

The Church Magazine for Markfield, Thornton,
Bagworth, Stanton under Bardon and Copt Oak



Wishing all our readers, contributors and
distributors a
Happy & Peaceful Christmas and New Year



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The Junction 22 Group of Churches Benefice website is:
www.j22churches.org.uk

Junction 22 Village Link

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This month's letter is from Revd Pauline Ashby

We live in altered times, and as we prepare to welcome Jesus, we wonder how many of our Advent and Christmas traditions will we be able to enjoy this year? With churches currently closed for worship it's easy to be so concerned with the 'big' seasonal events that we usually hold - Carol services, Christingle etc, that we overlook the faithful worship which happens in our churches all year round. One aspect that many will be missing terribly at present is Holy Communion - gathering to receive bread and wine in a way which is actual, communal and real.

Holy Communion was instituted by Jesus, it's a Sacrament. Archbishop Justin Welby comments on the current situation: 'the people of God do not have access to the sacraments which are so central to our life in Christ. This is a huge loss ... The sacramental life of the Church cannot be seen as an optional extra.' A sacrament is described as: 'an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace', in other words something we experience which shows the love of God. For many of us, receiving Holy Communion is part of the motivation and food we need for our journey of discipleship, our normal life - but at present, of course, life is anything but normal.

Perhaps we need to look at the sacraments from a different angle. At the end of a Communion service we pray: 'Almighty God, we thank you for feeding us ... Send us out ... to live and work to your praise and glory.' We are sent *out* 'to love and serve the Lord'. The sacrament doesn't remove us from the outside world but prepares and enables us to serve in it.

Maybe now is a time to emphasise, by sacramental living, what we give, rather than what we receive. Through our words and actions for us to be visible symbols of the reality of God, and channels for his grace.

Sadly, there will be many ways to respond to charity appeals this Christmas, but there are other things we can do. Looking out for our neighbours, a phone call, a kind word, even just a smile, can make all the difference. So, may our lives be outward signs of the love of Emmanuel, our God who came to live amongst his people.

Wishing you a safe, peaceful and happy Christmas,

Cross Hills Baptist Church Contacts

Pastor:	Garry Kelly	29 The Drive, Barwell, Leics. 07816 616189
Secretary:	Mrs Lynda Kelly	29 The Drive, Barwell, Leics. 07903 774491
Treasurer:	Mrs Glynis Straw	110 Main St, Thornton. 01530 230272
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Please Note:

Obviously our services at Cross Hills are suspended for the foreseeable future and so we are holding virtual services through the Zoom conferencing platform. This is working well for us and our services are held at 11 am every Sunday and prayer meetings every Tuesday at 7.15 pm.

Anyone wishing to join our services can they speak to Garry our Minister (contact number above) so that he can arrange for you to join our virtual services. You will need either a computer, iPad (or other tablet), or it will work to some extent on a mobile phone.

We wish you all well through these trying times.

God Bless. **Mary Holmes , Cross Hills Baptist Church**



Oct 1st Evelyn Lilian Sleath, St Mary & All Saints, Stanton under Bardon

Nov 4th (Florence) Grace Wilson, Garden of Remembrance, St Peter's Copt Oak

Please remember the families and friends in your prayers



The meetings are as follows:

8th & 22nd December at 2 pm

Following the Advent study 'Unexpected Jesus'

All you need is a phone, tablet or laptop. And to download a Zoom application.

For further details please contact Helen 230532



Mary Gibson

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Church Services across the Benefice



St Michael and All Angels' Church, Markfield

6th Dec	First Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion (CW)
13th Dec	Second Sunday	6.00 pm	Holy Communion (BCP)
20th Dec	Third Sunday	6.00 pm	Evening Prayer (BCP)
24th Dec	Christmas Eve	11.30 pm	Holy Communion
		6.00 pm	Online Christingle Service
25th Dec	Christmas Day		
27th Dec	Fourth Sunday	See St Peter's, Copt Oak for details	

St Mary and All Saints' Church, Stanton under Bardon

6th Dec	First Sunday	10.30 am	Morning Prayer (CW)
13th Dec	Second Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion (CW)
20th Dec	Third Sunday	10.30 am	Morning Prayer (CW)
24th Dec	Christmas Eve	6.00 pm	Online Christingle Service
25th Dec	Christmas Day	10.30 am	Holy Communion (CW)
			Joint Service
27th Dec	Fourth Sunday	See St Peter's, Thornton for details	

