothers' Union	1st and 3rd Tuesdays 2pm	Bowls	every Friday afternoon 2pm - 4pm Evening 7pm - 10pm

Rotas for January 2013

Readers at Morning Eucharist

6th	1st	Jan Lewis		
13th	1st	Eileen Nielsen	2nd	Val Beynon
20th	1st	Ken James	2nd	John Williams
27th	1st	Catherine Swain	2nd	Ann Llewellyn

Offertory Procession

6th	Junior Church
13th	Mary & Haydn Osborne
20th	Jan & Jim Proudfoot
27th	Sylvia & Mike Powell



Altar Flowers

6th	Gillian Hutchinson
13th	Barbara Thomas
20th	Margaret Massey
27th	Beryl Harris

Sidespersons

January	Pam Davies, Alan Clewett, Megan & Gledwyn Jones
February	Carole & Alan Pickard, Catherine Swain, Bob Mapp

Coffee

Beryl Harris

Sponsor for Bread & Wine

Eileen Nielsen

Church Cleaning

Carol Conway

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St Martin's Church, Dunvant

January 2013

Date	Service	Time	Sidesperson	Reader
6th	Holy Eucharist	8.00am	C Williams	D Morgan
13th	Sung Eucharist	9.00am	G Lewis	L Lewis
20th	Sung Eucharist	9.00am	C Williams	J Riseborough
27th	Sung Eucharist	9.00am	R Draisey	M Draisey

Altar Flowers

6th Val Elliott

13th Mrs Bessant

20th Christine Dardecker

27th Sue Charles-Phillips



We pray especially for:- Val Elliott, Jean Thomas

Parish News

We pray for all who are ill at this time or in Nursing Homes – particularly remembering those being cared for at home and for those who are caring for them:

Terry Watkins, Joyce Leonard, Phyllis Harries, Emlyn Bawden, Peter Dickman, Joan Davies, Beattie Loosemore, Mary Chivers, Olwen & John Iles. Get well soon; your church family is missing you.

We send love to Jessica Davies who is receiving treatment for her illness. Verona Thomas is making progress at home. Enid James and Dulcie Green are still undergoing hospital tests – we hope that they too will soon be feeling better and to Barbara Roberts who is undergoing hospital treatment for a fractured wrist – choir is not the same without her. We were pleased to see that Dorothy Hughes was feeling better and able to return to church.

❄

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Fred Prestwood. He was always referred to as 'Gwynneth's husband' and was always happy to support her in her many undertakings particularly during the years that she carried out the office of Parish Centre Manager. We send our sympathy to Gwynneth, sons Christopher & Michael, daughters-in-law Tina and Debra and grandchildren Lina & Tom. Fred was loved by his family and he loved them in return, they will miss him very much as will we all at St Hilary's.

It was also with great sadness that we heard of the death of Tony Glasson – he will always be remembered by us, with much affection, as our organist. We send our sympathy to Pat, daughters Gillian & Jayne, sons-in-law Adrian & Colin, grandchildren Tom, James, Anna, Daniel & Kathryn and sister Christine. Pat and family will miss Tony as he loved his family – we, in church, will also miss him.

Yvonne Evans of Wimmerfield Drive has died aged 98 years. She promised us all that when her telegram from the Queen arrived for her 100th birthday we could all hold it! She was a true and delightful lady who loved her church. She had been a Mothers Union member for 60 years. Although she did not have children of her own, she adored her nephews and nieces and they loved her in return. Until recently, she was a regular member at St Hilary's - she did not come to church without wearing a hat. She was a joy to know and we will all miss her. We send our sympathy to her family.

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Our sympathy to Enid James and family on the death of Enid's brother – particularly sad for Enid as his wife died just four weeks previously.

The church was saddened to hear of the death of Roy Thomas. Roy was brought into St Hilary's Church in his mother's arms almost 80 years ago, having been born a few weeks earlier at his home in Killay. During the past years, illness had prevented his regular attendance but he was always mentioned – not only in prayers but by the congregation and he always wanted to know what was going on in his church. For 75 years he was a member of the choir, for countless years he served on the PCC, he served as Warden to four Vicars and, in recent years, he was church Treasurer. There was nothing about the church or it's grounds that Roy didn't know. You only had to ask him and the answers would reel off his tongue. He was a traditionalist – 'change' was not a word he liked to hear in church and we would all be told, in no uncertain terms, when it was mentioned! He stood over 6 ft tall so he could not be missed in the choir. If asked if such and such a person was in church, he would reply "I was told as a young boy I must not look down at the congregation from the choir stalls - I go round to the car park if I want to speak or see someone". Although he and Barbara moved to Bishopston to be with Barbara's elderly parents, when asked where he was from he would reply loud and clear "I am a Killay boy". Roy served his Masonic Lodge as its Almoner and the Dunvant Male Choir as Treasurer. Roy loved his home and his family and was proud of his son and grand-children. We send our sympathy to Barbara, their son Stephen, daughter-in-law Mary and grand-children David and Julia. Roy's death will be a void in Barbara's and their family's lives and also for us.

On Christmas Eve, we heard the sad news of the death of Mervyn Howell. Until this past year Mervyn did not miss Sunday morning Eucharist. He would arrive at 10:00 am and make the walk up to the Memorial Garden "to spend a little time with Barbara", his beloved wife whom he lost 11 years ago. Mervyn was a quiet man but he had a wicked sense of humour – all of us who sat near him in church will be witness to. He loved his grand-children and would always relate tales about them. We, in St Hilary's, will miss Mervyn and we send our sympathy to his son Brian, daughter-in-law Linda, their sons Garry and Andrew and grand-son Ben. Sadly, Mervyn's only daughter Angela died 2 years ago and our thoughts go out to her husband Stuart, their children Dawn and Richard and grand-son Ben.

We give thanks for their lives, and pray for those who face the adjustments of bereavement.

To any member of our church family who is not feeling well or is distressed at this time, please contact Father Tim.

❄

Welcome back to Geraldine Rees after her recent hip replacement operation, good to see you doing so well.

Anita Price is now living in Caerphilly. New Address:
Room 27, Plas Hyfryd, 74 Ffordd-y-Maes, Caerphilly, CF83 2BH
Tel No: 02920 849427

We are pleased to say that, although Doll Lee was admitted to hospital a few days before Christmas, she was able to return home on Christmas Eve. She is feeling better and we look forward to seeing her back with us in the New Year.



Congratulations to Terri and Don Watkins as they celebrate their Diamond Anniversary. They were married at St Dingat's Church, New Tredegar on 27th December 1952. We pray that they may enjoy many more years together.

❄

Geraldine Rees would like to thank everyone who sent cards and get well wishes following her recent hip replacement operation….. 'Roger is doing a sterling job of looking after me and I am well on the road to recovery. His expertise in the kitchen is second to none but his ironing skills aren't quite up to the mark – a bit more practice is all he needs I think. We all need people who care from time to time and I am grateful for my many friends and family right now'.

There are a small number of trained pastoral care visitors in our Parish who will always try to accommodate a request.

•••

A special thank you to Father Tim and Canon Geoffrey who carried out their duties with dignity during the Advent period and the Christmas services. The attendance at the services was testimony to the hard work and effort put into making the Christmas festivities a great success.

•••

Date for your Diary:

Parish Dinner	Friday, 11th Jan	7:30pm
Tapestri Restaurant	(old Police Station building opp Glynn Vivian)	

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"I TOOK YOUR PLACE"

One day a man went to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near him and the driver told him **"I always park there!** ***You took my place"***. A little taken aback, the stranger locked his car and walked towards the church. He went inside for Sunday worship, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated **"That's my seat!** ***You took my place"***. The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome but said nothing. He then got up and went into the Lady Chapel, lit a candle and sat down to pray. Another member of the church walked up to him and said **"That's where I always sit to pray!** ***You took my place"***. The visitor was even more troubled by this statement but still said nothing and moved once more.

Later, during the Sunday Service, when the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out "What has happened to you?"

The visitor replied

"I TOOK YOUR PLACE".

EN

PARISH CENTRE CLOTHS

If anyone has taken blue check cloths or white linen cloths home to wash – please would you return them. The Hall is now desperately short when the tables are needed for refreshments.

Thank you
Val Beynon, Warden.

Have you got something you would like to say*? Read a good book? Seen a good film or play? Had a good holiday? Something interesting or funny happened to you? Tell us about it. There is a post box at the back of church – just drop in your contributions and we will share them in the magazine.*
Or e-mail to reesfolk@btinternet.com *Roger*

Ladies Guild

Our annual Christmas dinner was held on 28th December, at the King Arthur Hotel, when forty one Guild members, together with Father Tim, enjoyed an excellent seasonal meal followed by a disco.
Immediately after dinner, the raffle was drawn and the Vicar thanked the committee for their hard work, especially during Gwynneth's absence. It was a very enjoyable evening, the highlight being a "Twist" demonstration by Fr. Tim and our most senior member present, Beryl Bevan. Follow that!!



Due to the sad and shocking news of the sudden death of Fred, the previous day, on our meeting on 5th December members decided to cancel our plans and spend the evening remembering and reminiscing about him. Fred was a true gentleman with a wicked sense of humour, liked and respected by all Guild members. A talented man, he was a great support to Gwynneth in her role as Leader and he was always happy to entertain us with a talk, prepare a quiz or devise a treasure hunt around Killay. He was devoted to Gwynneth and looked after her wonderfully following her dreadful accident. We shall miss him and send our love and sincere sympathy to Gwynneth, Christopher, Michael, Tina, Debra, Lina and Tom.

Our next meeting is 9th January - programme to be arranged.

Best wishes to everyone for 2013.



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Mothers' Union

December 4th saw us at our usual venue, Sketty Hall, 36 members attending. The meal as usual was tasty and well presented. The bar was also well attended! Father Tim drew the raffle with his usual banter and Canon Geoffrey kept us all in order. Everyone went home with a present from the Christmas sack after Carole, Branch Leader had thanked everyone for coming.



We joined with Ladies Guild for the annual Carol Service with readings. Father Tim officiated joined by Canon Geoffrey. We later adjourned to the Hall for mince pies, sherry or a welcome cup of tea. Gwynneth was unable to attend, sadly, but Pam Davies thanked everyone in her place. Father Tim again drew the church raffle which Carol Conway had organised. It was a lucky evening, many of the ladies in the hall winning prizes.

Finally a happy New Year to all, we will begin the New Year on January 15th with corporate communion and the AGM afterwards in the hall.

Sandra Banks, Secretary

Music Society



14th January 7.30pm

A.G.M. followed by

Viv Davies' Memories of World War II –

New members Welcome!

Epiphany



On 6 January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. But who were these wise men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were they called kings - by a church father, Tertullian. Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the eighth century, the magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

Have you ever wondered where the name 'Jesus' comes from?



The name **Jesus** is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. Or there is the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became 'Ἰησοῦς' (Iēsoûs), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:26-33 told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because he will save his people from their sins".

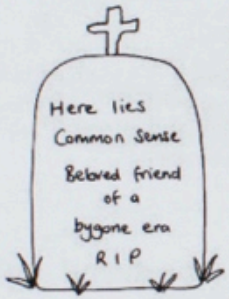
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Obituary:

THE SAD PASSING OF COMMON SENSE

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair, and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned, but overbearing, regulations were set in place.



Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teenagers suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they had themselves failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer paracetamol, sun lotion or a plaster to a pupil, but could not inform the parents when a pupil became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home, but the burglar could sue you for assault because you protected yourself and your own.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else is to Blame, and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised that he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Author Unknown

The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.



Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ.

He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.

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Pram Group

Our annual Nativity & Carol Service followed by a party was held on December 10th. As once again our numbers have varied considerably throughout the year we were delighted to welcome 20 children accompanied by an assortment of parents & grandparents.

We were especially pleased to welcome two of our former little ones who have grown into delightful girls. They came with their Mum & little brother. Joan filled in the time before the Service with a singing session & then Jingle Bells was sung as usual on our way down from the hall, accompanied by Joan as Margaret was unable to be with us.

It was lovely that Father Tim was able to be with us this year; I think he had forgotten what fun we have! Mums & children sorted themselves out on the chairs & we were ready to begin. Father Tim welcomed us all & we started with "While Shepherds Watched"— a very well known carol, followed by the Nativity Story. The angel appeared only a little late, Mary & Joseph arrived more or less intact, the donkey went missing for a bit but did return & Baby Jesus, although tipped out once or twice was mostly in the manger. The shepherds with sheep arrived (a couple did wander but that's what sheep do). The children sang "Away in a Manger" very nicely & Father Tim carried on with the story. By now the children had grown in confidence & were taking an active part in the proceedings; helping put the Kings in their place, just for a very short time before having a wander, as the Story progressed. One has to remember that the oldest child present was 3½ yrs. & the rest were 2yrs. old & under including triplets!

The children then sang their favourite "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"



The children then sang their favourite "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"; Father Tim led us in prayer, finishing with The Lord's Prayer & we ended with " O Come All Ye Faithful" (without the last verse) & trooped up to the party. I am pleased to report that all animals & people were accounted for but the human figures definitely need some backbone! And still no cow!

Jan. & her helpers had put a lovely tea ready; sandwiches, cakes, crisps of all sorts, baby slices of pizza, sausages, fruit & squash. Once again most of the little ones sat at the table & the food disappeared very nicely with very few accidents. Our unisex Santa was indisposed this year but another Father Christmas had stepped into the breech & arrived ringing his bell & greeting all the children. Some were a little wary but mostly all were pleased to see him. He distributed presents to all, the party bags contained a little leaflet this year with some very simple children's prayers. Parents & helpers combined in the clearing up & it was lovely to see everybody lending a hand. A happy atmosphere prevailed throughout. As the children left they all received a balloon & all departed happily.

Our thanks to Father Tim (who also joined us at the party), to our helpers on the day & to all our tea ladies without whom we could not keep going. Thanks to Margaret & Joan for leading the very popular singing sessions & to all the Mums & Dads & children who support us.

A Happy & Healthy New Year to all.

Margaret Bristow, Jan Huxtable, Gwynneth Prestwood & Pat Stratton.

Parish of Killay St Hilary's Church

P R A M G R O U P

Monday afternoons 1pm – 3pm in the Parish Hall
(During school term)

With songs & musical instruments,
pictures to colour and paint,
playdough, toys, books, jig saws etc

Refreshments for children & their
parents, grandparents or carers
All ages from babies to preschoolers
£1.50 per family



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All in the month of January

It was....

200 years ago:- on 2nd Jan 1813 that the Luddite trial opened in York, to try 66 people accused of destroying mechanised looms. 17 of them were later executed, and others transported to Australia.



Also 200 years ago:- on 28th Jan 1813 that Jane Austen's novel 'Pride and Prejudice' was first published.

150 years ago:- on 1st Jan 1863 that the Emancipation Proclamation was made. US President Abraham Lincoln declared that all slaves in states that had seceded from the USA would be freed.

Also 150 years ago:- on 10th Jan 1863 that the first section of the London Underground Railway was opened. It was the world's first underground railway service.





100 years ago:- on 30th Jan 1913 that Percy Thrower, British gardener, TV/radio broadcaster and writer; Britain's first celebrity gardener, was born.

70 years ago:- on 15th Jan 1943 that the Pentagon, in Arlington County, Virginia, was dedicated. It is the HQ of the US Department of Defence, and was the largest office building in the world at that time.

65 years ago:- on 30th Jan 1948 that Mahatma Ghandi, Indian political and spiritual leader, was assassinated by a Hindu extremist.



50 years ago:- on 23rd Jan 1963 that British intelligence offer and Soviet spy Kim Philby defected to the Soviet Union.



30 years ago:- on 1st Jan 1983 that the internet was created when the ARPANET officially switched to using Transmission Control Protocol and Internet Protocol (TCP/IP).

20 years ago:- on 20th Jan 1993 that Audrey Hepburn, Academy Award-winning stage and film actress (Gigi, Breakfast at Tiffany's, My Fair Lady) died.



10 years ago:- on 10th Jan 2003 that North Korea announced that it was withdrawing from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

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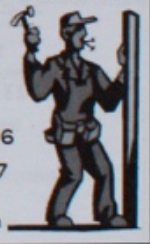
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Answer Next Month

Answers to Last Month's Dingbats

1. Base Line
2. Back Door
3. An Inside Job
4. An Uphill Struggle
5. Upset Tummy
6. Back to Square One
7. An Afterthought
8. Alright on the Night
9. A High IQ
10. Anyone For Tennis
11. Arm in Arm
12. Alice Through the Looking Glass

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Church Services

St Hilary's

1st Sunday	10.30am	Family Eucharist (followed by coffee with Traidcraft Stall)
	6.00pm	Evensong
2nd Sunday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	6.00pm	Combined Evensong with Siloam
3rd Sunday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	6.00pm	Evensong
4th Sunday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	6.00pm	Healing Service
5th Sunday	10.30am	Holy Eucharist
	6.00pm	Evensong at St Martin's

St Martin's

1st Sunday	8.00am	Holy Eucharist
2nd Sunday	9.00am	Sung Eucharist
3rd Sunday	9.00am	Sung Eucharist
4th Sunday	9.00am	Sung Eucharist
5th Sunday	9.00am	Sung Eucharist
	6.00pm	Evensong with St Hilary's at St Martin's

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Priest in Retirement	The Revd. Canon David Eaton, Two Way House, Wheelers Lane, Brockham RH3 7LA (843915). *Email:* rev_davideaton@hotmail.com
Reader	His Honour Peter Slot, The Red House, Old Reigate Road, Betchworth RH3 7DR (842010). *Email:* tarq1840@aol.com
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HISTORICAL NOTES Buckland (then Bochelant) was mentioned in the Domesday Book as a village of 35 households, a church and a watermill. These days it is a picturesque village covering 1362 acres, with a total population of around 580 in 240 households. It straddles the A25 and the Guildford to Redhill Railway. The parish registers date back to 1560, and the first recorded vicar to 1308. The present church is thought to have been built in 1380, and was extensively refurbished in 1860. The church has six bells, still regularly rung, and an unusual wooden spire. Some of the windows date from the 14th and 15th centuries. The window nearest the font suffered heavy damage from an enemy bomb in 1941. The glass was then removed and lost, until the 600 separate pieces were rediscovered in the Rectory cellar 52 years later, wrapped in newspaper. The window was restored in 1994, though part of it now forms the light-box at the West end of the church.

Buckland is in the Diocese of Southwark (*Bishop:* The Rt. Revd. Christopher Chessun) and the Area of Croydon (*Area Bishop:* The Rt. Revd. Jonathan Clark). For more information on the village, see the village website, http://www.bucklandsurrey.net

BUCKLAND PARISH MAGAZINE

MARCH 2013

Dear Everyone,

"Why do you look for the living among the Dead?
He is not here, but has Risen." (Luke 24: 5)

Those words from Luke were addressed to the women who first came to the tomb bearing spices on that first Easter Morning. They were expecting to anoint a body but instead found the angel messengers telling them that the one whom they were seeking was not there, had risen and they were to "Go and tell his disciples". They had the great proclamation that all of us have as Christians which is to "Go and tell the Good News." The Easter season is a time when we can be encouraged to live life with hope for the future inspired by the Christian story of faith told to us through the gospel narratives. During the preceding weeks, in the church year, we relive the drama of the Passion story, the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the celebration of the Last Supper, the time in the Garden of Gethsemane, the trial before the Jewish and Roman courts, and the pain of death of Jesus on the cross.

In our own lives it is often the case that it is through times of darkness/troubles that we become open to find new hope. Certainly the women coming to the tomb were going through a very dark time, and yet they hear and experience something that will energize their faith and give them hope.

The projects supported by the Lent Call tell remarkable stories of Faith and Hope built on great Love shared. One such story is from The Sindyanna Project in Galilee. Directed by Hadas Lahav the project is a practical way to try and bridge the divide between Israelis and Palestinians. Jewish, Muslim and Christian women are brought together to work co-operatively producing fair trade goods. The outcome is that many Palestinian women can become economically active and it is helping them to build bridges with women from the local Israeli community. Hadas has worked hard through dark times to build this industry up and has done it by her strong Faith and convictions. She says "The solutions will only come when people cease to be suspicious of each other and learn how to work and live side by side". Details of the other Lent Call Projects can be found later in this magazine and information is also

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available at each Lent Lunch.

As Christians we seek the Living Christ who works and moves with us in our lives… he is not dead, for he has risen. We are all witnesses to this faith and if we follow the examples of those who first came to the empty tomb, we too can live out the Gospel through our actions. This Easter Be Energized in your Faith, have Hope for the future and Share your Love.



God of faith, deepen our faith
so we may bear witness to Christ in the world;
God of hope, strengthen our hope
so we may be signposts to your transforming presence;
God of love, kindle our love
so that, in a fragile and divided world, we may be signs
of the faith, hope, love which we share in Jesus Christ. Amen

I wish you all a very Blessed Eastertide!

Carol

March Diary



Day	Date	Time	Event	Page
Thur	7th	7.45pm	Women's Institute Meeting	28
Sat	9th	3.30pm	Betchworth & Buckland Society Valuations Day	29
Mon	18th	7.30pm	Brockham Horticultural Society Meeting	26
Sat	23rd	7.30pm	Brockham Choral Society Concert	26
Sun	24th	11am-1	North Downs School car boot sale	17
Wed	27th	2-4pm	Drop-in at Hamilton Room, Betchworth	25
Fri	29th		Saint Rupert	19

In addition, on Wednesday 6th, Tuesday 12th and Wednesday 20th March the Lent Course will be running (p.3), and on each Thursday in March there will be a Lent lunch in the Reading Room at 12.30pm (p.6).

Church Matters

UPPER MOLE GROUP LENT COURSE

"FINDING A VOICE" BY HILARY BRAND

Wednesday 6th March St. Michael's, Betchworth. Session: "Pressing Forward and Breaking Through".

Tuesday 12th March Emmanuel Church, Sidlow Bridge. Session: "Poisonous Words and Profane Responses".

Wednesday 20th March St. Nicholas Room, Charlwood. Final Session: "Faith in our Voice".

Sessions start with drinks and biscuits at 7.30 for 7.45 start and conclude by 9.30 pm.



PARISH VISITING

If you know of anyone in your road in need of a visit, or newly moved in and would like a visit from someone from the church, it would be most helpful if you could let Carol the Rector, Pattie Vigers, Marjorie Hill or June Letheren (☎ 842084) know.

It is nice to be able to go round and welcome new people into the villages but it is often difficult to know when this happens.

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Plan of Services

Date	St Mary's, Buckland		St Michael's, Betchworth	
3rd March *3rd Sunday of Lent*	8 9.30	HC (BCP) Parish Communion	11	Parish Communion *Sunday School* *
10th March *Mothering Sunday* 	9.30	All age Mothering Sunday Communion (posies given out) 	8 11 	HCP (BCP) All age Mothering Sunday Service ‡ (posies given out) 
17th March *Passion Sunday*	8 10.30	HC (BCP) Joint Family Service	5pm	Choral Evensong
24th March *Palm Sunday* 	9.30	Parish Communion (meet in Reading Room at 9.15 for procession)	8 11	HC (BCP) Parish Communion (meet at Lych Gate at 10.50 for palm cross procession) ‡ *Sunday School* *
25th March Monday	7.30 pm	Meditation		
26th March Tuesday	7.30 pm	Film showing of "Gospel of Us by Michael Sheen" *(see pp. 7, 11)* followed by Compline		
27th March Wednesday	7.30 pm	Taize Prayers and music around the Cross		

* In the Hamilton Room ‡ Coffee and soft drinks served in church after this service. Please join us

Continued on next page

Plan of Services *Continued*

Date	St Mary's, Buckland		St Michael's, Betchworth	
28th March Maundy Thursday	8pm	Eucharist of the Last Supper (with anointing of hands)		
GOOD FRIDAY 29th March 	10.30 - 1pm 1-2pm 2-3pm	Family activities/ Walkabout All Age Service, treasure hunt etc. Meet in Reading Room Open meditation (drop in any time) Service of the Last Hour	8pm	Passiontide Readings and Music
Easter Eve 30th March	8pm	Easter Vigil Candlelight Service		
EASTER DAY 31st March (NB Clocks go forward)	8 9.30	HC (BCP) Parish Communion and Blessing of Easter Garden † 	11	All Age Parish Communion and blessing of Easter Garden † *Sunday School* * 
7th April 2nd Sunday of Easter	8 9.30	HC (BCP) Parish Communion	11	Parish Communion *(No Sunday School)*

† A small Easter egg for children as they leave
* In the Hamilton Room

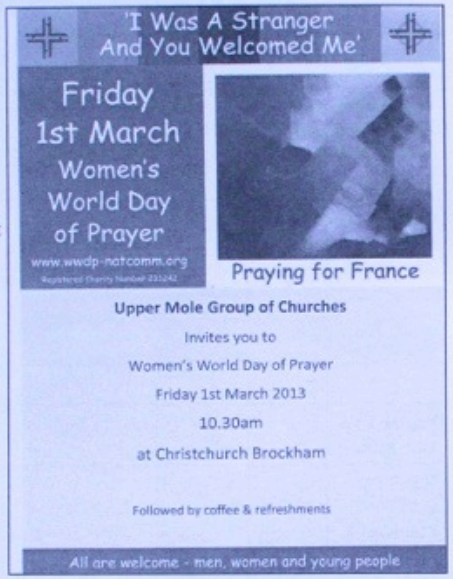
The longest journey is the journey within. *Dag Hammarskjold*

An humble knowledge of thyself is a surer way to God than a deep search after learning. *Thomas à Kempis*

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DATES FOR DIARIES IN LENT

1st March: Women's World Day of Prayer. 10.30am Christchurch, Brockham, ALL WELCOME. "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Service designed by Women in France. A taste of French cuisine served. Those of you who wish may also like to then follow this service with the Lent lunch hosted by Anne Forrest.



Lent lunches in March

Buckland Every Thursday at 12.30 in the Reading Room: 7th March, 14th March, 21st March, and 28th March.

Betchworth Lent Lunches from 12-2pm. You can pop in any time during this time for a frugal lunch: soup, bread, etc.

A chance to catch up with friends and meet new ones! Donations go towards the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call. Many thanks to those who have offered to host these lunches. Please ring the relevant number, details below, if you need directions or to tell the hostess that you are coming.

1st March	Anne Forrest	842739	86 Brockham Lane, Brockham RH3 7EH
8th March	Linda Slater	844632	10, Lazell Gardens, Betchworth RH3 7BF
15th March	Sara Smart	242285	Little Santon Farm, Trumpet Hill, Reigate RH2 8QY
22nd March	Eiluned Slot	842010	The Red House, Old Reigate Road, Betchworth RH3 7DR

For information on the Upper Mole Lent Course, see page 3

MOTHERING SUNDAY: 10TH MARCH

Buckland There will be an All Age Communion Service in Buckland at 9.30am when posies will be given out to mothers and ladies of the congregation.

Betchworth Children, young people and the Sunday School Families are invited to attend a Making Session in the Hamilton Room at 10.00 to make posies. Flowers and foliage may also be dropped at the Hamilton Room for 10.00am. The posies will be given out during the 11am Mothering Sunday Service (Non-Eucharistic) in Betchworth

The Gospel of Us This is a 2012 British drama based on the Owen Sheers novel of the same name and the three day Passion play that Michael Sheen acted in in his home town of Port Talbot in April 2011. Directed by Dave McKean, the film stars Sheen as The Teacher, a man who has lost all memory of who he is and of the danger his town is facing from a company, ICU, who are depleting the town of its resources with little regard to its residents.

We shall be showing this film (2 hours in length) from the DVD in Buckland church followed by a short compline service. Please bring a cushion!

GOOD FRIDAY 29th MARCH



A Service of Passiontide Readings, Hymns and Anthems (similar in form to the Christmas Service of Nine Lessons and Carols). 8pm in St. Michael's, Betchworth

A young curate was impressed by how her vicar always seemed to know what the weather was about to do. One day she commented on this impressive spiritual gift of knowledge. The vicar sighed. "Sadly, it is not spiritual. My joints are more accurate meteorologists than the BBC weather forecast."

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LENT CALL 2013

This year the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Call is supporting three projects in the Holy Land, our link Diocese of Zimbabwe and three projects within the Diocese of Southwark in each of the Episcopal areas. Details of the projects are on display in both churches and information is available at each LENT LUNCH.

Here though is a summary of the projects:

The Princess Basma Centre for Disabled Children is situated on the Mount of Olives and when started the area was ruled by Jordan. The Centre is run by Mrs Betty Majaj, an eighty something year-old Lebanese Christian who worships at St George's, the Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, and who has been involved in the work for many years - the last thirty as Director. The idea is that the centre works to ensure that specialist knowledge and help for children with special needs can be available. Princess Basma Centre offers an impressive array of services which include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, hydro-therapy, education for those with special needs, a sheltered workshop for those who are blind or have other physical disabilities, where they repair and make chairs and tables so that they can earn a living and become more independent. They receive orders for the work that they do from other organisations.

Sindyanna of Galilee This began in 1993-4 in response to the pressing need to try to bring employment back to places where the political situation had caused there to be none. The projects undertaken by Sindyanna are not only a way of providing an income for a group who would not easily manage to achieve one otherwise, but also a practical way to try and bridge the divide between the communities in the Galilee region in northern Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The projects bring together Jewish, Muslim and Christian women to work co-operatively producing fair trade olive oil and other olive based products, baskets and other goods which are now sold outside their own communities and even here in Britain.



Jeel al-Amal and the Bethlehem Arab Society for Rehabilitation It seems that there are so many children in the various parts of the Holy Land that need help and these two projects have offered help for boys who are orphans or come from difficult home backgrounds or have physical needs over many years. The Jeel al-Amal home for boys in Bethany is a bright and airy place behind secure gates. As we arrive it is clear that the boys are well practised at what they should do when a car arrives as they flattened themselves against the wall to get out of the way. Jeel al-Amal means 'generation of hope' and the home was founded in 1972 when there was no hope, so says Najwar Sahhar who now runs the home which her parents founded. The boys from the school often go on to important roles, for instance, one former pupil is now a judge in Ramallah. As with all initiatives finance can be a struggle sometimes but, says Najwar, 'This is the land of Jesus: he will help us to get all we need'.

Zimbabwe The Church in Zimbabwe is anxious to be able to get on with sharing the Gospel with the people in their cities, towns and villages. They have made plans and are making sure that they have the people and resources to begin the work of mission and ministry. This means planning education and other social projects; helping people to learn to farm and making sure that the land is properly irrigated; it means training men to be deacons and priests and lay people to be leaders in their communities. As we raise money during Lent 2013 for our Link Dioceses we are hoping for some more positive news of the reclamation of buildings. Do look on the Diocesan website or in the Bridge to see what is happening. But, whether or not all is restored, the Church in Zimbabwe will be working for the people of the Dioceses to help to bring about change.

Within the Diocese This year, the Bishop's Lent Call is supporting three projects within the Diocese: SparkFish in the Croydon Episcopal Area, Furzedown Youth Centre in the Kingston Area and Sydenham Garden in the Woolwich Area.

SparkFish was set up in 2010 to unite the churches of Reigate, Redhill and Merstham in supporting their local schools. Working through ministers, youth leaders and volunteers from local churches, it seeks to support young people in their lives at school and beyond. The team tries to demonstrate the Christian faith by their loving approach, and to explain it relevantly so that young people can make their own informed response. During 2011, Sparkfish was able to reach some 4000 children and young people. Sparkfish serves an area with diverse needs. As a young charity, SparkFish is still establishing itself financially and the opportunities are growing fast. Your support will help SparkFish reach out to touch more young lives.



Furzedown Youth Centre (FYC) is part of the mission of four local churches, three Anglican and one Baptist, working together in Furzedown, Wandsworth to be 'salt and light' in the community. Its vision is rooted in the gospel and Jesus' instructions on how to live life.

Sydenham Garden Founded in 2002, Sydenham Garden is a growing, award-winning charity providing gardening, nature conservation and creative opportunities for the well-being of local residents. The Garden is a place where local people, particularly those coping with ill health, can gain confidence and self-esteem through work and community.

Bishop Christopher thanks you for your support. In 2012 the money collected from across the whole diocese was almost £108,000 which has been distributed to our Link Dioceses in Zimbabwe supporting Health, Education and Irrigation projects and to specific projects in Southwark diocese building social cohesion.

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Easter at
St. Mary's and St. Michael's



Palm Sunday
24th March

9.15 am **Parish Communion in St. Mary's**
Meet at Reading Room, Buckland for procession around St. Mary's Church

11.00am **Parish Communion in St. Michael's**
Meet at 10.50 by Lych Gate to process

Maundy Thursday **8pm** **Eucharist of the Last Supper, St Mary's**
28th March

Good Friday
29th March



10.30am **All Age Family Activities**
Reading Room Buckland



10-30 - 1pm **All Age Walkabout Service**
at *Reading Room, including a treasure hunt and family craft activities, followed by by hot cross buns and mini Easter garden making for children*

1 to 2 pm **Open Meditation at St. Mary's**
2 to 3 pm **Service of the last hour at St. Mary's**
8 pm **A Service of Passiontide at St. Michael's**
Readings, Hymns and Anthems

Easter Eve
Saturday 30th March

8pm **Candlelight Vigil Service at St. Mary's**

Easter Day
Sunday 31st March

8 am **Holy communion (BCP) at St. Mary's**
9.30 am **Easter Parish Communion at St. Mary's**
11 am **Easter ALL Age Communion at St. Michael's**

(a small Easter egg for all children as they leave both churches)



HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

MONDAY 25th March. 7.30pm, Buckland. Meditation, which means a short reading, a little music (CD) then 20 minutes of silence — a good way to clear the noise and clutter between us and the presence of God.

TUESDAY 26th March. 7.30pm, Buckland. "Gospel of Us", a two hour film, a British drama based on the novel of that name and a Passion play acted in Port Talbot last year. It stars Michael Sheen, a man who has lost all memory of who he is and of the danger his town is facing.

The film will be followed by the very short late evening service of Compline.

WEDNESDAY 27th March, 7.30pm, Buckland. Taizé prayers and music around the Cross — a gentle time to sing, reflect and pray.

MAUNDY THURSDAY 28th March 8pm, Buckland. A Eucharist (Communion service) to commemorate the Last Supper and Jesus washing the disciples' feet. On the way to the altar you will be invited to wash your hands and they will be blessed for service. At the end of the service the altar is stripped and we leave in silence and darkness to remember the time when his disciples forsook him and fled into the night.

GOOD FRIDAY 29th March
10.30am – 1pm, Reading Room, Buckland. Walk the Way of the Cross. Follow the journey from the Upper Room to Golgotha and the garden tomb. Interactive walkabout service followed by hot cross buns, crafts and Easter garden making.
1-2pm Buckland Church. A time of silence, with a brief reading every ten minutes. Please come and go as you wish.
2-3pm A (non-Communion) conducted Service of the Last Hour.
8pm Betchworth. A Passiontide Service of Readings and music. This is similar in form to the Christmas service of Nine Lessons and Carols. It is solemn, beautiful and intensely moving.

EASTER EVE 30th March 8pm, Buckland. Easter Candlelight Vigil. This begins in darkness. The New Fire is lit, and the Easter Candle, which is then used to light all the candles in church. We remember our baptismal vows round the font.

EASTER DAY 31st March — a day of triumph
8am Buckland. A traditional (BCP) said Communion service.
9.30am Buckland. Parish Communion and blessing of Easter Garden
11am Betchworth. All Age Communion and blessing of Easter Garden (Sunday School available)

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EASTER LILIES



If you would like to donate a lily, or lilies, to celebrate Easter, or in memory of someone, please place your donation in an envelope and leave in the basket at the back of the Church. Each lily costs £2.

Alternatively contact Jean Cooke on ☏ 245161.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S - OPEN GARDENS DAY

The 'Friends' are beginning a programme of activities, one of which will be an Open Gardens Day in the village, to be held one Sunday after noon (1pm to 5pm) in either May or June - the date to be decided among those who are interested in opening. We would welcome anyone willing to open their garden to help raise funds for the church, particularly if you have not opened your garden previously. There are a great variety of gardens in Buckland - many hidden gems. We expect to charge admission for a ticket which would give access to 7 to 10 gardens in Buckland. We do not require gardens to be large or to be the standard of the National Gardens Scheme (NGS)!

If in any doubt, do give me a call to discuss - Duncan Ferns ☏ 07786 966841 or ☏ 843388.

FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S

The purpose of the Friends is to raise funds to help maintain the fabric and structure of St. Mary's, an important focal point at the centre of Buckland and a listed building with 1000 years of history. If you feel you can contribute to these efforts, especially in helping to plan the 2013 programme, please contact Trevor Cooke (☏245161) or Richard Wheen (☏ 842082) or see the literature in the church. We are also still looking for a Chairman.

She was in the bathroom, putting on her makeup, under the watchful eyes of her young granddaughter, as she'd done many times before. After she applied her lipstick and started to leave, the little one said, "But Grandma, you forgot to kiss the toilet paper good-bye!" I will probably never put lipstick on again without thinking about kissing the toilet paper good-bye....

****

Grandpa is the smartest man on earth! He teaches me good things, but I don't get to see him enough to get as smart as him!

THE REAL EASTER EGG



Details of the Real Easter Egg were in the January magazine. You still have time to order these by signing the order form at the back of church after a service. They are £3.99 each or ring the Rector.

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

Fairtrade fortnight (25th February – 10th March) will call on the British public to Go Further for Fairtrade in 2013 to look after the food we love and the people who grow it. Without our support now, farmers in developing countries face a difficult and uncertain future, the Fairtrade Foundation is warning.

This year thousands of people up and down the country will get creative with their Fairtrade campaigning to highlight the importance of small farmers in agriculture and their role in food security. Sculptures made from Fairtrade product packaging will form the centrepiece of this year's campaign. Towns, villages, churches, colleges and schools across the nation will create installations, collages or other works of art as protest petitions to deliver to MPs and others to ask for change. Debates will be held across the UK about the need to Go Further to protect the future of our products and the livelihoods of the farmers and workers who produce them.



Thousands of people will upload their creative activity to form a visual online petition to deliver a call to government to Go Further to support small farmers to achieve sustainable livelihoods and a better deal from trade. Best entries will win a money can't buy prize.

Mike Gidney, Interim Executive Director of the Fairtrade Foundation said: 'Companies and governments need to ensure small farmers can achieve sustainable livelihoods and play their full role in building fairer, better food systems for the future. Choosing Fairtrade is one way to help secure a better deal for millions of people in developing countries, so we want people to try a new Fairtrade product, create a work of art to ask for change, or pledge their support on our online petition.'

Smallholders in developing countries are increasingly hit by fluctuating commodity prices affecting their income and the prices they pay for the food they buy themselves, rising global food prices, rising production costs, and climate change. Fairtrade Fortnight is the nationwide effort to promote awareness of Fairtrade and urge people to buy products carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark. It unites all Fairtrade supporters, bringing together retailers, manufacturers, producers and consumers.

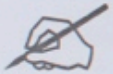
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Buckland Matters

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS:	17th February	Lewis James Hallett and Adam Finlay Carr Hallett
FUNERALS, CREMATIONS:	11th February	Michael Guy Wardlaw who died on 1st February, aged 88, of Norden Hill, The Coombe, Betchworth
	19th February	Colin Redmond Dunn who died on 26th January, aged 74, of 58 Brockham Lane, Brockham
INTERMENT OF ASHES IN BURIAL GROUND:	7th February	John Michael Ryn of 1 Rhinelands, Station Road, Betchworth who died on 16th July 2012 aged 53

ELECTORAL ROLL



Under the Church Representation Rules, the Church Electoral Roll is renewed every six years - this year being one. 'All persons who wish to have their names entered on the new roll, whether their names are entered on the present roll or not, are requested to apply for enrolment' before the end of February.

There are application forms, with conditions, on the magazine pew in the Church.

P.V.

DOES ANYONE KNOW?

We are trying to locate a Mr Keith Charles Nightingale, who is being sent important correspondence to our address, Walwyns, Reigate Road. If anyone ever knew this gentleman, or better still knows his current whereabouts, please call Mary Davidson on ☎ 249194.

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

Buckland Annual Parish Meeting

This year's Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Monday 29th April 2013 in the Reading Room, Old Road.



The Annual Parish Meeting provides an opportunity for your Parish Council to report on their activities during the year and for you to ask questions and provide feedback. We will share with you plans for the refurbishment of the village War Memorial in advance of the Centenary of the start of WW1 and local resident James Day will treat us to a short illustrated talk entitled "A Buckland Memorial". James has promised there will be lots of photographs and we hope as many Buckland residents as possible will choose to join us.

Opportunity to become a Parish Councillor

The resignation of Cllr Kearney has created an opportunity for someone to step forward to join the Parish Council. If you think you could be interested and would like to find out more about what is involved please contact the Clerk.

Public Events on the Village Green

While the Parish Council remains committed to promoting, and extending, its support for a wide range of activities on the Village Green, it has a legal obligation to protect the Village Green.

Please remember, before you hold a public event, to ask for the Parish Council's permission and understand that any permission granted will be conditional upon receiving written confirmation that:

- public liability insurance is in place to cover the event;
- the organisers will take appropriate measures to ensure vehicles do not park on or drive across the granite setts or grass surface of the Village Green;
- in the event that inclement weather causes the Parish Council to declare the surface of the Village Green unsuitable for it to be used for a public event that the organisers accept it will be their responsibility to ensure appropriate contingent arrangements are in place; and
- in the event of there being any damage to the Village Green the organisers accept they will be liable for the costs of restitution.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk. Email: bucklandpc@sheenaboyce.co.uk

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BENEFITING THE COMMUNITY - BUCKLAND'S FIRST ELECTRIC CAR?

Be prepared for Buckland's first electric car, driven by Robert Carr, occasionally even by Mary, his wife. It will take you by surprise. Guaranteed to make you smile!

Robert started looking for an economical run-about for short journeys years ago. Did you know that cars take 5-10 miles to warm up, that driving with petrol for short distances causes lots of wear on the car and potentially gives you the lowest mileage per gallon? And short journeys with cars run on diesel suffer with particulate filters packing up after only 12-15 months? Car exhausts still rot from the inside out if they don't get hot enough to expel the acidic liquid left after short journeys.

With all this in mind, BMW introduced the very economical *BMW C1* scooter with roof and seat belt - a brilliant idea. The downside of it, the UK government insisted that you wear a crash helmet. Consequently, it was withdrawn from the UK market.

In April 2011, Renault announced *Twizy*, a new electric vehicle, quite like a scooter with a roof. His *Twizy* was ready for collection on 1st June 2012. To date, more than 260 Twizys have been sold across the whole of the UK.

Robert's *Twizy* is bright orange, has the usual lights and indicators, is exempt from road tax and will take two people in tandem. He can manage without windows, being protected up to waist level by 'gull wing' doors. His *Twizy* has done 1100m so far and although Robert has driven lots of different cars in his life, never has he driven a vehicle which attracts so much attention. It's fantastic for short journeys and will keep up with traffic on all A roads with a maximum speed of 50mph.

Twizy takes 3½ hours to charge up from flat from a normal 13amp socket. The longest journey was to Guildford, but whilst Renault claim a range of 60 miles, 40 miles is closer to reality, as Robert found out on a trip to Burgess Hill. He had to stop off to recharge for ¾ hr at the Renault dealer in Copthorne to the delight of people there who had not yet been briefed on the Twizy!

Twizy is a real ice breaker. Youngsters really like *Twizy* as a cool car. Only recently, the EU decided that electric quadricycles, weighing less than 350kg and limited to 28mph, will be able to be driven by 16yr olds.

The price is affordable at just over £6000. It seems as if the only drawback is the concern over potential battery life. To overcome this, Renault offers a monthly battery hire for £45. If you decide to go electric, make sure you join the friendly Twizy Owners Club online.

Meike Laurenson

Parents' and Children's Section

NORTH DOWNS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hopefully the worst of the cold and snowy weather is behind us and the children will be able to play outside and enjoy the spring weather. Playgrounds are always busy places but constructive play forms an important role in children's learning.

Playtime is an opportunity for children to let off steam, to meet with friends, play quiet games, active games and to learn to share play equipment. Although it may not appear so at first glance there is much learning that goes on in school playgrounds. As you can imagine it's a constant task maintaining play equipment and replacing resources as a result of the wear and tear of use by some four hundred children. We currently need to improve and replace our play equipment at all three sites and have asked FONDS (Friends of North Downs School) our PTA, to organise a fund raising event to help us.

On SUNDAY 24TH MARCH we are holding a CAR BOOT SALE at the BROCKHAM site. Sellers should arrive at 10.00 a.m. and buying is from 11.00 a.m. - 1.00 pm. Tea, coffee and other refreshments will be available.

It's spring cleaning time. If you have any items to sell, why not come along and make yourself some money, but at the same time help to support our school. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this worthwhile event.

Angela Ewing, Headteacher

After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. Finally, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice,

"Who was THAT?"

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Children's page

THE STAND IN

It's not me; I didn't do it. Is it always someone else when the teacher asks 'who made this mess', or Mum says 'who broke this?' And if we hadn't done it, would we offer to clean up the mess or pay for what is broken out of our pocket money? Even though it wasn't our fault and we hadn't done anything wrong?

The answer is probably 'no'. Why should we? It wasn't our fault! It wouldn't be fair! But then things often aren't fair. It wasn't fair that the crowds in Jerusalem that first Easter shouted 'release Barabbas', a convicted criminal. They could have shouted 'release Jesus' - Jesus hadn't done anything wrong after all.

Jesus told us 'No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends' (St John's Gospel, chapter 15, verse 13). Jesus gave up his life for us.

And others have followed his pattern, like Maximilian Kolbe, a Catholic priest in a German concentration camp who took the place of another prisoner and was killed instead of him.

WHO? ME?

The answers to this Bible quiz are all words that begin with the letters M E ... answers below.

- Was with Daniel in the lions' den? (Daniel, 3)
- Is another name for Malta where St Paul was shipwrecked? (Acts, 28)
- Who did Jesus call blessed, and said they would inherit the earth? (Matthew, 5)
- Proverbs 17 says that a merry or cheerful heart is like what?
- What were James and John doing when they first met Jesus? (Mark, 1)
- Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to yeast mixed with what? (Luke, 13)
- King Saul's eldest daughter's name (I Samuel, 14)

When did medicine first appear in the Bible? When God gave Moses the tablets.

1. Meshach 2. Melita 3. the meek
4. good medicine 5. mending their nets
6. three measures of flour 7. Merab

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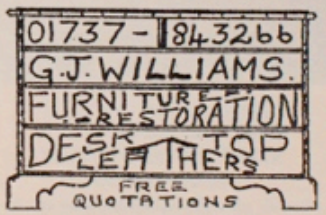
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FEATURES

SAINT OF THE MONTH



Saint Rupert (29th March, died around 710) is the saint for you if you like The Sound of Music – or salt with your food!

Rupert was bishop of Worms and Salzburg, and it was he who founded the great monastery of St Peter in Salzburg in the eighth century, thus firmly establishing Christianity in that city. True, it would be another 11 centuries before a certain young wanna-be-nun wandered about singing of her Favourite Things and Something Good, but you have to start somewhere.

In the meantime, Rupert also helped the people of Salzburg by developing the salt-mines nearby. This was 'something good' as well, because it brought in an income. Though if salt became a too 'favourite thing', it would also have raised the locals' blood pressure.

Rupert's iconographical emblem is a barrel of salt, which makes sense, but is not as romantic as raindrops on roses, or whiskers on kittens.

THE MAGAZINE 50 YEARS AGO

The Rector, the Rev. M.M. Barlow, devotes most of the magazine to the observance of Lent (he is, after all, the editor of the magazine as well as the Rector), but is also proposing a second 9.30 Communion in the month. The interesting thing about this is that he is looking for a "little choir" for the service. (Does this mean that there was no other church choir at the time, I wonder? Certainly I have not seen a reference to a choir, or indeed an organist, in any recent issue of the Magazine - the only "officials" named in the magazine are the Rector and Churchwardens.) The choir will, apparently be "learning to sing those parts of the Communion Service which have been set to music - such as the Sanctus, the Benedictus, the Creed and Gloria." Good luck to the "little choir". Though on reflection, perhaps a little choir in those days would have been 15 strong (and included some tenors and more than one bass).

I don't feel old. I don't feel anything until noon. Then it's time for my nap.

Bob Hope

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STORY OF THE MONTH

Ben, is 17 years old and lives in Surrey. He was having major family problems when something unexpected happened....here is his true story, as told to Martin Saunders, a youth worker.

"I've struggled with dark thoughts for a few years now. Since I was 14, my parents have argued pretty much non-stop, and they don't seem to care that my brother and I are in the house. There's other stuff too – my brother is much more popular and successful than me, and I suffer at school for being bad at exams. So that's why the thoughts came into my head – about hurting or harming myself – because deep down I didn't really like myself very much. That's also why I always wear black.

"Or I used to, anyway. Last Summer, my church youth leader persuaded me to go away with the group to a Christian camp. When we arrived, I found out that every day would include two long meetings like church services. To be honest, I wasn't looking forward to them at all. But when I went along, I had a massive surprise: I met with God.

"On the first evening, someone asked if they could pray for me. As they did, I started crying. Not just a little bit – I was bawling my eyes out. This wasn't like me, but I couldn't help myself. All the anger and frustration and sadness I'd been feeling just came pouring out. It wasn't just that though; there was something else. I started to feel a warmth; like I was getting a hug from within… like all the bad stuff was coming out, and being replaced by something good. Then I did something that I almost never did – I started smiling.

"I don't completely understand what happened, but I know that, somehow, I was touched by God. I know now that I'm not alone when things are tough at home and at school.

"The next day, I went along to the camp's shop, still dressed in black. They sold hoodies there, and so I picked the most colourful one they had. My way of saying to God: I know you've changed me. It's still my favourite jumper."

Ben made a decision to follow Jesus. He prayed, asking God to forgive him for the things he does wrong, and then he promised to live God's way. To find out more about the Christian faith, visit http://www.lookingforgod.com

Only Irish coffee provides in a single glass all four essential food groups: alcohol, caffeine, sugar and fat.

