



ST ANDREW'S
SHOTTERY

SEARCHLIGHT



DECEMBER
2019

2020
JANUARY

80p



Each Sunday morning the 1662 Eucharist is celebrated at 8.00am

Each Tuesday evening at 7.30pm there is a Said Eucharist

Every Thursday at 10am there is a Said Eucharist with Address

Sunday 1st December (Advent Sunday)

10.00am Parish Eucharist

6.30pm **ADVENT CAROL SERVICE**

8th: First Sunday in Advent

10.00am Parish Eucharist and Fellow Travellers.

6.30pm Evensong

9th: 6.00pm Bishopton School Carol Service.

Wednesday 11th December:

10.00am Carol singing at Morrison's

2pm Bishopton School Carol Service

6.00pm Shottery School Carol Service

Sunday 15th December (Advent 3)

10.00am Third Sunday Service.

6.30pm **NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS**

Sunday 22nd December (Advent 4)

10.00am Parish Eucharist

3.00pm Christingle

6.30pm Evensong.



Christmas Eve

4.00pm 'Crib Service'

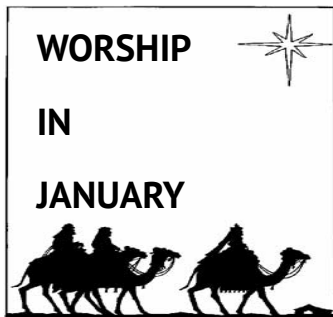
7.00pm Carols at the Bell

11.15pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.00am Holy Communion.



5th: EPIPHANY

10.00am Family Service.

6.30pm Common Worship Eucharist.

12th: THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

10.00am Parish Eucharist and Fellow Travellers

6.30pm Evensong.

19th: SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

10.00am Third Sunday Service

6.30pm Evensong.

7.30pm Atrium Café.

26th: THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY

10.00am Parish Eucharist and Fellow Travellers

6.30pm Evensong.



Slow down this Advent

A vicar decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon. Four worms were placed into four separate jars. The first worm was put into a jar of alcohol. The second worm was put into a jar of cigarette smoke. The third worm was put into a jar of chocolate syrup. The fourth worm was put into a jar of good clean soil. At the conclusion of the Sermon, the vicar reported the following results: The first worm in alcohol - Dead. The second worm in cigarette smoke - Dead. Third worm in chocolate syrup - Dead. Fourth worm in good clean soil - Alive. So, the Minister asked the congregation, what can you learn from this demonstration? A little old woman in the back quickly raised her hand and said, "As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!" There's always a different way of looking at things and that's the only justification for that story!

However, Advent does offers us all a different way of looking at things. It is a wonderful season and part of our consideration during these four weeks is about the role of time and waiting. We live in a world which doesn't like to wait - an instant world where waiting is seen as a negative thing. We have instant credit, instant gratification, we even have TV shows on the internet without the bother of having to wait for a particular day or time, we have instant coffee and instant tea (what is that about?) because we can't wait to brew it! Waiting has become countercultural. People often say, "The waiting is the hardest bit" and I'm sure that's true which is why maybe we need to sit with the difficult, to inhabit that space and to re-gain God's perspective.

Advent traditionally has been a season of the year where we take a step back and reflect on what God's coming to us in the baby of Bethlehem really means. Sure, during this season all of us are preparing for Christmas - buying and wrapping the presents, decorating the house, wringing the turkey's neck (unless you're vegetarian!), even arranging the family visits! But Advent is about much more than this. It invites all of us to take some time out to think about Jesus' coming, not just as an event in history, but his coming to each of

us every day of the week.

So, take some time out this Advent to stop, think and reflect. Enjoy the gift of this season, slow down a bit, watch and wait and then be truly prepared to celebrate the greatest event the world has ever known.

God bless you

Reverend Craig.



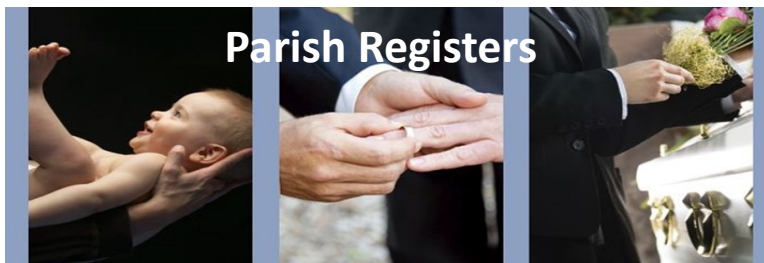
My apologies, I neglected
to alert our “new” Vicar
that this edition of
Searchlight would be a
double one.