St Peter's Church, Thornton

6th Dec	First Sunday	10.30 am	All Age Service (led by AA Team)
13th Dec	Second Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion
20th Dec	Third Sunday	10.30 am	Holy Communion (CW)
24th Dec	Christmas Eve	11.30 pm	Holy Communion
		6.00 pm	Online Christingle Service
25th Dec	Christmas Day		
27th Dec	Fourth Sunday	10.30 am	Joint Service with Stanton

St Peter's Church, Copt Oak

6th Dec	First Sunday	6.00 pm	Holy Communion (BCP)
13th Dec	Second Sunday	3.00 pm	Praise Service (service of the word)
20th Dec	Third Sunday	9.15 am	Holy Communion
24th Dec	Christmas Eve	9.00 pm	Holy Communion
		6.00 pm	Online Christingle Service
25th Dec	Christmas Day		
27th Dec	Fourth Sunday	10.30 am	Joint Service with Markfield

The Benefice of Markfield, Thornton, Bagworth & Stanton under Bardon and Copt Oak

Prayer Cycle	Church Local	Church Local &	Community, Nation	Benefice Street by Street
6th Dec	Our Benefice, Worship Together	Ratby, Groby, Kirby Muxloe	Local Primary Schools	Copt Oak Road, Priory Lane, Whitcrofts Lane
13th Dec	Christian worship in local schools	Desford and Peckleton	Local Secondary Schools	Cottage Lane, Whitwick Road, Old House Lane
20th Dec	Messy Church and its leaders	Anstey with Thurcaston and Cropston	Unemployed	Lea Lane, Polly Botts Lane, Ulverscroft Lane
27th Dec	Our treasurers and our finances	Braunstone Town, Glenfield, LFE	Housebound and Carers	Benscliffe Road, Charley Road

[illegible]

Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles for this edition of Junction 22 Village Link. Your contributions are always very welcome.

If you would like to send in a poem, recipe or short anecdote (maximum 400 words please) the deadline date of 10th December for submitting articles for the January edition.

We would also welcome your views on the magazine - What you like about it?
Could it be improved? What you are interested in reading about?
Your feedback is important to us as it lets us know if we are getting it right!

Our Contact details are on Page 24.

Daily act of worship for Advent



We are a people who dream, who long for joy.
We are thankful for the gracious gifts of God.

We know that God does great things in our midst.
We are thankful for the gracious gifts of God.

God has given us neighbours, near and far, to love.
We are thankful for the gracious gifts of God.

As we live and grow, give and receive...
We give in thanks for God's unfailing love.

A Prayer of Confession and Healing

Even as we have lived with isolation and fear this year,
we have also made space for hope in our lives.

With broken hearts, faltering steps, and a desire for healing
with those who have been silenced, diminished, and objectified,
we seek peace with each and all, and commit to justice with our lives.

As we greet strangers, neighbours and friends,
we make a place for joy in the chaos of our concern.
As we wait for a better future, promised by the Living God,
we make room for love in our habits, hearts, and homes.

Holy One, you make the crooked ways straight and mend the broken soul.
You assure the lost and lonely of your love; you bring relief to the suffering.
As we offer simple gifts in the face of profound need,
remind us how your grace grows in our giving and receiving.
Inspire the rebirth of love—in our world and in our lives—
as we dedicate ourselves to your justice and mercy. Amen.

Prayers of intercession

God of Hope, you hear our silent prayers and urgent cries.
Hear us now as we pray for your world and its people.
God of Hope, hear our prayer.

God of Peace, we pray for the people of Bethlehem, of Israel and Palestine; for all other places and peoples suffering conflict; for refugees who have nowhere to lay their heads; and for those who feel alone, lost, tired and frightened.

We pray for those who suffer at the hands of systemic racism, bigotry and prejudice. Restore us in right relationship, we who are created in your image, which is glorious in diversity.

Grant your people strength and patience as, together, we seek your promise of life renewed. God of the morning star, guide us in the ways of mercy and justice.

God of Peace, hear our prayer.

God of Joy, we pray for those who will spend this day alone; for those whose tables will have an empty place this year; for those in care home and hospital; and for our loved ones who live now in your eternal joy.

We pray also for those working in hospitals and research facilities who, daily, work to keep us safe in the midst of the COVID pandemic.

Grant your people courage and wisdom, as we seek your promise of wholeness. God of heaven and earth, of anticipation and promise, be with us and heal us. God of Joy, hear our prayer.

God of Love, open our hearts, that we might receive you. Open us to the possibility of true change, in us and in others. Remind us of your promise, made again to every generation, of your enduring love. May things on earth be as they are in heaven.