Alex Levine

SHARE YOUR EASTER EGG WITH THE DOG?

This is good news for any chocoholic: DON'T share your Easter chocolate with your dog. It could kill it – quite literally.



Expensive brands of chocolate and cocoa-rich chocolate have high levels of theobromine in them. It is a chemical compound which is harmless to humans, but lethal to dogs. Even a 30g bar of dark chocolate can contain more than 700mg of theobromine, enough to kill a small dog such as a cocker spaniel. Toxicity symptoms include vomiting, hyperactivity, salivation, increase in heart rate and fits.

WHY A CAT IS GOOD FOR YOU



Do you own a cat? Then your risk of heart attack or a stroke could be reduced by more than a third. Apparently, owning a cat lowers your stress and anxiety levels. (Unless of course, kitty scratches the new couch, or flatly refuses to come home at night.) But even so, a recent study at Minnesota University has found that cat owners tend to outlive non-cat owners.

It is thought that stroking a cat could reduce the level of stress-related hormones in the blood. Reducing stress is known to help protect against heart disease, by lowering blood pressure and reducing the heart rate. Which sounds purr-fect…

WANT TO LOSE WEIGHT?

Well, 'go to work on an egg', as the old advertising campaign advised. Now obesity experts have found that eggs seem to be one of nature's appetite suppressants, encouraging hormones that control hunger and tell us that we are full. It may be that the quality of the protein in your diet, rather than the quantity, can affect how full you feel. The study was carried out at the Biomedical Research Centre in Louisiana.

How is it that nobody has dreamed up any moral advances since Christ's teaching? What was there in his heredity and his environment to account for this unique teacher, and the remarkable fact that no greater has ever looked like emerging?

Michael Green

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MARCH GARDEN NOTES

Where to begin! March is upon us and suddenly everything in the garden is bursting in to life. The lighter evenings are thankfully giving us more time to tend and enjoy our gardens.

Now is the time to sow most varieties of seed, both flower and vegetable. Many can be sown directly into the soil to save time and effort in nurturing first in a seed tray. Plant onion sets and "chit" seed potatoes ready for planting soon. It's also a good time to plant summer-flowering bulbs such as dahlia and lilies.

Start a strict regime of weed control early in the season to prevent them spreading. A good covering of chipped bark will look great and hold back most weeds. For established brambles and nettles, try to dig these out and spray regularly with glyphosate which works systemically through to the roots.

Many shrubs such as rhododendrons, ferns and conifers will have appreciated the wet weather of 2012 and early 2013. However, a good feed will be necessary for all beds and borders to replenish washed-out soil.



Moss has flourished in the damp conditions, so apply ferrous sulphate to lawns. This is available in liquid or granular form, or in lawn sand. Rake up the moss as it blackens after treatment. Treat slippery paths with Jeyes fluid or Armillatox, especially in shaded areas. Greenhouses will benefit from a thorough glass wash to improve light levels.

It's a good time to prune bush roses, and to plant new climbers before they start new rampant growth. Herbaceous perennials are showing good signs of growth, so help them by clearing off the last of the dead foliage from last season.

If it all sounds daunting, the first lawn cut of the year will make a huge difference to the appearance of all gardens and provide inspiration and encouragement for the gardening year ahead !

David Hogg, Buckland Nurseries

LOVE AT EASTER

Turn your love to Him, who in his love
Upon a cross, our souls to save today,
First died, then rose, and sits in heaven above;
And now will fail no-one, I dare to say,
That will his holy heart upon Him lay!
And since he best to love is, and most meek,
Why should we feigned love go to seek?

By Geoffrey Chaucer (1343 – 1400)

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Those parishioners of yours who won millions on the Lottery and moved into this parish have created quite a stir. It was perhaps a little unwise of them to tell everyone the reason why they had become so wealthy. While most of our parishioners also do the Lottery, few would ever admit it in public. (Since your friends arrived, the entire PCC is buying ever more lottery tickets, but from the shop in the NEXT village, to try and keep it secret.)

However, your family still have much to learn about our country ways. Buying the old Dower House was impressive; and spending a small fortune re-stocking the gardens was certainly commendable. But someone should have told them about cattle grids. It must have been quite a shock for them to wake up one morning and find the thirty sheep from the neighbouring field had wandered in for breakfast.

Their brand new purple Ferrari has certainly brightened up the country lanes around here. The noise it makes as it roars up behind you quite quickens the pulse. Mrs Beamish had been suffering with low blood pressure for months: she says she is quite cured now. The Colonel, who is all for the community supporting the church, then asked if the newcomers would drive the bishop around on the day he came to do his tour of the parish. The Colonel thought that an open-topped purple Ferrari would make a great bishop-mobile; and the new-comers were so kind to agree. What a shame that they decided to accomplish the several miles of parish lanes in record time: the bishop barely even saw the several farmers that they nearly ran down. His new nickname in this parish is: The Purple Peril.

The newcomers have installed security lighting, which is understandable. But now I wonder how much sleep they are getting, as the rabbits, foxes, and badgers who live in their grounds keep it flood-lit for much of the night. Meanwhile, the Colonel is grumbling about the effect of light pollution on his young pheasants in the woods nearby.

But these little inconveniences apart, I am sure they will soon feel at home. I feel confident that by the third generation, they will be properly settled in.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

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THE GARDENING DOCTOR

Do you suffer from PLUMBAGO
Is your back a little sore?
Or perhaps it's PYRACANTHUS
Which you caught in Singapore?

You've a nasty little HOSTA
Which I think I'll have to lance
And I notice a SPIREA
Has been leading you a dance!

Are you getting forgetful?
Is NEMESIA the cause?
Does your ANTIRRHINUM pain you
When you're walking out of doors?

You've had SKIMMIA RUBELLA
I can see that by your nose
And a CORNUS CAPUOSA
Has played havoc with your toes!

How is your VIBURNUM TINUS?
Have you lost your sense of smell?
Use a SYRINGA REFLEXA
That should help to keep it well.

I'm afraid your MACRO CARPUS
Isn't really up to scratch
And do avoid NIGELLA
It's a nasty thing to catch!

Still, I think you're doing nicely
Watch the QUERCUS in your knees
Take your BERBERIS twice nightly;
Cheerio! Next patient please!

CURRENT TOPIC

- A woman has been taken into hospital after eating horse meat burgers from Tesco. Her condition is said to be stable
- Not entirely sure how Tesco are going to get over this hurdle
- To beef or not to beef. That is equestrian
- These Tesco burger jokes are going on a bit. Talk about flogging a dead... NO! NO NO NO!

FLOWERS FOR VALENTINE'S

Some husbands are thoughtful and buy their wives flowers on Valentine's Day. And then there is my husband. One day I couldn't stand it any longer. "Why don't you ever bring me flowers?"

"What's the point?" asked my husband. "They die after about a week."

"So could you," I shot back, "but I still like having you around."

Societies and Charities

ST MICHAEL'S WEDNESDAY DROP-IN AT THE HAMILTON ROOM, BETCHWORTH, 2-4PM



Come wind, rain or even if the sun comes out - as it has on a few occasions - the tables are set out, the kettle is boiled and tea pot ready, with a fine assortment of freshly baked cakes and biscuits ready for our afternoon 'soirée' in the Hamilton Room, Church Street, Betchworth on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

We meet for a convivial afternoon with known friends and getting to know new ones, marking topical events in some way. Do 'drop in' if you can make it. Our dates for the next five months are: 27th March, 24th April, 22nd May, 26th June and 24th July. We look forward to meeting you.

Margaret Miller & the Tea Crew

GREAT BRITISH FISH & CHIP SUPPER – 17TH MAY 2013

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want to eat fish and chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 17th May 2013 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting information and support services of the Spinal Injuries Association. You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home or at work, or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes. By inviting seven friends and asking them to donate an additional £5 means you will raise at least £35 from your supper but we will also give you additional fundraising ideas to raise even more money for SIA.

Since 2009 we have raised over £20,000 and it has become our flagship community fundraising event. We want to raise £10,000 from this event in 2013 so we can provide more support to spinal cord injured people.

The money raised from the suppers will help SIA offer support to individuals who become paralysed and their families, from the moment a spinal injury occurs, and for the rest of their lives by providing services and publications which enable and encourage paralysed people to lead independent lives.

Continued on next page

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Every year in the UK over 1,000 people experience a spinal cord injury and there are an estimated 40,000 spinal cord injured people in the UK alone.

Community Fundraising Manager, Elizabeth Wright, says, "The Fish and Chip Supper is a wonderful opportunity for a great lunch or evening with friends and family. You may be even a local community group wanting to run a fun evening with your group. Be a part of something special and make a real difference to help spinal cord injured people gain access to the information and support they need to enable them to live full and independent lives."

For more information or request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on ☎ 0845 071 4350, email fundraising@siafishandchips.co.uk or visit www.siafishandchips.co.uk

BROCKHAM GREEN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



Have you ever looked at a beautiful clematis in full bloom and wondered "why doesn't mine look like that"?! Then come along to our meeting at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 18th March in the Recreation Ground Pavilion, Middle Street, and learn more about the cultivation and care of a variety of clematis from our guest RHS speaker, Mr Everett Leeds, ex Chairman of the Clematis Society. Entrance £2 including refreshments.

Our talks are always open to non-members and we allow time at the end of the presentation for questions to our guest speaker.

We look forward to welcoming you at our first meeting of the New Year.

GEMS OF THE BAROQUE BY CANDLELIGHT

Brockham Choral Society are presenting a wonderful opportunity to aspiring young soloists in their forthcoming concert to be held in St Martin's Church on Saturday 23rd March at 7.30 pm. Five sopranos and altos from Dunotta, Rosebery and St Theresa's schools have auditioned and been offered solo parts in the Vivaldi Gloria, which is being performed along with Bach's "Jesu Meine Freude", "Ich bin Vergnugt mit Meinem Glucke" and Vivaldi's "Nulla in Mundo Pax Sincera", soloist Elizabeth Drury.

Tickets £15 (£10 under 25s in full time education) available from Maria Chadwick c/o Michael Frith, 40 South Street, Dorking, RH4 2HQ ☎ 01306 882728 or online at www.brockhamchoral.org/tickets.asp

♠ ♥ BUCKLAND BRIDGE CLUB ♦ ♣

Recent results are as follows:

24th Jan:	Winners:	Dirk Laan & Savas Oratis
	Runners-up:	Liz & Bill Seldon
31st Jan:	Winners:	Dirk Laan & Richard Wheen
	Runners-up:	Janet Dick & Savas Oratis
7th Feb:	N/S winners:	Janet Dick & Savas Oratis
	E/W winners:	Gloria Whitwell & Geoff Woodcock
14th Feb:	N/S winners:	Gail Sperrin & Phil Watford
	E/W winners:	Dirk Laan & Geoff Woodcock

Buckland Bridge Club

Congratulations to all concerned. We play duplicate bridge in the Reading Room on Thursdays and start at 2.15 sharp (note change of time), so please arrive somewhat earlier. Remember: parking is not so easy - there is space, however, by the Green on the other side of the A25. Please do not park in front of the village shop or block access to Dungates Lane or to houses in Old Road. For the Buckland Bridge Club website (which includes recent results), visit bridgewebs.com/Buckland

Richard Wheen

DORKING AND DISTRICT TALKING NEWSPAPER

This is a free service available to all visually impaired individuals or those unable to hold a newspaper.

Every week a team of volunteers produce a memory stick containing news and other interesting items read from the Dorking Advertiser. These are then posted to the listeners on our data base who listen to the recording at their convenience and when ready return the memory stick to us, in a pouch provided.

If the recipient does not have suitable equipment to play the memory stick then we will provide them with a machine. All items and postage are completely without cost to the listener.

We are trying to publicise this service and so if you know of anyone suitable to receive this service then please contact the Hon Secretary - Christine Thom on ☎ 01306 712044 or cathom@tiscali.co.uk

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DORKING GROUP OF ARTISTS

The Dorking Group of Artists will be holding their Spring Exhibition over the early May Bank Holiday weekend. This lively exhibition will display around 300 pieces of new and original art work produced by local professional and amateur artists. The works will include both traditional and contemporary pieces, in an exciting range of different media.

All work will be for sale at affordable prices. Quality greetings cards will also be available to purchase.



Admission to the exhibition will be free, and there is ample free parking alongside the hall.

Open to the public Saturday 4th May and Sunday 5th May - 10am to 6pm: Bank Holiday Monday 6th May - 10am to 4pm.

Venue: Betchworth Village Hall, Station Road, Betchworth, Surrey, RH3 7DF.

PEBBLECOMBE - BETCHWORTH'S EVENING W.I.

A strange haunting atmosphere enveloped us all as historian Rupert Matthews drew us into the world of ghosts both seen and unseen in and around Surrey.

Mischievous poltergeists, figures which seem real yet vanish through walls and some which even speak were all manifest in nearby Reigate, Esher and Waverley Abbey. Energetic Mr. Matthews was humorous in his demonstrations of how ghosts appear and yet managed a history lesson on the legends arising from the desecration of the abbeys in Henry VIII's reign, giving us an insight into what really happened to church property.

The Royal Society for Psychical Research at UCL categorise paranormal phenomena, of which there are many instances throughout the country.

Members exchanged tales of their own experiences and, suitably chilled, we made for a strong hot drink to recover before taking in details of our annual dinner, a coffee morning at the Dorking Christian Centre on 23rd March, a boat trip and other outings. Keen supporters should put 9th June in their diaries for our annual "Teas on the Green" at Betchworth. On 7th March we have 'An Invitation to Watercolour', a talk and demonstration by Janet Gale. Meetings are on the first Thursday every month at the Hamilton Room, Betchworth, at 7.45 p.m. Come and join us.

Pam Patch ☎ 844138

The Betchworth & Buckland Society

For the protection and conservation of the quality of life in Betchworth & Buckland

VALUATIONS DAY WITH AFTERNOON TEA

Saturday, 9th March 2013, Commencing at 3.30 pm
Betchworth Village Hall

We are holding a mini Antiques Roadshow. You are invited to bring along one item of collectable or antique interest which Steven Stockton from the prestigious auction house Bonhams will value while you are enjoying a full afternoon tea.

Price: £10 members (£12 for guests). 40% of the proceeds will be donated to the Queen Elizabeth's Foundation for the Disabled

Please bring only ONE item, although this could be a pair of candlesticks for example, or a small collection of items such as a chess set, but no whole dinner or tea services please. Unusual objects make the day more interesting – consider toys, clocks, musical or medical instruments, pewter, wood, silver or bronze items as well as earthenware or china. We could also accept small pieces of portable furniture. I attach a form for you to complete and leave with your item for the valuer. *NB Please note that we do not have insurance for your item so you bring it at your own risk.*

Booking in advance is essential. Please complete and return the booking form below and send it with your cheque to Dr Jo Howitt, Turret Cottage, Rectory Lane, Buckland, RH3 7BH. Any queries, ☎ 841114, or email bbsociety@aol.co.uk

✂

VALUATIONS DAY WITH AFTERNOON TEA

I would like to book ..... places for members at £10 each and ..... places for non-members at £12 each. We will be bringing ..... items. (Limit one per household please.) I enclose a cheque for £ ..... made payable to the Betchworth and Buckland Society.

If you would like to book a table for up to 7, please tick here and list the names of anyone who is booking separately.

I would like to reserve a table for 7. ☐

Names of those booking separately for this table:

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INFORMATION AND ADVICE TO HELP YOU MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES

If you're looking for information and advice on benefits, social networks, health issues or support for carers, we can help. By simply offering you a variety of ways to access free advice and information, we're making it easier for you to make the right choices about the care and support options available to you, helping you or your loved ones stay independent for longer.

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Here are just some of the questions we're asked:

- What benefits am I eligible for?
- How can I find out about local support groups?
- What do I do if I have to go into hospital but I look after someone at home?
- How can I find a good home care agency close to where I live?
- My mum is showing signs of memory loss. What should I do?

By telephone
Prefer to talk to someone? Call the Adult Social Care helpline on ☎ 0300 200 1005. Our friendly advisers will be on-hand to provide free information and advice to all Surrey residents. They can also put you in touch with other relevant organisations or arrange for social care support if you're eligible.

Online
If you have access to the internet visit www.surreyinformationpoint.org.uk. This website is a free online directory, packed full of essential information to help you or people you care for, find reliable care, community and health information.

In person
Pop along to one of the Hubs in Epsom, Redhill and Woking*. Each Hub is run by a group of volunteers who may have a disability or be a carer. These local centres will provide information and support to help disabled people, older people and carers stay independent. For more information visit www.surreyhubs.org.uk.

** Coming soon... Hubs in Addlestone, Dorking and Godalming*

Simple maths The 50-50-90 rule: Any time you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90% probability you'll get it wrong.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

Coins A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, 'No change yet.'

VOLUNTEERING 2013

Volunteers are a vital part of society, according to the national statistics. On average, two-fifths of adults volunteer formally once a year and a quarter of adults volunteer at least once a month. The economic value of volunteering adds £21.5 billion to the UK economy.

In recent years, the interest in volunteering has grown. The rise can be attributed to the games makers' success at the 2012 Olympic/Paralympics games and rising levels of unemployment which has prompted people to use their time productively and gain new skill that would help them get back to work.

Just like Simon, looking for a job for nearly a year with no luck. He was referred to the local volunteer centre by the job centre. The volunteer centre took time to discuss his career and volunteering options. Simon went to an interview with a charity working with young people for a volunteering role. The organisation was so impressed by his passion and experience he was offered a paid role at the organisation. Today, Simon is working in an education and personal development charity for young people in Surrey.

Not only will you have the satisfaction and achievement of making a difference, volunteering can also provide you with many benefits including making new friends, a chance to have fun and do something you have never done before. It can also increase your confidence, like retired teacher, Sheila, who was looking for volunteering opportunities in the local area. After searching on the internet, she came across The Volunteer Centre website and came in for an informal chat.

Through The Volunteer Centre, she met the founder of a charity based in Epsom providing services/activities for people with learning disabilities. Ten years later, Sheila is now the Advocacy Manager and an integral member of the team.

There are many different ways you can help to make a difference, by helping on a local community project, spending time mentoring or befriending a vulnerable person, setting up a volunteer scheme at your workplace, working outdoors to improve the environment, assisting with local sport initiatives and/or caring for animals and wildlife. Epsom, Leatherhead and Dorking Volunteer Centres also have an events team which engages volunteers interested in one-off events, perfect for those with little time.

Before you start to volunteer, it is important to take the time to think about exactly what you want to do, how much time you want to commit and how often you can do it. The Volunteer Centres can assist you through this.

Take your next step into volunteering and contact the volunteer centres for further information, email them on volunteering@vamidsurrey.org, call ☎ 01372 722911, or view the opportunities on www.do-it.org.uk

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MUSIC IN DORKING

2nd at 7.30, Maggini string quartet at Dorking Halls, £18, ☎ 01306 740619
7th 14th 21st 28th at 1.00, Lunchtime recitals at St Martin's, free, ☎ 01306 742629
7th 14th 21st 28th at 8.30, Watermill Jazz at Friends Life, £14-16, ☎ 07415 815784
7th at 7.30, Madam Butterfly at Dorking Halls, £28-32, ☎ 01306 881717
8th at 7.30, Royal Marines band at Dorking Halls, £16-17, ☎ 01306 881717
10th at 7.00, LHMF St John Passion at Dorking Halls, £8-20, ☎ 01403 240093
16th at 7.30, Ashtead Choral Society at Dorking Halls, ☎ 01306 881717
23rd at 9am, LHMF Youth Choirs at Dorking Halls
26th-30th at 7.45, DDOS at Dorking Halls, £12-18, ☎ 01306 881717

Choral music is prominent this month with the start of the Leith Hill Musical Festival and a concert by the Ashtead Choral Society. The Leith Hill Festival begins with Bach's *St John Passion*, conducted by Brian Kay. As usual, it will be a splendid occasion with a large Leith Hill choir and a baroque orchestra. The youth choir competition also takes place this month, with the main competition days to come in April. Ashtead's choir will be singing Faure's ever-popular Requiem plus a modern choral work, *Mirror of Perfection*, written in 1996 by Richard Blackford.



The Maggini string quartet will conclude their series of concerts with a quartet by Haydn, Schubert's last string quartet, and an early work by the English composer John Ireland. The Maggini are known for their championship of British music and this is sure to be a very enjoyable concert.



DDOS presents the musical comedy *Anything Goes* with music and lyrics by Cole Porter. Containing many favourite songs, this runs at the Dorking Halls from Tuesday to Saturday with an additional Saturday matinee performance at 2.30.

The Grand Opera of Belarus, making its first tour of the UK, will perform Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*. This tragic story will be performed by this distinguished opera company together with a large orchestra.

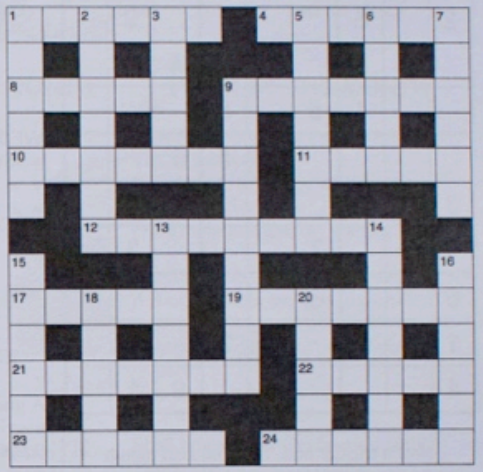


The Band of the Royal Marines will give a charity concert in support of Seafarers UK, and they will be joined by choirs from St Teresa's school in Effingham and Dawnay school in Bookham.

As usual, there will be lunchtime recitals at St Martin's each Thursday and concerts with Watermill Jazz every Thursday evening.

Puzzle Corner

CROSSWORD - Solution on page 36



ACROSS

1 Arouse (Song of Songs 2:7) (6)
4 Extinguish (Isaiah 1:31) (6)
8 '"They — —," you will say, "but I'm not hurt"' (Proverbs 23:35) (3,2)
9 Unhappiness (Nehemiah 2:2) (7)
10 Jewish (7)
11 Dirge (anag.) (5)
12 'A truthful witness gives honest —, but a false witness tells lies' (Proverbs 12:17) (9)
17 Paul quoted from the second one in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:33) (5)
19 'Do not use your freedom to — the sinful nature' (Galatians 5:13) (7)
21 'As you can see, he has done nothing to — death' (Luke 23:15) (7)
22 Name applied to Jerusalem (Isaiah 29:1) (5)
23 'All the people — — one man, saying, "None of us will go home"' (Judges 20:8) (4,2)
24 Lazarus, who was carried by angels to Abraham's side when he died, was one (Luke 16:20) (6)

DOWN

1 Appalled (Job 26:11) (6)
2 'In an — to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea' (Acts 27:30) (7)
3 Expel (Acts 18:16) (5)
5 'But I have a baptism to —, and how distressed I am until it is completed!' (Luke 12:50) (7)
6 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be — — ' (Isaiah 9:7) (2,3)
7 Hurry (Psalm 119:60) (6)
9 'For I desire mercy, not —, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings' (Hosea 6:6) (9)
13 One of its towns was Sychar, where Jesus met a woman at Jacob's well (John 4:5) (7)
14 Shouting (Acts 7:57) (7)
15 Arachnid (Isaiah 59:5) (6)
16 One of Paul's first converts in Philippi was Lydia, a — in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (6)
18 Donkeys (5)
20 Raked (anag.) (5)

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SUDOKUS

First a moderate one. Solution on page 36

2		6			1		9	
	9	8				4		
		4	5		8			
					5	6		
3		1						
	5		7				3	
6	7		8					
1		5			3		2	
4						9	1	

Now a trickier one. Solution next month

							7	
	4	8			7			
2					9		5	8
7		9				2		
	2			4		1		
			2					
	1		7	9				
9							8	6
			4				3	

BRIDGE

North to lead in a ♦ contract.



How are N/S to make all 6 tricks against any defence?

NORTH
♠ 3 2
♥ A 3
♦ -
♣ A Q

WEST
♠ K Q
♥ K J
♦ 5
♣ J

EAST
♠ A
♥ Q 10
♦ 4
♣ K 10

SOUTH
♠ -
♥ 2
♦ 6 3 2
♣ 3 2

Solution on p.36

ELDERLY MINISTERS

A minister, well known for marriage guidance counselling, was surprised to receive a letter from a prisoner serving life for murdering his wife. "What does he need me for?" he mused. "He appears to have solved all his marital problems by himself."

* * * * * * * *

A minister, awaiting surgery, insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get the anaesthetic, he said to his son "Don't be nervous, just do your best, and remember, if it doesn't go well and something happens to me, your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife."



March 2013

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

May Christ shield me today.
Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit,
Christ when I stand…



St. Patrick

GRACE OF THE MONTH

O thou, who kindly dost provide
For every creature's want!
We bless thee, God of nature wide,
For all thy goodness lent;
And, if it please thee, heavenly Guide,
May never worse be sent;
But whether granted or denied,
Lord, bless us with content! Amen

Robert Burns, 1759-96

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH



It is the daily grind that gives a person polish. - *Anon*

POEM OF THE MONTH

Does the road wind uphill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow, dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you waiting at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour, you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yes, beds for all who come.

Christina Rosetti

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SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS ON EARLIER PAGES

Last month's trickier Sudoku

6	7	4	1	8	9	3	5	2
9	5	1	3	4	2	7	8	6
3	2	8	7	6	5	9	1	4
7	1	3	6	2	8	5	4	9
8	9	6	5	3	4	2	7	1
5	4	2	9	1	7	8	6	3
2	6	7	4	5	3	1	9	8
1	8	9	2	7	6	4	3	5
4	3	5	8	9	1	6	2	7

This month's moderate one

2	3	6	4	7	1	8	9	5
5	9	8	3	2	6	4	7	1
7	1	4	5	9	8	2	6	3
9	4	7	1	3	5	6	8	2
3	6	1	2	8	9	5	4	7
8	5	2	7	6	4	1	3	9
6	7	9	8	1	2	3	5	4
1	8	5	9	4	3	7	2	6
4	2	3	6	5	7	9	1	8

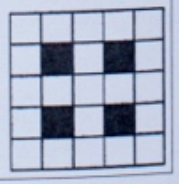
BRIDGE



North must begin by cashing ♣A. He then leads a ♠ for South to ruff low, and South now plays his ♦6, removing the opponents' trumps. North throws his ♣Q on this. South leads his last ♦. West must discard a ♥ to avoid North's ♠3 becoming good, and North jettisons that card. What is East to throw? If the ♣, North/South win the last two tricks with ♣3 and ♥A; if a ♥, South leads ♥2 to ♥A, and ♥3 is good for the last trick.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 1, Awaken. 4, Quench. 8, Hit me. 9, Sadness. 10, Semitic. 11, Ridge. 12, Testimony. 17, Psalm. 19, Indulge. 21, Deserve. 22, Ariel. 23, Rose as. 24, Beggar.
DOWN: 1, Aghast. 2, Attempt. 3, Eject. 5, Undergo. 6, No end. 7, Hasten. 9, Sacrifice. 13, Samaria. 14, Yelling. 15, Spider. 16, Dealer. 18, Asses. 20, Drake.



It was when cannibals ate a missionary, that they first got a taste for religion.

St Mary's Rotas

Date	Flowers	Reader/*Lesson*	Sidesman/*Procession*	
3rd March		Richard Wheen *Isaiah 55: 1-9* 	8 9.30	Mary Bishop Richard Wheen *Carol Leeds, Pat Evans Alec Gregory*
10th March	L	Jane England *1 Samuel 1: 20-end*	9.30	Carol Leeds *England family*
17th March	E	8.30 *Philippians 3: 4b-14*	8 10.30	Liz Vahey Rosey Davy
24th March PALM SUNDAY	N	Hugo Gale *Philippians 2: 5-11*	9.30	Caroline Gale *Pearce family*
28th March Maundy Thursday	T	Alec Gregory *Exodus 12: 1-4, (5-10), 11-14. 1 Cor: 11: 23-26*	8pm	Alec Gregory 
31st March EASTER	Liz Lockhart Mure	Philip Haynes *1 Corinthians 15: 19-26*	9.30	Philip Haynes *Jean Copeland, Sue Haynes, Marjorie Hill*

BUCKLAND PARISH MAGAZINE

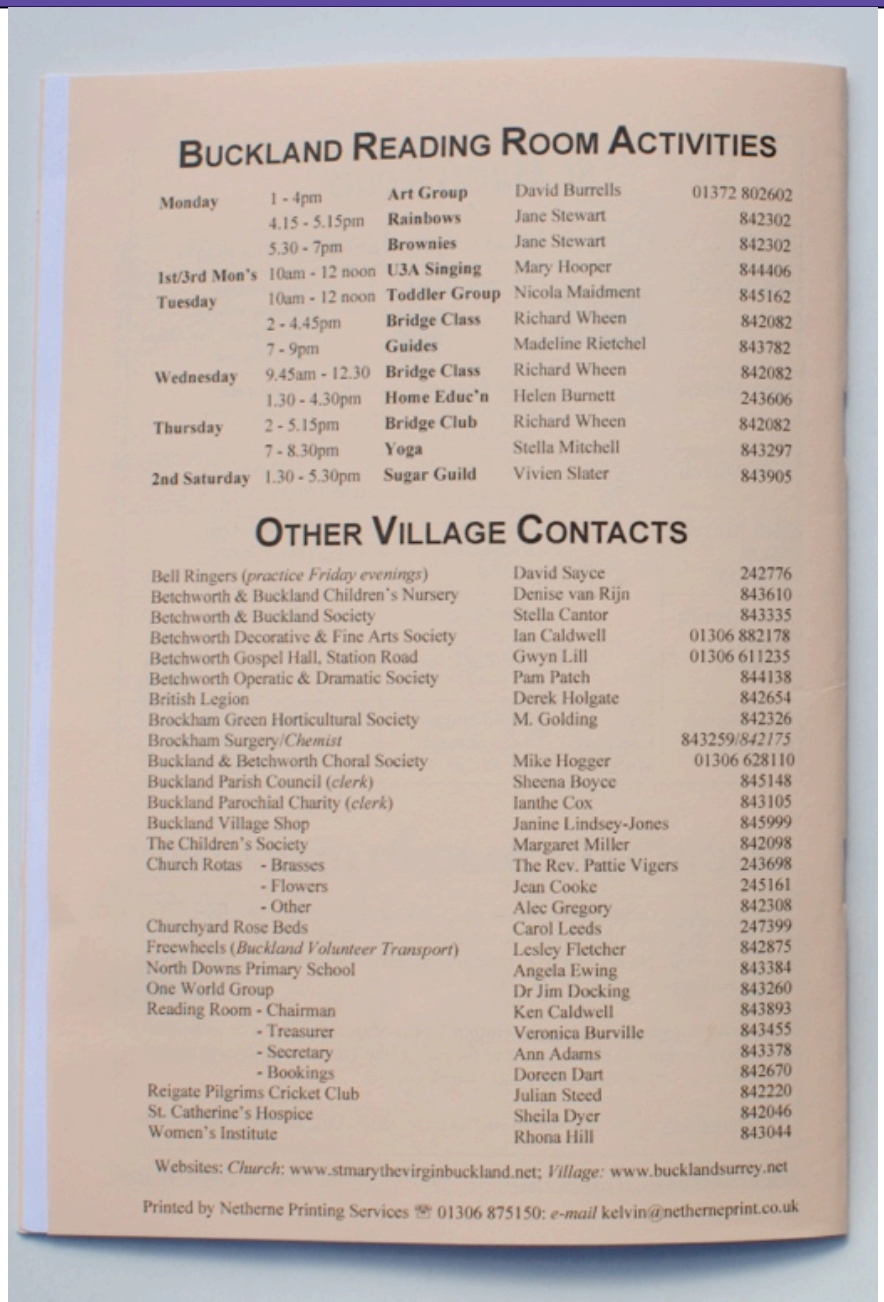
Issue No. 1044 Contributions for the April 2013 issue must be with the Editor by 17th March, please. Articles can also be handed in to the village shop. No acknowledgement of items for the magazine will be sent (unless sent in by email).



If you have not yet paid your **subscription** for the Magazine (£8 per household is the amount suggested) please give it to the Editor, the Treasurer (addresses on the inside front cover) or the village shop. Thank you.

The **photograph** on the front cover was taken by James Day, to whom many thanks.

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Buckland Reading Room Activities

Monday	1 - 4pm	**Art Group**	David Burrells	01372 802602
	4.15 - 5.15pm	**Rainbows**	Jane Stewart	842302
	5.30 - 7pm	**Brownies**	Jane Stewart	842302
1st/3rd Mon's	10am - 12 noon	**U3A Singing**	Mary Hooper	844406
Tuesday	10am - 12 noon	**Toddler Group**	Nicola Maidment	845162
	2 - 4.45pm	**Bridge Class**	Richard Wheen	842082
	7 - 9pm	**Guides**	Madeline Rietchel	843782
Wednesday	9.45am - 12.30	**Bridge Class**	Richard Wheen	842082
	1.30 - 4.30pm	**Home Educ'n**	Helen Burnett	243606
Thursday	2 - 5.15pm	**Bridge Club**	Richard Wheen	842082
	7 - 8.30pm	**Yoga**	Stella Mitchell	843297
2nd Saturday	1.30 - 5.30pm	**Sugar Guild**	Vivien Slater	843905

Other Village Contacts

Bell Ringers (*practice Friday evenings*)	David Sayce	242776
Betchworth & Buckland Children's Nursery	Denise van Rijn	843610
Betchworth & Buckland Society	Stella Cantor	843335
Betchworth Decorative & Fine Arts Society	Ian Caldwell	01306 882178
Betchworth Gospel Hall, Station Road	Gwyn Lill	01306 611235
Betchworth Operatic & Dramatic Society	Pam Patch	844138
British Legion	Derek Holgate	842654
Brockham Green Horticultural Society	M. Golding	842326
Brockham Surgery/*Chemist*		843259/*842175*
Buckland & Betchworth Choral Society	Mike Hogger	01306 628110
Buckland Parish Council (*clerk*)	Sheena Boyce	845148
Buckland Parochial Charity (*clerk*)	Ianthe Cox	843105
Buckland Village Shop	Janine Lindsey-Jones	845999
The Children's Society	Margaret Miller	842098
Church Rotas - Brasses	The Rev. Pattie Vigers	243698
- Flowers	Jean Cooke	245161
- Other	Alec Gregory	842308
Churchyard Rose Beds	Carol Leeds	247399
Freewheels (*Buckland Volunteer Transport*)	Lesley Fletcher	842875
North Downs Primary School	Angela Ewing	843384
One World Group	Dr Jim Docking	843260
Reading Room - Chairman	Ken Caldwell	843893
- Treasurer	Veronica Burville	843455
- Secretary	Ann Adams	843378
- Bookings	Doreen Dart	842670
Reigate Pilgrims Cricket Club	Julian Steed	842220
St. Catherine's Hospice	Sheila Dyer	842046
Women's Institute	Rhona Hill	843044

Websites: *Church*: www.stmarythevirginbuckland.net; *Village*: www.bucklandsurrey.net

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outreach

Parish magazine
of
St John of Beverley

Parish church of St John Lee

December 2012/January 2013



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Impressions of Burma

(known officially as Myanmar).

Burma has been in the news recently because of President Obama's visit but for many years it was almost a 'forgotten' country, ruled by a very oppressive military regime. Now things are changing. Many people know of Nobel peace prize holder An San Suu Kyi's brave stand against the dictatorship and the high price she has had to pay, under house arrest and separated from her family for many years.

I visited Burma in October this year as a participant in the British Council's worldwide 'Active Citizens' programme . The programme enables people from all over the world to meet and share experiences, knowledge and skills to equip them for work in their own communities. The British Council is involved in helping to rebuild civil society and institutions in Burma and it is also helping to encourage the development of co-operatives and social enterprises.

The economic effects of Burma's long isolation are plain to see in and around Yangon (formerly Rangoon) with roads and buildings in poor repair and many people living in insanitary conditions. Less obvious but harder to restore is the damage and suffering which Burma's people have undergone. I talked to some members of the 88 student movement who led the movement for democracy in the 1988 uprising. Many of these brave people who are once again involved in restoring democratic life and defending human rights were only this year released from long terms of political imprisonment., Change in Burma is a gradual and difficult process. Perhaps

the most serious set of The ongoing conflicts between communities divided by ethnicity, religion and history is perhaps the most serious problem. The conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities has been in the news recently and there are unresolved issues in other areas dating back to WW2. Although they were very concerned about these, and other social, economic and environmental problems, the people I heard and met, were full of hope and faith in the future.

From the moment I arrived in Yangon (after a 20 hour journey via Amsterdam and Bangkok) I was met by friendly courteous and helpful people. Our hotel close to the centre of the city was an oasis of luxury set amongst busy streets full of shoppers and food stalls.

The twin themes of the event were 'Social Cohesion in a diverse society' and 'Social enterprise'. There were so many inspiring stories, more than I can do justice to. One example which particularly interested me was the 'Shalom Foundation', an organisation with Christian roots based in Burma and dedicated to peace



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and mediation. As well as conducting peace talks in five separate conflict areas the organisation provides conflict transformation training, has peace and development programmes.

I was able to meet and talk with people from a variety of different faiths, backgrounds and regions of Burma including people from the Shan and Chin minorities. I visited two schools run by Buddhist monks and nuns on the edge of the city. These schools provide an education for the poorest children from the villages in the vicinity of the monastery. Classrooms are made of bamboo with earth floors and animals run around with the children who seemed happy and outgoing. We heard what a difference getting a good early education can make to children's life chances.

In a different way the day we spent meeting people who are setting up self sufficient social enterprises and charities was equally inspiring. A good example was a group of disabled people in the poorest part of the city who earn a living from making craftworks for sale to visitors and saving enough to help other disabled people as well. This spirit of enterprise was very evident in Yangon's famous market which was a treasure house of arts and crafts from all regions of the country.

It was clear to me that many of the projects and organisations we talked to and visited were expressions of faith, inspired by individual Buddhists, Christians and Muslims. It was fitting that a highlight of our 'social' programme was a visit to the Shwe Dagon pagoda, the most important Buddhist site in Burma. Dating back over 2,000 years and built on a hill overlooking the city the pagoda is a golden dome over 300 feet high surrounded by smaller shrines and courtyards. Despite having many visitors it struck me as a holy place of calm and prayer, enhanced by approaching it up half a mile of covered steps, everyone in bare feet.

I have only mentioned a few of the wonderful places I visited and people I met on what was a very brief visit but I would recommend anyone to go to Burma and see for themselves what a beautiful and inspiring place it is.

David Penn.



The Shwe Dagon Pagoda

Christmas Services 2012

Sunday 2nd December	6.30pm	St. John Lee	Advent Carol Service
Sunday 23rd December	4.00pm	St. John Lee	Christmas Carols
	6.30pm	Warden	Christmas Carols
Monday 24th December	3.30pm	St John Lee	Dressing the crib (a service for little people)
	10.00pm	Newbrough	The First Mass of Christmas
	11.30pm	St John Lee	The First Mass of Christmas
Tuesday 25th December	10.00am	St. John Lee	Christmas Parish Eucharist
	10.00am	Warden	Christmas Holy Communion
	10.00am	Stagshaw	Christmas Holy Communion

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Letter from the Rector

Dear Friends,

On the night Jesus was born, so the Bible tells us, an angel appeared to some shepherds on the hills above Bethlehem. Having informed them of the event that had taken place in the village below the angel was joined by a host of other angels and together they sang 'Joy to the world'.

Are you joy full? Is joy an emotion you would say you experience… often… sometimes… not at all?

Joy, along with love, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, is one of the fruits of the Spirit mentioned by St. Paul in his letter to the Galatians (Chapter 5 vv22,23). Joy differs from happiness, or cheerfulness, or being merry, or gleeful in that it is much deeper and is something we can choose to cultivate – with God's help.

When good things happen to me; when people are nice, or kind, or generous, I feel light hearted, affirmed, happy. My mood lifts, and all is good. Or, if I watch a good comedian his jokes make me smile, and if they are really good I laugh. Mirth is a great blessing. Being able to see the funny side of life helps us keep the world in proportion and not get bogged down in some of the harder stuff life throws at us.

But happiness, or cheerfulness, or being merry, or gleeful is rather like the morning mist. When things go wrong it can all rather quickly evaporate. If people are mean to me, or problems start to arise, or I find that I am in difficulty, my mood becomes much darker, much lower. I growl rather than whistle.

Joy is different. Joy begins from knowing deep down that, no matter what comes your way, no matter what life throws at you, as St. Julian of Norwich once said, 'all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well' (read that sentence a couple of times: it's worth pondering). Joy is knowing that despite the bank account being empty and the prospects of a job seeming far distant, I am safe and well and have a future that is bright. Joy is based not on the things of this world, joy is based on knowing that I am loved and care for and that nothing can take that away.

And that is what the angels were singing about. In the birth of Jesus God was making a rather big and bold statement. 'I love you' he was saying to the world he had created. And not just 'I love you' (not just?) but, 'I am with you and will show you the way into my kingdom, so that you can be with me too'. The infant Jesus (who would grow into a man and engage with all the good and bad things of life) was God's love token to his world. The infant Jesus was God's promise that all would be well, and all would be well, and all manner of things would be well.

For the early Christians, and indeed Christians down the ages, God's revelation of himself in Jesus has been a real source of joy. Deep, profound, lasting joy. Indeed it was one of the things that both attracted and repelled those who met them. "Those Christian's, no matter what you do to them, can't be broken down. They keep on smiling no matter what." was a complaint made against them.

My prayer for you all this Christmas is that you too might be touched by the birth of Jesus and so come to know that joy that the angels sang of. May you know deep within that all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well.

With all God's blessings,

Jeremy



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EARLY 20TH CENTURY STREET TRADERS IN NEWCASTLE

Scarcely a day passed in the back lanes of west Newcastle without the arrival of street traders, who roused their customers either by shouting or singing a call, ringing a bell or blowing a bugle. Each trader had his or her own call.

Davy Reed, a coal man, warned his customers of his arrival by shouting "Grreesh" – whatever that meant, and, if washing hanging across the back lane came in the way of his cart, his call of "Claes" would bring the housewives running to the



Alice Mulholland was a street trader in Newcastle in the 1870's

rescue before he used his whip to move the clothes. Another coal man, apparently selling small coal, sang out "Beany coal, coal"

Some Rag men pulled hand-carts which were flat, two-wheeled vehicles. They usually used bugles to rouse their customers – their renditions generally less than musical. Some even attempted Army bugle calls. Rags, bones and iron were exchanged for something like a balloon, a paper windmill or a few grubby sweets or candy rock. Other Rag men collected their rags in a sack and probably relied on getting their collection free of charge, as they called "Rags, bones or iron" "Rags to sell" or "Any rags, bones, bottles te sell?"

A Stick lass with a distinctive cry of "Any sticks or Roobin Stoan. D'ye want any Sticks?" must have travelled miles collecting her wares. Her sticks came from wooden boxes thrown out by shopkeepers and chopped at home. The Rubbing Stones had to be sought at Kenton Quarry. She took money or rags in exchange for her sticks. Kindling sticks in bundles were supplied to corner shops by the Workhouse Authorities who made their overnight "guests" cut, chop and bundle the sticks in exchange for the night's lodging.

Fish wives from Cullercoats in their traditional dress hawked their "men's" catches in the streets. Some had stands in the Fish Market at the corner of Clayton and Nun Streets, but the travelling saleswomen each had their own round. Our back lane was patrolled by Granny Taylor on the Monday Street side and by Maggie Storey on "our" side. Granny Taylor had a song of her own – and to a nice little tune. The words sounded to me like "A-shoose ee Callico, A -shoose ee Callico, D'ye want any feesh?" which I translate as "Ashore at Cullercoats (twice) Do you want any fish?"



Janey McCulley from Cullercoats

Maggie Storey, carrying her big creel, and with two baskets on her arms simply sang out "Feesh". The purchased fish were weighed, and the cutting and filleting was carried out on a piece of wood resting on the creel which had been placed on the ground. Mother once bought a slice of hake about an inch thick and six inches in diameter for about a penny. Maggie called it Black Jack". Herring were cheap – I once heard a hawker call "Fower and twenty a penny – Caller Harn".

(To be continued in the next month's issue – there were a large number of street hawkers!!)

OLD SAYINGS FOR DECEMBER

On St Thomas' night (in the "old" Church calendar this is December 21st) cut an apple in half and carefully count the number of seeds in each half. If the numbers are equal, then a marriage in the family will soon take place. If one of the seeds is damaged by the cutting the course of true love will not run smooth. If two seeds are damaged it denotes a widowhood.

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SOME PUZZLES SOLVED!

Working on the Time Line displayed in St John Lee Church at the time of our Patronal Festival has helped me solve some questions some of which have puzzled me for about 30 years.

Question 1. How to reconcile the drawings of the church around 1800 with the present layout of the building? The church then, had a porch, a very strange "spire", and the whole building seems back to front.
Answer - The church was altered in the first part of the 19th century, and then again later. The first alterations were the work of John Dobson, probably about 1840-44, when new tower was built, the south door and porch were blocked in, and a new door was placed in the north side of the church.
(Interesting! Most churches have the main door on the south side. If a north door was present, it was there for the devil to go out!)

Question 2. How did the bell (said to be dated 1851) get into the bell tower? There is a wooden ceiling to the baptistry, and the only access to the tower and to the bell is from outside, and the access points are too small to allow the bell and its supports to be pushed in.
Answer - Dobson's 1840 tower may not have had a ceiling. The bell must have been introduced in or about 1851. The carved wooden ceiling of the church and baptistry date from 1886-7 and were to Hicks' design.

Question 3. Why are some of the headstones in the old churchyard so near to the church wall?
Answer - Both Dobson and later Hicks extended the chancel. Dobson did repairs to the east end of the church in 1819, and further alterations in 1840-44 slightly changed the proportions of the church. Hicks in 1886-7 extended the chancel by 7 feet. Some headstones had to be moved, and were replaced as near their original places as possible.

Question 4. Why did the churchwardens' accounts books for 1800-1882 mention a gallery? Where was it? When was it put in?
Answer . Plans of the church in 1788 show no gallery, but a plan of the church "as it now is" made for the faculty application for the 1886/7 alterations shows a gallery at the back of the church, reached by a staircase near the north door. This gallery could well have been built in 1840/44. It was certainly taken out in 1886/8 alterations.

Question 5. Is this a "Dobson church"?
Answer - the tower is Dobson's work but the rest of the building is a

News from Acomb Methodist Church

A warm welcome to all
DECEMBER
1st Christmas Fair
9th Messy Church 2.30 -4.30 at Methodist Church
13th Home Fellowship 7.30pm venue tba
24th Candlelight service



major makeover and alteration and is the work of Hicks.

Question 7. Why, when the Parsonage Board tells us that the rectory was built in 1866 does the 1800 drawing show a building more or less where the rectory now stands?



Answer - because there was a previous older parsonage on the site, a building which seems to have been extended and altered and then finally replaced by a new rectory which was erected before the church was altered in 1886/7

How do we know this? In the Records Office at Woodhorn we found not only the plans for the 1886/7 alteration of the church, but (and this was a source of great excitement) a box of glass photographic negatives among which were a plans from 1788, and pictures of the "old vicarage", the "new rectory", and the old church before it was altered by Hicks. We already had the faculty application details for the last alterations - but have not found applications for work done before this.

Sheila Smith

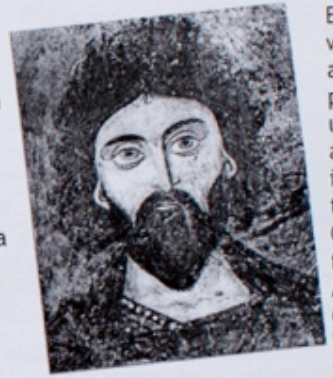
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Saints of the Month

Few people will not have heard of St Stephen - even if it is only from the carol which tells that "Good King Wenceslas looked out, on the Feast of Stephen". Stephen, whose feast day is December 26th , was the first Christian martyr. Probably a Greek-speaking Jew, he is the first named of seven deacons chosen by the apostles to look after the needs of Greek-speaking widows among the Christians at Jerusalem. A man "full of faith and power" he was a zealous preacher but was denounced to the Jewish council as a blasphemer. At his trial he summarized in detail the history of Israel and ended by accusing his hearers of resisting the Holy Spirit, adding that whereas their fathers had persecuted the prophets, they had killed the Holy One whom the prophets foretold. He cried "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." At this they rushed him out of the city and stoned him. As he fell to his knees he cried "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." A young man from Tarsus, Saul by name, watched this execution and "consented to it". This man was later to become St Paul.



Adrian (or Hadrian) of Canterbury whose feast day is 9th January had great influence on the development of the early Church in this country. He was born in Africa, and became abbot of a monastery near Monte Cassino, where he was twice offered the vacant archbishopric of Canterbury by Pope Vitalian. Twice he declined the offer, but, on the second occasion proposed the Greek monk Theodore as a suitable candidate. The pope agreed, but insisted that Adrian should accompany the new archbishop to England. They set out in 668, and after many delays reached Canterbury where Adrian was installed at the abbey of Peter and Paul (later St Augustine's). Adrian was a learned man, an experienced administrator, a scholar, and under his care the Canterbury monastic school had far-reaching influence. St John of Beverley is said to have studied under Adrian. Students at Adrian's school not only undertook sacred studies, but were taught poetry, astronomy, and calendar calculation. Some knew Latin and Greek as well as they did English. Adrian worked with his archbishop in pastoral undertakings and under the influence of the two men the Church flourished. Adrian died at Canterbury in 710 and was buried in the church of his monastery.



Old Sayings for January



If a bough of mistletoe is given to the first cow to calve after New Year's Day the rest of the herd will be safeguarded from ill luck for the rest of the year.

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From the Registers



Baptisms: *In baptism you have been raised with Christ through your faith in the power of God.*

Funerals: *If we have been united with Christ through baptism into death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection.*



Maddie Mae McGEE was baptised by Rev'd Jeremy Thompson at St John Lee church on 18th November 2012.