Clodagh



PARISH TRIP/PILGRIMAGE TO ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Craig and Su would like to lead a trip perhaps during late November next year. The cost would be in the region of £1200-£1500 for the ten-day visit which includes hotels (half-board) and flights. There will be the use of a qualified guide throughout the stay. We will be staying in Bethlehem and Nazareth. If you are interested in knowing more at this stage, then do have a chat with either Su or Craig. If there is enough interest, there will be an introductory evening at church to give more details and information.



Parish Registers

Funerals

8th November Maurice Bryan Parker (known as Pinky) (74)

22nd November Nora Burrell (92)

27th November Kim Marie Hopgood (50)

Quiet Day: Sat 14th December (Church/Hall)

10.00am-3.00pm.

Led by Myself and Joan Whyman. An opportunity to spend some time in God's presence as we look at the theme 'The Waiting place of God'. The day will include some input from myself and Joan, some silence, Lunch (bring your own) concluding with the Eucharist. An important day during the frenzy of Advent.
Rev. Craig.

It was Christmas and the judge was in a merry mood as he asked the prisoner, "What are you charged with?"

"Doing my Christmas shopping early," replied the defendant.

"That's no offence," said the judge. "How early were you doing this shopping?"

"Before the store opened," countered the prisoner.



On behalf of Stratford-upon-Avon Foodbank I'd like to give grateful thanks to everyone who made such generous donations at our harvest festival. People around the district have really come up trumps again this year and (pause for a quick boast!) St. Andrew's actually gave the largest single donation of all local organisations so well done everyone!

Fiona Macvie

MOST NEEDED ITEMS

FOR CHRISTMAS

Must reach us by 4 December 2019

Tinned Ham, Fish & Tinned Meats	Savoury Christmas Snacks & Treats
Tinned Vegetables & Tinned Potatoes	Christmas Crackers
Tinned Tomatoes	Small Christmas Puddings & Tinned Custard
Tinned Soup & Tinned Veg Meals	Christmas Sweets, Biscuit Selection Boxes
Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate	Mince Pies, Yule Logs & Small Christmas Cakes
Jam, Peanut Butter	Angel Delight, Rice Pudding, Tinned Fruit
Toilet Paper	Pet Food
Shampoo, Shower Gel, Razors, Shaving Foam, Deodorant	Washing up liquid, laundry powder/liquid

Donations can be left at Tesco, Morrisons, Waitrose, Coop, Sainsbury's Local, Stratford Leisure Centre, local Churches (including Holy Trinity) or brought directly to our Warehouse in the Tesco Carpark (opp Click & Collect) on Monday & Wednesday 2 – 3.30pm or Saturday 9.30 – 11.30am

Phone: 07884 418732

Info@stratforduponavon.foodbank.org.uk

www.stratforduponavon.foodbank.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1153297



Wrong Assumptions (by Janet Insoll)

Joseph assumed that Mary had been unfaithful.

The Wise men assumed that the King of the Jews would be born in Jerusalem.

King Herod assumed that the Christ would still be in Bethlehem after the visit of the wise men.

Joseph and Mary assumed that the Lord Jesus at the age of 12 years was with the travellers returning from Jerusalem to Nazareth.

Even today many assume that there were three wise men.

They also think wrongly that they worshipped the babe in the manger rather than a toddler in a house in Bethlehem.

Many assume that the carols are correct and that Jesus was born in the bleak mid-winter.

They also assume that he was born in the year zero, 2119 years ago.





I would like to thank members of St. Andrew's for their prayers and get well cards during my recovery from my operation and for the lifts to/from the choir rehearsals which I really appreciated.

Gary Collins

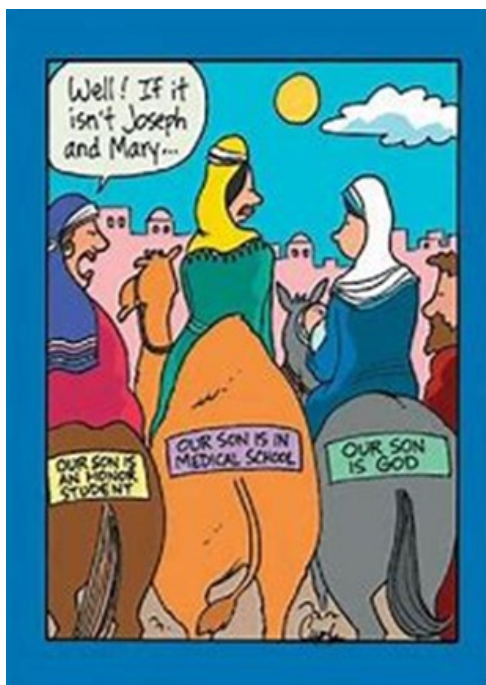


ANDY'S BOOTS

The sales of our walks booklets raised £350 for church funds.