God of Love, hear our prayer.

We pray these things in the name of the One who comes, Jesus Christ, who taught us when we pray to say, Our Father ... Amen.

God's Joy is surprising, arriving as a messenger.

God's Joy is deep and abiding, gathering us across divides.

Let us seek God's Joy in all whom we meet.

May God who is Giver, Gift, and Grace-Among-Us, be with us all, today and always. Amen.

(Rev. Andy O'Neill. United Church of Canada)



Readings for December

Morning

Evening

1 st	Ps 72:1-4, 18-19 Luke 10:21-24	Ps 74 Matt 12:22-37
2 nd	Ps 23 Matt 15:29-37	Ps 77 Matt 12:38→
3 rd	Ps 118:18-27 Matt 7:21,24-27	Ps 18 Matt 13:1-23
4 th	Ps 27:1-4, 16-17 Matt 9:27-31	Ps 17 Matt 13:24-43
5 th	Ps 146:4-9 Matt 9:35 - 10:1, 6-8	Ps 24 Matt 13: 44→
6 th	Ps 85:1-2,8-13 Mark 1:1-8	Ps 40 Romans 15:4-13
7 th	Ps 85:7→ Luke 5:17-26	Ps 144 Matt 14:1-12
8 th	Ps 96:1,10→ Matt 18:12-14	Ps 11 Matt 14:13→
9 th	Ps 103:8-13 Matt 11:28→	Ps 10 Matt 15:1-20
10 th	Ps 145:8-13 Matt 11:11-15	Ps 73 Matt 15:21-28
11 th	Ps 1 Matt 11:16-19	Ps 90 Matt 15:29→
12 th	Ps 80:1-4, b18-19 Matt 17:10-13	Ps 94 Matt 16:1-12
13 th	Ps 126 John 1:6-8, 19-28	Ps 68:1-8 Matt 14:1-12
14 th	Ps 25:3-8 Matt 21:23-27	Ps 86 Matt 6: 19→
15 th	Ps 34:1-6, 21-22 Matt 21:28-32	Ps 50 Matt 17:1-13
16 th	Ps 59 Luke 7:18-23	Ps 82 Matt 17:14-21
17 th	Ps 72:1-5, 18-19 Matt 1:1-17	Ps 44 Matt 17:22→
18 th	Ps 51 Matt 1:18-24	Ps 49 Matt 18: 1-20
19 th	Ps 71:3-8 Luke 1:5-25	Ps 57 Matt 18:21→
20 th	Ps 89:1-8 Luke 1:26-38	Ps 113 Luke 1:39-55

Morning

21st Ps 33:1-4,11-12,20→¹ Luke 1:39-45
22nd Ps 113 Luke 1:46-56
23rd Ps 25:3-9 Luke 1:57-66
24th Ps 89:19-27 Luke 1:67-79
25th Ps 97 Luke 2:1-20
26th Ps 119:161-168 Acts 7:51→¹
27th Ps 117 John 21:19→¹
28th Ps 124 Matt 2:13-18
29th Ps 96:1-4 Luke 2:22-35
30th Ps 96:7-10 Luke 2:36-40
31st Ps 96:1,11→¹ John 1:1-18

Evening

Ps 84 Matt 19:1-12
Ps 48 Matt 19: 13-15
Ps 89:1-37 Matt 19: 16→¹
Ps 85 Revelation 1:1-8
Ps 8 Philippians 2:5-11
Ps 86 Matt 23:34→¹
Ps 123 1 John 5:1-12
Ps 128 Mark 10:13-16
Ps 132 Colossians 1:1-14
Ps 65 Colossians 1:15-23
Ps 102 Colossians 1:24 - 2:7



Five short prayers for Advent and Christmas

Jesus our Prince of Peace, we pray that every time a carol is sung, a Christmas greeting spoken, a nativity play performed, that your name be honoured and glorified and that hard hearts be melted to receive you afresh. Amen

Lord Jesus, from the repetitive 'muzak' carols heard in every shop and supermarket, to the frantic shopping for glitzy gifts, may we, your disciples, be ready to grasp every opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with others. Amen

Lord Jesus, as we await your coming, help us to look for you in the hoodie on our estate, the beggar on the street, the outcasts in our society and open our hearts to love others as you do. Amen

As people strip away the Christmas wrappings may they find your precious gift of love within. Come Lord Jesus, Advent is ending. Amen

Lord, I pray that your Spirit of truth and love will fill the hearts of those for whom Christmas has no meaning. Amen

(Lynne Newland)

Collect for Christmas Night

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night you sent your almighty Word to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Collect for Christmas Day

Lord Jesus Christ, your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise, as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.