Douglas Conrad MINETT was cremated at West Road, Newcastle on 29th October 2012 after a service at St John Lee church.

Edward Dinning HESLOP was buried in Corbridge cemetery on 30th October 2012 after a service at St John Lee church.

Annie NEAL was buried in the churchyard at St John Lee on 7th November 2012 after a service at Acomb Methodist church.

Stuart Michael Haig NICHOLSON was cremated at West Road, Newcastle on 9th November 2012.

We offer our condolences to their families and friends and hold them in our prayers.



Weddings: *Jesus said "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you: remain in my love."*

Paul Daniel TOWARD and Michelle Alexandra ACKLAND were married by Rev'd Jeremy Thompson at St John Lee church on 10th November 2012.

Annual price of the magazine: £5
(Plus postage for those who have it posted)
Enquiries to Sybil Gill 600417

Sunday morning & evening services at St John Lee and Warden with Newbrough in December

Sunday	8.30am Said service of Holy Communion	10am Sung Eucharist followed by parish coffee/tea	4.00pm Evening services at St John Lee
2nd December Advent Sunday	St. John Lee	St. Peter Newbrough	6.30pm Advent Carol service
9th December 2dn Sunday of Advent	St. Michael Warden	St. John Lee	No Service
16th December 3rd Sunday of Advent	St. John Lee	St. Michael Warden	No Service
23rd December 4th Sunday of Advent	St. Peter Newbrough	St. John Lee	Christmas Carol Service
30th December 1st Sunday of Christmas	St. John Lee	St. Aidan Fourstones	No Service

Sunday morning Readings for December

Advent Sunday	Year C begins Jeremiah 33.14-16 1 Thessalonians 3.9-end
2nd Sunday of Advent	Malachi 3.1-4 Philippians 1.3-11
3rd Sunday of Advent	Zephaniah 3.14-end Philippians 4.4-7
4th Sunday of Advent	Micah 5.2-5a Hebrews 10.5-10
1st Sunday of Christmas	Isaiah 60. 1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12

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Sunday morning & evening services at St John Lee and Warden with Newbrough in January

Sunday	8.30am Said service of Holy Communion	10am Sung Eucharist followed by parish coffee/ tea	4.00pm Evening services at St John Lee
6ht January Epiphany	St. John Lee	St. Peter Newbrough	Holy Communion
13th January Baptism of Christ	St. Michael Warden	St. John Lee	No Service
20th January Epiphany 3	St. John Lee	St. Michael Warden	No Service
27th January Epiphany 4	St. Peter Newbrough	St. John Lee	No Service

Sunday morning Readings for January

Epiphany	Isaiah 60.1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12
Baptism of Christ	Isaiah 43.1-7 Acts 8.14-17
Epiphany 3	Isaiah 62.1-5 1 Corinthians 12.1-11
Epiphany 4	Nehemiah 8.1-3,5-6,8-10 1 Corinthians 12.12-31a

Parish directory

Rector Rev'd Jeremy Thompson	600268
Reader Sheila Smith	603945
Reader-in-Training Pam Nobbs	606700
Churchwarden / lay vice chair of PCC/Deanery synod Representative Sybil Gill	600417
Churchwarden Barbara Davidson	604024
Secretary Mike McKendrick	602761
Treasurer Barbara Gibson	606701
Gift Aid steward Chris Oliver	600224
Organist Paul Rudd	601715
Bookstall Sylvia Heady	632743
Children's Society Susan Burnell	632292
Christian Aid Barbara Davidson	604024
Church hall secretary Sybil Gill	600417
Electoral roll officer Susan Burnell	632292
Church flowers—Flower group	603110
St Aidan's, Stagshaw Susan Burnell	632292
Sacristan Jean Foxcroft	603110

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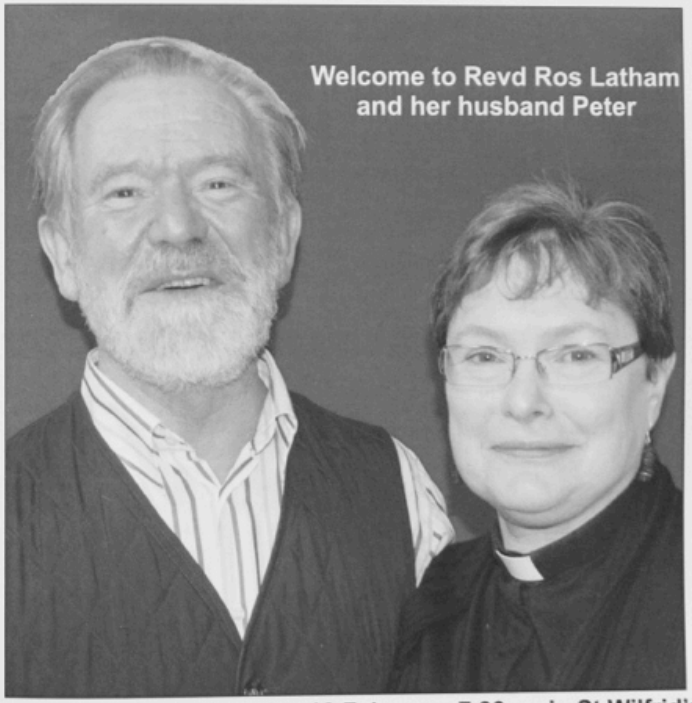
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tby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe

Group Messenger

The Alford Group of Parishes

orpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Ma
tby * Bilsby with Farlesthorpe

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2013



Licensing service Monday 18 February, 7.30pm in St Wilfrid's

faith supper afterwards in the church hall - all welcome

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FROM THE EDITOR



YES, IT'S TRUE, we have a new vicar for the Alford Group of Parishes. Revd Ros Latham (pictured on the front cover with her husband, Peter) will be licensed on Monday 18 February at 7.30pm in St Wilfrid's Church and everyone is invited to come to the service. It's likely to be a very well-attended occasion, so do arrive in good time to find a seat!

There will be a faith supper afterwards in St Wilfrid's Church Hall so any contributions for that would be very welcome.

Revd Ros will be moving into the Vicarage on Bilsby Road at the beginning of February, as soon as all the renovations are finished. She and Peter will have a couple of weeks of "settling-down" time before she officially starts work as our Vicar (technically, as our Priest-in-Charge) on Tuesday 19 February. She has written to introduce herself to us – you can read this on page 3.

Since Fr Charles left, almost two years ago, our Group of Churches has been very well led by Revd Wilma and Revd Bob supported by a team of other people, all willing to put in a lot of hard work and take responsibility for leadership on a totally voluntary basis (including our two Revds). Because of their commitment, we have continued to have a full calendar of services, a very active programme of social events and strong leadership in the individual churches and in the Group of Parishes.

We owe all these people a heartfelt and sincere "thank you" for everything they have done - it's hardly adequate but in addition, if you happen to see any of them in the next couple of months, perhaps you could deliver that "thank you" personally, face-to-face, so that they know how much we appreciate them and all that they do?

Perhaps you know others, too, who give their time and energy to the running of clubs and groups, delivering newsletters, serving on committees, organising events and helping to keep our community active and interesting. They need your encouragement and your enthusiasm. Tell them how much you enjoy the club or event, make an effort to go to meetings, support local events and offer to help if you can.

Lent starts on Wednesday 13 February – there's an article about it on page 9. Will you "give up" something for Lent? For many years I have struggled to give up chocolate for those austere days before the joy of Easter (31 March this year). A friend reminded me about "sacrificial giving" – focused on something that I find very hard to do. Yes, for me, that would describe giving up chocolate!

Best wishes for 2013

Hilary Barrett, Editor

The Group Messenger Editorial Team

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Mrs Sue Lyster	Treasurer / Advtsg	466468
Mrs Barbara Willoughby	Distribution	462289
Mrs Pam Maplethorpe	Calendar of services	462284
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Perhaps you were not expecting to receive a Church Magazine?

WE DELIVER a free copy of the Group Messenger to every home in the streets that will be prayed for in the next few weeks - you will find the list on page 44.

If you already have a copy of this Group Messenger and don't need this one, please pass it on to a friend or offer it to someone else who might enjoy reading it.

If you would like to receive a regular copy every two months, please fill in the slip at the bottom of page 13 and take it into the Post Office in Alford.

Best wishes from

The Distribution Team

Group Messenger articles can be emailed to gm@alfordgroupofchurches.org.uk

Revd Ros Latham introduces herself



HELLO at last. I have been looking forward to introducing myself as your new vicar for some time, and with any luck Peter and I will be resident in the vicarage by the time you read this.

I lived on farms in North Yorkshire for the first 45 years of my life, and so I am looking forward to living in the countryside again. My son, Mike, still farms in Thirsk and my daughter lives in Cape Town where she runs her own business. Sadly my marriage broke down when I began ordination training but very happily I met Peter and we have been married for almost 10 years. Peter is a retired forester and now fills his time with a small gardening business and singing in various different choirs.

I am not entirely new to Lincolnshire as I completed my curacy in Scunthorpe. Since then I have been a vicar in ex pit villages in Durham and then in Oxfordshire, where I have looked after three villages just south of Oxford. The villages are very varied and contain people from many different backgrounds.

One parishioner is a descendant of Sir Robert Christopher whose tomb is in St Wilfrid's - I have had to promise to take good care of it!

My greatest joys in ministry have been to help build bridges between the church and the surrounding non-church-going members of the community. It's important to me to contribute to the community both as the vicar and as an ordinary resident. For example, I have been an elected member of the local parish council and a keen participant at the amateur dramatics society.

I firmly believe that the Church of England is there for everyone in the community at whatever level they wish to join in.



One of the greatest gifts the Church of England has to give to the world is its diversity. There should be an honoured place for everyone, old, young and in-between, those who enjoy traditional worship and those who prefer something informal and modern and, yes, including those who support women as bishops and those who do not. It can and does contain many faithful Christians who understand some things differently and should be able to show the world how we can live with difference. Sadly we have not always achieved this too well recently.

It is by getting to know each other that we come to trust and respect each other. It is by regularly meeting together for prayer and worship that we become united in and through Christ.

It is important to make time for each other, both inside and outside church. And what a blessing a church family can be when it is a place to share our joys and sorrows, a place to offer support and be supported, a place to laugh and a place to cry and, crucially, a place where we meet our God together.

It's going to take me a little while to meet all of you but I look forward to doing so over the coming months.

My worst fear is that you will imagine I am too busy if you want to speak to me. Please do get in touch if you want to see me about something, that is what I am here for.

With every blessing.

Ros

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BISHOP CHRISTOPHER WRITES .....

THE CHRISTMAS decorations have been down for weeks and the turkey leftovers are but a distant memory. It is easy, therefore, to forget that in the church we continue to celebrate the season of Christmas right through January - until Sunday 2 February, in fact, the Feast of Candlemas.

Candlemas is a festival about light. Coming as it does at the end of the Christmas season, it is a time to give thanks for Jesus coming among us as the light of the world. As a sign of this, many churches bless the candles which will be used in church in the coming year, so that the light which shone out from the stable will continue to shine long after the shepherds have gone back to their fields and the magi have returned home.

Candlemas also commemorates the presentation of our Lord in the temple when, in accordance with Jewish custom, the infant Jesus was taken by Mary and Joseph to the temple forty days after his birth. As they did so, they were greeted by the aged Simeon who, the Gospels tell us, had been promised that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. When Simeon saw the infant Jesus, he took him in his arms and said the words which became known as the Nunc Dimittis:

> Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: to be a light to lighten the gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Most of us don't need to try very hard to think of dark places in our world – or, for that matter, in our own lives. There are signs all around us – war, famine, unemployment, illness, bereavement, loss - the list is long and can seem overwhelming.

But present, too, are signs of the presence of the Light of the world – care, kindness, concern, love, friendship. These are all signs that God continues to be with us. The one who came as a light in the darkness is with us always. The light from the stable continues to shine and the dark places of our world are forever changed because of it. As St John's Gospel tells us, 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.'

+Christopher Lincoln

Women's World Day of Prayer: "I was a stranger"

Friday 1 March, 7.30pm in Alford Methodist Church

WOMEN'S WORLD Day of Prayer is an international, interdenominational organisation that gives a voice to women from countries around the world. Each year a service is prepared by a committee from one country; this year France has been working on the service, which they have entitled "I was a stranger and you welcomed me".

The first country to use it on Friday 1 March will be Samoa, as the sun rises there. It will then sweep across Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas before the last service is held in American Samoa some 36 hours later.

As with many European countries, France receives a large number of asylum requests each year. Each request is a plea from an individual or a family that needs sanctuary and help. Behind each statistic is the story of a real life. Some of these stories will feature in this year's service.

Our own service is at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church in Alford. All are invited - men as welll as women, churchgoers from all churches as well as those who normally would not go to a church at all. Please join us.

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St Wilfrid's Social Team - dates for your diary

(everyone welcome, whether or not you go to church)

Tues 29 Jan: **10-Pin Bowling at Skegness** – 6pm at East Street car park, lifts available.

Sat 16 Feb: **Memories Quiz** - St Wilfrid's church hall at 6pm. £6 including supper.

Mon 18 Feb: **Licensing of Revd Ros Latham – faith supper** afterwards in St Wilfrid's church hall (please bring something if you can for the Faith Supper).

Sat 2 March: **MURDER MYSTERY** 7pm in St Wilfrid's church hall – tickets from the Church Office, £10, includes food. Please get your tickets by Sunday 24 February.

Sun 31 March: **Easter Sunday Lunch**, 12 noon in the church hall. £8.

Tues 23 April: **Spring Ramble** - meet 5.30pm at East Street car park, lifts available. Dinner afterwards at the George and Dragon in Hagworthingham; names to Barbara for the walk or to join the walkers afterwards for dinner.

Please contact Barbara Willoughby 462289 for further information

LUNCH AFTER FAMILY SERVICE SUNDAY 7 APRIL

IF YOU'RE GOING to the Family Service at St Wilfrid's on Sunday 7 April at 11am, please come to the church hall afterwards for lunch (no charge, you are our guests). Come with children or come by yourself, all are very welcome.

OUTING - Wednesday 6 March

Join the coach trip to the Embassy Theatre, Skegness, to see "There'll Always Be An England".

Coach leaves Alford at 11.30am. £20 for the day includes the coach and lunch in Skegness before the show, as well as your theatre ticket. For more details or to book, talk to Barbara Willoughby, 462289.

The Diocese of Lincoln Men's Voices choir
will be singing a
Choral Evensong
on Saturday 2 February, 5pm
at All Saints Church, Legbourne

Music:

Hodie beata Virgo	Byrd
Responses	Lloyd
Psalms for the day	
Faux-Bordon Canticles	Dearnley
Ave Regina Coelorum	Lassus

CVM - Christian Vision for Men
outreach through the Gospel

WHO OR WHAT is CVM? Quite simply, we are men who wish to reach men through the Christian Gospel. We are part of a national movement which has recently formed a branch in this area under the title 'North Lincolnshire CVM'.

We are currently building up a team who are willing to work with us to take out the Christian message to men.

Our next event is on **Saturday 16 March** when we will be laying on a Men's Breakfast at the Alford Community Church, 47 West Street, Alford. Men of all ages are welcome and it is free of charge with a voluntary donations plate available. Fry-up commences at 9am for a 9.30am start.

If you are intending to come it would be helpful if you could let us know, as we would hate to run out of sausages.

We also have a full-day Winning Men Workshop on **Saturday 11 May**.

If you are coming to the Breakfast, are interested in becoming a part of this exciting and dynamic new organization for men, or would simply like to know more about it, contact Peter Wilson on 07703 900251, e-mail pew53@yahoo.co.uk, or David Simcox on 01507 466824, e-mail simcoxdm@onetel.net

dates, events and things to do

Old clangers ring the changes to keep fit and healthy

THE TIMES newspaper recently published an article recommending bellringing as an excellent way of keeping fit and healthy into your senior years.

'Churches are urging parishioners to take up bellringing to keep fit. Benefits of the hobby include improved agility, co-ordination, reaction time, balance, muscle endurance and flexibility, according to the Churches Conservation Trust. Lloyd Grossman, the charity's chairman, said: "Over the years many of our members have noticed that the average change-ringer stays healthy and active well into old age. We decided to take a scientific look at the fitness benefits … and the results were so remarkable that we've launched a campaign to recruit more people.'"

So there's no need to spend money on slimming clubs or fitness centres, just turn up at St Wilfrid's Church (the entrance at the base of the tower, nearest to the George pub) 7pm to 9pm every Thursday for bellringing practice. There are no age limits and no costs, everyone will be made welcome.

Richard Willoughby

LENT GROUP in Alford at 14 East Street starts on Tuesday 12 February.
See page 8 or talk to Revd Bob for details.

Alford WI welcomes new members 7.30pm in St Wilfrid's church hall.
Wed 20 Feb: Supper with friends
Wed 20 Mar: Air Ambulance

Come and join us, visitors and new members are always very welcome.

In 2014, a year from now, we are looking forward to celebrating the 50th anniversary of the WI in Alford.

We are trying to contact as many previous members as possible so that they can have the opportunity to celebrate with us. If you used to be a member of the WI in Alford (Afternoon or Evening) or you know that a friend or family member was, please contact us and help us gather together as many people as possible for our special 'Golden Anniversary' party.

Please contact 462135 or 462499 for more details of our programme or to tell us about previous members.

Children's Society boxes
thank you for giving so much

I am very pleased to report that a cheque for £976.48, monies from the house boxes and the Christingle service collection, has been sent to the Children's Society from Alford and District.

I did not expect such a large amount this year, due to people leaving the area and sadly losing donors by bereavement.

Well done to all you generous people who, in difficult financial times, gave so much.

Mary Willoughby

A local group for arts and crafts

Alford Art Circle is a friendship group for anyone interested in any art or craft

It meets every Wednesday between 1pm and 4pm in St Wilfrid's church hall

£2.50 a session including refreshments

New members are always welcome

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust meets regularly for outings and talks.

Friday 15 February at the Half Moon Hotel, West Street, Alford, 7.30pm: a talk about **Snipe Dales Nature Reserve and Country Park** by new manager James Forrester.

Friday 15 March at the Half Moon Hotel, West Street, Alford, 7.30pm: a talk about **Merry England** by Chris Smith, concentrating on wildlife and Lincolnshire.

All are welcome. *For details of membership please contact John Richardson 463345.*

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Lent Group – Tuesdays at 14 East Street, Alford with Revd Bob and Revd Ros

At our Lent Group this year we hope to follow the Diocesan Lent course with its themes of thanksgiving, grace, relationship, creation and incarnation.

Everyone is welcome for as many sessions as you can manage. You don't need to commit to attending all sessions.

The dates are:

12, 19 and 26 February
12 and 19 March (on 26 March there will be a Holy Week Compline service in St Wilfrid's).

12 February is actually Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent starts, and all those who come to the Lent Group on that day are very welcome to stay on for pancakes after the meeting.

Bob and Hilary

Lent - that means giving up something, doesn't it?

FOR MOST people who don't go to church services regularly, "Lent" simply means a few weeks early in the year when you try to stop smoking, or you give up eating sweets.

But to Christians, it's the 40 days when Jesus was in the wilderness, living very simply and being tempted by the Devil. It happened immediately after his baptism by John and God's public announcement that Jesus is his Son and it marked the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Years ago, everyone ate very plain food in Lent - no meat, no rich or tasty food, no luxuries. That's why they celebrated and feasted on Shrove Tuesday, to use up all the food that couldn't be eaten in Lent. The French call it Mardi Gras - "Fat Tuesday".

The name Shrove comes from the old word "shrive" which means to confess. On Shrove Tuesday, in the Middle Ages, people used to confess their sins so that they were forgiven before the season of Lent began.

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THE SERVICES AND EVENTS OF HOLY WEEK IN ALFORD

HOLY WEEK IS the final week of Lent during which, with Christians throughout the world, we commemorate the mystery of our salvation through Christ's death and resurrection.

The week starts on Palm Sunday when we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey. Our service starts either in the church hall or the market place where palm crosses are distributed and blessed, before everyone moves off in procession to the church, where the Eucharist service includes a dramatised reading of the passion story.

On the three following evenings, we remember, at special Compline services, the events in Jesus' ministry whilst he was in Jerusalem prior to the Last Supper.

On Maundy Thursday, our evening service re-enacts the events of the Last Supper itself at which the observance of the Eucharist, or Holy Communion, was instituted. In many churches this includes washing the feet of twelve men or even the entire congregation; but in Alford, we normally only wash people's hands. The altars are then stripped bare and all decorations, including the candles and crosses, are removed. The congregation are then invited to keep vigil with the priests, remembering that Jesus asked his disciples, 'Could you not watch with me one hour?'

On Good Friday we carry a full size wooden cross around the town in our Walk of Witness, saying prayers and singing hymns at various points. We hope that this year members of all the Alford churches will be enacting a short drama in the market place at the beginning of the Walk of Witness, about 10.30am, telling the Easter story. Later that evening, our Stations of the Cross service comprises a series of 15 meditations focusing on Our Saviour's journey to His death.

Easter Day itself is the great feast day and apogee of the Christian liturgical year: on this day the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is celebrated. It starts with an early morning vigil service, blessing the Easter Candle and providing an opportunity for everyone to renew their baptismal vows. This is followed by a complimentary fried breakfast in the Church Hall. The main service of the day is a Group Eucharist at St Wilfrid's and this is followed by our Easter lunch in the church hall. All are very welcome.

Full details of all these services can be found in the centre pages, 24 and 25, and if you would like to join in the Easter lunch please see page 6 or the back page.

Revd Bob

COMMUNITY HELP FUND – ALFORD CHURCHES WORKING TOGETHER

Thank you yet again from the Community Larder team.

The Alford and District Community Help Fund (Community Larder etc) has supplied over 40 food parcels to those needing help including some Christmas parcels. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed or helped in any way to make this a success.

The Access Community Church helped distribute the Christmas parcels and has donated £250. Cllr Jean Bradley has promised £505 from her 'Councillor's Community Initiative Scheme' and Cllr Jeremy Webb has given £500 from the same scheme to help kick-start 2013.

It looks as if the New Year will be the start of even more difficult times for some people so if you can help, please continue to donate to the fund – we need funds and people need your help! Cheques should be made payable to Alford and District Help Fund and posted at St Wilfrid's Church Hall, or handed in to the Parish Office, the Access Community Church or the Methodist Church.

If you need help or a food parcel ring Edward 466377, Dennis 463789 or Stuart 462078

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Sunday 17 February
5pm in the church hall

G2G

Sunday 17 March
5pm in the church hall

G2G – you have Got 2 Go

WHEN DID YOU last think about the words you are speaking in the Lord's Prayer? Come to G2G in February and you may find yourself doing exactly that. Every month at G2G is different but each one includes lively praise and a less structured yet still spiritual approach to worship and faith - an informal Christian service and a tasty Sunday tea. G2G is for all ages, all people, all stages of faith. As the introductory song declares, all are welcome. Please join us.

Hilary Barrett

Taizé at St. Wilfrid's - a moment of calm, filled with love

Our monthly Taizé service takes place on the second Sunday at 5pm, welcoming all who wish to find a moment of calm through silence, song and prayer. Nature's beauty and many candles provide an atmosphere of reflective peace, against the beautiful songs of Taizé.

"Maybe we sometimes avoid silence, preferring noise and distraction because inner peace is a risky thing – it makes us empty and poor, our hearts are overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit, filled with an unconditional love. Silence is a humble yet secure path to loving"

Brother Roger of Taizé

We are a small friendly group, who look forward to meeting you! *Justine Whitehill.*

VIGOROUS AND LIVELY FOR FAMILIES

Have you been to the Family service at St Wilfrid's recently? If you have a son or daughter in Boys' Brigade or Girls' Brigade, you will have been attending almost every month and you will know the changes that have been happening during the last year.

Backed by the Family Service Team, Teresa and Roger Culpin have brought their vigorous, lively style of worship and singing to the somewhat traditional environment of St Wilfrid's and the rafters have been known to shake with the volume of sound that 60 or so voices can produce. At times the church is a hive of activity, with children buzzing from activity to activity, at times there's the still energy of focused attention when Teresa takes on the role of storyteller, weaving words round classic Bible teaching.

The Family Service is at 11am on the first Sunday of the month and appeals to all ages, all stages of Christian knowledge and belief. Join us on Sunday 3 February and/or Sunday 3 March, we look forward to seeing you there.

Family Service team

Moot Group to Lent Group

The Moot Group meets at 14 East Street, Alford, twice a month, normally on the second and fourth Tuesday evenings at 7pm.

If you enjoy lively, Bible-based debate, thoughtful challenge and good fellowship, this is definitely for you.

During Lent we will be meeting more often and following the Lincoln Diocese Lent course, a set of five studies to focus on the themes of Lent. These will take place on 12, 19 and 26 February and then on 12 and 19 March.

12 February is Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day, so everyone who comes to the first meeting of the Lent course is invited to stay on afterwards for a pancake party in our kitchen!

Moot Group will be back to normal from April, so the next Moot Group meeting will be on Tuesday 9 April.

Everyone is welcome, talk to me (462135) or just come. It would be useful to know how many people may come to the Lent course, but there is always room for another chair or two.

Revd Bob

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FROM ENTRIES IN THE GROUP REGISTERS

BAPTISMS

St Wilfrid's, Alford

16 December Theodore Robert Keon Vernon.



THE CHURCH is an important part of the life of our community, especially for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

If you are considering baptism or planning to get married, please ring the vicar, Revd Ros Latham, to discuss your plans. You can also telephone the parish office or drop in when they are open on Tuesday and Friday from 11.30am to 1.30pm.

For funerals it's advisable to make initial arrangements with a funeral director.

At your request, a member of the ministry team will visit you, discuss the details of the service you would like and offer you help, advice and support. Contact details can be found on the back of this magazine and we would be delighted to discuss any arrangements with you.

If you would like to have flowers placed in St Wilfrid's for a special occasion or anniversary or for any other reason, please speak to Gina White. The niche by the Lady Chapel is available for small arrangements which Gina is happy to create.

A donation towards the cost of the flowers would be appreciated.

Contact Gina on 462539 or have a word when you see her.

Welcome to our new Registrar of weddings and funerals

JEN COOPER has taken on the task of keeping the Parish Registers for St Wilfrid's Church and the Group of Parishes. She brings considerable experience to the task, having been Town Clerk in Alford and Mablethorpe as well as looking after cemetery records for the local councils. She has a particular interest in churchyards and is looking forward to delving into the old records of our local ones.

Jennifer Vear will continue to look after the Baptism Register.

Thank you to all our subscribers who have already paid their annual subscriptions. If you have a Group Messenger delivered and you have not paid yet, please give your subscription to the person who delivers your magazine.

If you are not yet a subscriber and would like to receive the Group Messenger on a regular basis, please fill in the tear-off strip below and return it to Alford Post Office in West Street.

Please deliver a regular two-monthly copy of the Group Messenger to me.

I understand that this will be at a cost of £3 per year, payable in December/January.

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Village News

Beesby

Remembrance Sunday service was prepared and led by the Churchwardens. "Guide me O thou great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land" was a fitting introduction to Josie's poem "In Flanders Fields". Following "Jerusalem", Maureen read the lesson from Hebrews and Susan said prayers. The homily was a monologue "Goodnight Dad, see you in the morning" telling the story of a son going to war, coming home and then the final Goodnight Son as he went across on D Day. A special request to sing "God save the Queen" brought our service to an end.

We welcomed Pat to our November Evensong and enjoyed her "Stir Up Sunday" service which she had hastily arranged due to a communication blip!

Back into action, the team arranged an Evening of Carols and Readings. Mint Jelly was the first offering by Josie which brought us nicely into "Mabel and Matilda", a humorous but sincere Christmas script looking at the Nativity through the conversation of two sheep following the star. We sang new carols to well-known tunes for which we had to enlist Bev and Mike on their instruments to accompany us with tunes of Auld Lang Syne and Baa Baa Black Sheep.

After all the prayers and good wishes for Joanne's recovery throughout the year, we were heartened to see her looking well again with her inspirational grandson Freddie, which prompted her amusing celebratory reading of a Grandma taking her grandchildren to a concert where the parents were performing on stage. They were about to witness a miracle. Then Mike's version of "Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer" on flugel horn – no, that wasn't the miracle! Olivia and Phoebe read the story of Christmas Eve in the Blunts' home when a stranger in the form of Jesus came to join them and was invited to move in for good. Then we had a Christmas carol from Venus and Mars, written and read by Mike and his reluctant side-kick Pearl, two aspects of men's and women's attitude to Christmas. Susan and Sheila read prayers and a poem and finally everyone was invited to come up to the front and join us to sing to "Come on, let's celebrate". Thank you to all our willing contributors and everyone who came join our celebrations. To finish, the ladies served mulled wine and mince pies.

It was our turn to host the Group Eucharist which was also the final service of 2012. Wilma's enthusiasm always inspires us and we were not disappointed. We are still smiling at Wilma's reading of the donkey's trials and tribulations as he carried Mary, his precious load, to Jerusalem. An absolute gem!

The Baa-mee Churchwardens Mabel and Matilda wish everyone a Happy New Year and look forward to welcoming Revd Ros to our group in February. *Pearl White*

Don't miss your church's AGM

St Wilfrid's, Alford:
Wednesday 10 April, 7pm in the church hall

St Andrew's, Beesby:
Thursday 11 April at 7pm in the church

Holy Trinity, Bilsby:
Wednes 20 March, 10am at Church House

St Andrew's, Hannah cum Hagnaby and St Peter's, Markby:
Thursday 14 March, 10.30am at Markby

St James, Rigsby:
Sunday 7 April after the morning service

St Margaret's, Saleby:
Sunday 14 April after the morning service

St Margaret's, Well:
Tuesday 19 March at 2pm in the church

Village News

Hannah

FIRSTLY, New Year greetings to everyone. What better way to start this year than with the arrival of our new Priest in Charge, Revd Ros Latham. We look forward to Revd Ros's leadership and welcoming her to Hannah church as soon as she is able to fit us into her busy schedule.

As it was Markby's turn for the Carol Service last year (doesn't that sound a long time ago?), we haven't had a service at Hannah since the beginning of December so we are looking forward to our first service of the year on 3 February at 11am. We look forward to meeting up with our regular worshippers and any newcomers who will be given a very warm welcome by all.

Although we will have lots of interesting services in the coming months, I am already looking forward to our Flower Festival event on 15/16/17 June which will include a Eucharist service on the Sunday at 3pm. I'm giving you plenty of notice so that you can write it on your calendar now and hopefully join us at some time over those three days.

Meanwhile, see you on 3 February (weather permitting!). *Mary Johnson*

Bilsby

WE HAD a very successful Carol Service in December, led by Revd Frank Yates. There were over 40 in the congregation so the carols were sung with gusto. Our thanks go to the readers and to Janet who played the organ for us. We were pleased to welcome the Wheatly family who had just arrived from Australia to spend Christmas with their families. Coffee and mince pies were served after the service and a birthday cake was presented to Michael Marsden to celebrate his 80th Birthday.

Our annual blessing of the plough was held on Sunday 13 January. The plough and milk churn were blessed by Revd Frank Yates with prayers for every aspect of farming life. The lessons were read by Minty Willoughby and Susie Hand. Revd Wilma then led a Eucharist.

The PCC are hoping that 2013 will see the sale of Church House and that the Church is able to provide a meeting room for the village. We still have a long way to go, but at least we seem to be moving in the right direction. Our thanks to the village for their patience.

In May we will be having a gift day at Bilsby Church. It will be on the 27th which is the Spring Bank Holiday Monday, and tea and cakes will be served. More information in the next Group Messenger.

Pam Maplethorpe and Pat Mowbray

Farlesthorpe

THE CHRISTMAS service on 9 December was well attended and the festive refreshments were well received. Hoping to have the next service in the spring so we will keep you updated. *Rachel Edgar*

Markby

AFTER A hectic September we were able to relax for a while before getting the church ready for the carol service on 20 December.

With the tree, the decorations and all the candles, it looked lovely. The service was led by Revd Wilma and Joyce played the harmonium. The flowers were arranged by Sandra. Although the evening was dreadful, very wet and windy, the church was full of people and they had all brought along their wonderful singing voices.

Come January, all was cleared away for the morning service on Sunday 6 January. Pam Maplethorpe led the service and Joyce Willoughby played the harmonium. Although the congregation was small, it was a lovely service. *Dee Collins*

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Village News

Saleby

WE HAD TWO surprise contributions to our Christmas Carol Service on 9th December. Led by David Simcox, the service was, as always, very well attended - no surprise there. The theme was "evergreen Christmas" with poems and readings focusing on seasonal plants and some of the traditions surrounding them. A well-known legend has it that Martin Luther began the tradition of decorating trees to celebrate Christmas. One crisp Christmas Eve, about the year 1500, he was walking through snow-covered woods and was struck by the beauty of a group of small evergreens. Their branches, dusted with snow, shimmered in the moonlight. When he got home, he set up a little fir tree indoors so he could share this story with his children. He decorated it with candles, which he lit in honour of Christ's birth.

It was lovely to have two of the readings performed by young Molly Scaman. Kath Cooney fortuitously bought a rather splendid Christmas tree in a charity shop, which - resplendent with lights and gold ornaments - gave a nice topical touch. Holly and ivy abounded on the window-sills and font, the pulpit was graced by a lovely green and gold arrangement by Irene Carter, who continually produces super artistic creations.

The first surprise was a beautiful miniature frosty snow scene ingeniously built from cardboard and other simple materials which appeared at the back of the church shortly before the service. Aha - we discovered this was the work of Maureen Nichols and her little granddaughter, Freya. They had created a similarly stunning display for Harvest Festival.

The second surprise was an unaccompanied solo - "The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came" performed by Chris Noble, a schooldays friend of Eric Wilson and longstanding supporter of Saleby Carol Service.

When he was in the 6th form at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School there was a tradition at Christmas for the students to go carol singing round the Alford pubs, led by the music teacher, Godfrey Sellars, (St Wilfrid's' organist) and "Angel Gabriel" was a carol that he particularly liked.

Some time before Christmas, Chris volunteered to sing this carol (unaccompanied) and requested that it be kept secret until the actual performance in order to surprise his wife Sue, brother and his wife, children and other family friends.

Chris has sung in karaoke in the past, but admitted afterwards to nerves in this different environment; however, his performance did not disappoint and the congregation responded with resounding applause.

Hopefully this may inspire him to give a repeat performance in future years!

We had a lovely time at The Grange afterwards where Neil and Bridgid Sanderson and their family welcomed us with refreshments and the tombola brought in some welcome funds.

Our torch-lit carol singing around the village on the evening of 19th was our last event of 2012. Always a very sociable occasion, we enjoy lovely warm snacks and drinks at several of our ports of call and a get-together at Kath's at the end. My hastily tinsel-wrapped, washed-out marmalade tin gradually filled up with notes and coins, including a generous donation of £100.

These two events and the annual bonfire party are such special and important parts of our village life - long may they continue.

Laura Hickin

Village News

Well

ON A COLD, wet and blustery Sunday in November the little church of St Margaret's welcomed the hardy parishioners of Well to Morning Service which was led by Revd Canon John Thorold.

The church was warm, autumn flowers brightened the windowsills and the hymns chosen were familiar favourites.

John spoke about the ministry of the church and how it has moved from being the whole responsibility of the vicar to now being very much in the hands of the laity, as priests no longer have one parish but may have nine, as at Alford, or even more.

Patterns of worship are also changing. The last Sunday in November used to be known as Stir-Up Sunday because of the verses read in the order of service, "Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people." It is still known as Stir-Up Sunday but this now applies to the making of the Christmas pudding and the church calendar is amended to Christ the King Sunday. The reading from David was appropriate: "His kingship is one that shall never be destroyed."

On the Friday before the carol service, the holly gathering took place. It was good to welcome Ben Irving. The holly was taken up to the church to decorate it, ready for the traditional Carols by Candlelight service on Sunday 9 December.

The church was full to bursting for the Carol Service, which was led by Revd Bob Barrett. Although the outside weather was cold, the church soon became cosy and warm. Mrs Anne Walters played the organ, starting with "Joy to the World" which everyone sang loud and clear.

Lessons were read by Stuart Reader, Cliff Fielding, Lucy Arnett, Malcolm White, David Woods and Angela Simcox with Revd Bob completing the readings. Peter Gardiner read a poem called "Carol Service" especially written for the service by Mrs Margaret Reynolds and Revd Bob spoke about the meaning of Christmas and why it is so special to him.

After the service everyone received a mince pie enclosed in a box, especially crafted by Mrs Kay Fielding, as they left the church.

All were invited to Well Vale Hall where mulled wine and mince pies were served, thanks to Malcolm and Anne White. A raffle was held and it was a lovely social occasion. The proceeds of the raffle were divided between St Margaret's and a charity supporting an orphanage in Burma.

Thank you to everyone who made this service a wonderful beginning to the Christmas season.

Margaret Reynolds and Susan Needham

A QUIZ FOR ALL AGES ABOUT LENT AND EASTER

1. What day marks the beginning of Lent in Western Christian churches?
2. Lent lasts for how many days?
3. What event in Jesus' adult life do Christians commemorate during Lent?
4. How old was Jesus when He was baptised?
5. What is "temptation"?
6. Which disciple betrayed Jesus to His enemies?
7. Outside which city was Jesus crucified?
8. What might be considered to be the saddest day of the year for Christians?
9. Who was the first person to see the risen Jesus?
10. Which of Harry Potter's 3 Deathly Hallows has a link with Easter Day?

Answers on page 44

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Susie Quinn's tales for younger readers . . . .

THE MAORI LEGEND OF CREATION

Although it can still feel like the depth of Winter at this time of year, there are days when the sun feels a bit warmer and we can see bulbs emerging from the earth, snowdrops and aconites and the first daffodils. It is a time of re-birth, of creation and hope. There are many stories about The Creation. This version comes from one of the Maori peoples of New Zealand.

Before there was light, there was darkness. Still and quiet it lay; a huge void, a vast nothing. The great void was a deep and limitless night. Deep in that blackness rested the creative thought, reaching away into forever, creating the earth and the sky.

Ranginui, the Sky Father, held Papatuanuku the Earth Mother, in a close embrace, and there they lay, deep in the darkness of that long black night. Many children were born to them. The children lay cramped between their mother and father and longed for the freedom to move.

Tangaroa, the restless, the discontented, the god of the oceans to be, murmured in the darkness, 'Let us part our parents.' There was a long silence, then all but one brother whispered, 'Aye, let us part them.' It was Tarwhirimatea, the passionate, the caring, the god of the winds to be, who did not speak. Then he said quietly, 'They are our parents. They gave us life. Leave them as they are. Let them be.'

'And what kind of life is this for us?' argued Tangaroa. 'No space to stretch our limbs, no space to explore the unknown. Again I say, let us part them.' The brothers quarrelled, bitterly. Alone in his view, Tarwhirimatea was defeated.

It was decided that Tangaro should be the first to try and separate their parents. Impatiently he rose up. He heaved, he pushed, he shoved ... and his parents clung tightly to one another, for great was their love. Finally, exhausted, Tangaroa sat down in the darkness.

Tanemahuta, the first born, the courageous, the strong, the god of the forest to be, spoke next. 'Let me try,' he said. He lay with his shoulders pressed on his mother and his feet on his father. He pushed, he pressed, he heaved and he struggled ... and in the great darkness, his parents lay, still bound together.

But Tanemahuta the relentless, the tireless, kept pushing. He strained with every ounce of his being. 'I can do it ... I can do it ... I will do it!' he thought to himself. And slowly, very slowly, Ranginui was parted from Papatuanuku.

Tanemahutu kept pushing till his father was away up high. Ranginui wept as he looked down on his beloved wife far below. His tears formed the rivers, the lakes and the oceans. Papataunuku grieved for her exiled husband. The early morning mists are her silent tears.

And thus did Tanemahuta, the remarkable, the endurer, separate his parents Ranginui the Sky Father and Papatuanuku the Earth Mother. Light flooded into the world and for the first time the brothers looked upon their parents. Tanemahuta then clothed his grieving parents. He dressed Paptuanuku in tall stately trees, ferns, flowers and vines. And Ranginui, he dressed in rainbows, clouds, stars, the silver moon and the golden sun.

Tawhirimatea, the god of the wind to be, was sad and angry with his brothers. He swirled up and away, away from them to join his father in the sky. He visits his mother gently but his brothers with anger . . . for he remembers.

Taken from a book of myth and legends of Aotearoa (the Maori word for New Zealand) written by Annie Rae Te Ake Ake.

Susie Quinn

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Big and basic questions - exploring faith

IN a series of articles, people with something to say will be writing about some of the big, basic questions of the Christian faith. You may agree or disagree with what is written. These are personal views; the aim is to highlight some of the facts and issues and start you thinking.

15. ROB RAE ASKS, "WHY READ THE OLD TESTAMENT?"

IS IT WORTH reading the Old Testament?

At a recent study day, our tutor gave a thought-provoking talk about the value of the Old Testament and I would like to share with you some of his ideas.

Let's think for a moment about the Old Testament. We all know where it is - it's the first three-quarters of our Bible - but do we know what it is?

The Old Testament is a collection of books. It's a library written 2,000 to 3,000 years ago, some early parts based on oral material. It was composed by Israelites, Judeans and Jews who lived in the Near East and Middle East. As you can imagine, it is a complex mixture of writing styles by different people, of different backgrounds and at different times. No wonder it is not an easy read. In addition, it was written in Hebrew, a language which is difficult to transfer into accurate, meaningful English.

The Old Testament is the complete Jewish Bible. The order of books is quite different from our Bible. In fact, the Jewish version is superior, since it keeps to a more accurate chronological order, while ours tends to jump erratically from age to age. It is the history of the Jewish people, showing how the teaching of God was revealed to them and describing their struggles to keep faithful to it.

A librarian would have great difficulty placing the Old Testament on an appropriate shelf because it includes so many different types of literature. It is made up of poetry, stories, laws, myths, legends, prophecy and even philosophy. Unfortunately, there are no chapter headings saying "This is poetry" or "This is myth" so it's very easy to misunderstand what the authors had in mind at the time of writing.

The Old Testament is clearly a religious book, but not exclusively. All aspects of life are within its pages, more so than in the New Testament. It shows how people think. It shows their emotions - hatred, envy, anger and love. It shows true-to-life aspects of family life - how people behave and relate to each other. All these mirror our human natures today, many centuries from the times they were written.

This, I hope, has given you a taste of what's in the Old Testament. In the next thrilling instalment, I will try to explain why we are reluctant to read this wonderful literature.

Robert Rae

In the next two issues of the Group Messenger, Rob Rae will consider why people choose not to read the Old Testament - and what you might discover if you do read it.

We welcome new contributors to the Group Messenger. If you have something to say, drop a note through my door (14 East Street, Alford LN13 9EQ) or email gm@alfordgroupofchurches.org.uk
Hilary Barrett, Editor

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her class. After explaining the commandment to "Honour thy father and thy mother," she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"
Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."

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CALENDAR

Saturday 2 February
8am ALFORD Eucharist BCP

Sunday 3 February **2 before Lent**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am ALFORD Family Service
11am HANNAH Morning Worship
11am RIGSBY Morning Worship
3pm ALFORD Evensong BCP

Wednesday 6 February
7pm ALFORD Healing Service
Thursday 7 February
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 10 February **Next before Lent**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am BILSBY Morning Praise
11am SALEBY Eucharist CW
3pm BEESBY Evening Prayer
5pm ALFORD Taizé service

Wednesday 13 February
7pm ALFORD Ashing Service
Thursday 14 February
9.15am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 17 February **Lent 1**
8am ALFORD Eucharist BCP
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
3pm HANNAH Evening Worship
5pm ALFORD Church Hall **G2G**

Monday 18 February
7.30pm ALFORD
Licensing of Revd Ros Latham

Thursday 21 February
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 24 February **Lent 2**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am BILSBY Mattins BCP
11am WELL Morning Worship
3pm BEESBY Evening Worship

Thursday 28 February
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Saturday 2 March
8am Eucharist ALFORD BCP

Sunday 3 March **Lent 3**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am ALFORD Family Service
11am MARKBY Morning Praise
11am RIGSBY Morning Praise
3pm ALFORD Evensong BCP

Wednesday 6 March
7pm ALFORD Healing Service
Thursday 7 March
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 10 March **Mothering Sunday**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am BILSBY Eucharist CW
11am SALEBY Morning Worship
3pm BEESBY Evening Prayer
5pm ALFORD Taizé service

Thursday 14 March
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 17 March **Lent 5**
8am ALFORD Eucharist BCP
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
3pm MARKBY Evening Worship
5pm ALFORD Church Hall **G2G**

Thursday 21 March
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW

Sunday 24 March **Palm Sunday**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am BILSBY Mattins BCP
11am WELL Eucharist CW
3pm BEESBY Eucharist CW

Monday 25 March
7pm ALFORD Compline
Tuesday 26 March
7pm ALFORD Compline

Wednesday 27 March
7pm ALFORD Compline
Maundy Thursday 28 March
7pm ALFORD Eucharist CW

Friday 29 March **Good Friday**
10am ALFORD Walk of Witness
7pm ALFORD Stations of the Cross

Sunday 31 March **Easter Day**
7am ALFORD Easter Vigil
10am ALFORD
GROUP EASTER Eucharist CW
3pm BILSBY Easter Praise

Wednesday 3 April
7pm ALFORD Healing Service
Thursday 4 April
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
Saturday 6 April
8am Eucharist ALFORD BCP

Sunday 7 April **Easter 2**
9.30am ALFORD Eucharist CW
11am ALFORD Family Service
11am HANNAH Morning Worship
11am RIGSBY Morning Worship
6pm ALFORD Evensong BCP

Please note, these services are correct at the time of going to press.

Please see the Sunday Reading Sheets for up-to-date information.

For the 8am BCP services please see Sunday Reading Sheets or enquire at the Parish Office for information.

Abbreviations:

BCP: Book of Common Prayer (more formal language and older style service)

CW: Common Worship, introduced about 10 years ago, offers a more modern, less formal style of church service

G2G: Café Church, informal praise service with free refreshments

LECTIONARY

(Please note that on occasion these readings may be subject to change.)

3 February **2 before Lent**
Malachi 3.1-5
Hebrews 2. 14-18
Luke 2. 22-40

10 February **Next before Lent**
Exodus 34. 29-35
2 Corinthians 3. 12-4.2
Luke 9. 28-36 (37-43a)

17 February. **Lent 1**
Deuteronomy 26. 1-11
Romans 10. 8b-13
Luke 4. 1-13

24 February **Lent 2**
Genesis 15. 1-12, 17-18
Philippians 3. 17-4.1
Luke 13. 31-35

3 March **Lent 3**
Isaiah 55. 1-9
1 Corinthians 10. 1-13
Luke 13. 1-9

10 March **Mothering Sunday**
either: Exodus 2. 1-10
or: 1 Samuel 1. 20-28
either: 2 Corinthians 1. 3-7
or: Colossians 3. 12-17
either: Luke 2. 33-35
or: John 19. 25b-27

17 March **Lent 5**
Isaiah 43. 16-21
Philippians 3. 4b-14
John 12. 1-8

24 March **Palm Sunday**
Luke 19. 28-40
Isaiah 50. 4-9a
Philippians 2.05-11
Passion: Luke 22. 14-23.56 *or* Luke 23. 1-49

31 March **Easter Day**
either: Acts 10. 34-43
or: Isaiah 65. 17-25
either: 1 Corinthians 15. 19-26
or: Acts 10. 34-43
John 20. 1-18

Will contributors please note that the deadline for the APRIL-MAY Group Messenger is FRIDAY 15 March

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THE CREATION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

from the Parish Magazines of 1926 and 1927

March 1926

May we make an appeal on behalf of our most vigorous church organisation. It has for some years been the desire of the teachers to possess a Sunday School banner which would appeal to the loyalty of the scholars and, placed in the Church, would remind them of where their life should be centred.

As the result of the extremely successful Sunday School Concerts, It is possible to allot £7 to this object. It will be agreed that if a banner is purchased it must be well designed and well worked, and worthy of being employed in the service of God.

Such a banner will, we are informed, cost £12. Here is an opportunity for those who appreciate the work of the Sunday School to show their practical sympathy. The teachers will be glad to receive any subscription.

Sept 1926

"The Monks of the North"

This is the title of a beautiful little pageant play which the boys and girls and Friends of the Sunday School are practising. The prayers of the congregation are asked for its success, not only for the sake of funds for the banner, but also for the education of our young people. The play, which introduces St. Wilfrid our Patron Saint as a boy, will take place d.v. in October.

Oct 1926

The week of the Festival would have been a very suitable time for our Pageant Play, "The Monks of the North", but unfortunately this cannot be arranged.

The dates provisionally chosen for the two performances that will be given are Thursday and Friday October 28th and 29th, and the price of admission will be 1/- and for reserved seats 1/6. The scenes of the play, illustrating a series of episodes in the early history of the Church in these islands, make a very effective pageant which should be well worth seeing. The proceeds will be given to the Sunday School Banner Fund.

Dec 1926

As a result of the resent Pageant Play, "The Monks of the North", the sum of £15/10/6 has been added to the Sunday School Banner Fund. The long-desired banner seems attainable and, we hope, will soon be purchased.

The play was so much appreciated that it has been decided to give another performance on Thursday 16th Dec. at 7pm, for the benefit of the Alford Recreation Ground Fund.

April 1927

We expect to have very soon the long - desired Sunday School Banner. It will, we hope, be dedicated and placed in the Church on Palm Sunday at the Morning Service when the children of the Sunday School will be present.

May 1927

The new Sunday School Banner was dedicated in the presence of the children at the morning service on Palm Sunday.

It has been designed by Mr. Hibbett from Parker's Masterpiece and with the name of the Parish above and below the command "Feed my lambs", represents our Lord as the Good Shepherd with a lamb in His arms and at His feet a little brother and a parent sheep. The design has been beautifully worked on silk damask by the Church Crafts League, of London, and has already been much admired. Placed in the Sanctuary it is a worthy addition to our beautiful Church.