Naomi Whittaker



Subject: Christmas Health and Safety

The Rocking Song

Little Jesus, sweetly sleep, do not stir;

We will lend a coat of fur,

We will rock you, rock you, rock you,

We will rock you, rock you, rock you:

Fur is no longer appropriate wear for small infants, both due to risk of allergy to animal fur, and for ethical reasons. Therefore faux fur, a nice cellular blanket or perhaps micro-fleece material should be considered a suitable alternative.

Please note, only persons who have been subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check and have enhanced clearance will be permitted to rock baby Jesus.

Persons must carry their CRB disclosure with them at all times and be prepared to provide three forms of identification before rocking commences.

Little Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road

Got to keep on plodding onwards with your precious load

The RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load that a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry, also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four hour plodding period. Please note that due to the increased risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear face masks to prevent inhalation of any airborne particles. The donkey has expressed his discomfort at being labelled 'little' and would prefer just to be simply referred to as Mr. Donkey. To comment upon his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.

We three kings of Orient are

Bearing gifts we traverse afar

Field and fountain, moor and mountain

Following yonder star

Whilst the gift of gold is still considered acceptable - as it may be redeemed at a later date through such organisations as 'cash for gold' etc, gifts of frankincense and myrrh are not appropriate due to the potential risk of oils and fragrances causing allergic reactions. A suggested gift alternative would be to make a donation to a worthy cause in the recipients name or perhaps give a gift voucher. We would not advise that the traversing kings rely on navigation by stars in order to reach their destinations and suggest the use of RAC routefinder or satellite navigation, which will provide the quickest route and advice regarding fuel consumption.

The Growth and Dissolution of the English Monasteries

This is the seventh of our series "What a Christian should know".

Early on in the fourth century there were ascetical movements involving the "Desert Fathers" in Egypt. Christian monasticism arises from a desire to live life through the ministry of Christ devoted to prayer. Eventually the monastic life was developed by groups of monks and nuns living their devotions in substantial buildings –the monasteries and convents –and directed by vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.. Most monasteries were linked by the common observance of the rule of St. Benedict (1) which is a guide to the spiritual, devotional and administrative life of a monastery.

A monastery was often established in a remote area by a few monks on the banks of a river or a fast flowing stream in a plot initially of anything from a single building housing one seminar with a few junior monks or nuns to a vast estate housing even a hundred or so of individuals.

A monastery like Fountains Abbey in North Yorkshire (2) or Hailes Abbey in Gloucestershire would contain an Abbey or Church, some as large as a cathedral (q.v. St. Albans Cathedral) and various defined areas like a dormitory, refectory, Chapter House. Many had a water mill.

In England a monastery was associated with one of four orders, Benedictines, Cluniacs and Cistercians. Cistercians tended to aspire to the solitary life of the original hermits. There were monks equivalent to ordained priests usually scholars and lay brothers. Many had specific duties such as Kitchener and Chamberlain as housekeeper.. In addition many "locals" would be employed on the larger estates. Sheep raising was a substantial occupation- the skins of one herd was necessary to provide enough vellum for one copy of the Bible! The whole was under the autocratic control of the Abbott who represented the Christ, assisted by the Prior responsible for the day to day running and discipline. Monasteries were well known for their hospitality to travellers

The outward and inward life of a monk was dominated by the work of God (opus Dei) and there was a rigid timetable of prayer and ritual, the night office, Lauds of the Dead, Prime and first light then Terce, and perhaps other periods leading to vespers and compline at dusk. With this the monastery accepted a particular responsibility to the outside world particularly locally.

There was an infirmary open to all, often a school for the young. The monastery was for five hundred years the main source of written books and scrolls of the Bible and theological works. It was the main source of scholarship outside

the Oxbridge and Scottish Universities. Monks were derived first from adult conviction and leading to a request to become a novice. Later it became common practice for families to donate children. (St. Thomas Aquinas was an example at the age of five). Novices would often come from the locality and would bring with them endowments of land. This often led to monasteries becoming large land owners of very large and distributed estates. Each monk had no possessions even their daily dress belonged to the communion and his life was dictated to a specific fixed norm.