(Common Worship, Additional Collects, 2003)

Prayers in a time of coronavirus

Love never fails. Even in the darkest moments, love gives hope.
Love compels us to fight against coronavirus alongside our sisters and brothers living in poverty. Love compels us to stand together in prayer with our neighbours near and far. Love compels us to give and act as one.
Now, it is clear that our futures are bound together more tightly than ever before. As we pray in our individual homes – around the nation and around the world – we are united as one family. So, let us pause and find a moment of peace, as we lift up our hearts together in prayer.

A prayer for times of isolation

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:38-39)

God of heaven and earth, in these times of isolation, apart from loved ones, distant from friends, away from neighbours, thank you that there is nothing in all of creation, not even coronavirus, that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails continue to be shared through the kindness of strangers looking out for each other, for neighbours near and far, all recognising our shared vulnerability, each of us grateful for every breath, and willing everyone to know the gift of a full and healthy life. Keep us all in your care. Amen

A prayer for a global pandemic


Loving God, strengthen our innermost being with your love that bears all things: even the weight of this global pandemic, even the long haul of watching for symptoms, of patiently waiting for this to pass, watching and waiting, keeping our gaze fixed on you, and looking out for our neighbours near and far.

Instil in our shaken souls the belief and hope that all things are possible with your creative love: for strangers to become friends, for science to source solutions for resources to be generously shared so everyone, everywhere, may have what they need for your perfect love that knows no borders may cast out any fear and selfishness that divides.

May your love that never ends be our comfort, strength and guide for the wellbeing of all and the glory of God. Amen.

(Christian Aid)



Countdown	Conundrum
Using the numbers 50, 6, 3, 7, 7, 4 try to make the number 264 Use only addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.	 Find the hidden word EVELIDRED (Answers on Page 30)

Community Carols for our villages!

Things are different this year and sadly it doesn't look as though our carol services in their traditional form will be going ahead. However, we had an idea to brighten up our villages and bring a smile to peoples' faces as they take their daily exercise.



The idea is simple - we would like as many people as possible to decorate a window in their house in the theme of a Christmas Carol. Then as people walk by, they can look out for the decorated windows and guess the carols, maybe singing a few verses to help them on their way.

You could have a theme for your road - for example - The Twelve Days of Christmas - and maybe even vote for your favourite.



However you decide to do it, let's bring some extra happiness and community spirit to the village this Christmas!

Revd Andrew Smith



Post those cards on time! Final posting dates are as follows:

December:

- ◇ **4th:** Australia & New Zealand
- ◇ **9th:** Africa, Asia, Caribbean, Central & South America
- ◇ **10th:** Canada, Cyprus and Malta
- ◇ **11th:** Greece, Eastern Europe (except Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia), Turkey
- ◇ **12th:** Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Poland, Sweden, and USA
- ◇ **16th:** Austria, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Portugal, Netherlands, Norway, Slovakia, Switzerland and Spain
- ◇ **18th:** Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg & UK 2nd Class Post
- ◇ **21st:** UK 1st Class Post



During Advent, in church, we light a special candle on each Sunday, and on Christmas day. Each candle represents a different aspect of Advent, but this year you may like to choose your own focus - for example the NHS, family and friends you can't see at the moment, etc. Below is a prayer you might like to use.

Today we light this Advent candle, knowing that all God's people around the world are watching and waiting for the promises of God to be completed. We do not yet have peace on earth, so far the suffering of the poor has not ended, and now we all struggle with the impact of the Covid pandemic. Yet, this Christmas, we will still celebrate because we, along with many others, are people of faith who refuse to give up hope. And that kind of hope, rooted in God, is stronger than anything else in the world.



**"Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing, but of reflection!"
(Winston Churchill)**

“What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future.” **Agnes M. Pahro**

**"I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year."
(Chares Dickens - A Christmas Carol)**

“Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand to hand.” **(Dr Suess)**

“My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern is very simple: loving others.” **(Bob Hope)**



Fundraising for The Bridge

(<https://www.thebridge-eastmidlands.org.uk>)

I am sure that most of you know that we have been collecting items to form part of 'starter packs' for The Bridge, a local charity who work to - amongst other things - prevent homelessness and help those when they do find accommodation by giving them basic equipment to set up home. Unfortunately, there is only funding for around two of these starter packs per month and the need is much greater.