The Banner cost £22/10/0, and thanks to the success of the Pageant Play "The Monks of the North" and the subscription of friends, the whole amount was raised and the Banner paid for before it was dedicated. Attached to the pole of the banner there is a small brass plate with inscription "Presented by S. Wilfrid's Sunday School and Friends 1927."

Thank you to Jennifer Vear for researching and writing this article

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National success for 1st Alford Boys' Brigade

The 1st Alford company has been mentioned in the Boys' Brigade national publication for being among the top 250 companies in the country. In the last 3 months of 2012 we increased our numbers by 10%.

So welcome to all the new faces and we're looking forward to another fantastic year.

Christmas bazaar

The Boys' and Girls' Brigade Christmas Bazaar was held in St Wilfrid's church hall on Saturday 8 December.

Lots of stalls filled the hall and there was a steady flow of customers. The young boys and girls did a fantastic job of manning many of the stalls. There was a great Christmas atmosphere and not one mince pie was left.

We raised £193 for our annual trip to the Trusthorpe pantomime in February. Thank you to all who attended.

Alford Christmas market

On 7 December, Alford's Christmas celebration took place at the Manor House and in the market place. The Parents and Officers Association were lucky enough to have a stall at each.

The tombola stall in the Manor House was very busy all evening, while the burger stall was a bit slow to start but gradually got very busy and sold out by the end of the evening. A big thank you to Roy from the community church for the tasty soup which was enjoyed by all.

Just over £350 was raised. Thank you to all who contributed.

Manor House Christmas tree

On 3 December the Anchor boys decorated our tree at the Manor House with pine cones they had decorated with glitter and tinsel.

Well done, boys, the tree looked fantastic.

Christmas party

On Monday 15 December Boys' Brigade met for an evening of fun and food. Ben Foxwell organised a mini Olympics with the boys split into teams of various countries. After many events the USA were declared the winners. After the refreshments the boys were each presented with a Christmas present provided by the Parents and Officers Association and all the helpers received a Jubilee badge. Captain Carl Steadman thanked all the helpers for the effort they put in every Monday evening as without them we wouldn't be able to maintain such a large company of boys. He also thanked the boys for their attendance, commitment and their smiles.

Dates for your Diary:

3 February– Church Parade
4 February – company night
11 February – company night
15 February – pantomime
18 February – no meeting
25 February – company night
3 March – Church Parade
4 March – company night
11 March – company night
18 March – company night
25 March – company night
1 April – no meeting
7 April – Family Service and lunch afterwards (pg 6)
8 April – no meeting

Staff news - promotion and new helpers

Congratulations to Ben Foxwell on his promotion to warrant officer and good luck as a valued member of our staff team.

We welcome Helen Bevis and Andy Hinde to Boys' Brigade as new helpers and we look forward to working with you both.

A word from our Captain

Thank you to everyone who has attended meetings and contributed towards 1st Alford Boys' Brigade in 2012. With your support, Boys' Brigade has grown in numbers and friendships. Happy New Year and I look forward to your continued support.

Carl Steadman, Company Captain

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Seniors' visit to Barclays Bank



The seniors recently completed their Money Matters badge which involved an activity evening led by the manager of Barclays Bank Mablethorpe. At the end of the evening she offered the girls a chance to spend some time at the bank.

This was arranged for early January and as all the girls were eager to attend, three visited in the morning and three in the afternoon.

Upon arrival the girls were informed about what they would be doing and then off they went. Two of the seniors observed the cashiers and had a list of things that the cashiers had to do with each customer and had to keep a record of this, the other senior was in the banking hall with one of the GB officers/helpers and had to ask the customers to mark the service that they had received that day. The customers were very happy to complete the questionnaire. After about 20 minutes the girls swopped roles so they all had a go at each task.

The time went really quickly and finished with the girls and officers all being given a goodie bag which included sweets, diary, keyrings etc. One of the seniors said she collected keyrings so was given a couple of extra ones; Barbara and I said that we collected money but for some reason we didn't get given any!

I would just like to thank all the staff at Barclays Bank for allowing the girls to visit and for spending time with them.

Michelle Arthurton, Lieutenant

HAPPY 120TH BIRTHDAY TO THE GIRLS' BRIGADE ENGLAND AND WALES!!

Term Dates:

Friday 11 Jan – Friday 15 Feb
Half Term
Friday 1 March – Friday 22 March
Easter
Friday 29 April – Friday 24 May
Half Term
Friday 7 June –Friday 19 July
Summer

Upcoming Events

Friday 8 February – we are taking part in the national Team Challenge competition. This will take place during our usual Girls' Brigade evening. We take part in this competition every year, however this is the first year that has included the Explorer Section and we are looking forward to the evening.

Thursday 2 May – we are taking the Juniors and above to see Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat at the Embassy Theatre in Skegness.

Saturday 4 May – we are taking part in the Regional Trip to Magna

Monday 5 to Friday 9 August – we are taking the Juniors and above to Ashbourne in Derbyshire for a 5-day district camp.

Katie Twigg, Company Captain

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INSPIRATION AND TEAMWORK CREATE A TRULY BEAUTIFUL FRONTAL FOR THE ST LAWRENCE ALTAR IN ST WILFRID'S CHURCH



Dedicated and blessed - Gina White with Bishop David

IT ALL BEGAN one Christmas a few years ago, when I was in Carlisle with my aunt. On Boxing Day there was a short outing to Hexham and it was there that a seed was sown.

I saw a dossal (a curtain that hangs behind the altar) in the St Wilfrid Chapel in Hexham Abbey. This set an idea in my mind of a communal banner which could be hung in front of the curtain, ie middle, lining of the St Lawrence Chapel in our own church. It would be visible from the nave and would add some brightness to the north-east corner of St Wilfrid's.

Materials were gathered and ideas developed. Then the PCC began the planning to renovate the north aisle. I had already repaired the altar superfrontal where there were signs of wear from the sleeves of the priests' vestments and so the next seed was sown – perhaps a complete new altar frontal and riddles (curtains) would be better than a hanging.

Much help would be needed, not just for needlework panels but also for assembling the actual altar frontal and the riddles. Jenny Smith said she would like to help in the assembling. Dennis, her husband, would be able to make a frame for the frontal if needed.

Many other ladies were involved in making the ribbon braids, covering plastic rings in buttonhole stitch, covering plastic crosses with ribbon embroidery and cord-making with yarns and threads. Using these things meant the designs could be made by appliqué and couching. They were stitched onto the silk panels. This meant the skills of advanced needlewomen were not needed all the time.

Over three years the panels evolved and materials were sought then purchased. Some ideas had to be re-thought.

Finally the day came, a beautiful and sunny one too, when everything was taken into St Wilfrid's, assembled and put into place.

The icing on the cake was when we realised that Bishop David was coming to take a service on 9 December 2012, the same Sunday that we hoped to complete the project. It could be dedicated and blessed by Bishop David.

Co-incidence does not come into the equation; from the time when I first saw the dossal in Hexham Abbey, I feel that this whole project was not done by me but through me. How else could such an enormous project come to fruition but by guidance, inspiration and help from God?

There were so many happenings that just could not be planned or ordered. I was able to find the right materials and colours, people were able and eager to help. On the weekend when we planned to move the frontal into church, the Friday was frightful, high winds and rain, yet Saturday was gloriously sunny and calm and this was the day when we planned to move the altar frontal from my lounge and into church to put it all together.

The project has been financed by the proceeds from 'Stitches' craft stalls, sales of craft books and materials, plus donations from friends. Anyone who would like to make a contribution towards the cost of the project would still be very welcome.

Gina White

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Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

Alford Branch
meets monthly on the 2nd Thursday
10.30-11.45 in St Wilfrid's church hall

The Mothers' Union AGM on 10 January, led by Revd Wilma, showed that 2012 had been an interesting year with continued support for Family Action.

Our finances are sound but we do need to have a fund-raising event to increase our support of the various Mothers' Union projects both here and overseas.

Revd Wilma then told us about a 'modern woman of the Bible' who for a year had lived strictly according to the Bible. This actually included her sitting on the roof as punishment for her sins. You can imagine, this caused some amusement, but it has some real implications. I would like to hear it all again.

Our meeting on 14 February focuses on the Women's World Day of Prayer which this year has been written by the women of France. A DVD of this will be shown and we will hear some French music from the service.

This does not replace the actual service on Friday 1 March (further information on page 5) but does help our understanding of it. We meet at 10.30am in St Wilfrid's church hall, following the 9.30am Thursday Eucharist service, starting with coffee. All are welcome to come and join this meeting and learn more about the WWDP. *Jennifer Vear*

For more details of these services and meetings or any other Mothers' Union events, please contact Jennifer Vear on 466377

RENEWING THE CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

A NEW church electoral roll must be prepared every six years and 2013 is the year it falls due. The roll is the church's register of electors; it is the list of those who are eligible to vote at the annual Parochial Church Meeting which is held normally in March or April. At this meeting the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and Deanery Synod representative are elected. When you have your name on the church electoral roll, you can have a voice in directing the way your local church is run.

As this is the year for a completely new church electoral roll, everyone needs to fill in an enrolment form, whether or not you were on the previous roll. Names are not automatically transferred from the old roll to the new roll.

You are entitled to be on the new roll if you:

- Have been baptised and are over 16 years old
- Are a member of the Church of England or a church in communion with the Church of England
- Are resident in the parish – or if you live outside the parish, have worshipped regularly in the parish church for the last six months
- Have filled in the appropriate enrolment form

In St Wilfrid's the forms will be available at the back of the church during March and when completed should be placed in the brown box nearby. All forms should be completed and returned by the closing date of Sunday 17 March, ie one month before the Annual PCC meeting (AGM). This is to enable the new roll for St Wilfrid's to be completed by Sunday 24 March and displayed and checked before the meeting on Wednesday 10 April.

If you live (or worship) in one of the parishes of Beesby, Bilsby, Hannah, Markby, Rigsby, Saleby or Well, your AGM will be on a different date (so the date of preparation of your electoral roll may therefore be different), but there is still a requirement to prepare a new one this year. *Ann Woodgate, Electoral Roll Officer for St Wilfrid's*

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Margaret Reynolds writes about the Calendar Boys: The Emperor, the Pope and the Angel Gabriel

THIS STORY BEGINS in 46 BC. At that time the Romans used a calendar with only 355 days. As this was a little shorter than the solar year, every so often an extra month was added to catch up. This bothered Julius Caesar and it was his brilliant idea to introduce the Julian Calendar with three years of 365 days followed by a leap year of 366 days.

In ancient Babylon and Egypt the year began at the autumn equinox when the day and night are of equal length, the day we call 21 September. The Greeks favoured the winter solstice, the day we call 21 December.

Julius Caesar also chose the winter solstice, but as the Romans traditionally began their year with a Festival of the New moon which, in the year 46BC was 10 days after the winter solstice, that particular year was lengthened by 10 days to 445 days. What a New Year's Eve that must have been! Not surprisingly, that year became known as the Year of Confusion.

All Julius's efforts were worthwhile, however, as the calendar he introduced lasted for more than 1600 years.

Numbering the years needed a year Zero, but it wasn't until Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the reign of Constantine that the Council of Nicea, meeting in 325AD to determine the rule for calculating Easter, also fixed the Zero as the year of the Nativity.

Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the spring equinox. If the full moon falls on a Sunday, Easter Day is celebrated on the next Sunday. In 325AD Easter Day was on 21 March but by the 16th Century this had slipped back to 11 March. This was because the length of a year is not 365 and a quarter days exactly, but 11 minutes and 14 seconds shorter, ie one whole day every 128 years.

In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII put Easter back in its proper place by removing ten days. Thursday 4 October was followed by Friday 15 October.

Nowadays all the countries of the world use the Gregorian or New Style calendar for official purposes. The Catholic countries adopted it immediately. Great Britain and the American colonies waited until 1753. The last to agree were Greece and the Eastern Church in 1924.

To adjust our calendars, the year 1751 began as usual on 25 March but ended on 31 December, losing 84 days, but establishing 1 January as New Year's Day.

The following year 11 days were removed by 2 September being followed by 14 September. There were riots in the streets as people demanded their 11 days back.

The error has not built up again because "turn of the century" years are not treated as leap years unless the date itself can be divided by 400. Although not exactly correct, it will be another 3,000 years before we need a further correction.

Keep the 11 days in mind as we turn to the Angel Gabriel. The government prepared its accounts according to the old Quarter Days; Lady Day (25 March) when the Angel Gabriel told Mary she was to be the Mother of Jesus, was regarded as the first day of the year for official purposes, then came Midsummer Day, Michaelmas Day and Christmas Day. The Quarter Days were moved on by 11 days so Lady Day became 5 April.

Income tax had been abolished in 1817 and when it was reintroduced by Sir Robert Peel in 1842 the income tax year also began on 5 April.

But, you may point out, 5 April is the last day of the income tax year, not the first.

Unfortunately in financial circles the year 1800 had been treated as a leap year. So the first day of the tax year was moved one further day to 6 April and there it has remained.

Happy New Year!

Margaret Reynolds

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Stuart Reder's Country Diary

Grumbles and gratitude at Christmas and New Year

Well, that's another Christmas and New Year's Eve over. I don't know where I shall be when it all comes round again. Like the saying goes, that's all in the lap of the Gods. I'm not against Christmas Day and all it stands for and I am in full agreement with Bob's Christmas sermon, it's having it blasted at you from all directions for weeks on end that I get fed up with, so that by the time it arrives I'm sick of hearing about it all, with the same songs going round and round like an endless tape. Mother didn't have much, but she managed to make Christmas appear overnight with home trimmings up as if by magic, and she fed us with her basic good home cooking, but it wouldn't have had that magical effect if we'd heard about it for weeks before.

It was a really nice gathering at the Well carol service (what a difference those red candles make) and also in the Hall afterwards, thanks to Anne and Malcolm. Thank you for the lifts and to Susan for asking me to do a reading, which is a rare event for me these days. I thought about Tom Porter doing his reading the year before and now he is no longer with us, a sad loss indeed.

My late neighbour George liked his holly so, as they didn't have a wreath on their graves this time, even though there were no berries I stuck some sprigs of holly in the ground for them. Thank you to those who have shown their appreciation to me for looking after family graves, and for all the cards. I received nearly 90, mostly needing expensive postal replies, and I'm sorry if I left anyone out, it all got too much to cope with in the end.

I had some nice homemade gifts including one from Germany which included an amusing cartoon cat card identical to the one I received from Louth Cat Rescue, along with their calendar which has Ellie walking through the snowdrops for February. An amusing homemade card depicts me in cartoon form with the chickens etc from some of the stories I've written. I had a homemade calendar from Penny and Suie at the bungalow two years ago which I have kept as it has photos of Rigsby and pets through it. I also had an amazing homemade glass robin sitting on a spade handle made from all the right coloured pieces of glass. It goes in a plant pot on the windowsill so the light shines through it and has my bird feeders in the background where I now also have seven long-tailed tits feeding daily on one feeder all at once, with their tails stuck out, looking like a decoration.

Sadly my starlings, bats and house sparrows have become victims of the re-roofing, by being shut out of the gable-ends where they used to nest and roost at night. I miss hearing them chattering as they all settled in and complaining suddenly if one moved. They would fly down in the mornings to splash around in the bird baths and then onto the shrubs to preen their feathers. The RSPB are concerned now about the drop in numbers and habitat due to the way new homes are built and older ones modernised. Up till now I had a good number of house and tree sparrows so I guess this is just one more example to add to the list.

I tidied up the village green in the rain three times on Christmas Eve from cars running over it and squeezing the mud out like toothpaste, but by Christmas morning it looked like a ploughing match had been held on it and I spent most of Christmas Day patching it up, determined that it would look tidy if only for one day. I always think the entrance to a town or village represents the area and if it's all mud and car wheel ruts it gives the impression of being rough and run-down. Bill Read thanked me and put some white canes round it which has kept them off it up till now but we have even had cars park on it sometimes. I enquired about those white chains but, without posts, the cheapest were 99p a metre and it measures 30 of my strides.

continued on page 39

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Thoughts of a Wandering Mind

Dashed expectations and everlasting promises

WINTER MONTHS can seem endless. Christmas festivities left behind leave us with a long wait to lighter days and warmer temperatures. Memories of feasting, presents and oh, those beautiful carols and readings telling us of the hope we have in Jesus' birth, begin to fade.

The darker side of this season can be seen in the number of dashed expectations - the present we had set our hearts on that failed to be put in our stocking, the joy of companionship and sharing that turned into rows because we expected different things from the time of being together, these can draw us away from the Light of Christ into darker times.

It's a well-known fact that along with moving house, Christmas is a time when the number of applications for divorce increases. Failed expectations – we can all suffer from them.

What is of immeasurable help is the focusing of our hearts and minds on the spiritual expectations that Jesus spoke of so clearly in the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt 5: 1-12) The words Jesus used in the Beatitudes help us to see that dwelling on heavenly rather than worldly things, can lead us to peace of mind and hope of life to come:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Worldly expectations will change along with the latest style, or be broken like a toy and thrown away, but what Jesus promises will not rust, fade or break, it is everlasting. He is always with us even though we cannot perceive His presence in any tangible way.

If you have need of Him just ask for His help, not in any half-hearted manner but with all your heart and longing. He answers in unexpected ways. You might not know immediately, it's looking back that enables you to see His hand at work in your life.

Try it. You've nothing to lose and everything to gain. He never fails us.

Angela Simcox

Stuart Reder's Country Diary - *continued from page 37*

A visiting priest from Grimsby was very taken with Ida Brown's story and was sorry I'd had to try and repair the broken stand on the nice frame I'd bought, with her being moved so many times away from the easy access area I put her in to save people catching their ankles or bumping their hips as they tried to negotiate the font to read about her. After all she did for St James, she deserves that easy-viewing place in there.

After enjoying the Lord of the Rings trilogy I found the Hobbit rather a let-down, especially when one of the dwarves asked for chips. Chips, in Tolkein's books? Never! But I did enjoy Life of Pi in 3D. The CGI tiger was so real, you couldn't separate it from the real one, and the words the boy spoke to it on the lifeboat reminded me so much of things I've said to my cats, especially to Susie when she sits on the bedroom windowsill as she did on New Year's Eve when the fireworks started popping off. Like the boy did to the tiger I say, "what are you looking at, what can you see?" and like the tiger did, she half turns then looks back again. My next film on the list of must-see is Les Misérables and I like being able to go in the afternoons.

I didn't sit up for New Year this time. I'd had a busy day and was too tired and not knowing where I'm going to end up just drains you at my time of life so there didn't seem to be much point, but I saw the coast light up with rockets etc from my bed at midnight and remembered, until people complained about them, when the bells rang the old year out and the new year in without upsetting the cats and dogs.

Happy 2013

Stuart Reder

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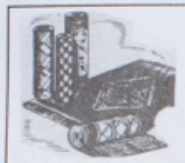
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ALFORD METHODIST CHURCH AND CIRCUIT EVENTS

MONTHS: February / March 2013

SUNDAY SERVICES are held each week at 10.30am. Everyone is welcome.

On **Easter Day, Sunday 31 March**, there is a service of Holy Communion at 8am followed by Easter Breakfast and a morning service at the usual time of 10.30am.

REGULAR MEETINGS start at 2.30pm unless stated otherwise.

A warm welcome to all

Circuit Fellowship (first Monday of the month - venues vary):

4 February . . . . **Wainfleet** - Speaker: Helen Banham
Leader: Betty Thomas

4 March . . . . . . **Skegness** - Methodist Women in Britain
Leader: Julie Alton

Alford Ladies' Group (second Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the Guild Room):

11 February . . . **Out for a meal** - contact Pat or Margaret for details

11 March . . . . . . **'God's Acre'** - Speaker: Helen Gamble

Alford Rainbows, Brownies and Guides meet on Monday evenings.

Alford Beavers, Cubs and Scouts meet on Tuesday evenings.

Alford Girls' Brigade meets on Friday evenings during term-time *(see page 29).*
for times please check with the leaders.

The Society of Friends (Quakers) 1st/3rd/5th Sundays at 10.30am in the Guild Room

WEEKLY COFFEE MORNINGS AND SHORT SERVICES: Tuesdays from 9.30am (service at 10.30am, leaders as arranged)

FORTNIGHTLY PRAYER GROUP: Every other Friday, 9 - 9.30am.
Please confirm dates with the stewards and join us if you can.

MONTHLY LUNCHES: Usually 2nd Thursday monthly - book by the previous Tuesday.

MONTHLY FILM CLUB: Usually the first Thursday of the month - 7pm.
For details, please speak to one of the stewards.

THURSDAY LEISURE AFTERNOONS: In the Guild Room from 1.30pm, all welcome.
Play Scrabble, do a jigsaw, bring your knitting / embroidery, or just enjoy the fellowship.

DON'T FORGET - Women's World Day of Prayer - Friday 1 March at 7.30pm

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Ofsted Outstanding 2008|2009

The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
"Gone but not forgotten"

WITH PRIDE our community wore the Poppy in November last year, both young and old, whether it was the traditional red poppy or the new wristband, the larger symbol or the small pin badge, each showed that we cared and remembered.

This could not have been possible if it had not been for the many organisations and individuals within our community that took on yet another task of having poppies available for sale.

On behalf of all those who will benefit from every penny put into the collecting boxes may we say a very big thank you to all the shops, businesses, schools and churches who provided this opportunity. And of course not forgetting all of the poppy collectors (sadly who are getting smaller in number) who took on the daunting challenge of going from house to house in not the best of weather in Alford itself and our surrounding villages.

But also, to everyone in the community who donated, please accept our grateful thanks for your help in reaching our present total for our district which stands at £5,064.39. The Poppy Appeal for 2012 does not officially close its books till the end of September 2013 so if you would still like to donate to the appeal, or possibly organise an event for the appeal, this would be wonderful and greatly appreciated.

Finally, if I may be so bold, The Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Sunday is only what you see of the Legion working in November, but the work of the Legion is 24/7 in many different ways. We need new members to take up the challenge of supporting members of our armed forces and their families.

For more information about The Royal British Legion you can go online on www.britishlegion.org.uk or locally contact the number below or see our new advert in this Group Messenger.

John Johnson
Poppy Appeal Organiser and Branch Secretary
01507 466554

Nativity at John Richardson's family farm used Beesby costumes

Just before Christmas, we took Avi, our grandson, to Wheelbirks, the farm where John was brought up. It is at Stocksfield which is between Hexham and Newcastle and is now run by two of his nephews.

They performed a nativity last year and repeated it this year using some of the costumes from the Beesby nativity which we had discovered when sorting out St Wilfrid's church hall for the renovations.

The characters (and the audience) all moved around the farmyard knocking on several doors to find an accommodating inn and then moved down the lane where they found the shepherds and kings. They then went into one of the barns, which was serving as a stable, where they found Mary along with a donkey and one of the farm's Jersey cows. The local church choir sang and three of our great nieces were angels. They did not feature a real baby though. Mary had, in fact, ridden a pony as the donkey was not suitable! Fortunately this performance was in the dry, which was not the case for the other performances.

Everyone then had supper in the Parlour which is open to the public (except Mondays) where they do a limited range of food along with various flavours of farm-made Jersey ice-cream. Contact us for details (see the back of this Group Messenger) or Google Wheelbirks for further details if you are interested in visiting.

The play was narrated by Lucinda, the ice cream parlour manager and wife of one of our nephews. All money raised was donated to educational projects in Zambia.

John and Georgie Richardson

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Coffee morning dates for the year

St Wilfrid's Coffee Morning takes place one or two Friday mornings a month, combining the opportunity for a good chat with friends over a coffee and biscuits (plus a refill) with stalls selling cakes, bric-a-brac, craft items, produce, plants, fruit and vegetables in their seasons.

At 10.30am there is a ten-minute Thought for the Day - usually a hymn and a short, faith-based story or reflection.

In 2013 the coffee morning dates will be:

22 March
19 April
10 May
14 June
5 and 19 July
9 and 30 August
13 September
(Charity coffee morning in aid of the Alford Community Larder)
11 October
15 November
6 December *(with a festive theme)*

Join in and help with any of these? Ring Rita 462078

We look forward to seeing you there and introducing you to new friends. If you need a lift (there or back) please contact either Stuart on 462078 or Richard on 463299.

ALFORD Group of Charities includes the John Spendluffe Education Charity, the Alford Youth Charity and the Relief of Poverty.

Money exists to help provide JSTC school uniform, educational materials, youth projects and the relief of poverty for those living in Alford.

Contact the clerk to the charity, Richard Neale, 462530.

St Wilfrid's coffee mornings

Friday 22 March

St Wilfrid's church hall, 9.45 -11.45am

Coffee and biscuits, plus a refill, 50p.

Stalls of cakes, bric-a-brac, plants, fruit and vegetables in season.

10.30am Thought for the Day

If you need a lift please contact
Stuart Hodgkins 462078
or Richard Willoughby 463299

Answers to the quiz on page

1. Ash Wednesday
2. 40 days
3. His 40 days and nights in the desert being tempted by the "devil"
4. About 30
5. Having the desire to do something you KNOW is wrong
6. Judas Iscariot
7. Jerusalem
8. Good Friday
9. Mary Magdalene
10. The Resurrection Stone

Thank you to Alayne Dodd for this quiz

DOWN YOUR WAY in Alford Group of Parishes

At St Wilfrid's and in all of the group's parish churches we pray, week by week, for all who live or work in a particular road or village.

Feb 03 ... Coles Avenue and Conlie Close
Feb 10 ... Commercial Road
Feb 17 ... Dashwood Road
Feb 24 ... Dixon Drive
& Farlesthorpe Village
Mar 03 ... East Street
Mar 10 ... Evison Close
Mar 17 ... Farlesthorpe Road
& Hagnaby Village
Mar 24 ... Finsbury Street
Mar 31 ... Hallam Close
Apr 07 ... Hamilton Road
& Hannah Village

St Wilfrid's, Alford - Sidesmen's Rota 2013

03 Feb	Mr and Mrs J Richardson
10 Feb	Mr and Mrs S Hodgkins
17 Feb	*8.00 am* Mrs J Cawthorpe
17 Feb	*9.30 am* Mr G Newstead, Mr A Vincent
24 Feb	Mr and Mrs N Willerton
03 Mar	Mrs A Dodd, Mrs M Willoughby
10 Mar	Mr and Mrs J Richardson
17 Mar	*8.00 am* Mr P Criddle
17 Mar	*9.30 am* Mrs M Morley, Mrs M Weaver
24 Mar	Mrs A Woodgate, Mr E Goulden
31 Mar	Mr and Mrs B Quinn
07 Apr	Mrs H Barrett, Dr J Walters
14 Apr	Mr and Mrs S Hodgkins
21 Apr	*8.00 am* Mrs J Cawthorpe
21 Apr	*9.30 am* Mr A Vincent, Mr G Newstead
28 Apr	Mr and Mrs N Willerton

St Wilfrid's, Alford - Flower Rota 2013-14

	High Altar	Pulpit
Jan 27 - Feb 12	Mrs J Vear	Mrs G Richardson
LENT 2013		
Mar 31 - Apr 07	Mrs S Boyce	Mrs J Cawthorpe
Apr 14 - Apr 21	Mrs A Thornley	Mrs K Ralph
Apr 28 - May 05	Mrs M Willoughby	Mrs B Cragg
May 12 - May 19	Mrs S Newstead	Mrs B Willoughby
May 26 - Jun 02	Miss F G White	Mrs J Nihell
Jun 09 - Jun 16	Mrs G Richardson	Mrs J Vear
Jun 23 - Jun 30	Mrs J Cawthorpe	Mrs S Boyce
Jul 07 - Jul 14	Mrs K Ralph	Mrs A Thornley
Jul 21 - Jul 28	Mrs B Cragg	Mrs M Willoughby
Aug 04 - Aug 19	Mrs B Willoughby	Mrs S Newstead
FLOWER FESTIVAL 2013		
Sep 01 - Sep 08	Mrs J Nihell	Miss F G White
Sep 15 - Sep 22	Mrs J Vear	Mrs G Richardson
Sep 29 - Oct 06	Mrs S Boyce	Mrs J Cawthorpe
Oct 13 - Oct 20	Mrs A Thornley	Mrs K Ralph
Oct 27 - Nov 03	Mrs M Willoughby	Mrs B Cragg
Nov 10 - Nov 17	Mrs S Newstead	Mrs B Willoughby
Nov 24 - Nov 30	Miss F G White	Mrs J Nihell
ADVENT 2013		
Dec 25 - Jan 05	Mrs G Richardson	Mrs J Vear
Jan 12 - Jan 19	Mrs J Cawthorpe	Mrs S Boyce

Thank you to everyone who works to keep the churches of our Group of Parishes beautiful, clean, safe and welcoming.

THE EDITORIAL team of the Group Messenger takes every reasonable care to avoid errors in the articles and advertisements contained in this magazine. However, the inclusion of an advertisement in the Group Messenger does not imply either endorsement of or liability for the goods or services advertised, whether by the Group Messenger editorial team, Alford PCC or the Alford Group of Parishes.

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01507 462284 or 01754 611644

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Fax: 01507 462916
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taking care of mealtimes

Every week at St Wilfrid's, Alford:

Sunday:
9.30am Parish Eucharist Common Worship
Monday:
6pm The Boys' Brigade (term time) at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar
7.30pm House Group, 26 East Street, Alford
Tuesday:
11.30-1.30 Church Office open in church hall
Wednesday:
9 - 9.30 am Prayer in St Wilfrid's
Thursday:
9.30am Eucharist Common Worship (said)
7-9pm Bell ringing practice
Friday:
11.30-1.30 Church Office open in church hall
6pm & 7pm The Girls' Brigade (term time) Methodist Church, West Street

Please see the calendar on pages 24-25 for details of all services in the Group of Parishes, week by week, and the back cover for contact telephone numbers for any groups mentioned here

Other regular services in the group:

Holy Trinity, Bilsby
(11am on 2nd and 4th Sundays)
St Andrew's, Beesby
(3pm on 2nd & 4th Sunday)
St James, Rigsby
(11am on 1st Sunday)
St Margaret's, Well
(11am on 4th Sunday)
St Margaret's, Saleby
(11am on 2nd Sunday)

There are also services at St Peter's, Markby and at St Andrew's, Hannah cum Hagnaby and occasionally at St Andrew's, Farlesthorpe.

Group Eucharist services are held when there is a fifth Sunday in the month.
The next one is:
Sunday 31 March (Easter Sunday) at St Wilfrid's, Alford

Monthly at St Wilfrid's, Alford:

Sunday:
8am Holy Communion BCP - 3rd Sunday
11am Family Service - 1st Sunday
3pm Evensong BCP (sung) - 1st Sunday
5pm Taizé service - 2nd Sunday
5pm G2G in church hall - 3rd Sunday
Wednesday:
7pm Healing Service - 1st Wednesday
Thursday:
10.30am Mothers' Union in church hall - 2nd Thursday
Friday:
9.45am Coffee morning in church hall with a short service at 10.30am *See page 44 for dates*
Saturday:
8am Holy Communion BCP - 1st Saturday

St Wilfrid's Church, Alford, which dates from the mid 14th century, is normally open until late afternoon for prayer and quiet reflection.

In the St Lawrence Chapel, on the far side of the church, you can sit comfortably, pray and light a candle. There is a prayer board where requests for prayer can be left. Also available, on your right as you come into the church, is a prayer request book.

An illustrated guide and postcards are on sale at the bookstall, together with souvenirs, prayer cards and Christian literature.

A 'who's who' board at the back of the church has photographs of significant people in the church family.

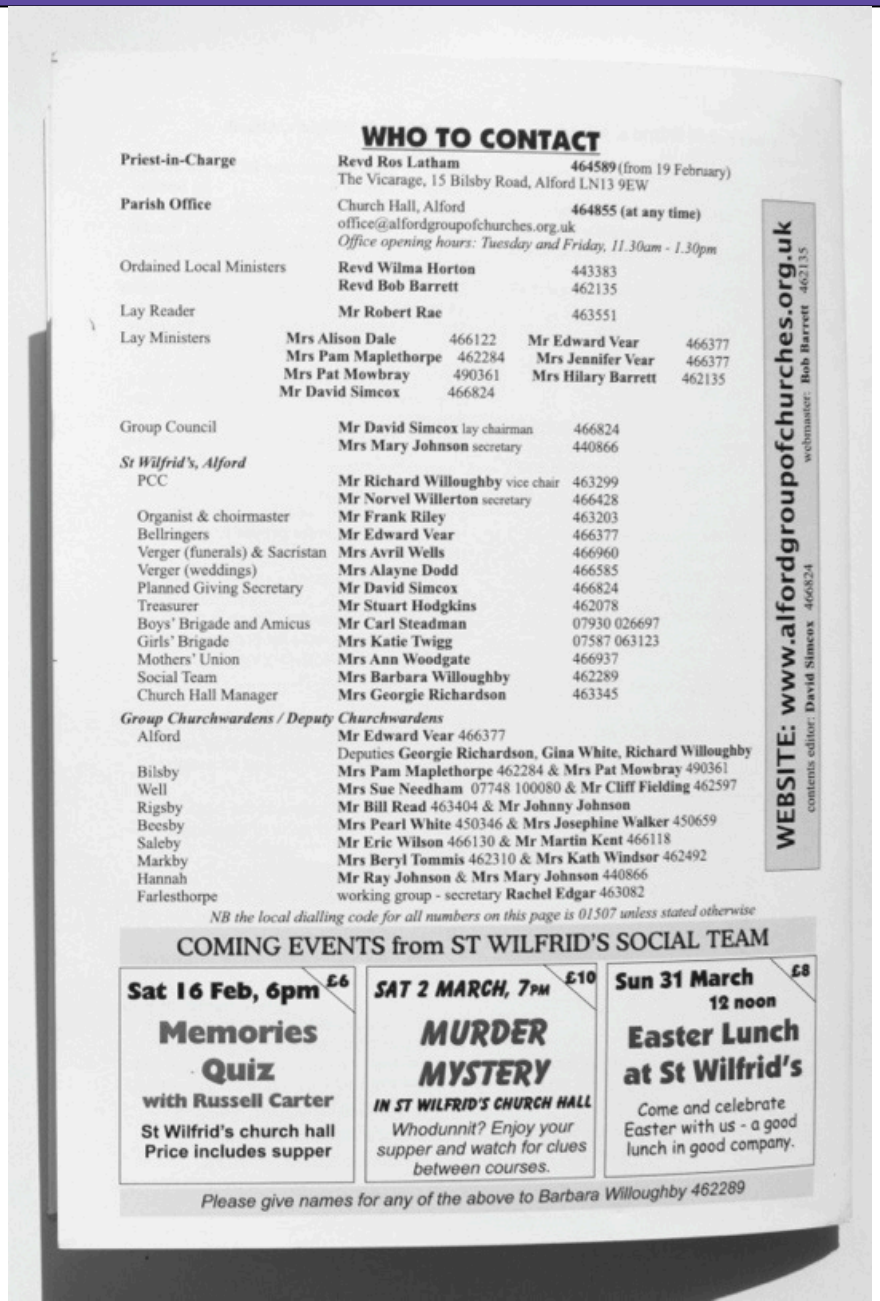
YOU are warmly invited to come to any of our services throughout the Alford Group of Parishes.

We can help with a lift to church if this is a problem.

If you can't manage to come, or you would like individual prayer or a visit from a church member, please ring one of the numbers below and we will do our best to sort out what you need.

Richard Willoughby 463299
Brenda Willson 462825
Stuart Hodgkins 462078

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WHO TO CONTACT

Priest-in-Charge	**Revd Ros Latham**	**464589** (from 19 February)
	The Vicarage, 15 Bilsby Road, Alford LN13 9EW	
Parish Office	Church Hall, Alford	**464855 (at any time)**
	office@alfordgroupofchurches.org.uk	
	Office opening hours: Tuesday and Friday, 11.30am - 1.30pm	
Ordained Local Ministers	**Revd Wilma Horton**	443383
	Revd Bob Barrett	462135
Lay Reader	**Mr Robert Rae**	463551
Lay Ministers	**Mrs Alison Dale** 466122	**Mr Edward Vear** 466377
	Mrs Pam Maplethorpe 462284	**Mrs Jennifer Vear** 466377
	Mrs Pat Mowbray 490361	**Mrs Hilary Barrett** 462135
	Mr David Simcox 466824	
Group Council	**Mr David Simcox** lay chairman	466824
	Mrs Mary Johnson secretary	440866
St Wilfrid's, Alford		
PCC	**Mr Richard Willoughby** vice chair	463299
	Mr Norvel Willerton secretary	466428
Organist & choirmaster	**Mr Frank Riley**	463203
Bellringers	**Mr Edward Vear**	466377
Verger (funerals) & Sacristan	**Mrs Avril Wells**	466960
Verger (weddings)	**Mrs Alayne Dodd**	466585
Planned Giving Secretary	**Mr David Simcox**	466824
Treasurer	**Mr Stuart Hodgkins**	462078
Boys' Brigade and Amicus	**Mr Carl Steadman**	07930 026697
Girls' Brigade	**Mrs Katie Twigg**	07587 063123
Mothers' Union	**Mrs Ann Woodgate**	466937
Social Team	**Mrs Barbara Willoughby**	462289
Church Hall Manager	**Mrs Georgie Richardson**	463345
Group Churchwardens / Deputy Churchwardens		
Alford	**Mr Edward Vear** 466377	
	Deputies **Georgie Richardson, Gina White, Richard Willoughby**	
Bilsby	**Mrs Pam Maplethorpe** 462284 & **Mrs Pat Mowbray** 490361	
Well	**Mrs Sue Needham** 07748 100080 & **Mr Cliff Fielding** 462597	
Rigsby	**Mr Bill Read** 463404 & **Mr Johnny Johnson**	
Beesby	**Mrs Pearl White** 450346 & **Mrs Josephine Walker** 450659	
Saleby	**Mr Eric Wilson** 466130 & **Mr Martin Kent** 466118	
Markby	**Mrs Beryl Tommis** 462310 & **Mrs Kath Windsor** 462492	
Hannah	**Mr Ray Johnson** & **Mrs Mary Johnson** 440866	
Farlesthorpe	working group - secretary **Rachel Edgar** 463082	

NB the local dialling code for all numbers on this page is 01507 unless stated otherwise

WEBSITE: www.alfordgroupofchurches.org.uk
webmaster: **Bob Barrett** 462135
contents editor: **David Simcox** 466824

COMING EVENTS from ST WILFRID'S SOCIAL TEAM

Sat 16 Feb, 6pm £6
Memories Quiz
with Russell Carter
St Wilfrid's church hall
Price includes supper

SAT 2 MARCH, 7PM £10
MURDER MYSTERY
IN ST WILFRID'S CHURCH HALL
Whodunnit? Enjoy your supper and watch for clues between courses.

Sun 31 March £8
12 noon
Easter Lunch at St Wilfrid's
Come and celebrate Easter with us - a good lunch in good company.

Please give names for any of the above to Barbara Willoughby 462289

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Overall Layout

Commendations:

- Buckland (Surrey)
- Outreach (Hexam)

Category Winner:

- Group Messenger (Alford)

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Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design ✔
- Overall Layout and Structure ✔
- Creativity and Typography of Headlines
- Use of Graphics
- Clarity of the Christian Message
- Appeal to a Wider Community

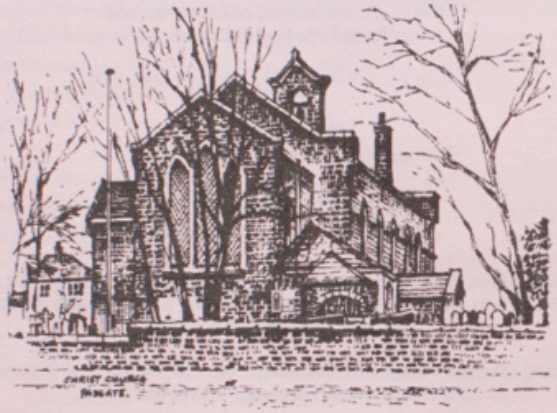
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GRAPEVINE



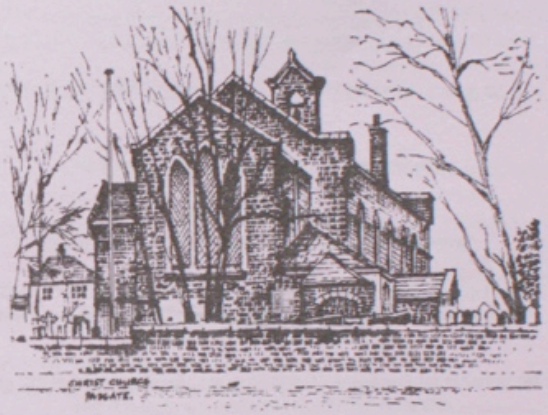
July - August 2012

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

GRAPEVINE



March 2013

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

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Bishop James to retire as Bishop of Liverpool



Rt Rev James Jones has announced that he will retire as Bishop of Liverpool on his 65th birthday in August. In a letter to the Diocese the Bishop says that his leaving will "give my successor the opportunity in due course to form his own leadership team to take the Diocese forward."

The Diocese will hold a farewell service for the Bishop in Liverpool Cathedral on 3 July.

Bishop James and his wife Sarah will leave the Diocese in August. The Bishop will remain as adviser to the Home Secretary on Hillsborough, will continue to write and broadcast and will be involved in a number of other national projects.

In his letter Bishop James said "Throughout my time in Liverpool I have found the willingness of the parishes in the Diocese to rethink and to reshape our common life for the service of others has been inspiring. Our Diocese is growing and there is still huge opportunity locally to make a difference to our communities with the Gospel of Christ.

It has been a privilege as Bishop to serve the wider community not least in chairing the Hillsborough Independent Panel. The Diocese has recognised the rightness of me doing this which has given me great strength. The way the families and survivors have received the Panel's report and the way truth is now opening up the path to justice affirms the worth of the Panel's work."

It has been a privilege as Bishop to serve the wider community

The Bishop concluded "Sarah and I are very conscious of God's providence over the last fifteen years. We are constantly humbled by the

commitment of the laity and by the dedication of the clergy. It has been a joy to serve you all as bishop. As together in the Diocese we thank God for his providence we renew our trust in him and pray that he will continue to guide the Diocese especially in the appointing of a new Bishop of Liverpool."

Paying tribute to Bishop James, the Bishop of Warrington, Rt Rev Richard Blackburn said "I give thanks and praise to God for the fifteen years of exceptional and inspirational leadership that Bishop James has given to the Diocese of Liverpool. We have been enormously blessed by his gifts and energy. I shall miss him as a wise colleague and a true Father in God."

The Dean of Liverpool, Very Rev Dr Pete Wilcox said "Bishop James has been an extraordinary servant of the Diocese of Liverpool, the city and the region, as well as a significant voice on a national stage, for well over a decade. He has been a wise pastor, a thoughtful and thought-provoking preacher and teacher, a courageous prophet, a champion of justice and a faithful friend. We wish him and Sarah a fulfilling new phase of life and work in what will surely be an active and fruitful retirement."

...t from the Liverpool Diocesan website

Donations

We acknowledge the following donations with thanks:

In memory of Len Jones from Jean Jones
In memory of Graham Austin from Frank and family
Richard and Moira Wilson
Mrs I D Chorley
Mrs E Delaney
Mrs Dudley

If you would like to ensure that your acknowledgement appears promptly in the next issue of Grapevine, please contact the Editor (823130) before the deadline given on page 3.

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Wendy Thomas



Last month our profile was of Nathan Thomas at Uni; this month Grapevine has asked Nathan's mum Wendy for her story.

My Name is Wendy Thomas. I was born on 15 October 1962 to Lilian and Geoffrey Lewis. My elder sister Christine was sent to the cinema with a packed lunch while I was being born at home - in Dickenson Street, just off Orford Lane Warrington.

It was planned that I would attend a new Infants School at Bruche, so we moved to Westover Road when I was five. I have wonderful memories playing and riding my bike around Padgate in what seemed like endless sunny days in the summer holidays.

I attended Sunday school at Padgate Methodist Church and was involved in the Walking Day for many years. The build-up itself was very special, and wearing a new dress always added to the excitement.

I attended Confirmation classes here at Christ Church, led by Revd. Roger Wikeley. I enjoyed the sessions and remember the little pink card we were given that would be signed by the Reverend each time we attended a church service.

After Bruche I attended Woolston High School. During this time we went to visit Monks's Offices off Green Lane, which gave me an interest in office work. On leaving school I went to work for Warrington Borough Council in the Rates department. I had a brilliant superior officer - guess

who? It was Bernard Shovelton. I really enjoyed it there, although things changed when the Poll Tax was introduced.

In 1980 I met Peter at Wilderspool Night Club in Warrington. A disco was held there every Friday and it was love at first sight, well for me anyway. On 19 October 1985 we were married here at Christ Church just before Revd. Wikeley left. Nathan was born in 1991 and Kieran followed in 1997. Family life is so very special - they are wonderful boys and we are very proud of them.

I now work for another brilliant person, well some of the time! My husband Peter has his own company and I am responsible for the clerical side of things. There are many advantages of working from home, not least of which have been to be around the home while the boys have been growing up.

On Friday mornings I try to attend the Playtimers as much as possible. I was introduced to it by Pat Lord. It's a lovely session and that includes the families and helpers alike. Christ Church is such a special church and you are always made to feel very welcome.

Many thanks Wendy for your kind words and for your interesting account of your family life and work. Wendy has not said that last year she took over organising the distribution of "Grapevine"- thank you Wendy.

Mothers' Union

10 March at 11.00 am is "Mothering Sunday". Members of the Mothers' Union will be participating in the service.

14 March at 7.30 pm. Stations of the Cross, followed by our meeting with speaker Rev. Pam Lovatt

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St. John's Church

Sharing Christ in the Community



St John's Square / Wentworth St
Wakefield WF1 2QU

Parish Magazine

FEBRUARY 2013

Price 50p

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Parish Centre

Angie Sykes has looked after the cleaning, letting and regular users of the Parish Centre for the last 16 years. She is leaving us at the end of January and we are very grateful for her loyalty and all that she has done. I would like, in the near future, to make a presentation to her in recognition of her long service.

If you would like to give a donation towards this, could you please see that I receive it a.s.a.p then I can decide on an occasion when we can show her our appreciation.

In the meantime, bookings can be made via Mrs Lorraine Hanson, on 01924 257376. The cleaning will be done by the Church cleaning team, and I will be the key holder for special events, on 01924 364268.

Michael Slack



When you 'pass the peace' to me
Could I make this special plea?

When you take my hand in yours
Please take it gently – because

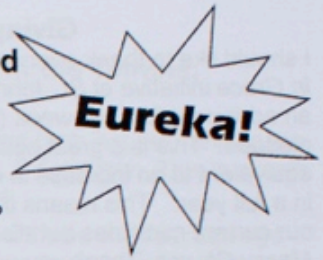
My aging bones can't take the strain
Of a crushing handshake. It causes *pain*!

A vice-like grip is no more 'true'
Than the gentle handshake I give to you.

So take my hand in friendly peace,
Allowing my fingers to rest at ease.

That way I'll respond with a smile for you
Instead of a grimace and muttered 'oooh!'

Is it time you remembered 'eureka!'?



As Lent 2013 gets underway, do you suspect that your Christian commitment is not all it could be? If so, you are not alone.

But Jesus is still calling us to be his disciples, NOT his well-wishers – from a safe distance! So how does one start as a disciple, exactly? It can be helpful to remember the story of John and Andrew in the first chapter of St John.

Firstly, John and Andrew were simply getting on with daily life when their teacher, John the Baptist, introduced them to Jesus. They hadn't been out looking for him – but when they met him, they were deeply affected. But actually it was Jesus *who found them*. If you encounter God, it is no accident that your paths have crossed.

Secondly, there is the *eureka!* factor in Andrew and John's story. This expression, from the Greek eurisko, is said to have been exclaimed around the year 200 BC by the Greek mathematician Archimedes when he discovered a way to determine the purity of gold. Andrew used this same expression in vs 41, when he told his brother he had found Jesus Christ. "I've found him! Eureka!"

This Lent, you can be sure that Jesus is certainly looking for you, and if your response has ever been: 'I've found him! Eureka!" – then you, like Andrew, have become a disciple, a Christian.

Maybe you began to follow Jesus a long time ago, but your obedience has been "on hold." You haven't been faithful in worship, in reading the Bible. You haven't even been a part of a local church.

Well, Lent 2013 is an ideal time to re-discover the joy of eureka! again.

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The Two Handkerchiefs

A mother gave both her sons a new blue handkerchief as a small extra Christmas present. Many months later the sons both visited their mother when she happened to be watching a very sad film. As she groped for her handkerchief both men offered her their own hankies to use instead.

The elder son took his pristine cotton square from the breast pocket of his suit jacket.

The younger son took out a crumpled and stained square from his trouser pocket.

As the mother shook out the elder son's handkerchief she thought how like him it was. Washed every week, carefully ironed into the same neat square – and kept that way in his pocket until the next washday. Even if he needed to wipe his nose he kept it folded and tidy. She noticed that it was now becoming threadbare along the fold lines, and she feared if she used it too roughly it might tear apart.



And how like her younger son was his hanky! Never ironed, though it was certainly washed often enough. But washing could not entirely remove the blood stain from when he used it to staunch a colleague's nose bleed, nor the stain from when he mopped up the coffee spilt on his girlfriend's handbag. There was a hole made by the beak of a terrified bird he rescued unharmed from a cat and carried to safety in the handkerchief. The cotton square was clearly used for all the usual hanky jobs as well, but was still strong, despite the hole.

It can be easy for us to be like the elder son – keep to routine, make sure things look good, stay in our comfort zone, and don't take risks.

But God calls us to take risks – to respond with compassion and love to the needs of those around us, even at some cost to ourselves. The cost for Jesus was death on a cross.

What does your handkerchief, or mine, say about us?

Sunday Services at St John's

EVERY SUNDAY

8.00am **Holy Communion**
A traditional, peaceful said communion service, without music.
The service lasts about 30 minutes.