The copying and translation of theological works occurred in the scriptoria and cloisters in a silence disturbed only by the scratching of pen nibs as the work continued. It is likely that scrolls (vellum) and early book blanks (codex) would be purchased externally as would imported paper. However, the presence of a watermill could possibly in rare occasions permit paper manufacture. A legend holds that two monks were able to determine paper manufacture from two captives from China versed in paper making and printing and use of this in monasteries is possible using rags and water. It is interesting to note that after the dissolution of the monasteries there was an upsurge in the number of water mills.

The peak of monasticism in England occurred in the early fourteenth century. The Black Death of 1348/9 took its toll even in monasteries. By the dissolution in 1536 many were understaffed and the recruitment of new novices was low.

The tragic decision by Henry VIII to dissolve the monasteries meant the loss of local community services and employment but more specifically scholarship. Advanced scholarship suffered for perhaps three hundred years. Henry's purpose was to raise money for the Treasury to pay for warfare against the French. There were about 700 establishments involved and the profit was, in the long run, below expectations. There was a pension bill for the ordained monks. All others were at the mercy of local conditions leading to poverty. With the release of so much land on to the market the sale of land was at a depleted value (3). The value of the suppression was therefore well below expectations.

It is likely that the advance of printing started by William Caxton in London in 1476 more than compensated for the loss of copying and producing handwritten documents in the monasteries. This extra time gave monks a respite to follow more scholarly pursuits within the church and universities even to the point of contributing to the rapid spread of the Protestant Reformation.

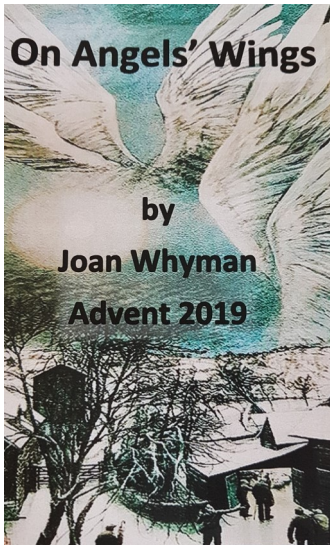
Reference 1. The Rule of Benedict (Penguin Classic).

Reference 2 Life in a Monastery. Pitkin Guide.

Reference 3. The Dissolution of the Monasteries, Pitkin Guide.



R. David Langman



ON ANGEL'S WINGS.

Reflections for Advent

by Joan Whyman.

Available now from Joan or Parish Office.
£3.

If you like the jokes in Christmas crackers, you'll like these....

What do you do with an angry candle? WHEN IT FLARES UP, PUT IT OUT.

When does a sailor take up least room in his ship? WHEN HE SLEEPS ON HIS 'WATCH'.

What is it that works when it plays and plays when it works?
A FOUNTAIN.

'Ok ladies.. is it just Me? Or you too!

Twass the month after Christmas,
and all through the house nothing would fit me, not even a blouse.
The cookies I'd nibbled, the eggnog I'd taste
At the holiday parties had gone to my waist.
When I got on the scales there arose such a number!
When I walked to the store (less a walk than a lumber).
I'd remember the marvellous meals I'd prepared;
The gravies and sauces and beef nicely rared,
The wine and the rum balls, the bread and the cheese
And the way I'd never said, 'No thank you, please.'
As I dressed myself in my husband's old shirt
And prepared once again to do battle with dirt -
I said to myself, as I only can
'You can't spend a winter disguised as a man!'
So - away with the last of the sour cream dip,
Get rid of the fruit cake, every cracker and chip
Every last bit of food that I like must be banished
'Till all the additional ounces have vanished.
I won't have a cookie - not even a lick.
I'll want only to chew on a long celery stick.
I won't have hot biscuits, or corn bread, or pie,
I'll munch on a carrot and quietly cry.
I'm hungry, I'm lonesome, and life is a bore.
But isn't that what January is for?
Unable to giggle, no longer a riot.
Happy New Year to all and to all a good diet!



Hearts of Men *by Jan Walker.*

Was Jesus born in Birmingham
Amongst the city's grime
The cars and all the crowds
The pressures of the time?

Was Jesus born in fields of green
With meadow flowers and woolly sheep
Where nature rules the seasons
And cows lay down to sleep?

Or Torbay's golden sands
Where the ocean greets the shore
With cool and salty hands
Wrapped round the blessed Tor?

No, when Christ was born
Centuries ago
'Twas not in dark December
Nor in the depths of snow.

Was not in a mansion house
Standing proud and grand
But in a stable poor and dirty
In a foreign land.

Where Mary, Joseph
And three wise men
Came to worship
In little Bethlehem.

And now today
We celebrate again
The birth of Jesus
Born in the hearts of men.