We, as a benefice and as a part of churches together in Markfield have already collected many items as well as monetary donations and we have made two deliveries to The Bridge, including duvets, kettles, toasters, crockery etc. You may be aware that I work at The Bridge and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed towards the work they do.

As part of our fundraising for Christmas, the staff are undertaking a Santathlon! All the details for this are below. I intend to take part in this and will be seen walking around the village to complete some of the required kilometres. If you were able to support me and all the staff taking part by contributing to our just giving page I would be very grateful.

This year at The Bridge, we are trying something a little different for our Christmas Campaign.

Throughout 2020, our 25th Anniversary year, we have been blown away by the generosity of local people. Because of this, we thought it was about time for us to give something back!

From the 25th November until Christmas Day, we will be completing the **Staff Santathlon!**

Running, walking, cycling and swimming.....As a team, we will cover the collective distance of Land's End to John O'Groats. That's an enormous 1,407km!

So, our fundraising target is £1,407...and each donation on our sponsorship page will help us keep local people away from housing crisis.

Our services are more crucial than ever, dealing with vastly increased demand: since March, we have seen a 75% increase in enquiries compared to 2019.



Magazine Subscriptions Information



2020.

During 2020, with Covid-19 affecting so many aspects of our daily lives, it was decided that we would produce an online magazine in addition to our normal printed edition and that we would waive the annual subscription charge as the online edition is free to everyone.

However, some of our distributors had already collected subscriptions from their customers whereas others had informed their customers that there was no charge this year. To those of you who have paid and are happy to have done so, thank you. If you would like this year's subscription money refunded, please let me know.

For those of you who have not been asked or have understood there was no charge we still do not require payments for this year. However, should you wish to contribute you may do so by either of the following methods:

- (a) Make a cash or cheque payment directly to your distributor; or
- (b) Send (or pop a cheque through the letterbox) to:

*Mary Gibson, 232 Main Street, Thornton, Coalville,
Leicestershire, LE67 1AG.*

If you do wish to contribute, cheques should be made payable to:

Thornton, Bagworth and Stanton under Bardon PCC .

Please remember to include your name and address details with all payments.

2021

From February we will resume the annual subscription which remains at £5 per year, i.e. 50p for each of 10 issues throughout the year, which I'm sure you will agree is still very good value for money.

Our distributors hope to collect this when they deliver the February edition at the end of January. Again, if you wish to make a cheque payment please do so as requested above.

Thank you,

Mary Gibson
Editor



Silent Night

This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.

SILENT
NIGHT
LOVED
CAROL
AUSTRIA
FIRST
SUNG
STILLE
NACHT
HEILIGE
CHRISTMAS
EVE
FATHER
JOSEPH
MOHR
YOUNG
PRIEST
ORGANIST
MIDNIGHT
MASS
MELODY
SINGLE
BING
VERSION
THIRD

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

Oop! Sorry! For those of you eagle-eyed readers who spotted the error in November's wordsearch.....there's no doubt, there was no DOUBT!

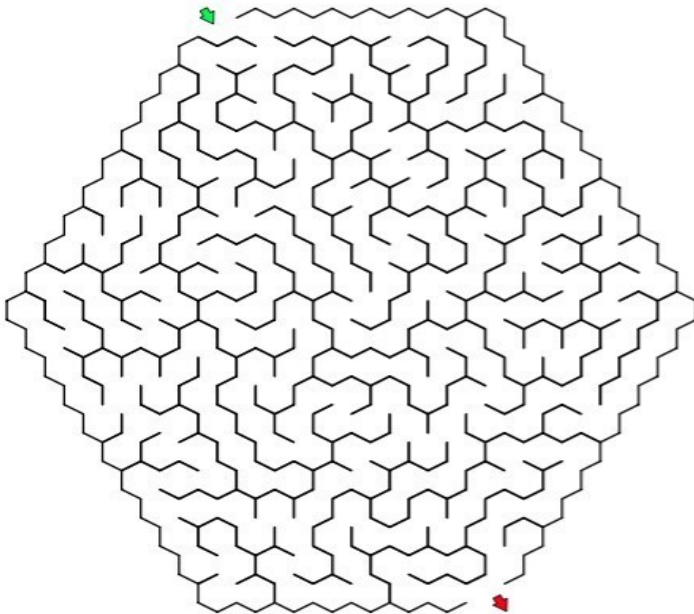
Sudoku

6	1			7				
					4	5		2
				8				3
	7		8			9		
		2				6		
		3			2		8	
4				5				
1		6	3					
				4			9	7

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It's A-mazing!