1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th SUNDAY EACH MONTH

10.00am **Parish Communion**
Creche, Junior Church and Teenagers meet in their own groups, and join the congregation at communion. A traditional service with a contemporary edge. We sing hymns and modern worship songs. During communion Prayers for Healing are available on the 1st Sunday and the Laying on of Hands on the 3rd Sunday. Lasts 60-80 minutes.

2nd SUNDAY EACH MONTH

10.00am **Family Service** (crèche area available with parental supervision) .
Relaxed, all-age worship with songs, and a thought for the day. Lasts 50-60 minutes
Baptisms often take place at this service

Coffee, tea, squash and biscuits are served in the church reception room after the 10.00am service.

The entrance door to the church is on the city centre / High School side of St John's Square. There is a ramp access for wheelchairs and pushchairs up to this door. There is a fully accessible toilet at the church. There is an induction loop for those who use a hearing aid.

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Caritas

The Catholic Churches of
St Gregory the Great & St Thomas More
Parish Magazine



Advent 2012 Issue 71 £1.00

Caritas

The Catholic Churches of
St Gregory the Great & St Thomas More
Parish Magazine



Lent 2013 Issue 72 £1.00

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Parish News

BAPTISMS

Jonathan Matos Cabral
Lily Rachel Hughes
Joao Guilerme Santos Fernandes
Jessica Maria Simmonds
Heidi Alice Erin Dewhurst
Willow May Hicks
Peter Anthony Francis Blewitt-Jenkins
Samuel Alexander Jeenes
Kitty Marie Kerr
Matilda Elizabeth Penhale
Filip Vijay Kumar
Phelan Christopher Morrissey
Charlotte Morwenna Uren
Isabelle Ann Taylor

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to the following who celebrated their wedding in St Gregory's Church:

Cara Josephine Mullooly to John Robert Saxon
Amanda Jane Ross to Joseph John Allen
Suzanne Alexandra Connor to Julian Harvard Rolfe

DEATHS

Please pray for the souls of those recently deceased and for their bereaved relatives:

Hazel Patricia Popplewell
William John Sullivan (John)
Lucy Margaret Curtis
Mary Ann Guinee
Siobham Margaret Woods
Clifford George Brookes
Patrick Joseph Wallace (Pat)
Ann Rice
Peter Egerton Holland
John Anthony Powell (Tony)
Anne Bevan
Margaret Christine Balster
Daniel O'Connor
Anthony John Chesson
Patrick Young

CARITAS Info

Next edition: 19th May
Submission deadline: 14th April
Please send all material to 'The Editor':
eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk
or hand in to the Parish Office.

Feedback always welcome

Corinna Turner (01242 575197), The Editor
eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk

Many thanks to proof readers Canon Bosco, Georgina, Felicity, and production team Lucy, Bryan, Margaret, Martin, Mary and everyone else involved.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition and apologies to those whose articles I was not able to include. Please keep them coming!

Thank you for reading CARITAS.

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Lent is a time of reconciliation and renewal. A time when we make space in our lives to think about our relationship with our Father and the ways in which we are responding or failing to respond to his love and care for us.

You may sometimes pop into an art gallery and be more impressed with the frames than the paintings. It's not the frame that has great value but the painting, yet the frame matters. A good painting can be ruined by a bad frame. However, a bad picture can't be made good by a frame. Really the frame is the least important part of the exhibit, yet in everyday life we sometimes place more value on the frame itself than what is within it.

We often do the same with people. We judge their worth by their 'frame' and we get it wrong. Take the rich businessman who is seen at Mass regularly, attends respectable functions, and appears to be a caring and loving husband. That's the frame. What we don't see is that he is unfaithful to his wife and cruel to her at home.

On the other hand, there is a husband who is unemployed and his wife has two part-time jobs to make ends meet. This couple don't have very much and their frame isn't very impressive. But they are happy because they love each other and have each other's love. They make a beautiful picture.

What kind of a frame do we have and what kind of a picture is within it? We are to show Christ's love in our lives. Are we his frame, or his picture?

As we begin this season of renewal let us pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our Parish, that we may be more authentic in our response to God's love. Called to be a people of hope, we entrust our lives once again to the One who gave his life for us.

[illegible]d bless you and your loved ones in this holy season of Lent.

[illegible] MacDonald



A gift heaven-sent ~ *Sent by email*

Happiness is something we create in our mind –
Not something we search for and so seldom find.
It's just waking up and beginning the day
By counting our blessings and wanting to pray.
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as a gift heaven-sent.
It's giving up wishing for things we have not
And making the best of whatever we've got.



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How Deep is Your Love? ~ *Stella Kinmond*

Perhaps we can remember the Bee Gees '80s Hit "How Deep is Your Love" with its dreamy melody. Or even Take That's cover version in 1996. The lyrics speak of someone seeking assurance from their loved one about commitment and the honesty of their feelings.

If God were asking that question of me, how would I answer? Do I come to Church out of habit or out of love for God? Do I belong to just a Sunday club or does it mean something more?

Gathering as God's family to give praise and thanksgiving ought to be our greatest joy. He has given us Life itself, blessings of health, home, a loving family, work and friends, and so much more besides.

However, in reality, sometimes I go to Church and don't feel like singing – there is war and chaos in the world, uncertainties over work issues, health concerns, fall-outs with friends and family … I am tempted by numerous distractions that could entice me away from going to church. Yes, there are times when I wish I could be doing something else… It is then that we need to be honest with God.



Tell Him what your feelings are.

Tell Him what's happening in your life.

If you are too upset to pray, tell Him why; ask His help.

If I can't think about what to pray for in my own life, let me look to others around me – yes, even those people in the benches beside me (the young mother struggling with a toddler, the old lady who walks with a stick and can't kneel down, a person from a different country who must be missing their family and homeland, the sick mentioned every week in our bulletin). Occasionally I have spotted people at church get upset when they think about their situation in life; I can see them discreetly wipe a little tear from their eye. Let me pray for **them**.

Some people come to Mass and don't join in the prayers or sing the hymns. I remember Gareth Malone and how he trains his choirs. Those singers who really commit themselves, who open their mouths and feel the love, they are the ones

…in. Imagine what praise …ngregation could raise …d, if we all participated fully in our worship!

When I kiss my husband or children, I don't always tell them I love them. But the point is that just by being in their company and close says that I love them, even if I don't say the words. In the same way, if we're there regularly in church, and we spend time with Him, God will know that we love Him. If we talk honestly with God, involving him in our lives and our decision-making, our relationship with him will grow. God wants us to walk though each day with us, to talk with us. He made us a promise to be with us always, even till the end of time. That is a powerful promise. With God with us, who can be against us?

Of course we must always remember that when we come to church we are in the presence of an almighty, everlasting and ever-loving God, who is the creator of all: King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We need to show reverence. (Remember Moses and the burning bush? He took off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground). If we were in the presence of the Queen of England would we ignore her and chat amongst ourselves? When we are in God's presence we ought to shut out distracting thoughts that pop into our heads and really focus on what is happening; we are celebrating the life, death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Through His sacrifice there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, not sin, not even death. How awesome!



At the point of communion let us truly remember we are receiving Jesus himself. This should embolden us to, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord".

Someone said, Christianity is only one generation away from extinction. **It's our job to keep the faith alive.** Parents please pray with your children daily and bring them to Mass every Sunday. Let us at St. Gregory's be friendly and welcoming to visitors. Let us take part in the life of the parish – going for coffee after mass, joining one of the many groups which need new

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participants together with the rosary beads made by Michael Lawson, the former President of the Rosary Beadmakers of Bathurst, NSW, Australia.

The statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary wrapped in cloth and then with bubble wrap, the candle sticks and holders, the prayers, some rosary beads and some leaflets of information about the Mass, Reconciliation, Examination of Conscience, etc. are all provided and in a big bag for convenience of transfer.

Membership:

Members are from all over Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire and a vision to link the circle to Rome and Australia is on the agenda. The Circle can never be an exclusive one as we all need each other, praying for one another wherever we are.

The Circle became a source of social contact among the Filipinos. It widens their area of friendship both spiritually and socially.

Participants invite friends and relations to come and join in the prayer of the rosary. It is quite a glorious atmosphere hearing the group chanting harmoniously to the leader's salutations.

There are 52 of them, 52 homes representing the 52 weeks of the year. They enjoyed the visit of the Blessed Mother who stayed with them for a week. They readily accepted the Blessed Mother to their homes and the blessings bestowed on them, only they knew.

Some of them do not know each other until the BVM is transferred to his/her home. Though it may sound awkward that sometimes the transfer happens anywhere, the Blessed Mother will not complain as she only wants the participants to say the rosary/ prayers while in their homes. Her coming to their homes is only a reminder that our Creator is looking after them through her.



We are in a group, in an association looking after each other like a family. As a family, to save the world, we must first save the home. The rosary can do this. Everything that one turns in the direction of God is 'prayer'. (St Ignatius of Loyola)

And so, with Bishop Sheen let us say:

"Though hammers beat and sickles cut and atoms burst and warfare blusters at red satan's and hell's command – lift up your hearts, for has not God promised through a Virgin's foot to crush these cobras of the night?"

Monastery of Our Lady and St Bernard, Brownshill, Stroud, GL6 8AL

Celebrate Lent with us in this Year of Faith...

Weekend Retreat: *15th-17th February*
"Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see."
Faith and Service in the Light of Vatican II
Suggested offering £85

Schools of Prayer... *Wednesday evenings 7.00-9.00 pm*
20th Feb: Jesus at Prayer
27th Feb: ...at the school of St Benedict
6th March: ...at the school of St Francis
13th March: ...at the school of Carmel
20th March: ...at the school of Pope Benedict XVI

Gospel Sharing: *Sunday afternoons*
3.30 Talk by a Sister
4.15 Tea
4.45 Vespers (Optional)

It all depends on your point of view! *~ Sent by email*

English prayer: O Lord, grant that we may not be like porridge - stiff, stodgy and hard to stir; but like cornflakes - light, crisp and ready to serve.

Scottish prayer: O Lord, grant that we may not be like cornflakes - lightweight, empty and cold; but like porridge - warm, comforting and full of natural goodness.

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"I TOOK YOUR PLACE"

One day a man went to visit a church. He arrived early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near him and the driver told him **"I always park there!** ***You took my place"***. A little taken aback, the stranger locked his car and walked towards the church. He went inside for Sunday worship, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated **"That's my seat!** ***You took my place"***. The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome but said nothing. He then got up and went into the Lady Chapel, lit a candle and sat down to pray. Another member of the church walked up to him and said **"That's where I always sit to pray!** ***You took my place"***. The visitor was even more troubled by this statement but still said nothing and moved once more.

Later, during the Sunday Service, when the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out "What has happened to you?"

The visitor replied

"I TOOK YOUR PLACE".

EN

PARISH CENTRE CLOTHS

If anyone has taken blue check cloths or white linen cloths home to wash – please would you return them. The Hall is now desperately short when the tables are needed for refreshments.
Thank you
Val Beynon, Warden.

Have you got something you would like to say*? Read a good book? Seen a good film or play? Had a good holiday? Something interesting or funny happened to you? Tell us about it. There is a post box at the back of church – just drop in your contributions and we will share them in the magazine.*
Or e-mail to reesfolk@btinternet.com *Roger*

Ladies Guild

Our annual Christmas dinner was held on 28th December, at the King Arthur Hotel, when forty one Guild members, together with Father Tim, enjoyed an excellent seasonal meal followed by a disco.
Immediately after dinner, the raffle was drawn and the Vicar thanked the committee for their hard work, especially during Gwynneth's absence. It was a very enjoyable evening, the highlight being a "Twist" demonstration by Fr. Tim and our most senior member present, Beryl Bevan. Follow that!!



Due to the sad and shocking news of the sudden death of Fred, the previous day, on our meeting on 5th December members decided to cancel our plans and spend the evening remembering and reminiscing about him. Fred was a true gentleman with a wicked sense of humour, liked and respected by all Guild members. A talented man, he was a great support to Gwynneth in her role as Leader and he was always happy to entertain us with a talk, prepare a quiz or devise a treasure hunt around Killay. He was devoted to Gwynneth and looked after her wonderfully following her dreadful accident. We shall miss him and send our love and sincere sympathy to Gwynneth, Christopher, Michael, Tina, Debra, Lina and Tom.

Our next meeting is 9th January - programme to be arranged.

Best wishes to everyone for 2013.



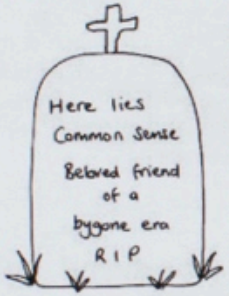
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Obituary:

THE SAD PASSING OF COMMON SENSE

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair, and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned, but overbearing, regulations were set in place.



Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teenagers suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they had themselves failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer paracetamol, sun lotion or a plaster to a pupil, but could not inform the parents when a pupil became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home, but the burglar could sue you for assault because you protected yourself and your own.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else is to Blame, and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised that he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Author Unknown

The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.

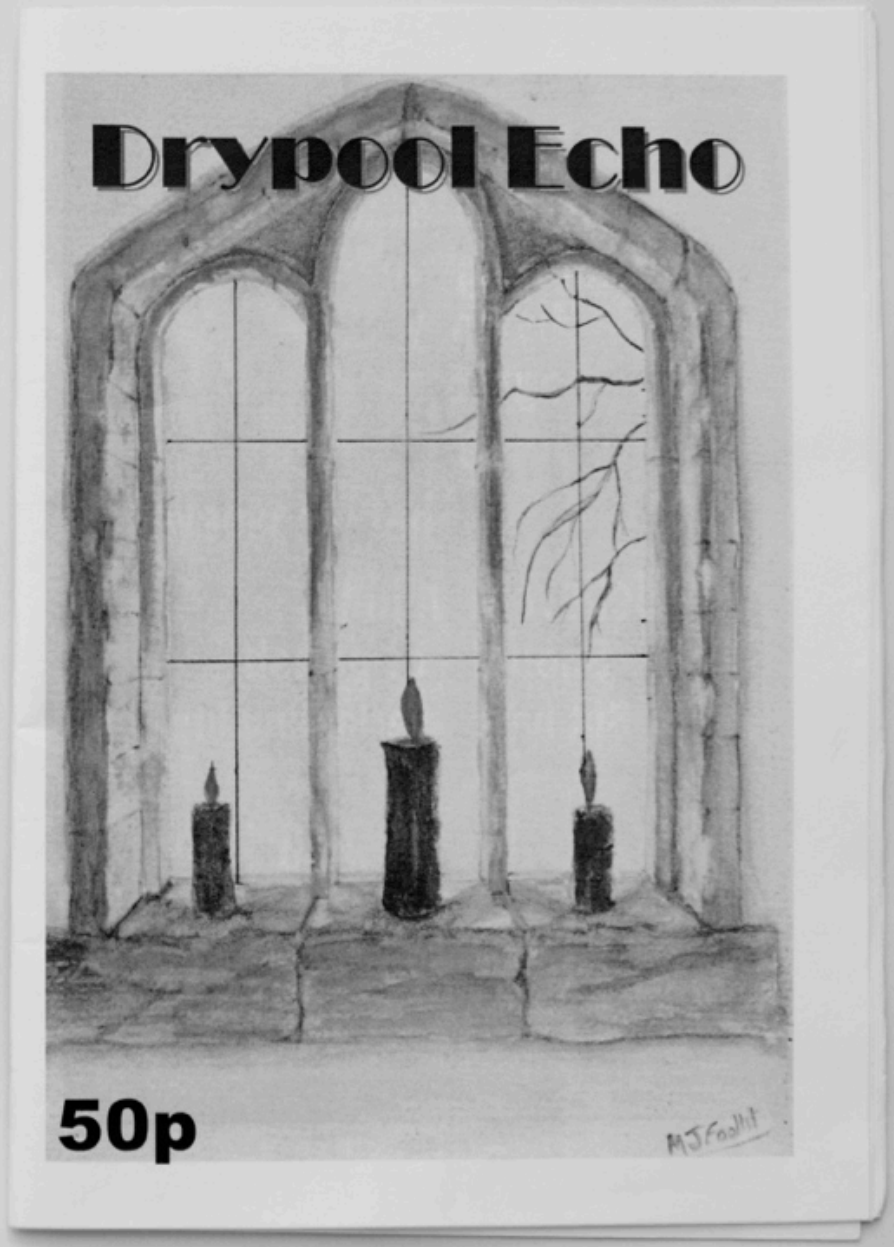


Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ.

He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.

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You Are Beautiful!

It's likely that many of you reading this will perhaps have already failed to keep those new year resolutions you made. If, like me, you didn't tell anyone what they were it won't be quite as embarrassing, but if you started that weight-loss blog or posted your intentions all over social media, you'll be feeling it more than the rest of us. Still, you'll have another chance soon as Lent approaches to be more self-disciplined. Perhaps you'll do a technology fast and lock away your iPad or mobile phone, maybe you will stop eating certain foods or start eating only vegetables and if you're really holy, of course, you'll be fasting the whole 40 days.*

This time of the year often finds us focussing on self-improvement or, perhaps if we are more honest, beating ourselves up over our many failures and weaknesses with a bit of self-loathing thrown in for good measure. At the risk of stating the blindingly obvious this is not a happy state of affairs - stop it!

Although we would never say aloud most of us believe, at least to some extent, (secretly) that we are unworthy and that we must do more or try harder to earn God's love. If you do think this way allow me to burst that particular bubble for you – there is nothing you can do to make God love you more and nothing you can do to make him love you less. He just loves you!

God has told us through the bible and the life, death & resurrection of his Son that he loves us (John 3:16). When God thinks about you he rejoices and sings a happy song (Zeph. 3:7)! So if the creator of the heavens and the earth who created you in his image and knows you better than you know yourself loves you unconditionally who are you to disagree?

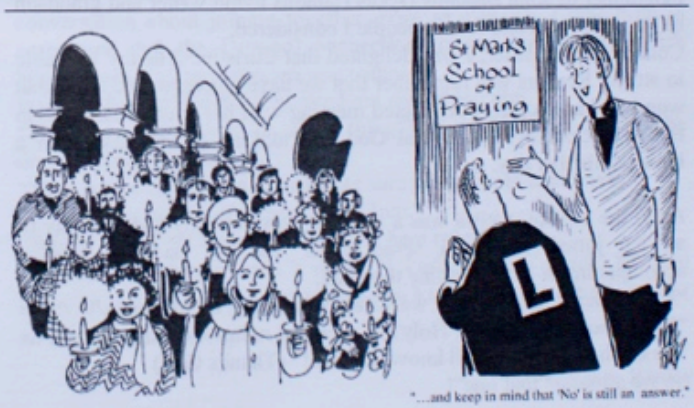
He's not impressed by your fasting (Is. 48:6), your sleek, professional worship (Amos 5:21) or your attempts to be good (Job 35: 6-8). None of it matters a jot to him in the sense of changing his attitude towards you. He just loves you!

As we continue through the new year I want to encourage you not to focus on what isn't right about your life, or the life of anyone else you know; don't worry about how imperfect Phil and I are, and we are; don't wish that such and such was or wasn't happening just focus your time and attention on Jesus. Ask him to fill you with his Holy Spirit and remind you every day that you are unconditionally loved. Be anxious for nothing but God!

God doesn't want your perfection or your strength, he wants your heart. There are good reasons to practice self-control but it's actually easier to be disciplined when you start from a place of knowing you are loved by God. If you know he loves you and only wants the best for you then it matters less that you slip up because you also know that he will forgive you. Also, once we accept that we are unable to help ourselves we can let God help us – his strength is made perfect in our weakness. In his strength, not ours, we are more likely to be able to do at least something good and then we can give him the glory and praise he deserves.

© Jason Taylor

*do not attempt a major fast or dietary changes without first seeing your GP and obtaining medical advice.



"....and keep in mind that 'No' is still an answer."

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A Journey of Discovery

During the Spring of 2012, when I was receiving treatment regularly at Castle Hill Hospital, I found myself waking up early in the mornings singing hymns. Not wanting to wake the rest of the household I got out my hymn book with tunes and realised I had been singing three hymns that Rev. J.B. Dykes had written the tunes to. 'Thou God of Truth and Love', 'I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say' and 'Jesus Lover of My Soul', so I felt I had started an interesting journey to find out more about Rev. Dykes. I already knew a connection was Dykes House on Hessle Foreshore. My parents knew it had been a nuns' retreat at one time, but didn't know why it was called Dykes House. Friends who are on the computer sent me information about Rev. Dykes and I found his life story fascinating. Also the fact that he was born in Hull in 1823 to very special parents and his grandfather was Rev. Thomas Dykes, made me think I should write about Rev. Dykes life. Dykes House was really Belmont House, Hessle and was occupied in the 1890s by Edward Octavius Dykes. his sister, Mrs Cheape and her daughter, Miss Cheape. At this time, Rev. J.B. Dykes widow Susan joined this family group and ended her life with them. Ross and I have a friend who is 103 and was born in Hessle. I was talking to her about the thought of writing a book about Rev. J.B. Dykes and Dykes House on Hessle Foreshore, and our friend Peggy said "I've been there many times, as Mrs Cheape and Miss Cheape held garden parties for All Saints Church, Hessle there. I knew the housekeeper and cook well, and there were beautiful gardens which went down to the River Humber." Well that is how I came to write my story, which I hope to complete in 2013 as it will be 190 years since Rev. J.B. Dykes was born.

© Christine Allenby

That's definitely a book I'd like to read—Ed.

	SERVICES	FOR	FEBRUARY	
	St Columba	St John	Victoria Dock	Other
Sun 3 Feb 2 Before Lent	Prayer Meeting	Morning Worship	Cafe Church	
Sun 10 Feb Sunday Before Lent	9.15 Holy Communion 10.30 Family Worship	Morning Worship		
Sun 17 Feb 1st in Lent	Holy Communion	Baptism	Morning Prayer	
Sun 24 Feb 2nd in Lent	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	Holy Communion	

Midweek Services St Columba's Tuesdays at 9.15am
St John's Wednesdays at 9.30a.m
CHECK NOTICE SHEETS FOR ANY CHANGES TO SERVICES

A Challenging Manifesto

John Wesley told the early Methodist teachers always to remember that "an ounce of love was worth a pound of knowledge" and his challenge to teacher and pupil alike was this:

Do all the good you can
By all the means you can
In all the ways you can
In all the places you can
At all the times you can
To all the people you can
As long as ever you can

His challenge still stands today.

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Mabel

The days after Christmas seemed rather flat for Mabel and her friends in the care home. But all welcomed the lighter nights and mornings. "And the birds must know something" said Rosa, "they're singing in the morning before it is light."

Mrs Timmins, the Home Manager, came into the lounge as the ladies were having their morning coffee. "I've had a visit from the Headmaster of the school across the road," she said. "The children there are doing a study of the war years. Would you ladies be interested in talking to the children about your experiences?"

"Well I wouldn't mind" said Rosa.

"I'll help" said Mabel, and soon everyone was willing to take part.

On the day, the teacher came with the children. The teacher spoke first about the children's studies and the sort of questions the children might ask. Then each of the ladies had a one-to-one session partnered with one of the children. Mabel's partner was Julie. At first the children were shy, but gradually their interest was won.

"Were you in the army?" Julie asked.

"No." Mabel told her. "I worked in a munitions factory, making shells for the soldiers to use."

Rosa had been in the WRNS and Jean had been in the Women's Land Army, so there was a good mix of experiences and the morning flew by. Half way through, Sylvia the carer brought a tray of orange juice for the children, and on the table arranged items of food in the weight and size of rations for one person.

"Is that all you got for one week?" questioned Julie. "I could eat that in one day. And what about sweets?"

Jean had a photo of herself in a Land Army uniform and Hilary had a gas mask and tin hat while Trina had brought an old ration book. After the children had gone, the ladies found they had much to talk about as memories came flooding back. A few days later they all received a nicely written letter of thanks from the children.

"That went well" said Rosa

"I think its good for the children to know how we lived in those days" Hilary put in.

"But we pray that is the only way they know about the effects of war" said Jean. A prayer that they all echoed in their hearts.

© Margaret King

Mothers' Union

The afternoon group met on Wednesday 9th January for the Annual Wave of Prayer and Surprise Packet Auction. We remembered Mothers' Union groups in Africa and also the Diocese of York. Candles were lit as we prayed for specific groups and members of the worldwide Mothers' Union.

We welcomed Keith Thompson to the meeting as our auctioneer. He was very in control as usual and the group thanked him for his time and effort.

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 6th February from 1.30 pm.

Parish Roving Reporter

St Columba's Flower Guild

The Flower Guild have decided this Easter to ask if anyone would like to give a donation of £4 for a lily in memory of a loved one. Donations for other flowers will also be gratefully received, for Easter or any other time of the year. Please see or contact Jean Clark.

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Plans? Yes, I've Got a Plan For You...

I should have known better, especially with it being this time of year. As the bus drove away from the station it was completely full and I thought to myself 'I could have walked home faster than how long it was going to take to get home'. As I got off the bus I noticed a text from Shane so I hurriedly sent him a reply. We had arranged to go to York together for a local carol service. Shane got back to pick me up a little later. As we drove off we both agreed that we may be too late to get to the carol service but still drove to York anyway. I said to Shane "if our visit is half as good as last time we should have quite a night". At first, I suggested we should just go to Beverley instead but Shane's reply "we car drivers like to stretch out our new set of wheels when we get them" made me smile.

We got to York around an hour later and started stretching our own legs with a walk around the historic city. As we passed York Minster and St Michael's we both fondly remembered our previous visit. As we walked around my growing hunger was getting the better of me and Shane and I were now on a mission to find a fish shop that sold spam burgers. We looked and looked but sadly found not one.

Nearly an hour later we decided to head back for the car. As we walked down a cobbled street, a voice called out "can you spare any change please?" We were confronted by a homeless man sat on a stone step....

© Carl Allison

Next month: Carl shares more of the story of our visit to York and our encounter with Trevor the homeless man

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"Never be afraid to try. Remember: amateurs built the ark. Professionals built the Titanic.

Anon.

Bible Sketchbook

Time to be a little less frenetic!



Let's try being a little bit less frenetic as we come into Lent. Martha was one of those people who welcomed Jesus into her house and her life but got so caught up with restless busyness that she couldn't hear what he was trying to say to her. Her sister Mary was different. She stopped. She sat at Jesus' feet. She listened and took in what he was saying. So despite all those things that need doing, let's make time to welcome Jesus into every area of our lives and go his way.

Read more in Luke 10:38-42







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On Why Rural Churchgoers Like to Freeze in Church

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Christopher,

Winter certainly exposes the difference between those of you who live in cities and us rural folk. While you bask in your centrally heated flat, with every modern convenience that could be imagined and complain about the half an inch of slush that makes your life so inconvenient, we country folk wear overcoats in our houses, open all doors and windows to let the heat in and battle through snow drifts, measured in feet, to get the morning paper.

Colonel Wainwright has acquired a new toy: a snow blower, of sufficient power that I believe it could clear the Antarctic. He kindly volunteered to clear the paths around the church. Working outwards from the church door, the path to the church soon became snow free. Unfortunately, he only realised when his job was complete that the blown snow then formed a ten foot drift under the lych-gate. We now have to climb over the churchyard wall and negotiate buried gravestones before we can reach his pristine paths.

Miss Margison, ever helpful in the worst sense of the word, decided to unfreeze the pipes in the church hall. A blow torch was not the ideal solution, although the resulting burst did make some rather attractive ice sculptures round the kitchen equipment. The village badminton team that uses the hall has now temporarily changed sport to ice hockey.

Inevitably, congregations have soared. There is nothing like adversity for making people want to prove they have the moral fibre to overcome it. Much satisfaction seems to be obtained on discovering who has not dared venture out, which is taken as judgement on their strength of character. The Prentices upstaged most people by arriving on a sleigh. Mr Prentice was warmly wrapped in a travelling rug, while his wife pulled it. As her husband explained, he couldn't possibly let the pony work in such conditions.

What I momentarily thought was applause during my sermon was merely people keeping their hands warm and the hymns were drowned out by the stamping of feet. Our organist complained that the cold made his fingers so numb that he couldn't play properly – although I didn't notice that things were much different from normal.

…y dear nephew, you continue to fret about your church heating dropping to temperate from tropical and a few flakes of wet snow obliging you to close your car park for health and safety reasons. We shall continue to triumph heroically over adversity and return home after Matins, knowing we have proved our Christian commitment in being utterly uncomfortable.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

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.

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OUTLOOK

The Magazine of
Bethesda Methodist Church, Cheltenham

December 2012 No. 81



Vancouver Island

"Hills of the north, rejoice ..."

Singing the Faith: no.172

OUTLOOK

The Magazine of
Bethesda Methodist Church, Cheltenham

February 2013 No. 82



Snowdrops, Colesbourne Park

"Flowers appear on the earth;"

Song of Songs 2 : 12

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Bethesda Methodist Church
Great Norwood Street
Cheltenham

Pastoral Letter

Be Careful

The predict[illegible]r has arrived in the la[illegible] a vengeance! I have lo[illegible] count of the number of times I must have said or heard "be careful". The thought of getting about in snow and ice frankly fills me with dread and every journey completed without sliding or falling is a cause for huge relief (if you've ever ended up in a plaster cast for a broken wrist or ankle, you'll know what I mean). Walking from the car park to Church, that fear of falling demanded such concentration I could spare no thought for anything else. But wasn't I 'taking care'?

Being so care full and so burdened by anxieties for ourselves, our world, our future, we could easily lose equilibrium. Yet I'm sure we've known people with troubles who nevertheless can stay 'up'. We can stay up or we can go under. An illustration - a novice to scuba diving must learn to carefully control buoyancy by means of a flotation jacket and a set of weights worn round the waist. At the water's surface, you need to shed the right one first - take off the means of buoyancy first and the weights quickly pull you down.

It isn't that such cares, such thoughts, indicate any kind of failure, just that, unbalanced, we are pulled further away from the state of hope-full Christian living that John Wesley described as having a 'heart… ever with the Lord'.

John Wesley's Methodist Character is, in his words, "careful (anxiously or uneasily) for nothing, as having cast all his care on Him that careth for him, and in all things, resting on Him".

That's Philippians 4:6, which in the New Living translation of the bible, puts it simply:

"Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done".

So, we should be careful!

Now, I mean, in the sense of practising care; the sort that buoys you up.

The Bethesda community does take care in the smile and the welcome we offer, the practical service and generous hospitality of all kinds, seen and unseen.

As Church we should have a care toward the future. We make changes soon because we would like to see a sound and attractive building, useful and welcoming; joyful and relevant music and worship; an inviting place to "come and see".

As individuals we have a care toward one another. Our greatest asset is each other and the support we can find there. Share all the care you can with each other and share everything with God.

Bridget Nye

Soup lunches



As part of the fund-raising I am hoping to organise regular soup lunches at church on the first Wednesday of every month starting on March 6th. I see this as both a fund-raising and an outreach opportunity and I am hoping that folk in the local community will feel welcome to come along between 12 and 2.00.

It would be wonderful to have some helpers who perhaps are not involved in other events to help on the day and also people who are happy to make some of their favourite soups to put on the menu; any offers will be gratefully received. We will be asking for donations rather than setting a price so as not to exclude anyone. Please feel invited and bring your friends.

Elaine Bailey 511278

baileye@btinternet.com

Fund raising.

We are off to a good start with the Ritz tea which raised £384. The next event on Feb 1st (Friday) is a ploughman's lunch - £5 where we will hopefully see the results of sponsoring Chris Wall to get his hair cut.

Feb 16th at 7.30 pm: Auction of promises. Free entry with a juice and snack bar. Promises already received include 1/2 day D.I.Y., help with family tree research, French lesson. If you have a promise please hand it in soon.



March 22nd (Friday) We have 50 tickets for "See how they run" at the 7.45pm Playhouse. Performance. Normal ticket price of £10 each but the refurbishment fund stands to gain 50% of this.

Ros Terry

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GUEST WRITER

Bridget Marriot

In Their Minds' Eye

After over 40 years in Early Years Education, I retired in 1995 and gave up all the committees and other commitments that I had, as I felt something else would find me. It did. I saw an advertisement in a newspaper for a Sighted Guide wanted at the Kingcombe Centre near Dorchester. This is an old farmhouse and outbuildings converted for a variety of courses, such as arts, crafts or musical activities - many of them residential. The weekend was called 'The Scents and Sounds of Autumn' and it was for Blind and Visually Impaired people. I had had no experience of being with blind people, but I was offered a place as a helper.

During those few days I started to understand a little of the life of someone with no sight, either through having lost it, or never having had any since birth. Two major things happened. While we were on the beach one day, I picked up a shell and put it in the hands of the lady I was guiding. She burst into tears. I was horrified and asked her what I had done. She replied, 'No one's ever done that for me before.'

One day I was walking along the cliff at Worth Matravers with a blind lady attached to my backpack, and I was describing the colour of the sea. I suddenly realized that my companion might not know what 'blue' was. 'No' she said, 'I've never had sight, but don't stop telling me, as I've got my own idea of what 'blue' is.' She then said I should join the Guide Dogs. I was puzzled as my tail doesn't wag and my nose isn't wet, but she said 'You ride, you ski, you sail, and you verbalize well.' I thought she meant I talked too much, but what she actually meant was that I could describe what I was seeing, and make it come alive for her. So I joined what was in those days called 'Guide Dogs for the Blind Adventure Group.'

A few years later I was in Guernsey for a short break and went to a Quaker Meeting on Sunday. It was the second smallest Meeting I have encountered- just five of us, but during Business the Clerk was talking about an occasion at a meeting when one member of the committee wasn't present, but they could all 'see' him in their Minds' Eye - and I thought, 'That's what I do. I enable Blind and Visually Impaired people to see the world in their Minds' Eye.'

I never fail to be amazed by the resilience and achievements of these people - holding down worthwhile jobs and raising families of their own. Their reasons for blindness are varied - car accidents, illness, or in one case being shot by the Mau Mau in Kenya. Another man I met had been a soldier in Northern Ireland and his sight loss was as a result of stepping on a mine.

There are different categories of holidays:

City breaks - Istanbul, Chester.
Experiences - The Chelsea Flower Show, Driving Day at Brands Hatch.
Resorts - Torquay or Reykavik.
Sun breaks - Tunisia or Bournemouth
Tour breaks - Alaska, Shanghai to Beijing.
Adventure breaks - Nepal or Borneo, often where the culture and living standards differ from our own and where you may need a positive, self-reliant attitude.
Activity/ Challenge breaks - Downhill skiing or tandem cycling, often very physical and requiring specific levels of fitness.

I usually choose the Activity or Adventure ones, but have also studied Shakespeare in Stratford-on-Avon, Jane Austen in Hampshire and classical music in Bournemouth.

So, what do I do as a Sighted Guide? I help to make sense of foreign currency, I help to buy presents for those left at home, I describe the scenery, people, buildings and food (it's green with white bits in it. It's pink with yellow fronds sticking out...) and find as many things as possible for my partner-of-the-day to touch.

Why have I done all these fantastic things, and many more besides? I do it to enable a blind person to experience the things that I have experienced by having them described to them. Sometimes this is not easy. On one trip I had to describe the paintings of the atrocities commited by the Khymer Rouge in the killing fields in Cambodia and allow my companion to feel the skulls in the museum there, all of which I found very harrowing. Then, to describe the enormity of the rocks and mountain regions of the area where the bridge over the River Kwai was built.

I recall the joy of re-meeting a visually impaired lady who said, 'Do you remember when we saw the snake in the tree above our heads when we were in the canoe in Borneo? She hadn't 'seen' the snake but to her she had.

Bridget Marriott lives in the New Forest and is one of a select few to appear for a second time as 'Guest Writer' in 'Outlook'. The above is a much shortened version of an Easter Lecture which she gave last year at the Sidcot 'Quaker' School, Somerset. Please let me know if you would like a copy of the full text. ***Ed.***

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DOES SIN MATTER?

The following is based on a paper prepared by Chris Lammiman for discussion at a meeting of the All Saints Housegroup.

In his book 'Speaking Christianity' Marcus Borg, the American theologian, emphasises that *sin* is one of the Bible's major metaphors for the human condition but it is one of several and not the only one. Does sin matter? It does! Crucially it matters how we think of SIN. Is it the most important metaphor in our understanding of our life with God?

SIN needs to be demoted from its status as the dominant Christian expression of what is wrong among us. It is not the only biblical image, or even the primary or most important one. Israel slaves in Egypt were not there because they had sinned; their great need was for LIBERATION.

SIN plays a part in the story of EXILE but it is not the primary image of their predicament. It was not forgiveness they needed but a "way to return home". The story of the Prodigal Son is not a story about SIN and forgiveness. It is about exile, return, welcome, celebration.

When SIN becomes the "one size fits all" metaphor for the human condition it obscures the rich and important meanings of other metaphors. According to the Bible what we need deliverance from is not simply sin, or primarily sin. People need liberation from bondage, to return home from exile. The blind need to see, the sick or wounded need healing, the outcasts need community. The "heaven and hell" emphasis on sin and forgiveness casts these meanings in to shadow. They are eclipsed by SIN.

Christian thinkers over the centuries have described sin as "hubris" (Greek) = pride, focused on self and attempting to be God-like. It applies to individuals and to institutions. The second image is "sloth" (leaving it to the snake) - letting others decide your life for you. The remedy is to re-centre ourselves on God. Another root image is idolatry - not a matter of idols but of lordship. Idolatry occurs when we make anything less than God the centre of our lives. Within this broader biblical understanding, forgiveness is not the primary antidote. Instead we need a deeper centering on God - "Thou shalt love the Lord your God"

In contemporary Christian worship, sin is the focus - confession and absolution. What of the other things which ail us- bondage, exile, infirmity, injury etc?

Borg asks us to imagine confession and absolution as part of the liturgy one Sunday in five and on the other four the confession of sin would be replaced by the other images of our predicament. So a five Sunday cycle would look like this.:

Week 1. Confession of sin and absolution
Week 2. God wills our liberation from bondage
Week 3. God wills our return from exile
Week 4. God wills that our blindness is lifted so that we can see again.
Week 5. God wills our healing and wholeness

How significant is the concept of sin to people to-day? Would a broader view as suggested by Borg make worship more relevant?

Coffee Shop



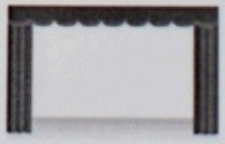
In 2011 the Coffee Shop and donations from Sunday Coffee, purchased 3 Shelter Boxes for areas in crisis. Our boxes have been used in Syria helping families who have been forced to flee their homes because of violence, religious tensions and economic hardship.

In 2012 the two charities we were supporting were the local Parkinson's group who meet monthly at St Mark's Methodist Church, and Cheltenham YMCA who are undergoing a major building refurbishment in Victoria Walk. Each charity was given £1,150.00.

This year we are supporting our own refurbishment and Maggie's Care Centre in College Baths Road. On Wednesdays between 5.30 & 6.30pm the centre is open to visitors to learn of the very important support the centre gives to their patients. The staff would be pleased to welcome any members of Bethesda.

Thank you for your continuing support, and if you would like to join the Coffee Shop team, please speak to Celia (236356)

Celia Kidd



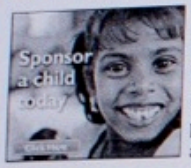
* * *

I told my mum that I'd opened a theatre. She said, "Are you having me on?" I said, "Well I'll give you an audition, but I'm not promising you anything."

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CLOSE TO MY HEART

In these days of austerity, charities are more desperate than ever for our support. We can probably each think of our 'favourites' and mine are special to me. *World Vision*, the well established Christian charity, has eased the suffering of many, and liberated communities all over the world, empowering them long-term and finding sustainable solutions to poverty. Stuart and I sponsor a child through World Vision and can heartily recommend sponsorship.



Another charity close to my heart is *Compassion in World Farming*. Animals for food are some of the most vulnerable creatures on the planet, with the least voice. They are seen as a commodity, an object, rather than sentient beings with feelings. Sustainable farming benefits animals, people and the environment. Not everyone is a pet lover, but those of us who own a dog, for example, and especially a 'rescue dog', will know that wonderful bond of trust and love. When I do my best for my dog, it reminds me of how I also need to treat fellow human beings and the planet. It reminds me of the vulnerable, of my relationship with Christ and compassion for all living things; the way I garden for wildlife, supporting the Fairtrade Traidgreen stall at Bethesda, the sources of timber products I purchase, and questions I ask of retailers when I choose what food I buy and whether I really need all I desire (not an easy one!).

CIWF
advancing
farm animal welfare

A compassionate food guide is available from Compassion in World Farming (that Red Tractor scheme is not nearly as ethical as you might think). The charity has lobbied hard for many welfare issues, including free-range eggs, free-range pork, no mega-dairies, calling for a ban on live exports and foie gras (you don't, do you?). It isn't easy being an ethical consumer. I get things wrong, believe me. But I'm trying.

If you would like to know more, please see:
World Vision www.worldvision.org.uk
Compassion in World Farming www.ciwf.org.uk

Ann Smith <><

"DO SOMETHING".... One



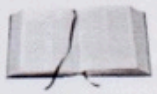
If I had the choice to be a Bible character it would be Simeon (Luke 2 v 25-35). I will make no claim to be as "righteous and devout...and full of the spirit" as he, but to hold that baby in my arms! To realise that this baby Jesus was God's promised Messiah! How wonderfully thrilling! At times the thought of it has brought tears to my eyes.

He knew the scriptures and was familiar with the prophecies of 400 plus years previously. But nothing had happened. I imagine he said "When, God, are you going to do something?" Then God made him that promise, namely, before he died he would see God's Messiah, the saviour of the world. And then He was there in his arms. And Simeon can say (King James' version) "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation..."

The downside of such insight of course is to have to prophesy the painful as well, as Simeon did. The Holy Spirit does not just reveal the nice side of life but He/She reveals the truth that God did and is still doing something.

"DO SOMETHING".... Two

About this time last year it occurred to me that we last h[ad] a mid-week Bible Study in Bethesda about 16 years ago. We do have communion fo[r] nightly on Thursday mornings (which is open to all), we have house groups but no Bible Study in church. "Somebody should do something!" I said. He seems to have chosen me but He is in charge.



So each Wednesday at 10.30am between two and seven of us meet in the New Room to read the lectionary readings for the following Sunday. Each of us has the chance to read aloud. We then discuss, exchange views and insights, listen to what is said and learn from each other. It is subsequently interesting and helpful to hear what extra knowledge and insights the preacher has to offer the following Sunday.

It began as "Taste and see" with the idea of having a light lunch together but we have settled for coffee and biscuits and it seems to work well. It is an opportunity for some who are not in a group already to meet in this way and there is room for two or three more. The meeting begins and ends with a prayer and lasts between 60 90 minutes.

Stuart Tierney

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MY FAVOURITE PLACE? - BOURTON v WINCHCOMBE YOU DECIDE!



*



So, it's a 'Place-off" between one of the largest villages in the country (population 3, 300+) and one of the smallest towns (c.4,400)!

The Bourton is of course the 'on-the-Water' version and not 'on-the-Hill', which is about 2 miles west of Moreton-in-Marsh. B-o-t-W is rightly one of the most visited villages in the Cotswolds & one of the most aptly-named, known as The Venice of the Cotswolds due to it's crystal-clear rivers!:- Windrush, Dikler & Eye, Birdland Canal, Marshmouth Ponds & Bourton Gravel Pits, incidentally all great habitats for birds!

It has 5 beautiful bridges, idyllic Cotswold stone cottages, with the lovely 709 AD Parish Church of St. Lawrence (there can't be many of those in the land!) at its heart, plus many & diverse attractions.

'Birdland' Park & Gardens (under new ownership) hosts the only King Penguins in England & encompasses the Marshmouth Nature Reserve, home of rare Hawfinches, still-scarce Otters & endangered Water Voles. (01451-820480) Greystones Farm is a comparatively-new flagship reserve of the Glos. Wildlife Trust, a body of people I cannot praise highly enough - (www.gloucestershirewildlifetrust.co.uk).

The 'Living Green Centre' (High Street) is also worth a visit for its organic show garden (01451-820942). Just round the corner from here on Sherborne Street is the Cotswold Motoring Museum & opposite, the Village's only charity shop, Sue Ryder, a favourite haunt of mine. The Tourist Information Centre is also on the far side of the Windrush on Victoria Street (01451 820211).

The Model Village is a Work of Art & if it's shopping you like, other Works of Art can be found in the 'Aladdin's Cave' that is attached to Hartwell's ironmongers. There are many high quality gift shops, including 'Toys for Boys' & Edinburgh Woollen Mill. Cricket, football & tennis facilities are on Rissington Road. A Specialist State-of-the-Art Dementia Care Home has just opened in Meadow Way, to the north of the Village.

...ne-time seat of the Saxon kings of Mercia, **Winchcombe** was also capital ...parate shire, Winchcombeshire! Belas Knap long barrow of prehistoric ...dates back 4,000 years. Winchcombe Abbey, which gives its name to the excellent Primary school, stood proudly for 1,000 years, but Henry VIII obliterated all traces of it in 1539. The last complete chronicle of the Abbey by Abbot, Richard of Kydderminster, was burned with the desserts in Pudding Lane, London in 1666! One wall of the Abbey remains, bordering Abbey Terrace. Many old Cotswold stone houses in the town, however, contain its ancient stones, lead & timbers.

Back in the day St. Peter's Parish Church, nearly new and complete with local look-alike gargoyles, huge tower & resplendent golden rooste, became the people's choice of church. Nowadays one can also worship at the Methodist Church (High Street), the Catholic Church or at the Cotswold Christian Centre

Although tourism is now by far Winchcombe's biggest industry, others have included wool, farming, paper, pottery & even tobacco. There's a hospital on Cheltenham Road & a clinic in the main car park! Winchcombe School has a growing reputation for excellence, not least for its Sports hub, used by the Cheltenham Town 'Rubies', no less!

Teashops & terraces, Antique shops & alley-ways, local tradespeople & lovely trees, all feature in fine style today as in bygone days. (Winchcombe T.I.C. - 01242 602925)

Though widely thought of as the most romantic castle in the land, Sudeley has been the scene of several murders & some bloody battles, not to mention horrible hauntings, despite the gardens being undeniably beautiful. Seven years ago, I embarked on the pleasurable task of writing **'Wing Walks?.....-In Winchcombe!!** Walk 1. - Sudeley Circular' - "a unique guide to a perfect birding 'local patch' in a tranquil & timeless town".

If it's good enough for my birds, then it's good enough for me!

John D. Wilcock

Winter Morning

Blonde texts husband on a cold winter's morning: "Windows frozen."

Husband texts back: "Pour some lukewarm water over it."

Wife texts back: "I did that and I think the computer's packed up altogether!"

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An Important Proposal

While working in a remote village in Sierra Leone I befriended Alpha, who was one of the local men on our building team. Alpha was impressed with my tool kit and amazed to find a woman working as a volunteer in construction. He would bring extra rice and greens for lunch and we would sit and talk. When he enquired about my husband, I explained I wasn't married. Alpha said later he wanted to have children and hoped to marry soon. He wondered if I was going to stay in his country and then surprised me by saying he had an important question to ask. I was rather nervous at this point. The next day Alpha was solemn as he asked if I was ready to answer his question. I nodded. "When you go back home," he said, "may I have your trowel?"

Porridge and Cornflakes



Church of England prayer: *O Lord, grant that we may not be like porridge - stiff, stodgy and hard to stir; but like cornflakes - light, crisp and ready to serve.*
Church of Scotland prayer: *O Lord, grant that we may not be like cornflakes- lightweight, empty and cold; but like porridge - warm, comforting and full of natural goodness.*

With thanks for the two items above to 'The Ideas Forum' the monthly emailing from ACE (The Association for Church Editors)

A Man May Not Marry His ...

***Derek Fryer** offers a personal view on a current topic*

Having emphasized certain deficiencies in the Table of Kindred and Affinity, the quarterly report of the Archbishop's Standing Committee on Matrimony had aroused deep disquiet in Lambeth Palace. Unburdening himself to a friend, the author of the report - the Prebendary and protagonist of a short story by Robert Graves - allowed that the Church had hitherto accepted Genesis 1:27, "male and female created he them", as definitive and that every human being was predestined to one sex or the other. Insufficient credit had been given, however, to the mystery and evolutionary wonder of the Divine Scheme, and to the remarkable skill with which Providence had been pleased to endow certain outstanding

surgeons and physicians. It had now been proved that a man or woman, even after consummating their marriage, could experience a partial change of sex which these surgeons and physicians were empowered to make total.

Pressed tactfully by his friend, the Prebendary revealed that the Standing Committee were no longer satisfied that the prohibited degrees listed in the Table of Kindred and Affinity had been defined with sufficient exactitude to prevent what could be construed as scandalous marriages from taking place. Now that a certificate, signed by two or three qualified doctors and approved by a magistrate, enabled a man legally to register himself as a woman, what was to prevent him from entering into a union which the Church would find ambiguous and problematic?

Against that, there was the peculiarly interesting case to consider of a man changed into a woman wanting to marry a woman turned into a man. The Prebendary could see no moral objection to a match of this sort, because the spouses belonged to opposite sexes whichever way you looked at it. Leviticus 20:13 could not be invoked in this case.

The discussion ended when the Prebendary was asked what counsel he would give to a legalized ex-man if he were to fall honourably in love with his deceased grandmother's husband and find his feelings tenderly reciprocated. "Strictly off the record," the Prebendary chuckled, "I should advise him to publish the banns in a remote parish and not disclose the relationship to the officiating priest. It is, after all, better to marry than to burn!"

Graves's story anticipates and complements the more recent controversy surrounding same-sex marriage, a nuptial form that is unacceptable to those who hold marriage to be self-evidently a biologically natural union between man and woman; pressure to broaden this definition to embrace both heterosexual and homosexual unions is seen by its opponents as illogical and unprincipled. Surely it is not beyond the wit of our legislators to devise a term that uniquely defines a formal homosexual union; and to do so, moreover, without either disparaging that union or lauding the unfortunate condition that promotes it. If the sticking point is indeed a semantic one (clergy's conscientious objections have already been accommodated), then it falls to Church and State together to seek its resolution. Let us hope they are up to the job.