Susie Fletcher would like to thank her church family at St Andrews for celebrating her 70th birthday with her and for the gift of the beautiful basket of yellow roses and lilac freesias, her favourite flowers.



Santa's elves are subordinate clauses



Life at Lee Abbey

Hello everyone,

I'd like to tell you about the Rule of Life which we promise to try to live by when we join the Community of Lee Abbey. There are certain promises made during the first couple of weeks when we wear a green badge, and then after three months you can be invited to "go Red" and become a full member of the Community. Well, at the beginning of October I was invited to take my Red Badge promises. Here they are:

In response to Jesus Christ's love, trusting in the help of the Holy Spirit, we seek to...

Worship him and seek his will through regular prayer, Biblical reflection and joining with others for fellowship and making the weekly Corporate Communion the central act of our work and worship.

Deepen our personal commitment recognising that our minds, time, talents, possessions and relationships, as gifts from God, are to be increasingly surrendered to him.

Share his saving love through our attitudes, lives and relationships.

Live in openness and honesty, being open to be known for who we are, accepting one another in love and saying nothing of others that could not be said to them personally if love and wisdom required it.

Help build community where we live, work and worship.

Respect and serve all others, welcoming the stranger, being a voice for the voiceless and working to alleviate poverty and injustice, and seeking to help one another to a clearer and deeper knowledge of Christ through our work and words.

Cherish and protect God's creation, which God the Father loves and entrusts to our care.

The 280 acres which make up Lee Abbey looked absolutely stunning yesterday when we had sunshine after all the rain. The sky was a clear blue, reflected in the sea, and the carpet of sweet chestnuts, along Upper Jenny's walk, was a gorgeous deep colour. The young cows were exactly the same tone, and as I came into the Valley of Rocks the bracken was singing to the same tune of burnt orange. A friend noticed that I was wearing blue jeans and a burnt orange jacket. I felt totally in harmony with the spirit of my surroundings and praised the Lord for such a beautiful day and the time to really enjoy it.

God bless you and keep you.

Denise Andreo

Christmas Items in the Cathedral Gift Shop

Coventry Cathedral gift shop, located at the Cathedral welcome desk, currently have a range of Christmas items for sale which would make the perfect gift for a loved one. They have Coventry Cathedral themed advent calendars, baubles and Christmas cards as well as some stunning fair trade felt decorations.

They also have copies of Archbishop Justin Welby's book, "**In This Light: Thoughts for Christmas,**" which is a collection of thoughtful meditations with contributions from celebrities, business leaders, athletes, politicians, and others, whose names you might not know but whose stories you will come to love.





SEEK THE AUTHENTIC *by Alan Minchin*

It was at the end of September when Jenny and I saw the first signs of this year's Christmas season.

Whilst visiting a large garden and home centre near Droitwich we noticed a large area of floor space having been already cleared, and the first artificial (and costly!) Christmas trees being placed into position.

In October the trees were now accompanied by snowmen, penguins, reindeer, fairies, L.E.D. flashing light pictures, artificial snow, toy villages and a whole host of (in my opinion) tacky and, again costly, Victoriana. Nativity scenes reminding us of what Christmas is truly about ? Unlike previous years I did manage to spot one, but it took a lot of searching! Fair to say, I think, that Christ was definitely again missing from this "Christmas" scene.

Still, the tills were ready and waiting for the 2019 season !

What a contrast was offered here to the simple gift of *authentic Christmas* as given to us by Almighty God, which is a beautiful and, of course completely free, gift. All we have to do is to accept !

But it is a paradox that the gift God has given has also become a stumbling block for numerous people with the historical records of Matthew and Luke causing problems where no problems really exist. Some atheists try to discredit these writings claiming that they are contradictory when, in fact, they should be seen as complementary.

But the biggest problem for many people, it seems, is that the matters dealt with fall outside of today's human experiences and therefore cannot be accepted as true happenings. This displays a form of arrogance by those who limit wisdom and understanding to their own boundaries of knowledge and acceptance.

What the Gospel records reveal is the supreme authority of God working in His Creation, in His way, to bring forth a unique , once only happening - the virginal conception and birth of the greatest manifestation of Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Only by way of the virginal conception and birth was the purity and holiness of God able to enter into the sin-stained world of humanity on Earth.

The Church, every year, gives the Advent and Christmas seasons for Christians to meditate on this truly stupendous happening. These seasons should be an oasis amidst the cacophony of what is now a mainly secular Xmas time of expense and over-indulgence perhaps owing more to the influences of the Roman Saturnalia festivals - which were known for their unrestrained behaviour - than to the Holy Family in Bethlehem.