Copt Oak News

After the deaths of my daughter, sister-in-law and my husband, all within 11 months, my world fell apart and I didn't know how I was going to be able to carry on with my life, but our little Westie, Louie, whom Ted and I had re-homed, became the reason to get up each morning, giving structure to my day and the living creature that whenever I returned home, greeted me at the door, tail wagging and bouncing up and down with excitement. Now, I am grieving his loss too, as he has died, 6 days before reaching 17yrs.

Those who have never had a pet, probably cannot fully understand the grief we feel when we lose them, but the bonds we form with them are powerful and dogs especially, hear our joys and troubles, never judge us and know when we are sick or sad. Dogs have been part of my life for many years (Louie was mine and Ted's fifth dog) and I don't know how I am going to live without one now.

Westies come from an ancient breed, one of the oldest of the Scottish highlands, bred originally for hunting foxes, wild cats etc among the crags of the mountains, their white coats being easily seen against the dark rocks. Now, they are pets rather than working dogs. Originally called Portllock Terriers, it was only when they were registered with the Kennel Club that they became known as 'West Highland White Terriers'

Anyone who has owned a Westie will tell you that they love people and companionship, are very agile, tenacious, plucky and courageous, with dark, intelligent, sparkling eyes and pricked up ears. They are very adaptable, easy to take out and soon become one of the family.

Every dog has its own individual character and Louie was very different from our other Westie, Mac, who we had for 12yrs, but they each demonstrated the breed's love of jumping and scrambling from rock to rock in hilly terrain - hence one of Louie's favourite walks was up on Altar Stones.

Now, I only have the memory of the pleasure and unconditional love and trust that my little dog gave me at the lowest time of my life and my house is very empty, but I am grateful that he died peacefully in his sleep at home.

Mary Pepper

Recently, another stalwart of the Forest, Grace Wilson (nee Pepper), died. I had known Grace since my childhood - she was Ted's cousin. On the 4th November, in the presence of her son Anthony, his wife and daughter, her brothers and other members of the family, Grace's ashes were placed in the same plot as those of her husband, Clifford in the garden of remembrance at St. Peter's, Copt Oak. The brief committal service, led by Revd. Pauline, was meaningful and special.

Grace had been a loyal supporter of church events for many years and when we are at last able to return to our usual fund raising activities we shall miss seeing her there. R.I.P. Grace.

Mary Pepper



St Peters Church Copt Oak

The restricted service pattern continued for the month of October and for the first week of November. We were getting used to the format - saying all of the responses behind our masks but not singing. That was until the second lockdown - what a shame we could not mark Remembrance in church. We did place a poppy wreath by the gate and attached a large poppy on the gate itself. Our official War Grave - for Sapper Percy Pearce was tidied and a wreath placed there as a mark of respect.

Other news concerning the windows - a third one has been removed and the fourth will be taken out soon. The first rebuilt window will be returned by the middle of November and the whole of phase one will be completed by the beginning of December. The fifth window will be repaired in-situ in the New Year.

Our Annual Parochial Church Meeting took place in church on Wednesday, 28th October. This should have taken place on 24th March but had to be postponed. We all refreshed our memory by reading again the 2019 Annual Report with its account and financial details of what happened in 2019. Mr Les Gammon was again appointed Churchwarden, the PCC was elected en masse - in fact all of the officers remained the same.

Pat and Ray Barnes and others continue to tidy the churchyard and graves. At this time of year clearing leaves from the carpark is a big undertaking - if most are not removed they rot down forming mulch. So Ray has been up with his

We have long desired to have a new shed to store items, like bric-a-brac, boxes of Christmas decorations etc. - at present many boxes are stored on the top of the kitchen roof - as we get older it has become a health and safety issue. To get permission a Faculty is required - and one of the pre-conditions concerns Planning. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council were contacted and after many forms and a site visit they have agreed that planning permission is not required for the position of the shed suggested. The next stage is to get on with the Faculty - more forms (everything is online nowadays (which makes it very difficult if you are not very tech savvy)).

Les Gammon



Recently I have been following a Bible Study based on the book of Proverbs. The verse that has resonated most has been the first verse of chapter 16 'We may make plans, but God has the last word'. In a recent sermon, Pauline, in her usual inimitable way, paraphrased this sentiment by saying, 'Man plans, God laughs'. How true that is!

For example, last Christmas, St. Peter's Church held a Nativity Festival. We each chose a Christmas hymn or song and depicted it in a Nativity scene and displayed them around the Church. This proved so enjoyable both to those involved and to the visitors to the Church, that a decision was made to do the same again for Christmas 2020. This time we would each choose a Christmas Carol.