* *

Addendum: *Robert Graves, poet and novelist, is best know for his historical novels 'I, Claudius' and 'Claudius the God'. The story 'A Man May Not Marry ..' first appeared in 1954 and is included in Graves' Complete Short Stories published in the Penguin Modern Classics series. Graves died in 1985.* ***Ed.***

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For the duration of my training I will not be able to produce a magazine every month. I will produce as many as my timetable will allow.

Contributions for the MAY magazine to be received on or before Thursday 25th April 2013

for publication on Saturday 4th May 2013

Biddy Wigley
5 Whitegates, Mayals, Swansea, SA3 5HW
Email: bobandbiddy.wigley@virgin.net

CHRIST ABOVE ALL ELSE

Fr Danny

Dear all,

Christ has set us free by his life-giving spirit of love, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We are to live by the Spirit and be guided by the Spirit. As children of God, we are free – that's what the gospel is all about.

St Paul is quick to remind the followers of Jesus that the gospel of Christ is tough. To proclaim the message of Christ is often very difficult indeed. Jesus never said it would be easy – for the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Again in Luke's gospel, Jesus said, 'Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.'

Jesus makes it clear time after time, that following him will not be easy. It will involve sacrifices and conflicts of priorities. But, as Jesus said, 'if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' To live by the spirit and by guided by the spirit we are made free. But what does that mean to us? Well, if we desire to know Christ, if we want to follow his example of perfect love, compassion and mercy, if we put Christ above everything else in our lives, we are set free.

To live by the Spirit we need to sacrifice living by the flesh. That's where it gets tough; because that's where we have to decide what is important to us. To live a rich life today in this world or to live a rich life in the Kingdom of God with the poor. If we follow Christ and live in the Spirit we will inherit the Kingdom of God – but this is a narrow way and leads to the cross before we are set free. Freedom requires commitment and a different set of attitudes that most of us will struggle with. Freedom requires putting others first, reaching out with compassion to our neighbours, helping the poor and the sick, and being committed in our discipleship.

We are all called to live the gospel of Christ, we are all children of God and must stand firm in the faith. Let us treasure the words of St Paul, 'I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the

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REJOICE!

Fr Danny

Over Lent, we enter more deeply into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings so that we might know fully and joyfully the power of his resurrection. "I want to know Christ and the power of his Resurrection," cried Paul, and so at Easter with all the saints and angels in heaven and united with those baptised around the world, we too give thanks, because for our salvation Christ was obedient even to death on the cross.

The tree of shame was made the tree of glory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored. We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he – and only he – is our salvation, our life and our resurrection; through him – and only him – are we saved and set free.

Let us rejoice with all the choirs of angels. Christ has conquered and darkness vanishes for ever. Rejoice O Mother Church! Exult in glory!

The rise[n] Saviour shines upon you! Let us resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

Now let us echo the wonderful words of Bishop Frank Weston of Zanzibar, '...Go out with the power of his resurrection and look for Jesus in the ragged, in the naked, in the oppressed and sweated, in those who have lost hope, in those who are struggling to make good. Look for Jesus. And when you see him, gird yourselves with his towel and try to wash their feet.'

We worship you, we venerate your cross, we praise your resurrection. Through the cross you brought joy to the world.

Christ is truly Risen! He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia. Let us rejoice and be glad, Alleluia.

St Augustine

And he departed from our sight that we might return to our heart, and there find Him.
For He departed, and behold, He is here.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Fr Nigel

Sporting honours

This year's winter graduation ceremonies were held over a period of two days in January at the Grand Theatre in Swansea.



In addition to the many students receiving degrees, the university awarded honorary fellowships and degrees to an elite group of people who had brought distinction to the locality and to Wales as a whole, via their respective professions.

One of the people awarded an honorary doctorate by the university was Welsh Rugby's Head Coach and former New Zealand All Black, Warren Gatland. He is pictured being congratulated by Fr Nigel.

Public Theology Lecture

Lord Griffiths, who was born in Fforestfach and educated at Dynevor Grammar School, returned to his home diocese on Thursday, 7th March to deliver a Theology Public Lecture at Swansea University. It was the 76th lecture since the series was first set up in 2003.

He spoke with great insight and eloquence on "The Christian Faith and the Financial Crisis" to an audience of over 150 people. Lord Griffiths who is one of the world's leading economists is currently Vice-Chairman of Goldman Sachs and a former Director of the Bank of England.



In the 1980's he worked as the Head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit at Number 10 Downing Street. He was Special Advisor to Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, and had responsibility for domestic policy in the United Kingdom.

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MUMBLES CHURCHES TOGETHER

Glenys Williams

'Do not exclude a stranger from your home. You may find that you're shutting out the messenger of God, the Angel of the Lord who comes to visit you, the Angel of the Lord who comes into your life.'
Original French version by Noel Colombier

We celebrated the *Women's World Day of Prayer* this year with a very moving service in 'Our Lady Star of the Sea', prepared by the Christian women of France and focussed on St Matthew 25: '**I was a stranger and you welcomed me**.' It was written by the women in the light of the many refugees, political and economic, who have moved to France over these past so many years.

100,000 are granted French nationality each year, but they must learn the language and accept the Constitution, so today almost one quarter of the current population has at least one foreign grandparent.

Thirteen of us came from the Parish, with Felicity Padley giving the address, and Shirley Hatton and Mair Kiley taking part in the service. The day was made very special when we were joined by Pam Buller, for her first outing since October, when she contracted a serious staph. infection in her knee.

Before the final blessing, we joined hands to say the Lord's Prayer and we finished with the usual splendid tea, this time with French cakes and biscuits.

Our Prayer for the Diocese

Father, we hold before you our family in the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, and we open our hearts and minds to your Spirit:
Bless us as we gather in your name; guide us as we grow into the likeness of your Son; lead us by your Spirit to go out and make disciples of others.
God of our journeying, be our way and our truth and our life; our beginning and our end.

We pray through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

I WAS A STRANGER & YOU WELCOMED ME

Revd Carol Davies

Carol preaches in Killay on Women's World Day of Prayer

On the 1st March 2013 at St Hilary's Church, Killay, I gave an address for WWDP. This year the prayer day was prepared by Christian women of France with the theme: 'I was a stranger and you welcomed me'. The following is an abridged version of my address.

Bonjour, bore da and good morning. This year we are sharing in Women's World Day of Prayer through the eyes of the women of France, a country not dissimilar to our own, where immigration is in excess of 6 million - in the UK it's just over 7 million - it's an emotive issue that each of us will have differing views about.

Demographic records dated 2010 reported that 34% of France's Immigrants come from European Union countries; 30% from North Africa; as well as some 14% from Asia; 11% from Africa and 11% from various other countries, and together they make up 11% of France's population. Statistics report similar stories to our own of problems at detention centres, especially concerning children; and of how the country's infrastructure is feeling the strain. Even so, when we see how atrocious life is for many people living in those places, it seems understandable why they would want to leave and seek a better life, although the reality is sometimes not all it's cracked up to be.

'There are no strangers; there are only women and men who have not yet met'.

But what is a better life we ask ourselves; how do we measure it? Is it about the 42" TV in the corner, or the latest model of our favourite car parked in the driveway? For many immigrants their aspirations are nothing like that. They are often fleeing from violence or persecution or seeking political asylum, or they are economic migrants and they bring with them their beliefs and customs. Recently our sensitivities were offended when horse meat came onto our supermarket shelves. This for us is not the norm but for many people including those in

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The remainder, the goats, are at God's left side – the wrong side also known as sinister – it comes from the Latin sinistre or [...], meaning bad omen. If you are ambidextrous like I am, then you and I are clearly hedging our bets; and if left-handedness is in your family as it is in mine, remember these words came into play when superstition was rife; clearly the Bible's use of metaphor has to be considered carefully.

But for the sake of understanding today's given passage it paints a picture of God's throne with all the nations placed in front – just imagine the scene: we have God telling the sheep on his right hand why they are the privileged – he says: When I was hungry you fed me; When I was thirsty you quenched my thirst; When I was naked you clothed me; When I was sick you cared for me; When I was in prison you came to me.

Not understanding, the sheep say to God – when did we see any stranger to do all this?
God's answer to the sheep is clear – WHEN YOU DID IT FOR THE LEAST SIGNIFICANT OF MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS YOU DID IT FOR ME.

God then tells the opposite story to the goats, When I was hungry you did not feed me; [...] When I was in prison you did not come to see me; he finishes by saying – WHEN MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS NEEDED HELP YOU DID NOT DO IT AND NEITHER DID YOU DO IT FOR ME.

It's saying those who have not followed Jesus will be judged in terms of how they treat people, that Jesus himself will judge the world on how it has treated Israel, it's a prequel to the final judgement - its message as relevant as it was when Jesus first said it when his brothers and sisters were abused or treated with contempt.

let us stand in unity with our brothers and sisters in France and everywhere else in the world,

As a witness to our human compassion for others and to remind ourselves of what our Christian calling demands of us, let us stand in unity with our brothers and sisters in France and everywhere else in the world, so that all those we meet will be able to say to us: I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME.

Merci, diolch and thank you.

*[Matthew 25.31-40]

CAROLS & CHOCOLATES

Brenda Love

On Friday 14th Decem[illegible] 2012, on a cold, wet and windy afternoon, a group of nine church members with Father Danny and the Rev. Carol went along to Brynhyfryd House and to Mumbles Nursing Home for a short service with readings, carols and prayers to anticipate and celebrate Christmas with the Residents and Staff. As always, it was a very joyful occasion with most of the Residents joining in the singing, choosing their favourite carols and remembering all the words.

We were made so very welcome and we were able - through the generosity of Parish members - to give to each person a small bag of chocolates and a booklet retelling the Christmas story. In return we were given the choice of a cup of tea, coffee or a glass of sherry with mince pies and biscuits.

The Residents in the Mumbles Nursing Home would have liked to have sung more and more carols as in previous years, but our visit there was followed by Brynhyfryd House. As they said they liked to watch 'Strictly Come Dancing', I told them that they should: "Keeeeep Singing" to paraphrase Bruce Forsythe.

It was a most rewarding and happy visit to both Homes for all involved.

David Bosch

If the Church is 'in Christ,' she is involved in mission.
Her whole existence then has a missionary character.
Her conduct as well as her words will convince the unbelievers
and put their ignorance and stupidity to silence.

Nina Gunter

If you take missions out of the Bible,
you won't have anything left but the covers.

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Effective Use of Headlines

Commendations:

- Drypool Echo (Hull)
- Outlook (Cheltenham)

Category Winner:

- Llwynderw (Swansea)

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Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design ✔
- Overall Layout and Structure ✔
- Creativity and Typography of Headlines ✔
- Use of Graphics
- Clarity of the Christian Message
- Appeal to a Wider Community

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OUTLOOK

The Magazine of
Bethesda Methodist Church, Cheltenham

December 2012 No. 81



Vancouver Island

"Hills of the north, rejoice ..."

Singing the Faith: no.172

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Recalling his death and resurrection,
and in obedience to his command,
we celebrate the offering of his eternal sacrifice,
until he comes again.

Through him, our Priest and King,
accept us as a living sacrifice,
a people for your praise.

Generous and holy God,
pour out your Spirit,
that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.

Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours, O Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

.....

Father, it is our joy and delight,
our reason for being, to offer you thanks and praise.

All your actions show wisdom and love.
Through your Word you spoke creation into existence
and made us in your image and likeness.
When we disobeyed you and drew away from you,
you did not leave us in darkness
but sent your Son, the Word made flesh,
to be the light of the world.

Emptying himself of all but love,
he was born of Mary,
shared our human nature and died on the cross.

Yet you have raised him from death to eternal life;
and through him you have sent your holy and
life-giving Spirit
to make your people, a people of light,
to reflect your glory in all the earth." Amen.

© Methodist Worship Book

THE BETHESDA BACKPACKERS



The Backpackers recently visited Mark & Sonia Boulton's new eco-house, near Mickleton, now nearing completion. (Photo by Bob Parkin)



Always resourceful, the Backpackers, on another walk, had to construct a bridge in order to complete their chosen route. (Photo by Norman Baker)

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GUEST WRITER

Jennie Edwards

Up, Up & Away (1966 - 1972)



Another weekend, virtually alone - boyfriend of six years busy with tennis, cricket, football, squash. Did I study for three years and teach for two for this? Opening a newspaper: there was a half page advert for BOAC needing cabin crew - an escape from the mundane was what drew me to the job.

After two days of rigorous interviews (they took 1 in 1,000 applicants !!) -role plays, being scrutinized from every angle, the first hurdle was over. Three months later - an acceptance, and I was fitted for my uniform, a tight fitting, smart suit. Our uniforms were free; Pan Am and TWA staff had to pay for theirs.

Training was a vigorous 6 - 8 weeks programme - removing aircraft windows, sliding down door chutes, climbing into impossibly high sided life rafts and crawling through smoke filled tunnels. This was followed by serving in BOAC's mock-up plane and eating the economy meal everyday - smoked salmon and steak!! Next, learning to mix fashionable cocktails and know the difference between a claret, a burgundy and a bordeaux.

My first trip was to Lagos where my case arrived at the Nissan Hut airport building dripping with condensation. I had always loved my grandmother's National Geographical Magazines and my journey from the airport was identical, passing villages with bench tables surrounded by villagers whose faces were illuminated by the one oil lamp.

I woke up in my hotel bedroom to see a local shinning up a palm tree in his bare feet, a huge lizard doing press-ups on my balcony and a seemingly endless electrical storm - all a far cry from Harrow.

Dress code was strict - hat and gloves; salary was low - £700 per annum plus some expenses, less than I received from teaching. So we didn't do it for the money.

Flights in 1966 - 71 were infrequent so we had long layovers - 9 days in Khartoum, 4 in New York; 18 day round the world trips. We had time to sightsee - take a flight from Teheran to Isfahan and look around.

Quantas referred to our wonderful Vc10 aircraft as 'WhaleTail' and thought we looked very sexy in our prim uniforms.

We were a novelty, a part of the British Institution. We came from 'backgrounds' - PA's, teachers, nurses, professional bodies, so on arrival in Bermuda we were expected to join the Governor on the lawn for cocktails, or join the Ark Royal in their mess for a starchy meal, or enjoy the company of the Sheik of Bahrain in his Palace or Beach house. Sometimes we found this tiresome and intrusive.

1966 Flight deck crews had seen service in the war, food in Economy Class was grand and in First Class amazing - cooked from scratch - roast beef, scrambled eggs etc. There was no entertainment so the cabin was peaceful tho' smoky.

There were no huge safety problems, although once the first class fridge exploded all over our first class hors d'oeuvre trolley (and my wig) - we now had to have short hair.

In 1970 our plane was one of five hijacked to the Arab Desert - Dawson's Field (a remote airstrip and former RAF base) and blown up by Palestinian extremists. After this our safety training became even more stringent and we had to pass exams each year.

We looked good, gave a great service, were respected and admired and were not allowed to marry as it spoiled the BOAC image (although BEA staff were allowed to be married). There were no crew seats to rest on at night, and we were away between 3 and 24 days.

I think I'd rather work on Eurostar than on some of the the Budget Airlines these days. Staff work hard but can look tatty, it's hard to understand the public address briefings and the whole service/food experience and values have changed.

I never did marry my over-sporty boy friend, but he continued to be a friend.

Jennie Edwards was born in Harrow (lower slopes) in 1943 and at 13 went to a College studying Textiles, pattern making and design.
After A levels she went to Trent Park Teacher Training College in Hertfordshire and subsequently taught for 3 years in Hendon.
Next she joined BOAC and flew for 8 years, before returning to teaching about 1990, teaching Design Technology, Art and English. Now retired she enjoys the company of her daughter's 3 children. Her son is a successful DJ (Sigma) travelling the world playing his "Drum and Bass" style of music, not for the faint-hearted!



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CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

The Light of the World

Christmas always began in October when Mum made the cakes and lots of Christmas puddings. We always kept one for Easter with a roast chicken because in those days lamb and beef was cheaper than chicken or turkey. In fact Mum and I would even eat one in the Summer as we loved them so much. You couldn't buy the dried fruit stoned and washed so my sister and I would help her and then we would stir the mixture, add the sixpences and make a wish. You had to be careful you didn't break a tooth on them, the sixpences I mean!



A week before Christmas, Dad would get the decorations out of the loft and we'd decorate the tree. There were coloured lights, cardboard decorations, tinsel and candles in metal holders attached to the branches. Thank goodness we never lit them, it would have been a Health and Safety hazard!! Paper chains, made by my sister and myself, hung from the centre light, very colourful and busy! Around the walls hung the Christmas cards. Yes, proper Christmas cards, people really knew then what Christmas was all about.

After a huge lunch the youngest child would give out the presents from under the tree. When we got older we would of course listen to the Queen's Speech. This was followed by tea with cake, sandwiches and a chocolate log. In the evening we would eat again, supper!!! Cold turkey, homemade pickles and chutneys and a pudding. I really couldn't eat that amount today but rationing had gone on some years after the war and perhaps we worried that we would have to go without again, who know?



After I married we lived in a Wiltshire village where my children were born. The week before, Father Christmas came round the village in his sleigh and gave presents to all the children. It was magical for them. Belonging to the Methodist Chapel we would go carol singing and were always invited into the big Court House, formerly the residence of Judge Jeffries! They had a baronial hall with an enormous log fire where we'd sing and take our fill of mince pies and punch. The Sunday before Christmas in the late afternoon everyone would gather in the Anglican church on the green for the Christingle Service. The church looked

beautiful lit only by the candles, the light of the world carried by the children and we even had a donkey once. But I do remember one occasion when the vicar's son set the little girl's hair alight in front of him!!! The bit I liked best though was Christmas morning. We had a glorious Silver Band and they would play carols all around the village from 4.30 in the morning. I remember many a time, with the family watching from the warmth of indoors, the band members in the darkness lit only by lamplight carolling in the frosty air. But of course the children wouldn't go back to bed then so we had to open the presents in their stockings.

Times appear to be changing and I know that we must 'move' with them. But do our grandchildren understand the meaning of Christmas? Luckily their school Christmas plays, not necessarily a nativity as such, rather like Aesop's Fables, have a moral/message teaching of goodwill to all men, respecting others' religions and somewhere there is always a baby. Yes, we must remember that baby for 'love came down at Christmas time'.

My love to you all and a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Anna Young

Home & Away

It is understandable that some memories will involve music.



1954, my first Christmas in the Royal Air Force and my first year playing the organ.

1956, my first Christmas in Germany and, as a SNCO, serving Christmas dinner to the airmen in the Airmen's Mess.

1958, our first Christmas, of twelve, in Germany, invited to share Christmas Eve with the German family in Cologne, in whose attic flat we lived for two years.

In the early 60's, clambering into a truck to go carol-singing around RAF married quarters in Cologne, playing a piano-accordion acquired from somewhere and, on Christmas Eve, travelling back from Neumarkt on the tram with a big Christmas tree.

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In early December 1963, sitting in the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, while our son was born in the military hospital at RAF Wegberg near Dusseldorf.

In the late 60's, singing in the British choir, with the French, American and German choirs in the Blaue Kirche in Berlin and pushing a trolley, with my electronic organ on board, for carol-singing around the wards at the new British Military Hospital on Heer Strasse. This was the third organ I had built in five or six years.

In 1972, our first Christmas in our own house in Stamford and in 1973 our first Christmas in Cheltenham.

In the early 90's, serving Christmas dinner to the needy at Burlington Baptist Church in Ipswich and more recently at Grove Lane Baptist Church, Cheadle Hulme, in both cases where our daughter-in-law was Minister.

We wonder what Christmas memories we shall have this year from Singapore and Bali.

Eric & Georgie Harding

East London



Treasured memories of Christmas in East London are mostly family ones from the mid-forties. Mum used to make the Christmas pudding from recipes handed down from her mother. She started to mix the ingredients in a mixing bowl about a month before Christmas Day watched by my brother, sister and myself. We got many a clip round the ear as our fingers strayed into the mix. The prepared mixture was placed into a basin sealed at the top by a plain suet pudding that mum had just made up and then covered with a cloth. The basin was put in a saucepan and boiled for about 10 to 12 hours through the night; who kept the saucepan topped up I do not know, but at midmorning the next day out came the pudding.

Eagerly sitting round the breakfast table my brother sister and I watched as the suet pudding was removed placed on a plate and sliced up covered with lashings of butter or syrup and while it was still warm we were allowed to tuck in. We liked this more than the Christmas pudding that was stored away for Christmas day. Chicken for a city dweller was a luxury and very expensive to buy from the butcher. On Christmas Eve, Smithfield Meat Market auctioned chickens that had not been sold by the

wholesalers. Dad and sometime I used to go to the market and bid for a chicken still covered in its feathers; bringing it home on the underground was also an experience.



West Ham Football Club always had a home game at 11.00am on Christmas Day. Dad, myself and brother used to go to watch them, a tradition we enjoyed until they stopped playing on Christmas Day. Mum and sister stayed home to cook the chicken.

Evenings were spent at an aunt's house with about thirty or more aunts, uncles and cousins singing and dancing in a room so small you could hardly move. We were a melodious group - it was not until later years, when some of the older cousins brought their girl friends along to the evening party, that we learned we were all pitch deaf and sang our songs to a single note.

George Davies

FORREST GUMP GOES TO HEAVEN

The day finally arrived. Forrest Gump dies and goes to Heaven. At the Pearly Gates he is met by St. Peter himself. However the gates are closed and Forrest approaches the gatekeeper. St. Peter said, 'Well, Forrest, It is certainly good to see you. We have heard a lot about you. I must tell you, though, that the place is filling up fast, and we have been administering an entrance examination for everyone.
The test is short, but you have to pass it before you can get into Heaven.'

Forrest responds, 'It sure is good to be here, St. Peter, sir. But nobody ever told me about any entrance exam. I sure hope that the test ain't too hard. Life was a big enough test as it was.'

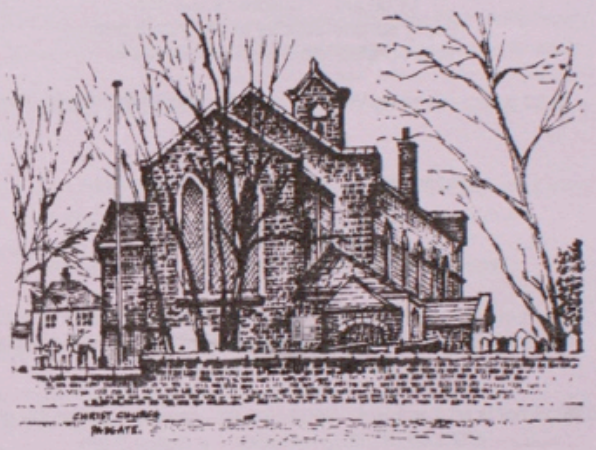
St. Peter continued, 'Yes, I know, Forrest, but the test is only three questions. First: What two days of the week begin with the letter T? Second: How many seconds are there in a year? Third: What is God's first name?'

Forrest leaves to think the questions over. He returns the next day and sees St. Peter, who waves him up, and says, 'Now that you have had a chance to think the questions over, tell me your answers.'

Forrest replied, 'Well the First one -- which two days in the week begins with the letter T? Shucks, that one is easy. That would be Today and Tomorrow.'

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GRAPEVINE



March 2013

CHRIST CHURCH PADGATE
PARISH NEWS

Diocese of Liverpool

Suggested contribution: 25p

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Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday 24 March

8.30 am Holy Communion (Celebrant Rev John Macaulay)

10.50 am Palm Sunday Procession from the Subway to Church for the Eucharist Service (Celebrant the Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

No evening service

EASTER 2013

Monday 25 March

There will be no service

Tuesday 26 March

7.15 pm Stations of the Cross and Eucharist at Cinnamon Brow (Celebrant Rev Denise Williams, Preacher The Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

Wednesday 27 March

10.45 am Holy Communion at Christ Church (Celebrant T.B.C.)

7.30 pm Agape Meal at Woolston

Maundy Thursday 28 March

7.30 pm At Cinnamon Brow - The Commemoration of The Last Supper and Washing of the Feet followed by The Watch until 11 pm

Good Friday 29 March

10.30 am Children's Service (Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

2.00 pm The Last Hour on the Cross (The Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

6.30 pm The Way of the Cross

Saturday Easter Eve 30 March

8.00 pm The Easter Ceremonies held at at Christ Church led by Rev Denise Williams

Easter Sunday 31 March

8.30 am Holy Communion (Celebrant Rev. John Macaulay)

11.00 am Festival Eucharist (Celebrant Ven Archdeacon of Warrington)

12.45 pm Baptism

Easter Monday 1 April

No services held at Christ Church

Verses for Palm Sunday 24 March



Ride on, ride on in majesty
As all the crowds 'Hosanna!' cry:
Through waving branches slowly ride,
0 Saviour, to be crucified.

Ride on, ride on in majesty
The angel armies of the sky
Look down with sad and wondering eyes
To see the approaching sacrifice.

Ride on, ride on in majesty.
The last and fiercest foe defy:
The Father on his sapphire throne
Awaits his own anointed Son.

Extract from the hymn by
H. Milman 1791-1868

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Wendy Thomas



Last month our profile was of Nathan Thomas at Uni; this month Grapevine has asked Nathan's mum Wendy for her story.

My Name is Wendy Thomas. I was born on 15 October 1962 to Lilian and Geoffrey Lewis. My elder sister Christine was sent to the cinema with a packed lunch while I was being born at home - in Dickenson Street, just off Orford Lane Warrington.

It was planned that I would attend a new Infants School at Bruche, so we moved to Westover Road when I was five. I have wonderful memories playing and riding my bike around Padgate in what seemed like endless sunny days in the summer holidays.

I attended Sunday school at Padgate Methodist Church and was involved in the Walking Day for many years. The build-up itself was very special, and wearing a new dress always added to the excitement.

I attended Confirmation classes here at Christ Church, led by Revd. Roger Wikeley. I enjoyed the sessions and remember the little pink card we were given that would be signed by the Reverend each time we attended a church service.

After Bruche I attended Woolston High School. During this time we went to visit Monks's Offices off Green Lane, which gave me an interest in office work. On leaving school I went to work for Warrington Borough Council in the Rates department. I had a brilliant superior officer - guess who? It was Bernard Shovelton. I really enjoyed it there, although things changed when the Poll Tax was introduced.

In 1980 I met Peter at Wilderspool Night Club in Warrington. A disco was held there every Friday and it was love at first sight, well for me anyway. On 19 October 1985 we were married here at Christ Church just before Revd. Wikeley left. Nathan was born in 1991 and Kieran followed in 1997. Family life is so very special - they are wonderful boys and we are very proud of them.

I now work for another brilliant person, well some of the time! My husband Peter has his own company and I am responsible for the clerical side of things. There are many advantages of working from home, not least of which have been to be around the home while the boys have been growing up.

On Friday mornings I try to attend the Playtimers as much as possible. I was introduced to it by Pat Lord. It's a lovely session and that includes the families and helpers alike. Christ Church is such a special church and you are always made to feel very welcome.

Many thanks Wendy for your kind words and for your interesting account of your family life and work. Wendy has not said that last year she took over organising the distribution of "Grapevine"- thank you Wendy.

Mothers' Union

10 March at 11.00 am is "Mothering Sunday". Members of the Mothers' Union will be participating in the service.

14 March at 7.30 pm. Stations of the Cross, followed by our meeting with speaker Rev. Pam Lovatt

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Parish of Killay

Parish Magazine

St Hilary and St Martin



January 2013

40p

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And now Paul was coming to them encouraging them to stop looking at others and to look at themselves. What Paul was asking them to do was to examine themselves and to see if it was true that through their actions and words Christ Jesus was living within them. One of the methods of assessment in schools is to let the pupil mark their own tests. What is the point of doing this? - it gives them the opportunity to examine themselves; to see if they really know the material. It is not just take the test, be done with it and see what happens. Each time the question is read and the answer given, it gives them a chance to examine themselves and pledge to do better on the next test.

I am sure that we are aware of the phrase soul searching, but have we ever really done it. Have we taken time to look at our life both inside and out and marked ourselves given ourselves grades. The bible tells us to test ourselves so let's test ourselves and you can mark yourselves: 1) When was the last time you prayed and did not need something or was in trouble? 2) When is the last time you shared Jesus with someone who is not a Christian? 3) When is the last time that you sat down and meditated on a passage of scripture? 4) When is the last time you sacrificially gave without expecting something in return?

How did you do? Did you pass with flying colours or did we just get by or did we fail? Examining ourselves can be hard but can also be helpful because it helps us to see the things that need to be changed. If we are Christians then we should realise that Christ Jesus is within us and that should cause us to want to study God's word. It should compel us to want to share God's word with others. But it demands that we examine ourselves and our actions. Do others see Jesus living in us?

And finally after being willing to examine yourself and noticing the changes you need to make, are you willing today at the beginning of a new year to come to church and to begin the spirit of restoration. May 2013 be the year in which Christ Jesus is not just within us but that Christ Jesus can be seen through us. I wish you all a very happy and healthy and every blessing for the coming year.

Yours in Christ Fr Tim

Our Vision: *A family, rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by:*
Gathering as God's people – Growing more like Jesus – Going out in the power of the Spirit.

Christmas Eve - *The Crib Service*



Baby Jesus Alicia surrounded by a cast of hundreds



Daniel Vaughan joins in the festivities



Father Tim prepares to give the Blessing



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Mothers' Union

December 4th saw us at our usual venue, Sketty Hall, 36 members attending. The meal as usual was tasty and well presented. The bar was also well attended! Father Tim drew the raffle with his usual banter and Canon Geoffrey kept us all in order. Everyone went home with a present from the Christmas sack after Carole, Branch Leader had thanked everyone for coming.



We joined with Ladies Guild for the annual Carol Service with readings. Father Tim officiated joined by Canon Geoffrey. We later adjourned to the Hall for mince pies, sherry or a welcome cup of tea. Gwynneth was unable to attend, sadly, but Pam Davies thanked everyone in her place. Father Tim again drew the church raffle which Carol Conway had organised. It was a lucky evening, many of the ladies in the hall winning prizes.

Finally a happy New Year to all, we will begin the New Year on January 15th with corporate communion and the AGM afterwards in the hall.

Sandra Banks, Secretary

Music Society



14th January 7.30pm

A.G.M. followed by

Viv Davies' Memories of World War II –

New members Welcome!

Epiphany



On 6 January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. But who were these wise men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were they called kings - by a church father, Tertullian. Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given. Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the eighth century, the magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

Have you ever wondered where the name 'Jesus' comes from?



The name **Jesus** is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. Or there is the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became ' Ἰησοῦς' (Iēsoûs), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:26-33 told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because he will save his people from their sins".

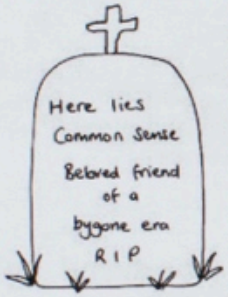
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Obituary:

THE SAD PASSING OF COMMON SENSE

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as knowing when to come in out of the rain, why the early bird gets the worm, life isn't always fair, and maybe it was my fault. Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned, but overbearing, regulations were set in place.



Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teenagers suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they had themselves failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer paracetamol, sun lotion or a plaster to a pupil, but could not inform the parents when a pupil became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband, churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home, but the burglar could sue you for assault because you protected yourself and your own.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust, his wife, Discretion, his daughter, Responsibility and his son, Reason. He is survived by three stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, Someone Else is to Blame, and I'm A Victim. Not many attended his funeral because so few realised that he was gone.

If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

Author Unknown

The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.



Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ.

He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.

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The Easter Candle

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50 pence

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life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'

Please may I encourage you to attend the most important and deeply moving services during Holy Week.

With best wishes and prayers,
Fr Danny

FAMILY NEWS

Averil Willis, Terry Williams, Ruby Jones, and Dolly Wright have died since the last edition of the magazine. Averil, who was 95, was a member of this parish most of her life and along with Terry, Ruby and Dolly will be greatly missed.

Bill Mort, who was Lay Reader in this diocese and lived in Bishopston has also died recently.

We extend our deepest sympathy and offer our condolences to all who mourn.

We pray for those in hospital at this time, amongst them Joyce Bidder, Eric Thomas, Betty James and Iori Thomas. We also pray for the many housebound members who are unable to join us in church at this time.



PCC Away-Day at Nicholaston House: reflecting on the Diocesan Vision and how it might be realised in our parish

MEET FELICITY BARROW

Mair Kiley

Faith and what it means to you; an occasional series of interviews with members of our churches

I am grateful to Felicity Barrow for sparing me some of her valuable time to answer some questions about her Christian faith. It is my hope it will interest and encourage us on our shared journey of faith.

Felicity can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
I am 47 years old and married to Trevor who is retired. I work part time as a criminal lawyer and we've got 2 children - Isobel who is 17 and Olivia who is 14. We live in Mayals with my parents Dorothy and Cliff.

Can you tell me how long you have been a Christian?
When I was very young my Mother sent me to Sunday school near our house. Although my Mother was confirmed in the Church, she decided not to have me baptised, but to give both my brother and me the opportunity to decide for ourselves. When I was about 12 and at Comprehensive school, lots of my friends were attending church and going to confirmation classes, and I went to see what the fuss was about. I decided I would like to be confirmed, and of course to do that, I had to be baptised. I chose my own Godparents, which was very nice, and I chose wisely because they have always been very supportive. When I became confirmed I carried on attending that church and have been a committed Christian ever since.

If you didn't have a faith what would give you meaning?

What does your faith mean to you?
That's a really tough question. It is very important to me because it is the bench mark for the way I try to live my life. I try to live a Christian life and to demonstrate this in my role as wife, parent, daughter, friend and lawyer. The reason faith is so important is because it gives you a backdrop. If you didn't have a faith what would give you meaning? It is all very well to have a busy life but in the quiet moments it is important to have belief in

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something beside that which is immediately around you. It is central to my life and attending church on Sunday is really important. It helps me maintain a close relationship with God. I think it must be hard for people who say they are Christians but don't go to church, to keep a close relationship with God. Sunday is the first day of the week for me and going to church sets me up for the week. I always feel better coming out of church than when I went in, partly because of the fellowship and partly because I have an opportunity to reflect on what God means to me.



You mentioned relationships-do you believe your Christian faith is about a relationship with God?
Yes I do, and like all relationships you have to nurture it. There are times when that relationship becomes fractured, and you have to work hard to come back to it, but if you have faith, I believe you always will.

How do you feel about sharing your faith with people you meet?
I am always happy to tell people I am a Christian. People who know me and those I work with know how important my faith is to me. I make no secret of the fact that I go to church. I try to encourage other people to come to church. I think a lot of the problems people face in their lives could be put into perspective by coming to church and having a relationship with God. I find it an uplifting experience. I think the world would be a better place if more people put themselves in a position to experience a belief and faith in God.

I am always happy to tell people I am a Christian.

I am not shy about sharing my faith, and I try to show by example that I am a Christian, and that there are huge benefits, by doing little things or even big things for people. There is a lovely hymn, one of my favourites, the Servant Song and the words "Let me be as Christ to you" I think illustrates what I am trying to say. I think this is what we should be like as Christians, showing by example rather than proscription that this is a good way to live our lives.

So you are quite confident in sharing your faith?
Yes I am, but then I'm quite a confident person, and I try and instil in my children not to be reticent about sharing their faith, which can be very difficult for teenagers today.

Is your faith different today than it was say 15 or 20 years ago?
Yes it is. We mentioned about our relationship with God, and how relationships change. When I was young I had a very different view of God. We are brought up to believe in an all seeing, all knowing, kind and benevolent God, who won't allow anything bad to happen to us, and that I believe is a very childlike view. Then you start to grow up and have some experiences which are less positive. I was fortunate to grow up in a happy home, where I was protected, by my family, from the big wide world.

When I was in my 20s and busy establishing my career, I didn't think I needed God as

As I matured into an adult my view of God changed. I still believe in a benevolent God who cares about us, but I realise there is a much bigger responsibility on us to fulfil our part of the bargain. As a child you tend to think, when bad things happen, why is God allowing that? But as you get older you realise that your faith enables you to work through these bad things.

We spoke earlier about our relationship with God sometimes being fractured. When I was in my 20s and busy establishing my career, I didn't think I needed God as much. I still went to church, but it was more of a habit. So what did I need God for? When I had my own children I started to look again at my relationship with God. When you become a parent, you realise you are responsible for other people, and the sense of this can be overwhelming on your own. My faith changed then, and it has matured as I have matured.

Are there areas in the church you would like today see changed ?
Yes, I'd like to see more people coming to church. I've just been in the Middle East, where the custom is for people to come to prayer 5 times a day. The call comes from the Imam at set points throughout the day, and wherever people are, in the supermarket, the beach etc. they all come. I think it is a shame

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REJOICE!

Fr Danny

Over Lent, we enter more deeply into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings so that we might know fully and joyfully the power of his resurrection. "I want to know Christ and the power of his Resurrection," cried Paul, and so at Easter with all the saints and angels in heaven and united with those baptised around the world, we too give thanks, because for our salvation Christ was obedient even to death on the cross.

The tree of shame was made the tree of glory; and where life was lost, there life has been restored. We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he – and only he – is our salvation, our life and our resurrection; through him – and only him – are we saved and set free.

Let us rejoice with all the choirs of angels. Christ has conquered and darkness vanishes for ever. Rejoice O Mother Church! Exult in glory!

The risen Saviour shines upon you! Let us resound with joy, echoing the mighty song of all God's people!

Now let us echo the wonderful words of Bishop Frank Weston of Zanzibar, '...Go out with the power of his resurrection and look for Jesus in the ragged, in the naked, in the oppressed and sweated, in those who have lost hope, in those who are struggling to make good. Look for Jesus. And when you see him, gird yourselves with his towel and try to wash their feet.'

We worship you, we venerate your cross, we praise your resurrection. Through the cross you brought joy to the world.

Christ is truly Risen! He is Risen Indeed. Alleluia. Let us rejoice and be glad, Alleluia.

St Augustine

And he departed from our sight that we might return to our heart,
and there find Him.
For He departed, and behold, He is here.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Fr Nigel

Sporting honours

This year's winter graduation ceremonies were held over a period of two days in January at the Grand Theatre in Swansea.



In addition to the many students receiving degrees, the university awarded honorary fellowships and degrees to an elite group of people who had brought distinction to the locality and to Wales as a whole, via their respective professions.

One of the people awarded an honorary doctorate by the university was Welsh Rugby's Head Coach and former New Zealand All Black, Warren Gatland. He is pictured being congratulated by Fr Nigel.

Public Theology Lecture

Lord Griffiths, who was born in Fforestfach and educated at Dynevor Grammar School, returned to his home diocese on Thursday, 7th March to deliver a Theology Public Lecture at Swansea University. It was the 76th lecture since the series was first set up in 2003.

He spoke with great insight and eloquence on "The Christian Faith and the Financial Crisis" to an audience of over 150 people. Lord Griffiths who is one of the world's leading economists is currently Vice-Chairman of Goldman Sachs and a former Director of the Bank of England.



In the 1980's he worked as the Head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit at Number 10 Downing Street. He was Special Advisor to Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, and had responsibility for domestic policy in the United Kingdom.

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Parish magazine
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St John of Beverley

Parish church of St John Lee

December 2012/January 2013



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Impressions of Burma

(known officially as Myanmar).

Burma has been in the news recently because of President Obama's visit but for many years it was almost a 'forgotten' country, ruled by a very oppressive military regime. Now things are changing. Many people know of Nobel peace prize holder An San Suu Kyi's brave stand against the dictatorship and the high price she has had to pay, under house arrest and separated from her family for many years.

I visited Burma in October this year as a participant in the British Council's worldwide 'Active Citizens' programme . The programme enables people from all over the world to meet and share experiences, knowledge and skills to equip them for work in their own communities. The British Council is involved in helping to rebuild civil society and institutions in Burma and it is also helping to encourage the development of co-operatives and social enterprises.

The economic effects of Burma's long isolation are plain to see in and around Yangon (formerly Rangoon) with roads and buildings in poor repair and many people living in insanitary conditions. Less obvious but harder to restore is the damage and suffering which Burma's people have undergone. I talked to some members of the 88 student movement who led the movement for democracy in the 1988 uprising. Many of these brave people who are once again involved in restoring democratic life and defending human rights were only this year released from long terms of political imprisonment., Change in Burma is a gradual and difficult process. Perhaps

the most serious set of The ongoing conflicts between communities divided by ethnicity, religion and history is perhaps the most serious problem. The conflict between Buddhist and Muslim communities has been in the news recently and there are unresolved issues in other areas dating back to WW2. Although they were very concerned about these, and other social, economic and environmental problems, the people I heard and met, were full of hope and faith in the future.

From the moment I arrived in Yangon (after a 20 hour journey via Amsterdam and Bangkok) I was met by friendly courteous and helpful people. Our hotel close to the centre of the city was an oasis of luxury set amongst busy streets full of shoppers and food stalls.

The twin themes of the event were 'Social Cohesion in a diverse society' and 'Social enterprise'. There were so many inspiring stories, more than I can do justice to. One example which particularly interested me was the 'Shalom Foundation', an organisation with Christian roots based in Burma and dedicated to peace



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EARLY 20TH CENTURY STREET TRADERS IN NEWCASTLE

Scarcely a day passed in the back lanes of west Newcastle without the arrival of street traders, who roused their customers either by shouting or singing a call, ringing a bell or blowing a bugle. Each trader had his or her own call.

Davy Reed, a coal man, warned his customers of his arrival by shouting "Grreesh" – whatever that meant, and, if washing hanging across the back lane came in the way of his cart, his call of "Claes" would bring the housewives running to the



Alice Mulholland was a street trader in Newcastle in the 1870's

rescue before he used his whip to move the clothes. Another coal man, apparently selling small coal, sang out "Beany coal, coal"

Some Rag men pulled hand-carts which were flat, two-wheeled vehicles. They usually used bugles to rouse their customers – their renditions generally less than musical. Some even attempted Army bugle calls. Rags, bones and iron were exchanged for something like a balloon, a paper windmill or a few grubby sweets or candy rock. Other Rag men collected their rags in a sack and probably relied on getting their collection free of charge, as they called "Rags, bones or iron" "Rags to sell" or "Any rags, bones, bottles te sell?"

A Stick lass with a distinctive cry of "Any sticks or Roobin Stoan. D'ye want any Sticks?" must have travelled miles collecting her wares. Her sticks came from wooden boxes thrown out by shopkeepers and chopped at home. The Rubbing Stones had to be sought at Kenton Quarry. She took money or rags in exchange for her sticks. Kindling sticks in bundles were supplied to corner shops by the Workhouse Authorities who made their overnight "guests" cut, chop and bundle the sticks in exchange for the night's lodging.

Fish wives from Cullercoats in their traditional dress hawked their "men's" catches in the streets. Some had stands in the Fish Market at the corner of Clayton and Nun Streets, but the travelling saleswomen each had their own round. Our back lane was patrolled by Granny Taylor on the Monday Street side and by Maggie Storey on "our" side. Granny Taylor had a song of her own – and to a nice little tune. The words sounded to me like "A-shoose ee Callico, A -shoose ee Callico, D'ye want any feesh?" which I translate as "Ashore at Cullercoats (twice) Do you want any fish?"



Janey McCulley from Cullercoats

Maggie Storey, carrying her big creel, and with two baskets on her arms simply sang out "Feesh". The purchased fish were weighed, and the cutting and filleting was carried out on a piece of wood resting on the creel which had been placed on the ground. Mother once bought a slice of hake about an inch thick and six inches in diameter for about a penny. Maggie called it Black Jack". Herring were cheap – I once heard a hawker call "Fower and twenty a penny – Caller Harn".

(To be continued in the next month's issue – there were a large number of street hawkers!!)

OLD SAYINGS FOR DECEMBER

On St Thomas' night (in the "old" Church calendar this is December 21st) cut an apple in half and carefully count the number of seeds in each half. If the numbers are equal, then a marriage in the family will soon take place. If one of the seeds is damaged by the cutting the course of true love will not run smooth. If two seeds are damaged it denotes a widowhood.

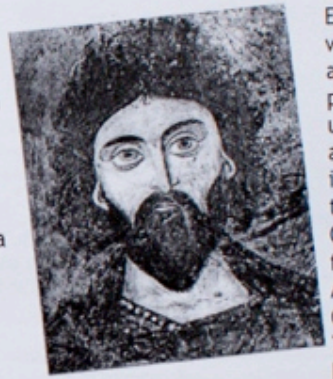
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Saints of the Month

Few people will not have heard of St Stephen - even if it is only from the carol which tells that "Good King Wenceslas looked out, on the Feast of Stephen". Stephen, whose feast day is December 26th , was the first Christian martyr. Probably a Greek-speaking Jew, he is the first named of seven deacons chosen by the apostles to look after the needs of Greek-speaking widows among the Christians at Jerusalem. A man "full of faith and power" he was a zealous preacher but was denounced to the Jewish council as a blasphemer. At his trial he summarized in detail the history of Israel and ended by accusing his hearers of resisting the Holy Spirit, adding that whereas their fathers had persecuted the prophets, they had killed the Holy One whom the prophets foretold. He cried "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." At this they rushed him out of the city and stoned him. As he fell to his knees he cried "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." A young man from Tarsus, Saul by name, watched this execution and "consented to it". This man was later to become St Paul.



Adrian (or Hadrian) of Canterbury whose feast day is 9th January had great influence on the development of the early Church in this country. He was born in Africa, and became abbot of a monastery near Monte Cassino, where he was twice offered the vacant archbishopric of Canterbury by Pope Vitalian. Twice he declined the offer, but, on the second occasion proposed the Greek monk Theodore as a suitable candidate. The pope agreed, but insisted that Adrian should accompany the new archbishop to England. They set out in 668, and after many delays reached Canterbury where Adrian was installed at the abbey of Peter and Paul (later St Augustine's). Adrian was a learned man, an experienced administrator, a scholar, and under his care the Canterbury monastic school had far-reaching influence. St John of Beverley is said to have studied under Adrian. Students at Adrian's school not only undertook sacred studies, but were taught poetry, astronomy, and calendar calculation. Some knew Latin and Greek as well as they did English. Adrian worked with his archbishop in pastoral undertakings and under the influence of the two men the Church flourished. Adrian died at Canterbury in 710 and was buried in the church of his monastery.



Old Sayings for January



If a bough of mistletoe is given to the first cow to calve after New Year's Day the rest of the herd will be safeguarded from ill luck for the rest of the year.

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Effective Use of Graphics

Commendations:

- Killay Parish Mag (Swansea)
- Llwynderw (Swansea)

Category Winner:

- Outreach (Hexam)

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Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design ✔
- Overall Layout and Structure ✔
- Creativity and Typography of Headlines ✔
- Use of Graphics ✔
- Clarity of the Christian Message
- Appeal to a Wider Community

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"You may sometimes pop into an art gallery and be more impressed with the frames than the paintings. It's not the frame that has great value but the painting, yet the frame matters. A good painting can be ruined by a bad frame. However, a bad picture can't be made good by a frame. Really the frame is the least important part of the exhibit, yet in everyday life we sometimes place more value on the frame itself than what is within it."

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BAPTISMS

Jonathan Matos Cabral
Lily Rachel Hughes
Joao Guilerme Santos Fernandes
Jessica Maria Simmonds
Heidi Alice Erin Dewhurst
Willow May Hicks
Peter Anthony Francis Blewitt-Jenkins
Samuel Alexander Jeenes
Kitty Marie Kerr
Matilda Elizabeth Penhale
Filip Vijay Kumar
Phelan Christopher Morrissey
Charlotte Morwenna Uren
Isabelle Ann Taylor

MARRIAGES

Congratulations to the following who celebrated their wedding in St Gregory's Church:

Cara Josephine Mullooly to John Robert Saxon
Amanda Jane Ross to Joseph John Allen
Suzanne Alexandra Connor to Julian Harvard Rolfe

DEATHS

Please pray for the souls of those recently deceased and for their bereaved relatives:

Hazel Patricia Popplewell
William John Sullivan (John)
Lucy Margaret Curtis
Mary Ann Guinee
Siobham Margaret Woods
Clifford George Brookes
Patrick Joseph Wallace (Pat)
Ann Rice
Peter Egerton Holland
John Anthony Powell (Tony)
Anne Bevan
Margaret Christine Balster
Daniel O'Connor
Anthony John Chesson
Patrick Young

CARITAS Info

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eventide_unicorn@yahoo.co.uk
or hand in to the Parish Office.

Feedback always welcome

Corinna Turner (01242 575197), The Editor
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Many thanks to proof readers Canon Bosco, Georgina, Felicity, and production team Lucy, Bryan, Margaret, Martin, Mary and everyone else involved.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition and apologies to those whose articles I was not able to include. Please keep them coming!

Thank you for reading CARITAS.

The Challenge of Lent

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Lent is a time of reconciliation and renewal. A time when we make space in our lives to think about our relationship with our Father and the ways in which we are responding or failing to respond to his love and care for us.

You may sometimes pop into an art gallery and be more impressed with the frames than the paintings. It's not the frame that has great value but the painting, yet the frame matters. A good painting can be ruined by a bad frame. However, a bad picture can't be made good by a frame. Really the frame is the least important part of the exhibit, yet in everyday life we sometimes place more value on the frame itself than what is within it.

We often do the same with people. We judge their worth by their 'frame' and we get it wrong. Take the rich businessman who is seen at Mass regularly, attends respectable functions, and appears to be a caring and loving husband. That's the frame. What we don't see is that he is unfaithful to his wife and cruel to her at home.

On the other hand, there is a husband who is unemployed and his wife has two part-time jobs to make ends meet. This couple don't have very much and their frame isn't very impressive. But they are happy because they love each other and have each other's love. They make a beautiful picture.

What kind of a frame do we have and what kind of a picture is within it? We are to show Christ's love in our lives. Are we his frame, or his picture?

As we begin this season of renewal let us pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our Parish, that we may be more authentic in our response to God's love. Called to be a people of hope, we entrust our lives once again to the One who gave his life for us.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones in this holy season of Lent.