So, may *the authentic Christmas story* be heard and rejoiced in, not in the shopping malls and high streets, but in the dignity and reverence of our churches and in fellowship with our fellow pilgrims. As we celebrate the Christmas Holy Eucharist let us not forget that "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving".

Because, of course, without Christmas there would have been no glorious Resurrection of Easter and for this our thanksgivings should never cease.

Deo Gratias.

Alan Minchin.

Advent Quiet Day at Charlecote Quiet Garden - 7 December

Early in Advent, escape the pre-Christmas madness and spend a day making room for Christ to be brought to birth in your life. It takes place on Saturday 7 December between 10am and 4pm. There is a suggested donation of £20. Lunch will be included.

For more information please visit their website. To book your place please call Revd Rachel Saum on 07815 793 625 or email her using the link below.

Website: www.charlecotequietgarden.org

Email: charlecotequietgarden@gmail.com

Our December charity will be



Our vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes, and where people with disabilities participate equally in society.

Protecting sight

We prevent sight loss and avoidable blindness in some of the poorest parts of the world by treating conditions such as cataracts and fighting debilitating eye diseases.

Disability rights

We promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities, and we campaign for disability rights so everyone has the chance to receive an education, earn a living and be happy.

Working locally

We work with governments around the world to tackle the problems at the root of avoidable blindness, and we work with local communities to support people who need it most.

Campaigning for change

We work with national governments, strengthening systems that tackle the problems at the root of avoidable blindness – the sorts of things most of us take for granted, like access to clean water, sanitation facilities and education. We make changes for the long term, and help change systems from the inside to ensure support continues to be given to the people who need it.

Everything we do is geared towards our vision of a world where avoidable blindness has been eliminated, and people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else. We can only get there thanks to the generosity

of our supporters. In return, we aim to be as transparent as possible so you can be sure your money is being used wisely.

How You Can Help



You can make a huge impact in the world with a small action. By getting involved you'll be changing lives for the better, including your own.

Please make a donation that could change a child's life. Add your voice and speak up for people who don't get heard. We need you!

Please give generously on 8th December.



"God grant you the light in Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is love; the radiance of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; the all of Christmas, which is Christ.





At our meeting on the 12th, our opening prayers were led by Hilary Capron. There were reminders - for the Advent Carol Service at Emscote on 2nd December (mini-bus leaving at 10.15 a.m.; presents for prisoners' children and Christmas cards for prisoners can be taken there for collection by Chris Cooke; - also for our stall at the Christmas Fayre.

Janet explained that our annual subs. (£25) could now be paid by direct debit; otherwise they could be paid to her as usual at the December or January meeting please.

Hilary then introduced Karen Gaymond, the ambassador for The Children's Society in the Coventry Diocese; she explained that the Society has a lower profile than some other well-advertised charities as they focus their funds on schemes to forward the work.

She looked back at the appalling conditions for poor and abandoned babies and children in the 1700s and how this had led to the setting up of the Foundling Hospital in London by a wealthy philanthropist. Only relatively fit children were admitted and it depended on whether one picked a green or a red ball! However, it had several famous patrons such as Handel and Howarth. By the 1800s, Dickens in his novels was highlighting the poverty and difficult lives of orphans and street children - the only refuge often being the work-houses.

The Bishop of Southwark was influential in the setting up of homes for smaller numbers of children (say 10) between the ages of 5 and 14 years. This was a revolutionary idea and in 1884 the 3rd such home was opened in Leamington Spa. The girls were trained for work in service or in the Midlands clothing industry and the boys often went into military service.

And so the work of the Church of England Society for Waifs and Strays progressed - the name changing in 1980 to The Children's Society.

In 2000, the emphasis changed from the work in the many homes, to focus on the hubs of London, Manchester and Birmingham. The Society prepares a very comprehensive Childhood Report which provides a basis for Government policy and lobbying for improvements.



Karen outlined some of the many projects e.g. Handle with Care (Manchester); Fair and Square (free meals for children up to 7); Streetwise in Coventry. Sadly, there are still many problems. For example, the number of runaway children over the year was 100,000 (only 50,000 reported as missing). Always there is the question of funding - finding living accommodation for 16 year-olds leaving institutions before they receive Living Allowance at 18; looking after young carers, etc. Coventry has a lot of work with the large number of refugees there. Karen said that there was plenty of information on their website.