During the January sales I passed by one of our local charity shops and, there in the middle of the window were three large metal angels. They were being sold at a third of their original price. I thought, wonderful, I could make good use of these. They were big, bright and bold and just the thing for a Christmas Carol display. I decided there and then that my carol display for Christmas 2020 would depict 'Angels from the realms of Glory' and that these three metal angels would form the central image. I bought them and popped them into our loft.

I should have remembered that quotation from Proverbs! As with so many other events both local and nationwide our Festival of Christmas Carols has been cancelled. In the meantime the angels will have to remain in the loft together with all the other precious items that I store. I look forward to the angels being brought down from their lofty heights ready to enhance our display for Christmas 2021

Best wishes to everyone for Christmas and the New Year.

Jan Gaskell



Nine Lessons and Carols

As Christmas draws near again our thoughts turn to the traditions which mark the festive season. One of the highlights being the annual carol services held in churches everywhere. At the moment restrictions are still in place and we do not know whether we shall be able to hold these services this year. Looking through the ‘Songs of Praise’ book of ‘The Nation’s Favourite Carols’ it was interesting to read of the origins of the traditional service of Nine Lessons and Carols.

The story behind this brings together three people who never actually met, Edward Benson, First Bishop of the Diocese of Truro, Eric Milner- White, a First World War Army Chaplain, and the Irish author of the carol Once in Royal David’s City, Mrs C. F. Alexander. At 10 pm on Christmas Eve 1880, after the foundation stone of his cathedral had been laid, Bishop Benson arranged a simple service of readings and carols which was held in a wooden shed on the site. Between the carols the story of ‘the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the Glorious Redemption brought us by the Holy Child’ was told with bible readings by members of the community, beginning with a young choir boy.

Around the world today hundreds of services of Nine Lessons and Carols follow Bishop Benson’s original simple pattern. In 1918 Eric Milner-White, on becoming Dean of Kings College, introduced a form of Bishop Benson’s service for the citizens of Cambridge. He had a great gift with words and is best known for his Bidding Prayer which traditionally follows the singing of Once in Royal David’s City.

Finally to Mrs C.F Alexander, the Victorian Sunday School teacher who wrote the verses of Once in Royal David's City to help her class understand part of the Apostles Creed. It wasn't intended solely as a Christmas hymn and was written along with other parts of the creed that she ingeniously turned into songs 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and 'There is a Green Hill far Away'.

It is thanks to these three people that we have the service loved by so many and the format of which we have followed at Copt Oak for many years. Let us hope that we will all be able to 'make this place glad with our carols of praise' this year too.

Sue Gammon.



Apology!

Our apologies to Sue Gammon for inadvertently missing the end paragraph of her article 'Inspiring Hymns' (page 21 of our November 2020 edition).

Editorial Team



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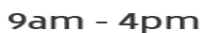


Faith in Later Life

CONNECTIONS



We'd love to hear from you for a chat.





Thornton News



Thornton Nature Notes

Coastal Visitors.



Mid October was marked by some settled weather and bird migration was in full flow. Winter thrushes were arriving with flocks of Redwing and Fieldfare heading west on the 13th. The highlight of this date was a coastal species and only my second Rock Pipit at Thornton. This dark pipit is common around our coasts, but is a scarce migrant inland.

On the 14th a very late brood of Mallard ducklings was a surprise and the following day a first winter, female Stonechat was at Bagworth Heath. Other species recorded in mid-October included Raven, Teal, Wigeon, Shoveler and Goldeneye. Butterflies were also still active with Peacock, Tortoiseshell and Speckled Wood seen.

The October Webs count had totals of 215 Mallard, 135 Coot, 38 Tufted Duck, 21 Moorhen, 18 Little Grebe, 10 Teal, 6 Shoveler and 1 Barnacle Goose. Also seen on the 19th was a Golden Plover heading west.

On October 22nd 20 Lapwing were on the dam and on the 23rd a male Goosander flew west. As October came to a close finches were also heading south with Siskin, Lesser Redpoll, Chaffinch and Brambling all recorded.

With good numbers of Black Headed Gulls on the reservoir it's always interesting to find ringed birds and discover their countries of origin. Two colour ringed birds were at the outflow. Yellow K06A is a Latvian ringed bird and Blue T8W7 is from Poland. There was also a metal-ringed adult Black Headed Gull, which I recorded before. It has PRAHA on the ring and is from the Czech Republic. All these records have been sent to the appropriate ringing schemes. Coot numbers were increasing, I decided to make a count. Well someone has to do it! On October 29th 201 Coot were present. On the 31st 48 Wigeon and 59 Cormorant were also counted. A single male Red Crested Pochard was a brief visitor.