Canon Bosco MacDonald
Parish Priest



A gift heaven-sent ~ Sent by email

Happiness is something we create in our mind –
Not something we search for and so seldom find.
It's just waking up and beginning the day
By counting our blessings and wanting to pray.
It's giving up thoughts that breed discontent
And accepting what comes as a gift heaven-sent.
It's giving up wishing for things we have not
And making the best of whatever we've got.



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How deep is your love?

If God asks, how would I answer?

It's our job to keep the faith alive

How Deep is Your Love?

Perhaps we can remember the Bee Gees '80s Hit "How Deep is Your Love" with its dreamy melody. Or even Take That's cover version in 1996. The lyrics speak of someone seeking assurance from their loved one about commitment and the honesty of their feelings.

If God were asking that question of me, how would I answer? Do I come to Church out of habit or out of love for God? Do I belong to just a Sunday club or does it mean something more?

Gathering as God's family to give praise and thanksgiving ought to be our greatest joy. He has given us Life itself, blessings of health, home, a loving family, work and friends, and so much more besides.

However, in reality, sometimes I go to Church and don't feel like singing – there is war and chaos in the world, uncertainties over work issues, health concerns, fall-outs with friends and family … I am tempted by numerous distractions that could entice me away from going to church. Yes, there are times when I wish I could be doing something else… It is then that

…ell…

…we need to be honest with God.

Tell Him what your feelings are.

Tell Him what's happening in your life.



If you are too upset to pray, tell Him why; ask His help.

If I can't think about what to …ay …k …s, even those people in the benches beside me (the young mother struggling with a toddler, the old lady who walks with a stick and can't kneel down, a person from a different country who must be missing their family and homeland, the sick mentioned every week in our bulletin). Occasionally I have spotted people at church get upset when they think about their situation in life; I can see them … **them**.

Some people come to Mass and don't join in the prayers or sing the hymns. I remember Gareth Malone and how he trains his choirs. Those singers who really commit themselves, who open their mouths and feel the love, they are the ones

…our congregation could raise for God, if we all participated fully in our worship!

When I kiss my husband or children, I don't always tell them I love them. But the point is that just by being in their company and close says that I love them, even if I don't say the words. In the same …way, if we're there regularly in … we love Him. If we talk honestly with God, involving him in our lives and our decision-making, our relationship with him will grow. God wants us to walk though each day with us, to talk with us. He made us a promise to be with us always, even till the end of time. That is a powerful promise. With God with us, who can be against us?

Of course we must always … …presence of an almighty, everlasting and ever-loving God, who is the creator of all: King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We need to show reverence. (Remember Moses and the burning bush? He took off his sandals because he was standing on holy ground). If we were in the presence of the Queen of England would we ignore her and chat amongst ourselves? When we are in God's presence we ought to shut out distracting thoughts that pop into our heads and really focus on what is happening; we are celebrating the life, death and resurrection of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Through His sacrifice there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, not sin, not even death. How awesome!



At the point of communion let us truly remember we are receiving Jesus himself. This should embolden us to, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord".

Someone said, Christianity is only one generation away from extinction. **It's our job to keep the faith alive.** Parents please pray with your children daily and bring them to Mass every Sunday. Let us at St. Gregory's be friendly and welcoming to visitors. Let us take part in the life of the parish – going for coffee after mass, joining one of the many groups which need new

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Parish of Killay

Parish Magazine

St Hilary and St Martin



January 2013

40p

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Parish of Killay

Permission by Dog Collar?

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The Vicar Writes .....

January 2013

Dear Friends

As we come to the beginning of a new year it is a good time to take stock. To examine our lives. To look to the future and learn from the past. This is as true for our spiritual life as anything. In II Cor. 13:5 we find these words *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you– unless, of course, you fail the test?"*

In today's society, it seems that when it comes to an examination, everyone is always looking at the other person instead of themselves. It's amazing when something goes wrong, all of a sudden the finger pointing starts. It's always someone else's fault and not ours.

A story is told of a man who called the doctor and told the doctor that his wife was having problems of hearing and he wanted the doctor to check her out. So the doctor said "check her out at home and see how bad it is before you bring her in". The man said "how do I do that?" Doctor said "ask her something from the other side of the room and keep getting closer until she responds back to what you said". So the man goes home and she is in the kitchen making supper and from the other side of the kitchen husband says "Is dinner about ready love?" He didn't hear anything. So he goes to the centre of the kitchen and says "Dinner about ready love?" Still didn't hear anything. So he gets up right behind her and says "Dinner about ready love? and at that point she turns around and says "for the third time -Yes."

It seems that we are always willing to jump on being critical of others yet, maybe this year is the year that you and I should be willing to examine ourselves a little more closely. Go back to II Corinthians 13:5: *"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves..."*

The Corinthians have had it in for Paul. They have been insistent on testing Paul, the very one who had brought them to the Christian faith.

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And now Paul was coming to them encouraging them to stop looking at others and to look at themselves. What Paul was asking them to do was to examine themselves and to see if it was true that through their actions and words Christ Jesus was living within them. One of the methods of assessment in schools is to let the pupil mark their own tests. What is the point of doing this? - it gives them the opportunity to examine themselves; to see if they really know the material. It is not just take the test, be done with it and see what happens. Each time the question is read and the answer given, it gives them a chance to examine themselves and pledge to do better on the next test.

I am sure that we are aware of the phrase soul searching, but have we ever really done it. Have we taken time to look at our life both inside and out and marked ourselves given ourselves grades. The bible tells us to test ourselves so let's test ourselves and you can mark yourselves: 1) When was the last time you prayed and did not need something or was in trouble? 2) When is the last time you shared Jesus with someone who is not a Christian? 3) When is the last time that you sat down and meditated on a passage of scripture? 4) When is the last time you sacrificially gave without expecting something in return?

How did you do? Did you pass with flying colours or did we just get by or did we fail? Examining ourselves can be hard but can also be helpful because it helps us to see the things that need to be changed. If we are Christians then we should realise that Christ Jesus is within us and that should cause us to want to study God's word. It should compel us to want to share God's word with others. But it demands that we examine ourselves and our actions. Do others see Jesus living in us?

And finally after being willing to examine yourself and noticing the changes you need to make, are you willing today at the beginning of a new year to come to church and to begin the spirit of restoration. May 2013 be the year in which Christ Jesus is not just within us but that Christ Jesus can be seen through us. I wish you all a very happy and healthy and every blessing for the coming year.

Yours in Christ Fr Tim

Our Vision: *A family, rooted in Christ, committed to transforming lives by:*
Gathering as God's people – Growing more like Jesus – Going out in the power of the Spirit.

Do others see Jesus living in us?

Christmas Eve - *The Crib Service*



Baby Jesus Alicia surrounded by a cast of hundreds



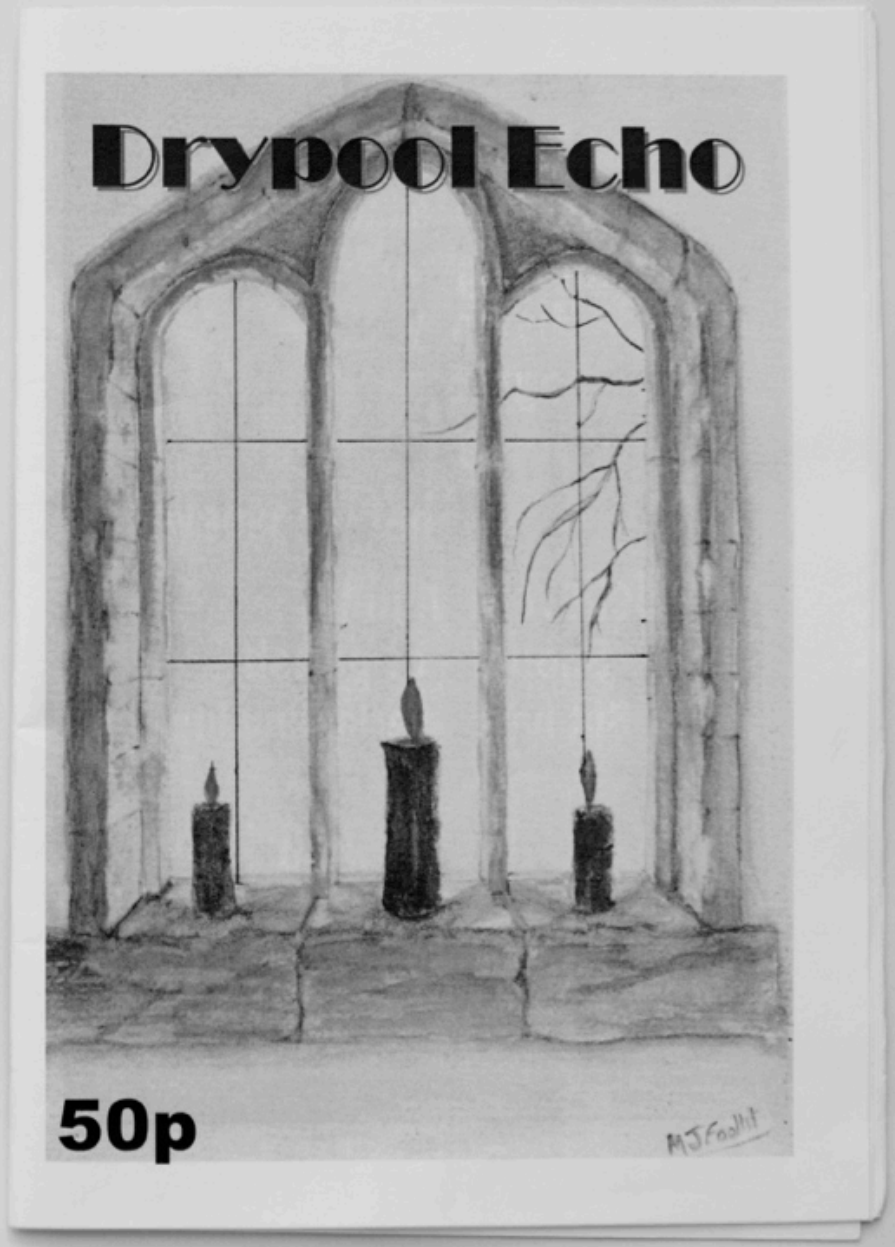
Daniel Vaughan joins in the festivities



Father Tim prepares to give the Blessing



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You Are Beautiful!

It's likely that many of you reading this will perhaps have already failed to keep those new year resolutions you made. If, like me, you didn't tell anyone what they were it won't be quite as embarrassing, but if you started that weight-loss blog or posted your intentions all

God doesn't want your perfection or your strength, He wants your heart

or start eating only vegetables and if you're really holy, of course, you'll be fasting the whole 40 days.*

This time of the year often finds us focussing on self-improvement or, perhaps if we are more honest, beating ourselves up over our many failures and weaknesses with a bit of self-loathing thrown in for good measure. At the risk of stating the blindingly obvious this is not a happy state of affairs - stop it!

Although we would never say aloud most of us believe, at least to some extent, (secretly) that we are unworthy and that we must do more or try harder to earn God's love. If you do think this way allow me to burst that particular bubble for you – there is nothing you can do to make God love you more and nothing you can do to make him love you less. He just loves you!

God has told us through the bible and the life, death & resurrection of his Son that he loves us (John 3:16). When God thinks about you he rejoices and sings a happy song (Zeph. 3:7)! So if the creator of the heavens and the earth who created you in his image and knows you better than you know yourself loves you unconditionally who are you to disagree?

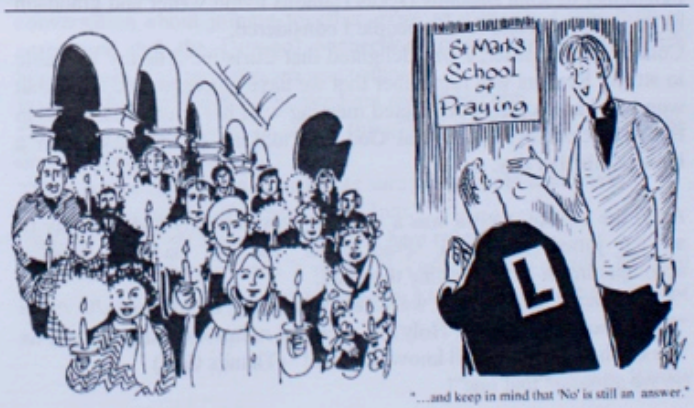
He's not impressed by your fasting (Is. 48:6), your sleek, professional worship (Amos 5:21) or your attempts to be good (Job 35: 6-8). None of it matters a jot to him in the sense of changing his attitude towards you. He just loves you!

As we continue through the new year I want to encourage you not to focus on what isn't right about your life, or the life of anyone else you know; don't worry about how imperfect Phil and I are, and we are; don't wish that such and such was or wasn't happening just focus your time and attention on Jesus. Ask him to fill you with his Holy Spirit and remind you every day that you are unconditionally loved. Be anxious for nothing but God!

God doesn't want your perfection or your strength, he wants your heart. There are good reasons to practice self-control but it's actually easier to be disciplined when you start from a place of knowing you are loved by God. If you know he loves you and only wants the best for you then it matters less that you slip up because you also know that he will forgive you. Also, once we accept that we are unable to help ourselves we can let God help us – his strength is made perfect in our weakness. In his strength, not ours, we are more likely to be able to do at least something good and then we can give him the glory and praise he deserves.

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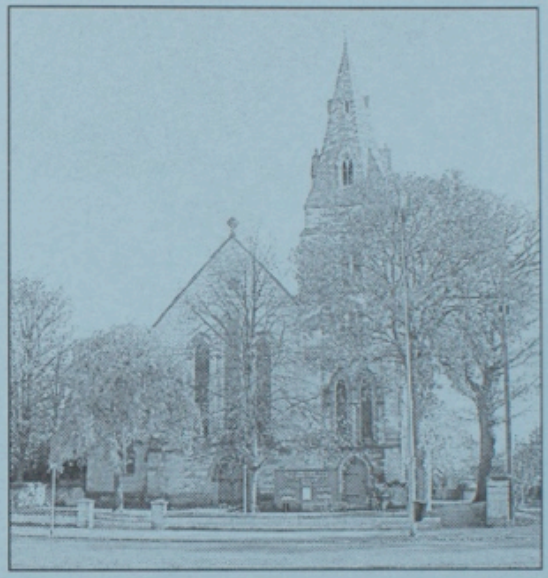
*do not attempt a major fast or dietary changes without first seeing your GP and obtaining medical advice.



"...and keep in mind that 'No' is still an answer."

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The Messenger



The magazine of
The parish church of
St. Nicholas
Lincoln

January 2013 – Issue 5. 50p

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HOW FIT ARE WE? PART TWO

New readers start here.... I suggested in the last edition that we take the 20 Olympics as an example of how we might increase our spiritual fitnes ad face life itself.....

Most people when embarking on any kind of journey or project need a map, plan or a simple list to keep them on course. In spiritual terms some people refer to this as a Rule of Life and it can be very detailed for some or something really quite simple and manageable but open to further development as you grow in spirituality.

So the first consideration – **WHAT** should a rule contain? Last time I mentioned 'Una's Rule' using the New Daylight Notes and there are many others available. Clergy will often use a version of the Daily Office or other devotions but whatever you use it needs to include certain elements.

- period of quiet before you start, nothing extensive, but just to recollect that you are here with God and he is here with you
- opening prayer which may be prescribed if you are using a set form or perhaps something that speaks to you or the prayer for the day
- a reading, perhaps a portion of scripture, psalm or poetry or a mixture. When you are starting out don't be too ambitious and use two readings, psalms and canticles etc. – as a certain rabbi would say 'not too heavy man!' All of that can come later.
- some form of reflection or comment, or reflection on a comment and then move into your final prayer.

WHEN should you do all of this?

The timing is entirely up to you but make it regular and constant. The word discipline springs to mind and if you try to squeeze it in as and when that is what you are doing to God. God is worth more than that. Morning, evening, whenever, it matters not provided you do it in a disciplined form and ***you do it.***

WHERE should you do this?

Our spiritual fitness (Olympic metaphor)

hting, material
emember in this
ou with the
. Many find a
visual aid helpful such as a candle, icon or crucifix. I would not advise walking in the country or by the sea shore for this part of your rule although it would be great to build it on as an addendum perhaps once a week or so.

But there is **MORE!** Sorry about that; all of that is fine but what is it achieving? We started off with a working definition of spirituality as trying to get closer to our God. All of the above will help us with that but our Rule of Life needs a little application. There really is no point in being spiritually fit unless we engage with God's people. How we do that is up to each and every one of us but a good guide is to look at that passage in Galatians (Ch. 5 verses 22 -25) on the fruits of the spirit – ***go on look it up*** – and choose just one area and add it in to your Rule and then apply the whole Rule to your life.

When you've finished your Rule write it down, date it and put a review date on it. That will remind you that it is work in progress and not an end in itself. If you need help ask. Any priest will be only too willing to pray with you and give you guidance and some people find it a great help to have themselves and their rule blessed at a time such as this. Some people are in the practice of using someone they trust and respect as a soul friend to put their Rule together but be careful that you don't lose sight of the fact that this is between you and your God and not a chat session between friends.

What will the outcome be? Well that depends on you and your God. I found I wanted to go further, do more, Quiet Hours and Days, Retreats of all kinds, all chances to increase your spiritual fitness a part of your everyday life. That might not be for you but don't dismiss it out of hand just yet. What this basic simple form of fitness will give you is a platform from which to move without stretching your spiritual ham string, calf muscle or even getting cramp so it's worth a try.

The Rev'd Canon Brian Barnes

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ON COUNTING BLESSINGS

A small child, it's said, came to think that God is called Harold. "That prayer they teach us," the boy explained, "it starts 'Our Father in heaven, Harold be your name.'" It was probably that same boy who prayed not to be led 'into Thames Station'! In truth, many adults these days seem no more familiar with the Lord's Prayer than this young schoolboy. Indeed, the Prayer has to be printed out in Wedding Service sheets if all present are to join in confidently with its wonderful words.

Surprisingly, there is one thing which doesn't appear in the Lord's Prayer: thanksgiving. However, as we discover from the Gospels, Jesus was constantly thankful to God. 'I thank you Father because you have hidden these things from the wise and have revealed them unto babes'. (St.Matthew 11.25). Jesus was impressed by the one leper out of a group of ten who expressed gratitude for being healed. (St.Luke 17.11-19). Jesus gave thanks for the loaves and fish with which he fed the crowd (St.Mark 6.37-44) and for the bread and wine at his Last Supper with his disciples. (St.Mark 14.22-25). And Jesus thanked God for his prayer being heard at the scene of Lazarus' death. (St.John 11.41). Later on in the New Testament the writer to the Ephesians urges readers to 'give thanks always for all things to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (5.20).

Perhaps we could be doing with a little more of this appreciation, towards God and towards our fellow human beings! When on holiday in New England not so long ago I saw in a gift shop a framed sign on sale. In attractive script it read, 'KITCHEN RULES. Sit: Give Thanks: Eat: Praise Cook: Tips Accepted'. I liked the idea that not only might we thank the Creator but also thank and praise the Cook. Whilst there is much in the world to lament (greed, cruelty, gunfire, disability, for example) there is so much which gives cause for joy and satisfaction - nature's brilliant colours, the giving and receiving of love, the thrill of sport, the excitement of travel, the endless pleasures of music, art, the theatre and more besides. The Prayer Book's General Thanksgiving invites us to 'bless (God) for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life, but above all for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ'.

Ten years ago Jeffrey John (now Dean of St. Albans) wrote a mind stretching book, 'The Meaning in the Miracles'. In it he combined great respect for the Gospels, with a spirit of scholarly inquiry. He looked at the Old Testament

Living with a thankful heart

…nd
…ncarnate
…s on the
healing of the (Samaritan) lepers deal well with our readiness (or otherwise) to say "Thank You". And he quotes Johnson Oatman Jr's lines which may be doggerel but which are certainly profound:

'When upon life's billows you are tempest-tossed,
When you are discouraged thinking all is lost,
Count your blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done'.

If we know the tune that goes with these words, might it be worth singing the song to ourselves sometime today? And why not take the trouble to acknowledge the thoughtfulness somebody might show us? That way, as the film-maker Mike Leigh would say, 'Life is Sweet'.

The Rev'd David Mowbray

WORK CONTINUES ON ANGLICAN METHODIST COVENANT

The Joint Implementation Commission (JIC) of the Anglican Methodist Covenant has voiced its disappointment that the General Synod did not agree women bishops. It added, however, that, although the vote in General Synod failed to remove a major obstacle to growing into that unity to which the Church of England and the Methodist Church are committed in the Covenant between them, the basis of that Covenant has not changed.

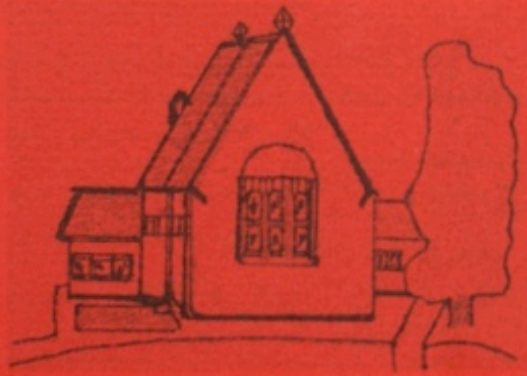
"There is much that still unites us and we will continue to work towards the full visible unity of our churches," said the Rt Rev'd Christopher Cocksworth and Prof Peter Howdle, who co-chair the JIC. The Anglican Methodist Covenant was signed at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday 1 November 2003 in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen.

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Tough Questions

Is Britain a Christian country? How can Christians have a positive effect on secular issues, politics, ethics etc when it seems that Christianity has been marginalised?

Before the 16th century Reformation, there was only one kind of church in Britain and it took its lead from the Pope. At the Reformation biblical Christianity was rediscovered, and the Church of England was founded as a protestant church (one of those protesting against the Roman Church). It was then assumed that the country of England and the Church of England were one and the same: all the English people were members of the English Church, which is why the monarch was deemed to be the earthly boss of both. We were assumed to be a Christian country, rather like Old Testament Israel – a godly Kingdom under God's monarch. There were almost no members of other faiths, and atheism had not really been invented.

What a long way we have come from those 16th and 17th century days. No doubt our understanding of the bible and of church life and of Christian doctrine has grown and developed since then, and we no longer put to death those we disagree with. That's good. But the church now is deemed to be a religious grouping, alongside many others. Today there are all sorts of churches, as well as mosques, synagogues, gurdwaras, temples, and a great many people who are simply not allied to any recognized faith at all.

We have a legacy of Christian influence in this country, though, which lingers. Our present Queen is a practising and praying Christian believer. Much of our legal and judicial system is based on biblical laws and principles. We date our years from the birth of Christ. We still have a state church, 'the conscience of the nation', operative in every square inch of the land. Our countryside is peppered with church towers and spires in every village. All our great national events are accompanied by Christian prayers, hymns, and services. Biblical words and phrases are spotted by the discerning in our literature, newspapers, pop music, and everyday speech. More people attend Christian churches each week than watch football. In every city (and

especially in London) there are vibrant, growing churches attracting young people, students, and others, with new churches constantly springing up. Theology is a growing academic pursuit in schools and

Salt & light in a secular world

The word 'secular' is to do with 'time'. It denotes life in this present age without reference to anything outside it (such as eternity, God, or heaven). And while we have a great Christian heritage in this country, we have to face the fact that Britain has become more secular than Christian, with new laws, new social trends and expectations which take no account of God, have no origin in biblical or Christian faith, and sometimes run counter to it. Real committed 'practising' Christian believers are thought to be an oddity these days. We are mostly a tolerated oddity. Where once it was normal to pray to Jesus and believe the Bible, such an attitude is now sometimes assumed to be anti-scientific, anti-democratic, anti-choice, anti-diversity, and oppressive of others who hold different views. People tolerate us mostly, until our views run counter to the cultural trends of our secular society (on abortion and embryology, marriage and family life, Sundays, sexual 'freedoms' and so on). England is not a Christian country now, and sometimes Christians here are made to feel most uncomfortable (as in the case of the B.A. stewardess wanting to wear a cross, or the van driver wanting to display a cross on his dashboard).

What should we do about this situation? Obvious answer: PRAY. But also prepare for difficult days by being fully integrated into your church, by holding fast in your mind and heart to God and his word, and by being unashamed of your allegiance to Jesus. Call others to follow him. Support campaigns on issues that matter. We may be losing influence in the West, but we shall not lose any battles that really matter. We are more than conquerors through him who loved us (Romans 8:37). As we read the New Testament it is very obvious that the early church was powerful and effective and growing, even though it was a very small minority, and reviled as an objectionable oddity.

God is faithful. We must be faithful too, keeping our nerve as we carry on in his service.

- James Dudley-Smith

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Tough Questions

Is faith a leap in the dark? Can I be a Christian without committing intellectual suicide?

When I discovered I was one of the only people in my school that actually enjoyed Religious Studies (or 'Theology' as my school pretentiously called it), I decided to see if I might go on to study it at university. Some well-meaning older Christians passionately tried to persuade me otherwise. They warned that many keen Christians fall away while studying Theology. Being a young man, I ignored their advice. To me, it seemed that they were wanting me to (as it were) stick my fingers in my ears and pretend that everything I had been taught up until that point was true, and close my eyes and pretend that no one disagreed with me. Surely, I thought, if something is true it will stand up to the rigours of an anti-evangelical Theology faculty.

I think my friends were right and so was I. I saw a number of folk come up to university as Christian believers and leave university as confused agnostics. On the other hand I'm still here to tell the tale, which is why I think it is possible - in fact necessary – to be a Christian without committing intellectual suicide. Faith is not a leap in the dark.

If we are to be those who have genuine adult faith, we need to move from **credulity** (believing what someone else tells us – parents, teachers, vicars, friends…), to **criticism** (flexing our thinking muscles, testing what we have been told – does it fit with the world around me?) and finally to **conviction** (we've assessed the evidence and come to a well-rounded and settled world view that is our own). The problem for many of us comes when we stay at stage one for too long. Content to be baby Christians, receiving from our elders, we are suddenly thrown a dose of the dark side of life which causes us to question everything we've ever been told. Frightened of this unsettling feeling, we decide 'faith' is for children and either abandon it, or cling to it like a comfort blanket which we feel like we've outgrown.

Real Christian faith is simply our response to a given set of data. We see the world in its beauty and brokenness, we see ourselves with our

potential and limitations, we read the facts of Jesus' existence. What do we make of this giant of civilisation who claimed to speak for God [illegible]lfilling [illegible]n the dark. [illegible]e verified, Christian faith rests on the historical events of a real person's life and death (and resurrection). It is my conviction (and that of a billion or so others) that active trust or confidence (faith) in the person of Jesus Christ is the answer to the riddle of our beautiful and broken world, and our human potential yet great limitations. This was also the apostle Paul's conviction when he gave his life to passing on what was 'of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day…' And that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time' (1 Corinthians 15:3-6). This was the central message of Christian faith which rested squarely on the facts of Jesus life, death and resurrection. Of course it all began at Christmas, when Jesus first came into the world as a baby. You can check that out too, even this Christmas - a good time to face the facts.

So I studied Theology at university. The interesting thing I began to find was that once people threw away the idea of God, then all ideas had to be thrown away too. G.K. Chesterton put it like this: 'In so far as religion (Christian faith) is gone, reason is going…And in the act of destroying Divine authority we have largely destroyed the idea of that human authority by which we do a long-division sum. With a long and sustained tug we have attempted to pull the mitre of pontifical man; and his head has come off with it.' (*Othodoxy* p.55). I began to discover that rather than faith requiring intellectual suicide, it actually furthers intellectual enquiry. The logical result of 'no faith' is to bring to an end proper intellectual enquiry, as there is no final basis to anything. Nothing is proved, nothing is gained.

But real faith doesn't end with intellectual satisfaction that Jesus is who he said he was. It begins there and moves to a ditching of our pride and bending of our wills to his – as master of the world, and to say with 'doubting' Thomas, 'My Lord and my God'. That's not a leap in the dark, it's resting in the light.

- Tim Lewis

Ditching out pride and bending our will to His

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The Easter Candle

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No room for doubt

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For the duration of my training I will not be able to produce a magazine every month. I will produce as many as my timetable will allow.

Contributions for the MAY magazine to be received on or before Thursday 25th April 2013

for publication on Saturday 4th May 2013

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CHRIST ABOVE ALL ELSE

Fr Danny

Dear all,

Christ has set us free by his life-giving spirit of love, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We are to live by the Spirit and be guided by the Spirit. As children of God, we are free – that's what the gospel is all about.

St Paul is quick to remind the followers of Jesus that the gospel of Christ is tough. To proclaim the message of Christ is often very difficult indeed. Jesus never said it would be easy – for the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it. Again in Luke's gospel, Jesus said, 'Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.'

Jesus makes it clear time after time, that following him will not be easy. It will involve sacrifices and conflicts of priorities. But, as Jesus said, 'if you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' To live by the spirit and by guided by the spirit we are made free. But what does that mean to us? Well, if we desire to know Christ, if we want to follow his example of perfect love, compassion and mercy, if we put Christ above everything else in our lives, we are set free.

To live by the Spirit we need to sacrifice living by the flesh. That's where it gets tough; because that's where we have to decide what is important to us. To live a rich life today in this world or to live a rich life in the Kingdom of God with the poor. If we follow Christ and live in the Spirit we will inherit the Kingdom of God – but this is a narrow way and leads to the cross before we are set free. Freedom requires commitment and a different set of attitudes that most of us will struggle with. Freedom requires putting others first, reaching out with compassion to our neighbours, helping the poor and the sick, and being committed in our discipleship.

We are all called to live the gospel of Christ, we are all children of God and must stand firm in the faith. Let us treasure the words of St Paul, 'I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the

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life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me an

Please attend

deeply moving services during Holy Week.

What faith means to me:
a church member's perspective

FAMILY NEWS

Averil Willis, Terry Williams, Ruby Jones, and Dolly Wright have died since the last edition of the magazine. Averil, who was 95, was a member of this parish most of her life and along with Terry, Ruby and Dolly will be greatly missed.

Bill Mort, who was Lay Reader in this diocese and lived in Bishopston has also died recently.

We extend our deepest sympathy and offer our condolences to all who mourn.

We pray for those in hospital at this time, amongst them Joyce Bidder, Eric Thomas, Betty James and Iori Thomas. We also pray for the many housebound members who are unable to join us in church at this time.



PCC Away-Day at Nicholaston House: reflecting on the Diocesan Vision and how it might be realised in our parish

MEET FELICITY BARROW

Mair Kiley

Faith and what it means to you; an occasional series of interviews with members of our churches

I am grateful to Felicity Barrow for sparing me some of her valuable time to answer some questions about her Christian faith. It is my hope it will interest and encourage us on our shared journey of faith.

Felicity can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
I am 47 years old and married to Trevor who is retired. I work part time as a criminal lawyer and we've got 2 children - Isobel who is 17 and Olivia who is 14. We live in Mayals with my parents Dorothy and Cliff.

Can you tell me how long you have been a Christian?
When I was very young my Mother sent me to Sunday school near our house. Although my Mother was confirmed in the Church, she decided not to have me baptised, but to give both my brother and me the opportunity to decide for ourselves. When I was about 12 and at Comprehensive school, lots of my friends were attending church and going to confirmation classes, and I went to see what the fuss was about. I decided I would like to be confirmed, and of course to do that, I had to be baptised. I chose my own Godparents, which was very nice, and I chose wisely because they have always been very supportive. When I became confirmed I carried on attending that church and have been a committed Christian ever since.

If you didn't have a faith what would give you meaning?

What does your faith mean to you?
That's a really tough question. It is very important to me because it is the bench mark for the way I try to live my life. I try to live a Christian life and to demonstrate this in my role as wife, parent, daughter, friend and lawyer. The reason faith is so important is because it gives you a backdrop. If you didn't have a faith what would give you meaning? It is all very well to have a busy life but in the quiet moments it is important to have belief in

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something beside that which is immediately around you. It is central to my life and attending church on Sunday is really important. It helps me maintain a close relationship with God. I think it must be hard for people who say they are Christians but don't go to church, to keep a close relationship with God. Sunday is the first day of the week for me and going to church sets me up for the week. I always feel better coming out of church than when I went in, partly because of the fellowship and partly because I have an opportunity to reflect on what God means to me.



You mentioned relationships-do you believe your Christian faith is about a relationship with God?
Yes I do, and like all relationships you have to nurture it. There are times when that relationship becomes fractured, and you have to work hard to come back to it, but if you have faith, I believe you always will.

I am always happy to tell people I am a Christian.

How do you feel about sharing your faith with people you meet?
I am always happy to tell people I am a Christian. People who know me and those I work with know how important my faith is to me. I make no secret of the fact that I go to church. I try to encourage other people to come to church. I think a lot of the problems people face in their lives could be put into perspective by coming to church and having a relationship with God. I find it an uplifting experience. I think the world would be a better place if more people put themselves in a position to experience a belief and faith in God.

I am not shy about sharing my faith, and I try to show by example that I am a Christian, and that there are benefits by doing little things or even big things for people. There is a lovely hymn, one of my favourites, the Servant Song and the words "Let me be as Christ to you" I think illustrates what I am trying to say. I think this is what we should be like as Christians, showing by example rather than proscription that this is a good way to live our lives.

So you are quite confident in sharing your faith?
Yes I am, but then I'm quite a confident person, and I try and instil in my children not to be reticent about sharing their faith, which can be very difficult for teenagers today.

Is your faith different today than it was say 15 or 20 years ago?
Yes it is. We mentioned about our relationship with God, and how relationships change. When I was young I had a very different view of God. We are brought up to believe in an all seeing, all knowing, kind and benevolent God, who won't allow anything bad to happen to us, and that I believe is a very childlike view. Then you start to grow up and have some experiences which are grow up in a happy home, where I was protected, by my family, from the big wide world.

When I was in my 20s and busy establishing my career, I didn't think I needed God as

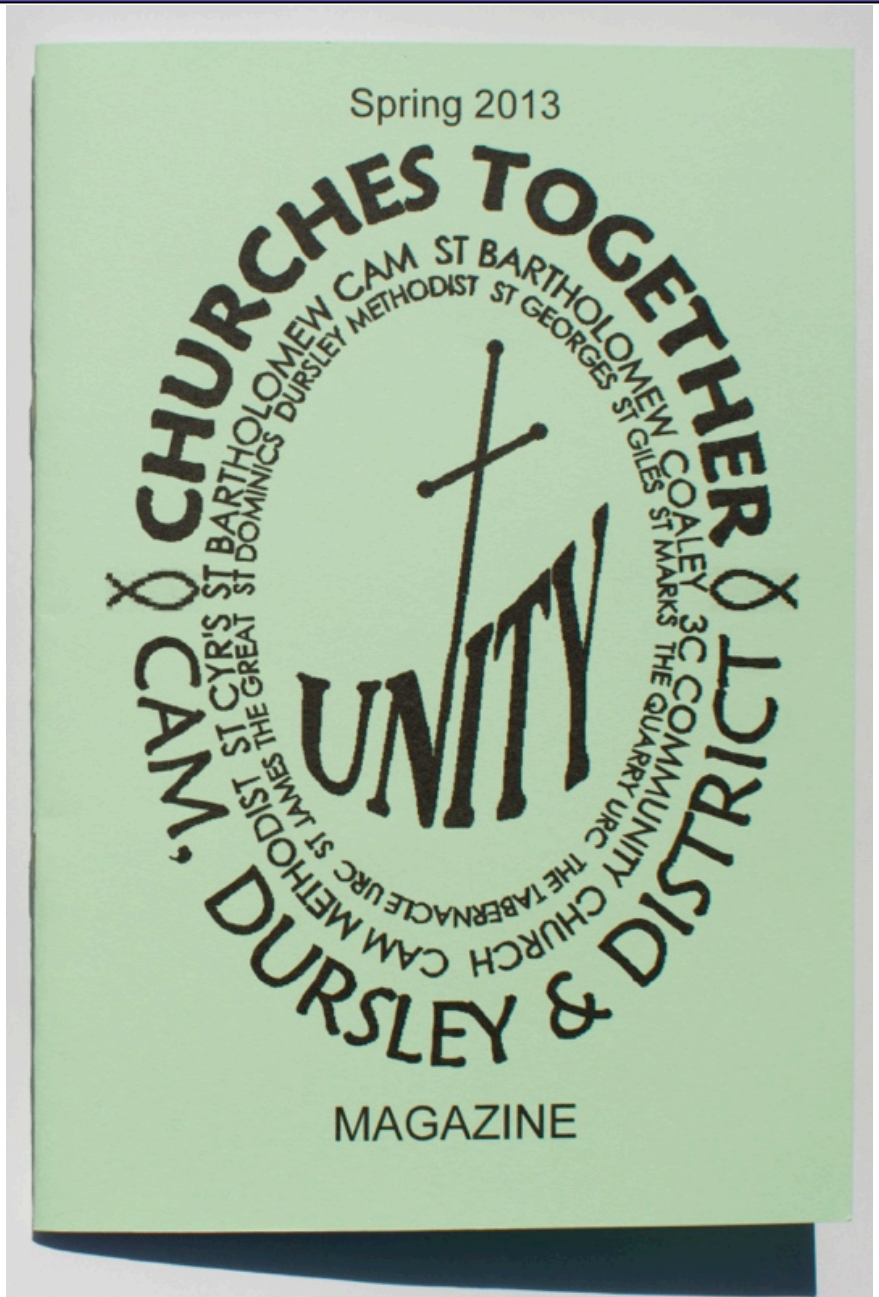
As I matured into an adult my view of God changed. I still believe in a benevolent God who cares about us, but I realise there is a much bigger responsibility on us to fulfil our part of the bargain. As a child you tend to think, when bad things happen, why is God allowing that? But as you get older you realise that your faith enables you to work through these bad things.

We spoke earlier about our relationship with God sometimes being fractured. When I was in my 20s and busy establishing my career, I didn't think I needed God as much. I still went to church, but it was more of a habit. So what did I need God for? When I had my own children I started to look again at my relationship with God. When you become a parent, you realise you are responsible for other people, and the sense of this can be overwhelming on your own. My faith changed then, and it has matured as I have matured.

Are there areas in the church you would like today see changed ?
e more people coming to church. I've just been in the Middle East, where the custom is for people to come to prayer 5 times a day. The call comes from the Imam at set points throughout the day, and wherever people are, in the supermarket, the beach etc. they all come. I think it is a shame

A bold and confident stance

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Churches Together in Cam, Dursley and District

Covenant: a key theme

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Summer 2013 Unity Magazine

The theme is: What Made a Difference?

Deadline for Articles: 1st May 2013
Email: unitydursley@inbox.com

The Covenant with Abraham & The Covenant with Moses
Genesis 15 & Exodus 19

The Oxford Dictionary defines the word "Covenant" as "A bond entered into voluntarily between two parties by which each pledge themselves to do something for the other". It is more than a promise, born out of a close, intimate relationship. A good example can be found in the Church's Marriage Rite, where before any vows are made or rings exchanged, the prospective couple profess that they are entering into the marriage contract freely and without coercion. The making of a complex promise then follows: "...to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy law...". We note that both parties use the same words, for the union is equally binding on both. Physical actions then follow, to back up the words which have been spoken – rings are exchanged and hands are joined, to emphasise the important physica element of the marriage. The making of the marriage covenant brings two individuals together into a new unit in the community.

When God called Abraham to "leave your native land and go to a land which I will show you" there was clearly a reason. Abraham and his descendants were to be a new unit in a new community, and example of a loving partnership with the one true God. God's promise to Abraham was three-fold: along with a new land to live in, God promised Abraham that he would be the founder of a truly large family, and that he, the Lord God, would always be with him. In Genesis ch. 15 we see the beginnings of an intimate relationship between God and Abraham. No longer does God simply call and Abraham obey; God promises that Abraham's faithfulness will be rewarded, and with hesitation Abraham asks what that reward will be. God assures him that not only will he have a son, but also that his descendants will be as countless as the stars. God then backs up his words with a physical action. Abraham is instructed to prepare a number of creatures for a ritual sacrifice – a custom that in fact pre-dated the time of Abraham. In a vision, Abraham then sees God, in the form of fire, pass between the portions of the offering – a "rite of passage" which bound the person who passed through. So God himself entered a new relationship with this man he has chosen to be the

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The historical context

founder of a new people. For his part, Abraham is called to die to his former way of life and follow God's guiding instructions. Note that the creatures are ritually slaughtered before they are offered; death is implicit in the ratification of the covenant. Abraham is called to die to his former way of life so that he might rise to the new.

Many years later, when the descendants of Abraham had been liberated from slavery in Egypt, God renewed his covenant with his people. The promise made in Exodus ch. 3 had been fulfilled – the people were on the return journey to their own land – but having reached the Sinai desert, all that they had was the word given to Moses that God was looking after them. So God announces that he is about to renew his covenant with his people. He will be their God, and they will be his people – they will become a holy nation (where "holy" means "set apart" for the service of God). What follows in Ch. 19 is a detailed instruction to the people; to be worthy recipients and partakers in this covenant, they must prepare themselves physically and spiritually by acts of cleansing. They must wash themselves and their clothing, they must abstain from all physical relationships, and must not even touch the mountain of Sinai, for fear of contamination. Having done all that God asked of them, the people then were ready to receive the new commandments from God, set in stone, given to Moses – a physical reminder that God was indeed with them. Note that once again death is implicit in the ratification of the covenant. The old, dead, way of life is laid aside through the ritual washing & cleansing, and the old morality set aside through the discipline of abstinence.

The covenants made to Abraham and to Moses were both instigated by God but were by no means one-sided agreements. Time and again the same phrase is repeated: "I will be your God and you will be my people, if only you will..." The covenant will not hold if the people do not keep their part – to obey God's word and following his teaching, and live lives dedicated to his service. God seals his part of the covenant with a physical act – the giving of himself to his people, and asks that in the keeping of their part, the people give themselves to him.

Ian Robb
Lower Cam & Coaley

The Ark of the Covenant

My first knowledge about the Ark of the Covenant came through a children's colouring book, which depicted King David bringing the Ark into Jerusalem. What caught my childish eye was that the artist had drawn it looking exactly like our china display cabinet, with its side hinged double doors. Of course I had no real understanding of its significance, or the trouble that David got into for dancing in front of it. I probably thought no more about it until Steven Spielburg's film, 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' appeared in 1981. An interesting example of the bible successfully crossing into popular culture, since the film was very good and went on to win numerous awards.

The Ark of the Covenant does have a fascinating history, which started with God telling Moses on Mount Sinai to construct it, to hold the tablets of stone bearing the Ten Commandments. Not only that, God gave Moses the exact design. It was to be 45" (115 cm) long by 27" (68 cm) high and wide. It was to be made from Shittim (Acacia) wood and covered inside and out with gold. No doubt I just coloured it dark brown like our china cabinet! It was to have two carrying poles, gold covered of course, which, peculiarly, could not be removed. Finally it was to be covered with a golden cover, topped with two cherubim. In Spielburg's film, these faced each other with their wings outstretched. Additional to the Tablets of the Covenant, it seems to have also housed Aaron's stick, the one which burst into bud and a jar of manna. Throughout the Old Testament, references to the Ark give us a comprehensive picture of its use and movements. God was obviously thought to reside in it, or at least the voice of God was heard between the two cherubim, as it was regularly consulted before important decisions regarding events like battles. Highlights of its history include

- It was carried for 40 years during the Israelite wanderings in the desert, where it rested in a special tent – The Tabernacle
- It caused a miraculous dry passage to open, through the waters of the River Jordan, to allow the Israelites to cross on their way to the Promised Land

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- It was carried around the City of Jericho for seven days, prior to the miraculous collapse of the walls
- It was present in the temple at Shiloh during Samuel's apprenticeship
- The priest Eli fell dead when news reached him that the Philistines had captured the Ark
- The Philistines returned the Ark after 7 months, as it brought them only misfortune
- David had the Ark brought to Jerusalem and got into a lot of trouble from his wife for dancing in front of it on the way, or has some of the story been edited out? Also, Uzzah was struck dead for touching the Ark on the same journey. Again it all seems a little unfair.
- Solomon built his temple to house the Ark, where it resided in the Holy of Ho

Explaining terminology

After that it Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 586BC. Certainly nothing more is heard of it, though it continues to be referenced in the New Testament. It was definitely not present in the rebuilt Temple.

At this point things get interesting for lovers of mystery, since several different traditions about its fate have grown up. The most obvious one is that the Babylonians carried it off with all the other valuables in the Temple. However there are ancient Jewish writings which indicate that it was hidden before the Babylonians arrived, in particular, in a cave in Mount Nebo, on Jordon's east bank. Further, the location was lost and the Ark will not be found until the Second Coming. Other Jewish sources say it was hidden in the maze of caves and tunnels under Jerusalem. Spielburg has it hidden in Egypt and it becomes a race between the good guys, led by Indiana Jones and the Nazi bad guys, to find and remove it, for the power it is supposed to possess. Spielburg's film does contain a grain of truth in that when Tutankhamun's tomb was opened in the 1922, something very much like the Ark was found inside, albeit a bit larger than the biblical measurements. Even if this was not the biblical Ark, it does show that the design of the Ark was already around at the time of Moses. Most recently, in the last couple of years, there have been reports that the Ark was in Ethiopia. There is apparently a tradition in Ethiopia that Solomon and the Queen of Sheba had a son (who is not mentioned in the Bible) and it was he who took it back to Ethiopia. Certainly the Orthodox Christians there have a shrine called the Chapel of the Tablet at Axum, which seems to contain a holy relic. It is guarded night and day by a solitary monk, who is the only one allowed to see it. Both the Daily Mail and CNN News reported that due to a leaking roof, it was going to be moved and the monk would need assistance and then the world would see it. Mind, legend also has it that anyone seeing the Ark will die, just as happened to the Nazi bad guys....So that was a probable error in my colouring book, it would presumably have been completely covered up when being moved.

David Ri

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Striking a Bargain

This is such a familiar phrase that we hardly give it a thought, but on reflection the use of the verb strike when we refer to making an agreement looks at first a bit strange. It's not like saying "It struck me that . . ." when we imply a sudden and definite fresh awareness of something. It's a really old expression and it has roots in the Latin phrase for making a treaty by the ancient – we'd say primitive - practice of confirming it with a blood sacrifice.

Through much of the ancient world this manner of making a solemn agreement, especially between differing groups, was very common, and we see it in Genesis 15 when God confirms his promises to Abram with a covenant ceremony. Abram believed God, but wanted a doubled assurance. "How am I to *know* . . . ?" And at the instruction of the LORD God, Abram brought a heifer, a ram, a goat and a turtledove, cut them in two and set the halves opposite each other with a path between them. The practice of making a covenant would involve the parties passing between the severed portions, implicitly affirming that their own lives are on the line, and they desire to fulfil the commitment at the cost even of their lives.

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Our 21st century challenge

Over a
regular c
God more fully. He looked for some means of helping them to hear God's offer and challenge ever more deeply, and to allow God to prompt and enable them to respond.

In 1755 Wesley created a form of service adapted from the works of Joseph and Richard Alleine. These works came from the Puritan tradition of pastoral and spiritual guidance. Wesley therefore insisted that the Covenant Service be located in a framework of pastoral care, preaching and guidance.

This framework dealt with the corporate needs of a particular society of Christian disciples, and within that with the needs of individuals within that group. It therefore linked personal devotion with corporate worship.

There would be a series of meetings about the Covenant involving sermons, explanations and exhortations. An invitation would then be issued for "those as will" to come to the Covenant Service. After a day's "Retreat" for people to prepare themselves in prayer, fasting, reflection and self- examination there would be the Covenant Service itself. This would be held in the context of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Wesley thought that this Sacrament brought into the realm of experience and made real all that was said in the Covenant. He therefore urged Methodists to pay it the highest regard, to put it at the centre of their spiritual life and to share in it frequently.

The process did not end with the Covenant Service. People were encouraged to continue to work out the implications for their lives of the fact that their relationship with God had been renewed in and through Christ. It was accepted that people might find this difficult to do without help, and might "backslide". There would therefore be further pastoral guidance offered to both groups and individuals in the weeks that followed the service.

Neil Grecian

Covenant – A Modern View

A covenant needs commitment and loyalty. These are often lacking in our modern world, and are not as highly valued as in the past.

God gave humanity a model covenant to show His commitment and loyalty to His people by sending us his Son. Our side of this contract requires our loyalty and commitment to God and to each other. Fortunately He gives us help if we ask for it.

What covenants do ordinary people enter into today? Marriage, Mortgage, Lease, Business deals, Support of Government by payment of taxes and voting, Parenting, and for some, Armed Service. Can you add to this list? For Christians should we add 'Support of local Parish and Clergy'? When we are baptised and confirmed we enter into a covenant with God. Are we still loyal and committed to that covenant?

The banking crisis of 2008/9 was brought on by what are called toxic loans. These were undertakings by bankers to lend money tc people who were not sincere in undertaking to repay the loans, because their earnings were insufficient to cover the monthly payments. These bankers were unfaithful to the covenant of their profession; and even more so when they sold these bad loans on tc unsuspecting investors in a 'bundle'. This began the depression we are in which is causing suffering to so many who are out of work. The breaking of small covenants can have devastating effects on Society as a whole.

Marriage is a covenant between two people, but it is also a covenant between the couple and the community. They commit tc providing a stable home for any children and to playing their part in their community. We can all see the repercussions of a broken marriage.

Loyalty, Commitment, Honesty and Truth are qualities we need to teach our families and communities by example.