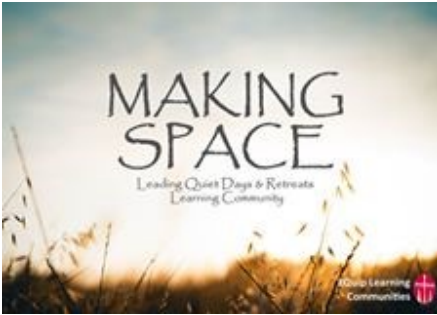
Hilary thanked Karen for her talk which had made us aware of the vast amount of work being done by the Children's Society.

Next Meeting - 10th December - Christmas Party.

Daphne Jones

Humorous Biblical Shorts

- Who was the greatest financier in the Bible? Noah, because he was floating his stock while everyone else was in liquidation.
- What kind of motor vehicles are mentioned in the Bible? a) Jehovah drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden in a Fury. b) David's Triumph was heard throughout the land. c) A Honda, because the apostles were all in one Accord.
- Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible? Samson because he brought the house down.
- Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible? When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.



Making Space: Leading Quiet Days & Retreats

Due to popular demand, we will be launching a second group in Wellesbourne, which will begin meeting in the New Year. See below for further details

This Learning Community is an opportunity to gather together with others to share ideas, inspiration and encouragement that will help develop your skills in making space for others to encounter God through quiet days/evenings and retreats.

We will meet together five times over the year, with each session focusing on a different element of planning a quiet day, and having a different theme following the pattern of the liturgical year (advent, lent etc.). Sessions will be interactive with opportunities to share and discuss ideas and challenges along with input from the group facilitators and time for reflection and prayer.

No experience of running quiet days is required! The events you'd like to run might be anything from a simple prayer station in your church for visitors to access, to a full day retreat. You are welcome whether this is an area you already dabble in, you're an old hand at planning retreats and are looking for fresh ideas or you would like to put something like this on at your church but have no clue where to start! Bring your enthusiasm and we'll all share our knowledge and creativity and go away encouraged and inspired.

To find out more and reserve your place: Contact Lisa Holt or Jen Stewart via servingchrist@covcofe.org

Wednesdays 15 January 2020, 11 March 2020, 29 April 2020, 8 July 2020, 30 September 2020

Time: Meeting from 7:00 – 9:00pm (beginning with refreshments)

Location: St Peter's Church, Wellesbourne, CV35 9LS

Spaces are limited to enable the most effective learning environment –

There is no charge to be part of a Learning Community. The EQuip Learning Communities are predominantly intended for lay people, but if you're ordained and interested, do get in touch!

Shottery St Andrew, you're transforming lives in Khantati

Your sponsorship continues to show **Edgar** that he's cared for.

And your support reaches further, to Edgar's family and friends, transforming lives all around him. All children in Khantati are getting the help they need and deserve to grow up healthy, happy and safe. As a sponsor, your commitment means that together, we can have a lasting impact, not only for your sponsored child, but also for generations to come.



Growing lasting change

When we started partnering with the people in Khantati in 2006, we planted a seed of hope, which, nurtured by your support, is bringing long-lasting change to Edgar's community.

Gradually you're helping to build a thriving community and transform lives in Khantati. Thanks to you, things have continued to improve, and your support has made a huge difference. Now, children know how to protect themselves, they're doing better at school and the community is working to protect them from abuse and violence.

Your support is changing Edgar's life, and it's reaching many more too. You're making a difference to some of the community's most vulnerable children, including those who don't have a sponsor. Children are sometimes neglected and do not get the care and attention they need at home, often because their dads have gone away to look for work. It's thanks to the changes in the community brought about by sponsorship that community volunteers can now make sure that children have the support they need.

Meanwhile, there's still work to be done. For example, men are often away from home for long periods for work, and many people still hold traditional views about women's ability to work and contribute. The challenges are tough, but the community is working together to overcome them.

Thanks to you, children are doing better at school and preparing for brighter futures. Extra training for teachers and more books, textbooks and equipment for pupils have helped children improve their reading and maths skills. "We

write stories and poems at school. Thanks to our sponsors, we have plenty of books to learn with.”

Thanks to sponsors like you, children see their lives change for the better. With an education, clean water and nutritious food, they become healthier and happier and can get all they need to look forward to a brighter future.

We’re planning to leave Khantati in 2023, once we know that changes like this will last, and benefit not only Edgar and his friends but also generations to come.

How sponsorship money is spent

In 2018, across all our sponsorship programmes, sponsorship money in communities where we work was spent in the following areas:

Child wellbeing for sponsored children 37%

Livelihoods and economic development 19%

Education 14%

Health and nutrition 14%

Child protection 9%

Food security 7%



PLEASE DONATE

Generously on Sunday 12th January

Some Irish jokes.....