November commenced with mild weather, huge numbers of Wood Pigeon were migrating west. On the 3rd I counted 11,200 over Thornton between 8.00 am and 9.45am, a staggering volume of birds. These birds, all migrating from

Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, are a species requiring farmland on which to feed, they need the milder weather of Britain, where frosts are less harsh.

The final highlight to date was also found on the 3rd. A Juvenile Shag was at the outflow - a first record for Thornton of this coastal species that's rarely seen inland.

Andy Smith 10/11/2020



News from St Peter's, Thornton

To use Reverend Andrews' words, 'The church buildings may be closed, but the church is open'.

Despite the November Lockdown, much was made of Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day. A Poppy Cross, to which people were invited to tie a poppy or ribbon and say a private prayer, and a Poppy trail, providing entertainment and interesting facts, were initiatives developed by Louisa, and put together by Lis and me. Both were in the new churchyard which looked as stunning as ever adorned in autumn colours, and were visited by many folk.

The Lychgate was decorated by Colin and Delia with poppies and a beautiful Cross made of knitted poppies. Individuals paid homage to all those who have given their lives in the two World Wars and in all conflicts across the world. It was lovely to take part in the 'doorstep clap' on Sunday after the two minute silence at 11 am with many neighbours, once again uniting us all.

It is more than likely that we will be unable to hold our usual Carol and Christingle Services, but we are hoping to mark Advent and Christmas through a variety of ways. Look out for details of events on the Benefice website www.j22churches.org.uk/thornton and on the village notice boards.

If you know of anyone needing a helping hand in any way, please do get in contact.

**Shirley Garlick
(01530 230422)**



A Babe is Born

Many stories are told of the Wise Men of old,
And the Baby of Bethlehem,
How they followed His Star and were led from afar,
To the stable out there near the Inn.

There's nothing on earth like the news of a birth,
And the joy that a baby can bring.
And I wonder if Mary was worried or sad,
To find no room at the Inn.

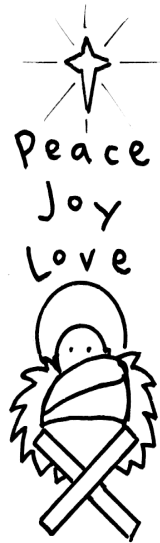
Do you think that perhaps she didn't mind,
For the stable was warm and dry?
They had journeyed far and perhaps she knew
How humble His birth would be.

It couldn't have done the Babe any harm,
For we're told He didn't cry.
He must have lain in the manger crib,
Contented and warm and dry.

The moral is surely there for us all,
How Jesus would like us to be.
We should be humble, loving and kind,
Not worried by all we see.

We should make the most of the blessings we have,
Not crave for what cannot be.
We must seek the kingdom of Heaven first,
And He will supply every need.

**Written by Sheila Pickering, Stanton under Bardon, who is no longer with us.
(Ref. Luke 2, Mathew 6:31 - 33, Luke 12:31)**



Smile!



- ◇ The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
- ◇ No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery
- ◇ I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.
- ◇ Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- ◇ A backward poet writes inverse.
- ◇ Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, 'I've lost my electron.' The other says, 'Are you sure?' The first replies, 'Yes, I'm positive.'
- ◇ A vulture boards an airplane, carrying two dead raccoons. The steward looks at him and says, 'I'm sorry, sir, only one carrion allowed per passenger.'

[illegible]

All in the month ofDecember

It was:

- ◇ 65 years ago, on 1st December 1955 that African American civil rights activist Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, violating the city's racial segregation laws. This incident led to the birth of the modern American civil rights movement.
- ◇ 30 years ago, on 1st December 1990 that British and French construction workers on the Channel Tunnel broke through the last wall of rock separating the two halves, and Britain and France were linked for the first time in thousands of years.
- ◇ 15 years ago, on 19th December 2005 that the Civil Partnership Act came into effect in the UK. The first civil partnership under the act was formed in Belfast, that same day. The first in England and Wales were on 21st December.

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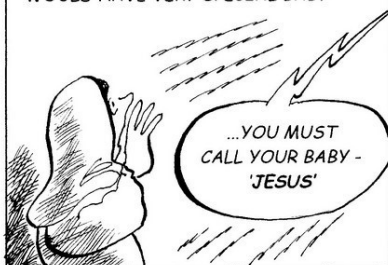
The First Christmas



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