Sophia Schutts

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Clarity of Christian Message

Commendations:

- Focus (Yovil)
- Llwynderw (Swansea)

Category Winner:

- Unity - Churches Together (Dursley)

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Award Scheme Criteria:

- Cover Design ✔
- Overall Layout and Structure ✔
- Creativity and Typography of Headlines ✔
- Use of Graphics ✔
- Clarity of the Christian Message ✔
- Appeal to a Wider Community

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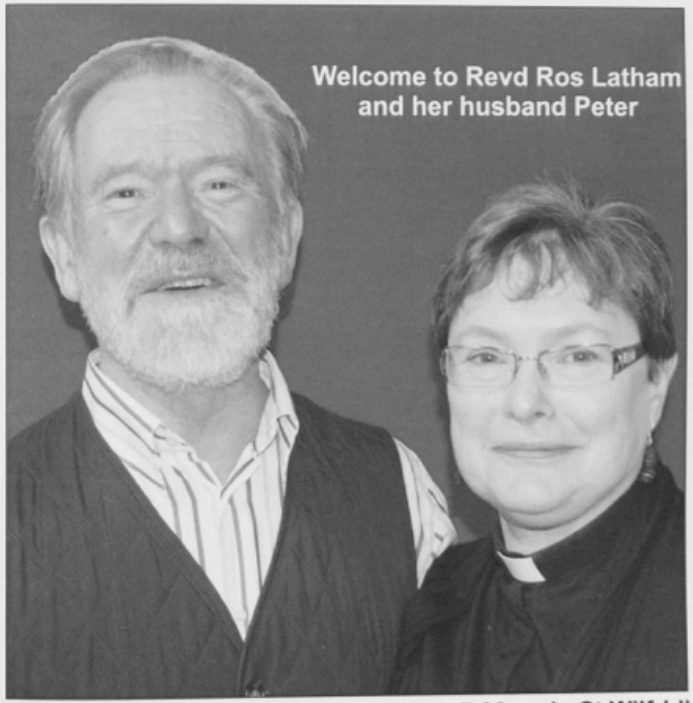
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lby * Bilsby with Farlesth
lby * Bilsby with Farlesth
orpe * Hannah cum Hagnaby with Markby * Alford with Rigsby * Well * Saleby with Beesby and Ma

Group Messenger

The Alford Group of Parishes

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2013



Licensing service Monday 18 February, 7.30pm in St Wilfrid's

faith supper afterwards in the church hall - all welcome

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Village News

Beesby

Remembrance Sunday service was prepared and led by the Churchwardens. "Guide me O thou great Redeemer, pilgrim through this barren land" was a fitting introduction to Josie's poem "In Flanders Fields". Following "Jerusalem", Maureen read the lesson from Hebrews and Susan said prayers. The homily was a monologue "Goodnight Dad, see you in the morning" telling the story of a son going to war, coming home and then the final Goodnight Son as he went across on D Day. A special request to sing "God save the Queen" brought our service to an end.

We welcomed Pat to our November Evensong and enjoyed her "Stir Up Sunday" service which she had hastily arranged due to a communication blip!

Back into action, the team arranged an Evening of Carols and Readings. Mint Jelly was the first offering by Josie which brought us nicely into "Mabel and Matilda", a humorous but sincere Christmas script looking at the Nativity through the conversation of two sheep following the star. We sang new carols to well-known tunes for which we had to enlist Bev and Mike on their instruments to accompany us with tunes of Auld Lang Syne and Baa Baa Black Sheep.

After all the prayers and good wishes for Joanne's recovery throughout the year, we were heartened to see her looking well again with her inspirational grandson Freddie, which prompted her amusing celebratory reading of a Grandma taking her grandchildren to a concert where the parents were performing on stage. They were about to witness a miracle. Then Mike's version of "Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer" on flugel horn – no, that wasn't the miracle! Olivia and Phoebe read the story of Christmas Eve in the Blunts' home when a stranger in the form of Jesus came to join them and was invited to move in for good. Then we had a Christmas carol from Venus and Mars, written and read by Mike and his reluctant side-kick Pearl, two aspects of men's and women's attitude to Christmas. Susan and Sheila read prayers and a poem and finally everyone was invited to come up to the front and join us to sing to "Come on, let's celebrate". Thank you to all our willing contributors and everyone who came join our celebrations. To finish, the ladies served mulled wine and mince pies.

It was our turn to host the Group Eucharist which was also the final service of 2012. Wilma's enthusiasm always inspires us and we were not disappointed. We are still smiling at Wilma's reading of the donkey's trials and tribulations as he carried Mary, his precious load, to Jerusalem. An absolute gem!

The Baa-mee Churchwardens Mabel and Matilda wish everyone a Happy New Year and look forward to welcoming Revd Ros to our group in February.

Pearl White

Don't miss your church's AGM

St Wilfrid's, Alford:
Wednesday 10 April, 7pm in the church hall

St Andrew's, Beesby:
Thursday 11 April at 7pm in the church

Holy Trinity, Bilsby:
Wednes 20 March, 10am at Church House

St Andrew's, Hannah cum Hagnaby and St Peter's, Markby:
Thursday 14 March, 10.30am at Markby

St James, Rigsby:
Sunday 7 April after the morning service

St Margaret's, Saleby:
Sunday 14 April after the morning service

St Margaret's, Well:
Tuesday 19 March at 2pm in the church

Village News

Hannah

FIRSTLY, New Year greetings to everyone. What better way to start this year than with the arrival of our new Priest in Charge, Revd Ros Latham. We look forward to Revd Ros's leadership and welcoming her to Hannah church as soon as she is able to fit us into her busy schedule.

As it was Markby's turn for the Carol Service last year (doesn't that sound a long time ago?), we haven't had a service at Hannah since the beginning of December so we are looking forward to our first service of the year on 3 February at 11am. We look forward to meeting up with our regular worshippers and any newcomers who will be given a very warm welcome by all.

Although we will have lots of interesting services in the coming months, I am already looking forward to our Flower Festival event on 15/16/17 June which will include a Eucharist service on the Sunday at 3pm. I'm giving you plenty of notice so that you can write it on your calendar now and hopefully join us at some time over those three days.

Meanwhile, see you on 3 February (weather permitting!).

Mary Johnson

Bilsby

WE HAD a very successful Carol Service in December, led by Revd Frank Yates. There were over 40 in the congregation so the carols were sung with gusto. Our thanks go to the readers and to Janet who played the organ for us. We were pleased to welcome the Wheatly family who had just arrived from Australia to spend Christmas with their families. Coffee and mince pies were served after the service and a birthday cake was presented to Michael Marsden to celebrate his 80th Birthday.

Our annual blessing of the plough was held on Sunday 13 January. The plough and milk churn were blessed by Revd Frank Yates with prayers for every aspect of farming life. The lessons were read by Minty Willoughby and Susie Hand. Revd Wilma then led a Eucharist.

The PCC are hoping that 2013 will see the sale of Church House and that the Church is able to provide a meeting room for the village. We still have a long way to go, but at least we seem to be moving in the right direction. Our thanks to the village for their patience.

In May we will be having a gift day at Bilsby Church. It will be on the 27th which is the Spring Bank Holiday Monday, and tea and cakes will be served. More information in the next Group Messenger.

Pam Maplethorpe and Pat Mowbray

Farlesthorpe

THE CHRISTMAS service on 9 December was well attended and the festive refreshments were well received. Hoping to have the next service in the spring so we will keep you updated.

Rachel Edgar

Markby

AFTER A hectic September we were able to relax for a while before getting the church ready for the carol service on 20 December.

With the tree, the decorations and all the candles, it looked lovely. The service was led by Revd Wilma and Joyce played the harmonium. The flowers were arranged by Sandra. Although the evening was dreadful, very wet and windy, the church was full of people and they had all brought along their wonderful singing voices.

Come January, all was cleared away for the morning service on Sunday 6 January. Pam Maplethorpe led the service and Joyce Willoughby played the harmonium. Although the congregation was small, it was a lovely service.

Dee Collins

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Village News

Saleby

WE HAD TWO surprise contributions to our Christmas Carol Service on 9th December. Led by David Simcox, the service was, as always, very well attended - no surprise there. The theme was "evergreen Christmas" with poems and readings focusing on seasonal plants and some of the traditions surrounding them. A well-known legend has it that Martin Luther began the tradition of decorating trees to celebrate Christmas. One crisp Christmas Eve, about the year 1500, he was walking through snow-covered woods and was struck by the beauty of a group of small evergreens. Their branches, dusted with snow, shimmered in the moonlight. When he got home, he set up a little fir tree indoors so he could share this story with his children. He decorated it with candles, which he lit in honour of Christ's birth.

It was lovely to have two of the readings performed by young Molly Scaman. Kath Cooney fortuitously bought a rather splendid Christmas tree in a charity shop, which - resplendent with lights and gold ornaments - gave a nice topical touch. Holly and ivy abounded on the window-sills and font, the pulpit was graced by a lovely green and gold arrangement by Irene Carter, who continually produces super artistic creations.

The first surprise was a beautiful miniature frosty snow scene ingeniously built from cardboard and other simple materials which appeared at the back of the church shortly before the service. Aha - we discovered this was the work of Maureen Nichols and her little granddaughter, Freya. They had created a similarly stunning display for Harvest Festival.

The second surprise was an unaccompanied solo - "The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came" performed by Chris Noble, a schooldays friend of Eric Wilson and longstanding supporter of Saleby Carol Service.

When he was in the 6th form at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School there was a tradition at Christmas for the students to go carol singing round the Alford pubs, led by the music teacher, Godfrey Sellars, (St Wilfrid's' organist) and "Angel Gabriel" was a carol that he particularly liked.

Some time before Christmas, Chris volunteered to sing this carol (unaccompanied) and requested that it be kept secret until the actual performance in order to surprise his wife Sue, brother and his wife, children and other family friends.

Chris has sung in karaoke in the past, but admitted afterwards to nerves in this different environment; however, his performance did not disappoint and the congregation responded with resounding applause.

Hopefully this may inspire him to give a repeat performance in future years!

We had a lovely time at The Grange afterwards where Neil and Bridgid Sanderson and their family welcomed us with refreshments and the tombola brought in some welcome funds.

Our torch-lit carol singing around the village on the evening of 19th was our last event of 2012. Always a very sociable occasion, we enjoy lovely warm snacks and drinks at several of our ports of call and a get-together at Kath's at the end. My hastily tinsel-wrapped, washed-out marmalade tin gradually filled up with notes and coins, including a generous donation of £100.

These two events and the annual bonfire party are such special and important parts of our village life - long may they continue.

Laura Hickin

Village News

Well

ON A COLD, wet and blustery Sunday in November the little church of St Margaret's welcomed the hardy parishioners of Well to Morning Service which was led by Revd Canon John Thorold.

The church was warm, autumn flowers brightened the windowsills and the hymns chosen were familiar favourites.

John spoke about the ministry of the church and how it has moved from being the whole responsibility of the vicar to now being very much in the hands of the laity, as priests no longer have one parish but may have nine, as at Alford, or even more.

Patterns of worship are also changing. The last Sunday in November used to be known as Stir-Up Sunday because of the verses read in the order of service, "Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people." It is still known as Stir-Up Sunday but this now applies to the making of the Christmas pudding and the church calendar is amended to Christ the King Sunday. The reading from David was appropriate: "His kingship is one that shall never be destroyed."

On the Friday before the carol service, the holly gathering took place. It was good to welcome Ben Irving. The holly was taken up to the church to decorate it, ready for the traditional Carols by Candlelight service on Sunday 9 December.

The church was full to bursting for the Carol Service, which was led by Revd Bob Barrett. Although the outside weather was cold, the church soon became cosy and warm. Mrs Anne Walters played the organ, starting with "Joy to the World" which everyone sang loud and clear.

Lessons were read by Stuart Reader, Cliff Fielding, Lucy Arnett, Malcolm White, David Woods and Angela Simcox with Revd Bob completing the readings. Peter Gardiner read a poem called "Carol Service" especially written for the service by Mrs Margaret Reynolds and Revd Bob spoke about the meaning of Christmas and why it is so special to him.

After the service everyone received a mince pie enclosed in a box, especially crafted by Mrs Kay Fielding, as they left the church.

All were invited to Well Vale Hall where mulled wine and mince pies were served, thanks to Malcolm and Anne White. A raffle was held and it was a lovely social occasion. The proceeds of the raffle were divided between St Margaret's and a charity supporting an orphanage in Burma.

Thank you to everyone who made this service a wonderful beginning to the Christmas season.

Margaret Reynolds and Susan Needham

A QUIZ FOR ALL AGES ABOUT LENT AND EASTER

1. What day marks the beginning of Lent in Western Christian churches?
2. Lent lasts for how many days?
3. What event in Jesus' adult life do Christians commemorate during Lent?
4. How old was Jesus when He was baptised?
5. What is "temptation"?
6. Which disciple betrayed Jesus to His enemies?
7. Outside which city was Jesus crucified?
8. What might be considered to be the saddest day of the year for Christians?
9. Who was the first person to see the risen Jesus?
10. Which of Harry Potter's 3 Deathly Hallows has a link with Easter Day?

Answers on page 44

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DECEMBER 2012

CHURCH & VILLAGE



FEBRUARY 2013

CHURCH & VILLAGE



The Old Rectory, Litcham

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DECEMBER 2012

CHURCH & VILLAGE



FEBRUARY 2013

CHURCH & VILLAGE



The Old Rectory, Litcham

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at the school and Margaret saw many children and their families through the school during that time. She worked with individual children and groups, being very involved in all aspects of school life, especially teaching children to cook. Her training and expertise in many areas will be hard to replace. Her love and care for the children in the school over the years was immeasurable. In such a long working life at the school, Margaret inevitably saw many changes, including the merger with the high school.

The staff held an end-of-term and farewell lunch party to say a big thank you, with cards and presents. Best of all Margaret intends to come back as a volunteer and hear pupils read in the term ahead. Margaret is set therefore to finish as she began her days at the school, as a volunteer.

Christine Watts, Head of Primary Phase

Charity fund-raising

Childre
last term.
As part o
less and
The Blind.

In the secondary phase, girls took part in the 'Race 4 Life', doing a fun run on the playing field and raised the astonish £4,398 for Cancer Research UK. A cake sale held by 8W also raised £80 for Alz r's and Macmillan Nurses.

Year 10 students taking the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) course decided that one of their challenges would be to raise money for the Salvation Army Christmas appeal and Alzheimer's. They ran a cake sale and tombola and organised an auction of goods and promises and in total, raised over £250.

Not to be outdone, staff rallied round to support the annual Macmillan coffee morning and raised £163.

At a time when money is tight and many families are struggling, it's wonderful to see how generous our young people and community can be in helping others who are less fortunate.

Jeremy Nicol

LITCHAM CHILDCARE

The children have settled back into their routing which include, dancing sessions with Diana, multi-sports with Andy from Kings Lynn Community Football, visit to the mobile library and music sessions with JDT. This month will see the Chinese New Year celebrations where the children will experience all things Chinese including food, music and making decorations. This will be followed by making Valentine's Day cards for their loved ones. I am sure all the children will need a half term holiday which commences on Monday 22nd February.The next holiday club will run from Monday 18th February to Friday 22nd February. The club is open to all children aged 2 – 14 and is open from 7:45am – 6:00pm. Sessions cost £2.75 with a minimum booking of 3 hours. To check availability please call 01328 701703.

Local Children's Groups

Congratulations to Lisa Rodwell who was December's 50/50 club winner.

Litcham Childcare would like to welcome Ali Fisher who joined the board of Trustees in January. More trustees are urgently needed so if you would like to join, please leave your name and contact details in the office.

As the bad weather has arrived, if the Centre has to close due to bad weather, you can find out by listening to Radio Broadland or logging on to Norfolk County Council's website and searching for School Closures. You can also check www.litcham.childrencentre.org.uk which will kept up to date with opening information. If Litcham School Primary Phase is closed due to bad weather only, then Childcare will close too.

Diary dates

Friday 15th February – last day of term
Monday 18th – Friday 22nd February – Holiday Club open
Mon 25th February – Childcare reopens.

LITCHAM CHILDREN'S CENTRE

Below is a list of what is happening at the Centre during February: You may also wish to visit our website for more up to date information www.litcham.childrencentre.org.

Litcham Stay and Play toddler group – runs on Wednesday mornings (term time only) from 9:15am-11:00am at the Children's Centre. There is a different activity for each week. The group is open to all parent/carers with children under 5.
A £1 donation to help with refreshments is welcomed.

Little Wrigglers and Mums to be group - The group is held on Thursday mornings from 9:30-11:30 at the Centre. This group is for parents/carers with children under 15 months and mums to be. Weigh and Play is held on the first Thursday of each month (Thursday 7th February) where the health visitor attends to run a clinic. One of our family workers is on hand with any advice or information needed.

Monthly Messy Mondays – This group is held at the Centre on the first Monday of each month (the next session is on 4th February). This is a group for parents/carers with their children under 5 years, where creativity is the key! (It is advisable to bring a spare change of clothes.) If you would like to attend this group please call Leanne on 01328 701703. There are only 10 spaces available each month so please note that booking is essential.

C Card - Litcham Children's Centre is now C Card registered. We hold a drop in on Wednesdays from 9:00am-12:00am. You can also call for an appointment on 01328 701703 if you would like a certain time.

Childminding Support Group A group specifically for childminders and minded children to meet and discuss topics such as policies, risk assessments and any other matters arising. The group has changed to the second Monday of the month from 9:45am – 11:45am (Next group Monday 11th February).

Baby Massage The current course is now coming to an end. If you would like to attend the next course, please contact Leanne on 01328 701703 to book.

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ORGANIST STILL AVAILABLE

In the December issue of The Church and Village magazine it was stated (in News from the Lexhams) that I had retired as church organist. I would like to make it quite plain that I have only retired from playing at East Lexham. My organ playing at my other Churches on Sundays continues as before. I am therefore still available to play for Funerals as and when required

LITCHAM COMMON CONSERVATION GROUP

Adder Surveyors Wanted!

We want to compile a record of the locations at which adders are sighted this spring, together with the dates, so that we gain a better picture of where the main hibernation sites are, and the total numbers on Litcham Common. For this we need volunteers, and if anyone would be interested in helping I would be grateful if you could get in touch with me. If we have enough people, then we might be able to organise a training session with an adder expert.

Even if you do not want to be part of a formal 'survey group', we would be interested to hear from you if you see adders on the common, and in particular exact locations and when they have been spotted.

Adders are shy creatures that avoid contact with people if possible. They are Britain's only poisonous snake, but be a bit lethargic early in the season. They are Britain's only poisonous snake, but without saying that people should never try to touch or catch one!

I can be contacted on 01328 700045.

Tree Clearance

A certain amount of tree clearance is to be carried out as part of the management plan drawn up for us by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and some work may take place this month before the start of the nesting season. Inevitably there will be noise and disruption, but the contractors will be asked to keep this to a minimum; please bear with us while work is taking place, and take note of any signs or requests from the workmen to stay clear of certain areas. There will be very good safety reasons for these instructions.

The purpose of the work is to 'push back' the boundaries of the existing open areas of the common so as to increase the areas of heathland, and also to connect up the open areas. The full management plan can be viewed on Litcham's website, on the Litcham Common 'Management' page. I also have a paper copy of the plan if anyone would like to see this.

Conservation Group

The next Conservation Group task will take place on Saturday 9th February, starting at 10:00am and meeting in Litcham Common Car Park. New volunteers are always welcome to join us.

Tim Angell, on behalf of Litcham Common Management Committee

Local Conservation Group

BEESTON

www.beeston-norfolk.co.uk

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN



Flower Rota

February	3rd	Jane Napier
	10th	Mr & Mrs Ellis
	17th	Mr & Mrs Ellis
	24th	Mrs Rowland & Mrs Winterbone
March	3rd	Mrs Rowland & Mrs Winterbone

Sidesman Rota

February	10th	Mr A. Lawrence
	24th	Mrs W. Carter

Christingle Service. The staff and children of Beeston School arranged this lovely service. When the lights were lowered, the church, lit only by the candles and Christingles, looked particularly beautiful. Christmas is a special time and [illegible]ew parcels too. As the service [illegible] to think about those who may [illegible]ol for this timely reminder and [illegible]r Rupp!) and lots of greenery and candles, the church looked wonderful.

One again we were very pleased to welcome the Brownies and Rainbows. The children, warmly dressed for the part, recited a very amusing "angel" poem. Wherever does Daffodil, their leader, find such inspiration? Well done girls and thank you. We look forward to next year's performance!

You may remember that proceeds from last year's Carol Service, was shared between the Brownies and the Deaf Choir. With their gift, the Choir had decided to purchase dark blue sweatshirts, with a logo, and white gloves. They looked very smart and the choice of colours makes it easier for hands to be seen when signing to a crowd. This proved most successful when teaching the congregation to join with the signing of a carol. It was surprising how quickly people managed to learn! The choir broke new ground for us by signing two carols, accompanied only by recorded music. The result was unbelievably impressive. Thank you King's Lynn Deaf Choir for taking part and for sharing your skills with us.

Finally, thank you to Father Martin Joyce, to the readers, to those who decorated the church, to those who provided refreshments and of course to you, the congregation.

Future Dates

Lent Lunch. Something to put on that new calendar! This charity fundraiser will be held in the Village Hall on Thursday 14th March. For a bargain lunch and good company, keep that date free. There is always a choice of numerous homemade soups, a variety of rolls plus tea or coffee to follow. Look out for further information in the March magazine.

AGM. Looking way ahead now, the time to find out what goes on "behind the scenes" in

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Local Walk

SNOWDROP WALK



The annual Snowdrop Walk at Lexham Hall will be held on Sunday 10th February from 11:00aàn 'till 4:00pm in aid of the National Gardens Scheme charities. Refreshments will be provided by Litcham Church. Dogs on leads are welcome. **Please note that there will NOT be a second Snowdrop Walk Sunday this year.**
Neil Foster

STANFIELD

STANFIELD NEWS.

Stanfield 100 Club.
January Draw

1st	No.44	Gorden Brown
2nd	No.42	Mr. Sandford

For more information contact Lyn Walker 01328700140.

STANFIELD CAROL SERVICE



Many thanks to all those who helped to make our Carol Service, a brilliant start to Christmas. The readers, Maya, Daniel, Sebastian, George and Maria, Thelma for playing the organ, Bella and Margie for decorating the church, all the ladies who brought refreshments and Rev'd Martin Joyce for taking the service.
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO ALL.

School News

PRIMARY SCHOOL
Brisley C.E.V.A Primary School

Although it now seems a long time ago now, we enjoyed lots of great activities at the end of last term.
The Choir took part in the Voice in a Million Concert at St Andrew's hall in Norwich and also visited Lincoln House at Swanton Morley to sing to the residents.
Fakenham Christmas Tree Festival – we were delighted to be able to decorate a tree again this year that raised £152.83 for the Anthony Nolan Trust. Thank you to everybody who helped and supported us.
Football: Congratulations to our Year 5 and 6 boys who showed great sportsmanship when they played at the NCFC ground at Carrow Road against Langham Primary and won 5:2.
Christmas Party: Everyone had a great time thanks to all the hard work of the Friends and Johnny Jaffacake our entertainer!
Christmas Performances: We read from the Bible, recited poetry, sang carols and Class 1

ked churches in
both occasions
and leading us in prayer. Thank you also to Reverend Inman who takes alternate Thursday morning collective worship with Reverend Robin.
End of term Parents' Assembly: this was very well supported. Well done to Sebastian, Amelia and George for winning the class merit cups and Holkham for taking the House Cup!
Cake and Flannimal Sale: This was great fun and was held just before we broke up for the Christmas holiday. The flannel animals Class 2 made were brilliant and together with lots of cakes, sold really quickly raising £284 for school funds.
Christmas Wreath Donation: The school is most grateful to Tina Barnes for dividing the proceeds of her Christmas Wreath making evening between us and Brisley Church. Thank you!
2013: We hope everyone had a lovely Christmas and has a healthy and happy New Year. The school has lots of activities planned and in February there will be cycling proficiency and School, House and Class elections. Half term is from the week beginning 18th February.
Website: If you would like to find out more about the school, please contact the school direct on 01362 668350 or have a look at our website: www.brisley.norfolk.sch.uk

GREAT DUNHAM

www.greatdunham.org.uk

CHURCH NEWS

Churchyard Tidy-up



Our next Churchyard clear up will be on Sunday 17th February from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. All volunteers are very ... you to all those who have helped out ... gifts of time and effort make a real ...

Christmas Feast

The Christmas Feast and Pantomime held in the beginning of December was a great success. We thank everyone who worked to make it so and to everyone who came along and enjoyed the food and spectacle.

Local Quiz

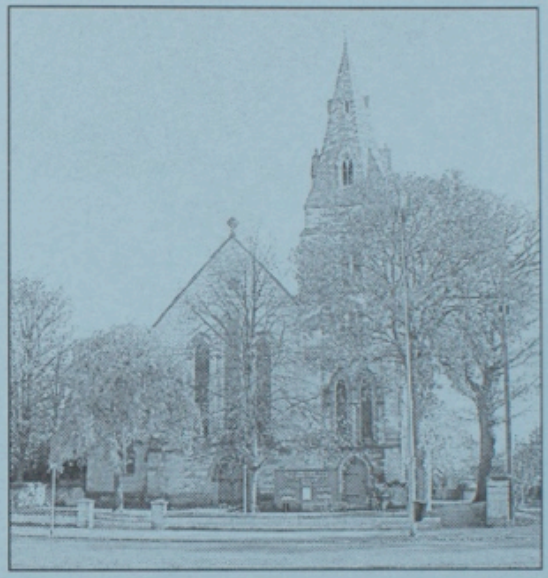
GREAT DUNHAM VILLAGE HALL
Dates For Your Diary!

QUIZ and CHIPS

The first of these events in the New Year will be held on Friday 15th February 2013 at 7:30pm.
So make up a party of 4 and come along to test your knowledge while having some fun and maybe winning a Raffle prize. Choice of Fish and Chips or Sausages and Chips.

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The Messenger



The magazine of
The parish church of
St. Nicholas
Lincoln

January 2013 – Issue 5. 50p

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THE PARALYMPICS -- LONDON 2012
AN UMPIRE'S VIEW



I was one of the English table tennis umpires who was honoured to be invited to officiate at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. The Para's, as they were known, followed almost two weeks after the 'main' event bu all who took part either as an athlete or one of the thousands of volunteers, whether they were Games Makers or officials, they were every bit as important. For me the experience started with Betty dropping me off at Newark and catching the train to London and then catching the Javelin from Paddington to Stratford and the Games Village. The technical officials (as umpires and referees were known) stayed in the Village with the athletes, unlike their counterparts in the Olympics who stayed in hotels around London. This greatly enhanced the feeling of being part of belonging to the Olympic 'family'.

Once settled into the Village our first job was t our Games uniforms, one for official duties and one for casual we in one or the other. One of the essentials of hall in the village was unbelievable. It was s pitches but it looked bigger. It was immense end were serving areas serving food from around the world, from China and Asia to Africa and then Europe and the Americas and the Caribbean. In the centre was the Best of British food area and tucked away in one corner was a McDonald's and it was all free. The Dutch umpire would have his Big Mac and fries everyday and when I asked him why he said "because my wife would not let me eat them at home".

The opening ceremony was a spectacular display that I'm sure many of you saw on the television. The table tennis event took place at the Excel Exhibition Centre in the Docklands. It is an enormous building in which several indoor sports such as judo and weightlifting also took place in both the Olympics and the Para's. The only downside of living in the village was the fact officials and players had to be bussed from there to the Excel, a journey that usually took at least 30 minutes. When off duty our accreditation passes would permit us to watch all the other events.

I found it very humbling to see the way the athletes with severe disabilities adapted to play their chosen sports in such a positive way.

David Brown

Sponsored Walk

ST NICHOLAS SPONSORED WALK 2012

y day in September, nine of us met at the Church in order to be transported to Southrey (just south of Bardney). We started our walk following the River Witham, along the track of the old Boston to Lincoln railway line, and then turning to cross farmland and follow part of the Viking Way, reaching Tupholme Abbey for our coffee stop. Here, some of the group finished their walk or completed a circular route back to Southrey.

Three of us then continued to Bardney Abbey, initially across fields and then through Scotgrove Woods. We had a quick look at the remains of the Abbey (of which there is very little to see now) and then walked into Bardney to re-join the river, which we followed into Lincoln, where we walked through the Arboretum and up to the Cathedral to complete our 20 miles.

erybody had a very enjoyable walk, especially as we were blessed with rfect walking weather – sunny but not too hot. The walkers were Betty own, Liz Elsom, David and Diana Mowbray, Susan Pycock, Colin Reynolds, Audrey Salisbury, David Simmons and Dave Valentine. We would like to thank Susan Whate and her team for opening up the Church and providing refreshments, and for Judith Fawcett and her friend, and Andrew Simmons for providing transport. Finally, we would like to thank all those who sponsored us, helping us to raise £230, all of which will be used to maintain the church organ.



Dave Valentin

The Paralympics: an umpire's perspective

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MEETING SAINT HUGH



I have always thought it would be good to go up one of the lofty scaffolds that can usually be seen somewhere on the Cathedral, so when the opportunity came I was delighted. This particular scaffold was on the South West turret, where the Works' Department was repairing and replacing badly eroded stonework.

We had booked the trip in advance and, when we arrived, we were checked against the list and issued helmets and high visibility jackets. Fortunately, there was a lift, rather basic but at least it wasn't claustrophobic – quite airy in fact – but it was obviously strong, carrying all that stone up and down and it felt very safe.

We got off at the level below the top staging and could walk right round, in a forest of scaffold poles admiring the beautiful new stonework. What drew our attention most was, of course, the splendid crown, a replica of the one used at the Queen's coronation and made to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. It is richly gilded and painted and I was intrigued by the realistic velvet lining which looked so soft but was hard stone like the rest. The crown is visible from ground level and I feel quite proud when I see it glinting in the sun and think "I've touched that!"

Then we went up a short flight of steps to the very top of the scaffold. Here there was nothing above our heads and this was where one was really conscious of the height, especially as there was no netting round as there had been on the lift and the lower stages. The view was just glorious; the whole city spread out before us, the countryside beyond, the tiny people in Minster Yard and Castle Hill, the toy cars – all so different from our normal street level perspective.

I remember two things in particular from that panorama. The first is that, from that viewpoint, you can see the Castle in its entirety as a defensive enclosure on a mound with a keep and curtain wall, a reminder that it was designed and built as a military stronghold. The second is the close view we had of the beautiful Norman stonework of the lower level of the South West tower. It is so massive and strong and has stood there for nearly a thousand

Stonework repairs on Lincoln cathedral

ar to Saint Hugh's statue. I had
e-size, which makes it seem more
human. There he stands, looking over the city he loved so much and now would hardly recognise. But his obit prayer is still said every day at Evensong.

All the masons who used their skill on the restoration have left their marks on the north side of the turret at this level. Each mason has his own individual mark, mainly formed from his initials, but always carved in straight lines – no curves. The young man who escorted our party was still learning his trade but was near the end of his training and had, with justifiable pride, left his mark with the others.

Then we had to take a final look at the wonders around us, say "Goodbye" to Saint Hugh on his pinnacle and rattle down to earth in that very practical and rather gritty lift. This was an exciting and fascinating experience and I hope to repeat it when the planned restoration of the North West tower is completed. It will be good to have a close view of the Swineherd of Stow on his pinnacle, having met Saint Hugh on his. (Hugh was Bishop of Lincoln from 1186 to 1200, when he died and was buried in Lincoln Cathedral).

Dorothy Middleton



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Gardening Tips

Recipes

TIPS FOR GARDEN MAINTENANCE JANUARY – MARCH

January

If you haven't protected tender plants from frost yet, then it may not be too late. Place protective straw or fleece on tender plants overwintering outdoors. It is also worth protecting non frost-proof containers (terracotta pots for example) with bubble wrap, hessian or fleece, to prevent them cracking.

Move established deciduous trees and shrubs, provided that the ground is not frozen or waterlogged.

Cut off old leaves of hellebores that produce flowers from ground level to expose the flowers.

Prune fruit trees such as apples and pears, so long as it is not a period of heavy frost, (but not plums, cherries and peaches, which a

February

Mulch roses and fruit bushes with well-rotted garden compost or manure

Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering to maximise the potential for next year's flowers.

Renovate overgrown deciduous hedges by hard pruning all around, to encourage evenly new growth.

Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'.

Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut for their winter appearance.

March

Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials, and plant new herbaceous perennials.

Cut back *Cornus* (dogwood) and *Salix* (willow) grown for their colourful winter stems.

s last year's compost will have lost

Weeds will be coming back in to growth now, so get on top of them early before they get out of hand.

Prune roses (except ramblers) towards the end of month.

Apply spring lawn treatment, provided it is not a period of persistent frost. Water it in after 48 hours if no rain has fallen.

Andrew Simmons

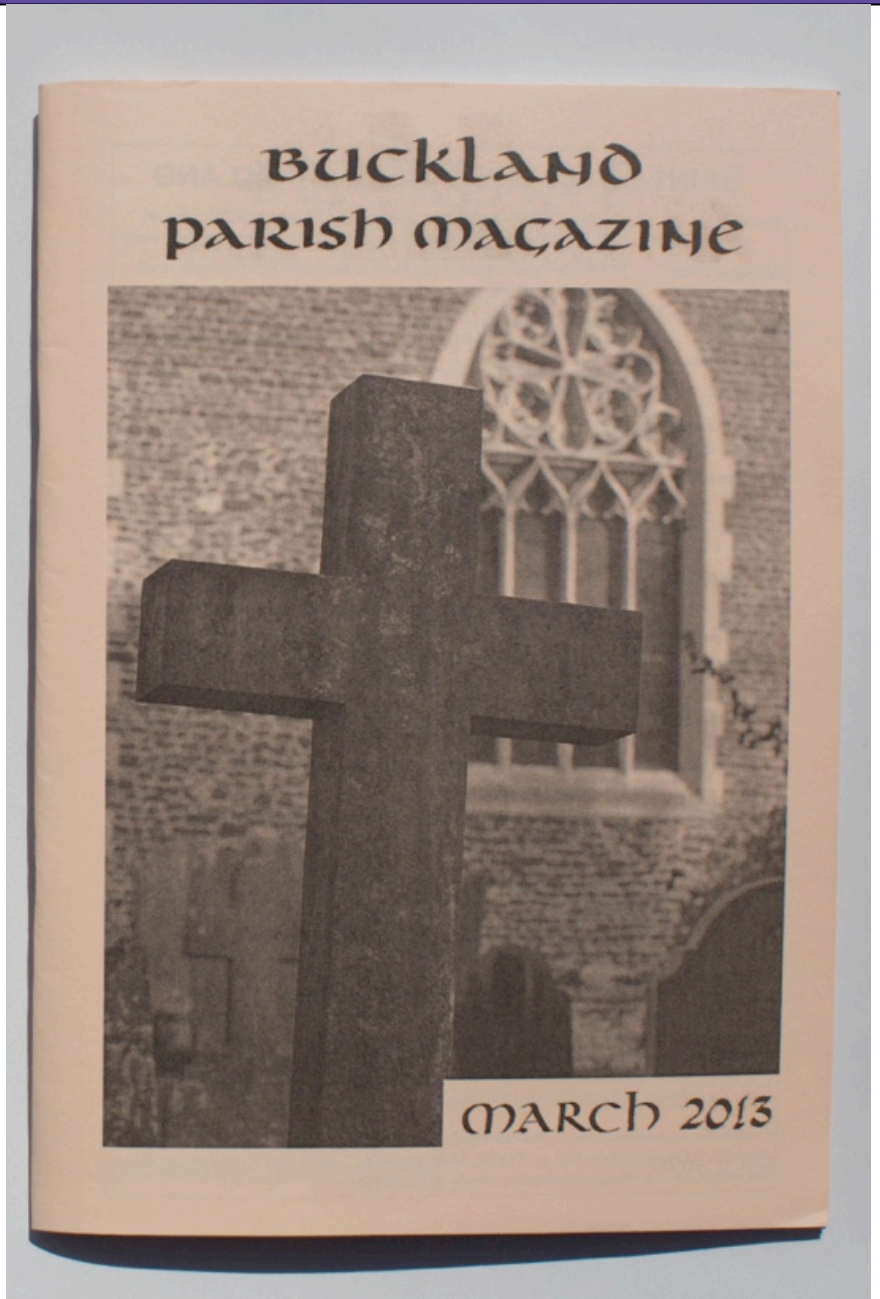
ROCKY ROAD CAKES

We thank Una Barnes for this rather tasty, addictive recipe.

450 gm Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolate, broken into pieces
150 gm ginger nut biscuits, broken into 1 cm chunks
2x40 gm Cadbury Crunchie Bars, cut into 1 cm chunks
100 gm mini marshmallows.

Method: Line the base and sides of a 20 cm square cake tin with baking parchment.
Place the milk chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a saucepan of hot water. Bring the water to the boil, then take the pan off the heat and allow the chocolate to melt slowly.
Once the chocolate has melted, remove the bowl from the saucepan and allow the chocolate to cool until just above room temperature (if it's too hot the marshmallows will melt).
Stir in the Crunchie chunks, biscuit chunks and marshmallows.
Press into the prepared tin and chill in the fridge for 1-2 hours or until set, then cut into 16 squares.

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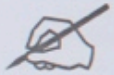
Parish Council News

Buckland Matters

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISMS:	17th February	Lewis James Hallett and Adam Finlay Carr Hallett
FUNERALS, CREMATIONS:	11th February	Michael Guy Wardlaw who died on 1st February, aged 88, of Norden Hill, The Coombe, Betchworth
	19th February	Colin Redmond Dunn who died on 26th January, aged 74, of 58 Brockham Lane, Brockham
INTERMENT OF ASHES IN BURIAL GROUND:	7th February	John Michael Ryn of 1 Rhinelands, Station Road, Betchworth who died on 16th July 2012 aged 53

ELECTORAL ROLL



Under the Church Representation Rules, the Church Electoral Roll is renewed every six years - this year being one. 'All persons who wish to have their names entered on the new roll, whether their names are entered on the present roll or not, are requested to apply for enrolment' before the end of February.

There are application forms, with conditions, on the magazine pew in the Church.

P.V.

DOES ANYONE KNOW?

We are trying to locate a Mr Keith Charles Nightingale, who is being sent important correspondence to our address, Walwyns, Reigate Road. If anyone ever knew this gentleman, or better still knows his current whereabouts, please call Mary Davidson on ☎ 249194.

BUCKLAND PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

Buckland Annual Parish Meeting

This year's Annual Parish Meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Monday 29th April 2013 in the Reading Room, Old Road.



The Annual Parish Meeting provides an opportunity for your Parish Council to report on their activities during the year and for you to ask questions and provide feedback. We will share with you plans for the refurbishment of the village War Memorial in advance of the Centenary of the start of WW1 and local resident James Day will treat us to a short illustrated talk entitled "A Buckland Memorial". James has promised there will be lots of photographs and we hope as many Buckland residents as possible will choose to join us.

Opportunity to become a Parish Councillor

The resignation of Cllr Kearney has created an opportunity for someone to step forward to join the Parish Council. If you think you could be interested and would like to find out more about what is involved please contact the Clerk.

Public Events on the Village Green

While the Parish Council remains committed to promoting, and extending, its support for a wide range of activities on the Village Green, it has a legal obligation to protect the Village Green.

Please remember, before you hold a public event, to ask for the Parish Council's permission and understand that any permission granted will be conditional upon receiving written confirmation that:

- public liability insurance is in place to cover the event;
- the organisers will take appropriate measures to ensure vehicles do not park on or drive across the granite setts or grass surface of the Village Green;
- in the event that inclement weather causes the Parish Council to declare the surface of the Village Green unsuitable for it to be used for a public event that the organisers accept it will be their responsibility to ensure appropriate contingent arrangements are in place; and
- in the event of there being any damage to the Village Green the organisers accept they will be liable for the costs of restitution.

Sheena Boyce, Clerk. Email: bucklandpc@sheenaboyce.co.uk

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Ecological News

Local School News

BENEFITING THE COMMUNITY - BUCKLAND'S FIRST ELECTRIC CAR?

Be prepared for Buckland's first electric car, driven by Robert Carr, occasionally even by Mary, his wife. It will take you by surprise. Guaranteed to make you smile!

Robert started looking [illegible]nomical run-about for short journeys years ago. Did you know that cars take 5-10 miles to warm up, that driving with petrol for short [illegible]the car and potentially gives you the lowest mileage [illegible]with cars run on diesel suffer with particulate filters [illegible]hs? Car exhausts still rot from the don't get hot enough to expel the acidic liquid left after short journe

With all this in mind, BMW introduced the very economical *BMW* roof and seat belt - a brilliant idea. The downside of it, the UK gove that you wear a crash helmet. Consequently, it was withdrawn from the UK market.

In April 2011, Renault announced *Twizy*, a new electric vehicle, quite like a scooter with a roof. His *Twizy* was ready for collection on 1st June 2012. To date, more than 260 Twizys have been sold across the whole of the UK.

Robert's *Twizy* is bright orange, has the usual lights and indicators, is exempt from road tax and will take two people in tandem. He can manage without windows, being protected up to waist level by 'gull wing' doors. His *Twizy* has done 1100m so far and although Robert has driven lots of different cars in his life, never has he driven a vehicle which attracts so much attention. It's fantastic for short journeys and will keep up with traffic on all A roads with a maximum speed of 50mph.

Twizy takes 3½ hours to charge up from flat from a normal 13amp socket. The longest journey was to Guildford, but whilst Renault claim a range of 60 miles, 40 miles is closer to reality, as Robert found out on a trip to Burgess Hill. He had to stop off to recharge for ¾ hr at the Renault dealer in Copthorne to the delight of people there who had not yet been briefed on the Twizy!

Twizy is a real ice breaker. Youngsters really like *Twizy* as a cool car. Only recently, the EU decided that electric quadricycles, weighing less than 350kg and limited to 28mph, will be able to be driven by 16yr olds.

The price is affordable at just over £6000. It seems as if the only drawback is the concern over potential battery life. To overcome this, Renault offers a monthly battery hire for £45. If you decide to go electric, make sure you join the friendly Twizy Owners Club online.

Meike Laurenson

Parents' and Children's Section

NORTH DOWNS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hopefully the worst of the cold and snow[illegible]her is behind us and the [illegible] be able to play outside and [illegible]the [illegible]pring weather. Playgrounds [illegible]ays busy places but [illegible]uctive play forms an [illegible]ant role in children's learning.

Playtime is an opportunity for children to let off steam, to meet with friends, play quiet games, active games and to learn to share play equipment. Although it may not appear so at first glance there is much learning that goes on in school playgrounds. As you can imagine it's a constant task maintaining play equipment and replacing resources as a result of the wear and tear of use by some four hundred children. We currently need to improve and replace our play equipment at all three sites and have asked FONDS (Friends of North Downs School) our PTA, to organise a fund raising event to help us.

On SUNDAY 24TH MARCH we are holding a CAR BOOT SALE at the BROCKHAM site. Sellers should arrive at 10.00 a.m. and buying is from 11.00 a.m. - 1.00 pm. Tea, coffee and other refreshments will be available.

It's spring cleaning time. If you have any items to sell, why not come along and make yourself some money, but at the same time help to support our school. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at this worthwhile event.

Angela Ewing, Headteacher

After putting her grandchildren to bed, a grandmother changed into old slacks and a droopy blouse and proceeded to wash her hair. As she heard the children getting more and more rambunctious, her patience grew thin. Finally, she threw a towel around her head and stormed into their room, putting them back to bed with stern warnings. As she left the room, she heard the three-year-old say with a trembling voice,

"Who was THAT?"

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MARCH GARDEN NOTES

Where to begin! March is upon us and suddenly everything in the garden is bursting in to life. The lighter evenings are thankfully giving us more time to tend and enjoy our gardens.

Now is the time to sow most varieties of seed, both flower and vegetable. Many can be sown directly into the soil to save time and effort in nurturing first in a seed tray. Plant onion sets and "chit" seed potatoes ready for planting soon. It's also a good time to plant summer-flowering bulbs such as dahlia and lilies.

Start a strict regime of weed control early in the season to prevent them spreading. A good covering of chipped bark will look great and hold back most weeds. For established brambles and nettles, try to dig these out and spray regularly with glyphosate which works systemically through to the roots.

Many shrubs such as rhododendrons, ferns and conifers will have appreciated the wet weather of 2012 and early 2013. However, a good feed will be necessary for all beds and borders to replenish washed-out soil.



Moss has flourished in the damp conditions, so apply ferrous sulphate to lawns. This is available in liquid or granular form, or in lawn sand. Rake up the moss as it blackens after treatment. Treat slippery paths with Jeyes fluid or Armillatox, especially in shaded areas. Greenhouses will benefit from a thorough glass wash to improve light levels.

It's a good time to prune bush roses, and to plant new climbers before they start new rampant growth. Herbaceous perennials are showing good signs of growth, so help them by clearing off the last of the dead foliage from last season.

If it all sounds daunting, the first lawn cut of the year will make a huge difference to the appearance of all gardens and provide inspiration and encouragement for the gardening year ahead !

David Hogg, Buckland Nurseries

LOVE AT EASTER

Turn your love to Him, who in his love
Upon a cross, our souls to save today,
First died, then rose, and sits in heaven above;
And now will fail no-one, I dare to say,
That will his holy heart upon Him lay!
And since he best to love is, and most meek,
Why should we feigned love go to seek?

By Geoffrey Chaucer (1343 – 1400)

Gardening Tips

The Rectory
St. James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

Those parishioners of yours who won millions on the Lottery and moved into this parish have created quite a stir. It was perhaps a little unwise of them to tell everyone the reason why they had become so wealthy. While most of our parishioners also do the Lottery, few would ever admit it in public. (Since your friends arrived, the entire PCC is buying ever more lottery tickets, but from the shop in the NEXT village, to try and keep it secret.)

However, your family still have much to learn about our country ways. Buying the old Dower House was impressive; and spending a small fortune re-stocking the gardens was certainly commendable. But someone should have told them about cattle grids. It must have been quite a shock for them to wake up one morning and find the thirty sheep from the neighbouring field had wandered in for breakfast.

Their brand new purple Ferrari has certainly brightened up the country lanes around here. The noise it makes as it roars up behind you quite quickens the pulse. Mrs Beamish had been suffering with low blood pressure for months: she says she is quite cured now. The Colonel, who is all for the community supporting the church, then asked if the newcomers would drive the bishop around on the day he came to do his tour of the parish. The Colonel thought that an open-topped purple Ferrari would make a great bishop-mobile; and the new-comers were so kind to agree. What a shame that they decided to accomplish the several miles of parish lanes in record time: the bishop barely even saw the several farmers that they nearly ran down. His new nickname in this parish is: The Purple Peril.

The newcomers have installed security lighting, which is understandable. But now I wonder how much sleep they are getting, as the rabbits, foxes, and badgers who live in their grounds keep it flood-lit for much of the night. Meanwhile, the Colonel is grumbling about the effect of light pollution on his young pheasants in the woods nearby.

But these little inconveniences apart, I am sure they will soon feel at home. I feel confident that by the third generation, they will be properly settled in.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

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THE GARDENING DOCTOR

Do you suffer from PLUMBAGO
Is your back a little sore?
Or perhaps it's PYRACAN
Which you caught in Singa

You've a nasty little HOST
Which I think I'll have to lance
And I notice a SPIREA
Has been leading you a dance!

Are you getting forgetful?
Is NEMESIA the cause?
Does your ANTIRRHINUM pain you
When you're walking out of doors?

You've had SKIMMIA RUBELLA
I can see that by your nose

And a
Use a SYRINGA REFLEXA
That should help to keep it well.

I'm afraid your MACRO CARPUS
Isn't really up to scratch
And do avoid NIGELLA
It's a nasty thing to catch!

Still, I think you're doing nicely
Watch the QUERCUS in your knees
Take your BERBERIS twice nightly;
Cheerio! Next patient please!

Societies & Charity Groups

CURRENT TOPIC

- A woman has been taken into hospital after eating horse meat burgers from Tesco. Her condition is said to be stable
- Not entirely sure how Tesco are going to get over this hurdle
- To beef or not to beef. That is equestrian
- These Tesco burger jokes are going on a bit. Talk about flogging a dead... NO! NO NO NO!

FLOWERS FOR VALENTINE'S

Some husbands are thoughtful and buy their wives flowers on Valentine's Day. And then there is my husband. One day I couldn't stand it any longer. "Why don't you ever bring me flowers?"

"What's the point?" asked my husband. "They die after about a week."

"So could you," I shot back, "but I still like having you around."

Societies and Charities

ST MICHAEL'S WEDNESDAY DROP-IN AT THE HAMILTON ROOM, BETCHWORTH, 2-4PM



Come wind, rain or even if the sun comes out - as it has on a few occasions - the tables are set out, the kettle is boiled and tea pot ready, with a fine assortment of freshly baked cakes and biscuits ready for our afternoon 'soirée' in the Hamilton Room, Church Street, Betchworth on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

We meet for a convivial afternoon with known friends and getting to know new ones, marking topical events in some way. Do 'drop in' if you can make it. Our dates for the next five months are: 27th March, 24th April, 22nd May, 26th June and 24th July. We look forward to meeting you.

Margaret Miller & the Tea Crew

GREAT BRITISH FISH & CHIP SUPPER – 17TH MAY 2013

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want to eat fish and chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday 17th May 2013 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting information and support services of the Spinal Injuries Association. You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home or at work, or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes. By inviting seven friends and asking them to donate an additional £5 means you will raise at least £35 from your supper but we will also give you additional fundraising ideas to raise even more money for SIA.

Since 2009 we have raised over £20,000 and it has become our flagship community fundraising event. We want to raise £10,000 from this event in 2013 so we can provide more support to spinal cord injured people.

The money raised from the suppers will help SIA offer support to individuals who become paralysed and their families, from the moment a spinal injury occurs, and for the rest of their lives by providing services and publications which enable and encourage paralysed people to lead independent lives.

Continued on next page

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Appeal to a Wider Community

Commendations:

- Church & Village (Litcham)
- The Messenger (Lincoln)

Category Winner:

- Buckland Parish Mag (Buckland)

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John King Trophy

Commendations:



- Caritas (Cheltenham)
- Buckland Parish Mag
- Outreach (Hexam)
- Llwynderw (Swansea)
- And the winner is …

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John King Trophy

Winner:



- The Alford

Group Messenger

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John King Trophy

Winner:



- The Alford

Group Messenger

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