Mrs O'Toole said: "I can only tell you this bit of scandal once, because I promised Mrs O'Leary I would never repeat it"

PADDY: "If you can guess how many Pheasants I've got in me bag you can have both of them".

SHAUN: Three.

"O'Leary, your glass is empty, will you be having another one?"

And what would I be doing with two empty glasses?" O'Leary replied.

PADDY: "Hey Shaun, what's Mick's surname?"

SHAUN: "Mick who?"

Thank Dickens for Christmas as you know it!

Ever wonder where many of our Christmas traditions come from? A surprising amount can be traced back to the well-loved story of 'A Christmas Carol', by Charles Dickens.

When you read 'A Christmas Carol', you discover almost a template of the 'ideal Christmas' which we still hold dear today. Dickens seems to have selected the best of the Christmas celebrations of his day (he ignored some of the odd excesses) and packaged them in such a way as to give us traditions that we could accommodate and treasure – more than a century later.

So, for instance, in A Christmas Carol, Christmas is a family day, with a family-centred feast. In a home decorated with holly and candles the characters enjoy a roast turkey, followed by Christmas pudding. They give their loved ones presents. Scrooge even gives donations to charity (!). And all the while outside, there is snow and frost, while church bells ring, and carol singers sing, and hope for mulled wine. In 'A Christmas Carol' there is even a Father Christmas – in the shape of Christmas Present. Only the Christmas tree itself came later, when Prince Albert imported 'a pretty German toy' that won the heart of the English court, and hence the rest of Victorian society.



CHRISTMAS FAIR.

A very enjoyable and rewarding Christmas Fair on Saturday 23rd November. A large team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers together with many shoppers ensured that the event was a resounding success. Apart from the fact that nearly £2,800 was raised, it was so good to be able to spend time (and money) with everyone. Well done and thanks to all involved.

CHRISTMAS TO-DO-LIST

- ^{BE} ~~buy~~ presents
- wrap ~~gifts~~ ^{SOMEONE}
^{IN A HUG}
- send ~~gifts~~ ^{PEACE}
- ^{DONATE} ~~shop for~~ food
- ^{BE} ~~see~~ the lights

Wellbeing Conference Sat. 9th November (Interfaith Forum)

Organised by Jatinder Birdi on behalf of the Sikh community and in conjunction with WCC, at the beginning of Interfaith Week this event took place at St Peter's Conference Centre, Dormer Place, Leamington Spa.

The key aims of the Conference were to raise awareness of the importance of Spiritual, Emotional, Psychological, Physical, Financial, Social and a Healthy Lifestyle; and to provide the community with an outline of services & support available, and opportunity to raise issues & concerns with key service providers.

Following a welcome from Fr John, St Peter's RC Church, there was an "Opening Reflection & Spiritual Wellbeing" by John Stroyen, Bishop of Warwick. Amongst much other considered reflection, Bishop John said that all the stated principles have to be addressed and combined in all our lives in order to improve mental health. Depression and anxiety are the most prevalent in our communities, which we should learn to recognise. We must, through kindness and patience, be more perceptive with ourselves and others, towards a whole and healthy society.

There were further speakers on all subjects from Warwickshire Police, Springfield Mind, Matt Western recent MP and Citizens advice, amongst others.

This was an important and thought-provoking conference. But in a warm & hospitable venue on a wet & dreary day, friends old & new enjoyed lively networking and much fellowship.

The event ended with a really delicious vegetarian lunch provided by the Sikh community.

Ann McNeil.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP

We met on Thursday 31st of October 2019. Our speaker was Nic Carree who is well known to us all. He came to talk about making Christmas table decorations. It was a little early for Christmas flowers but we shall not meet again with a speaker until after Christmas. It was lovely to have Nic with us. He is so skillful in the construction of arrangements and he obviously enjoys doing it very much; his enthusiasm comes over very clearly.

Nic told us a story about guests bringing very different table arrangements as gifts at a dinner party. He then showed us how to combine them using very various pieces of equipment, (see the picture below). He then constructed an arrangement from scratch with greenery and flowers, made in an attractive bag with a surprise gift inside at the base. It could be, for example, a jar of jam or chutney so that when the flowers are over, there is still a gift to find! Part of the arrangement included Gerberas, which I find often go droopy quite early. The secret of making them stand erect again is to put them in a small amount of water with a few drops of bleach, leave for a couple of hours, then put them back into the arrangement,. Another tip we could all use to good effect.



Nic very kindly gave us the flowers and left them for us to raffle. It was a lovely interesting evening and we were so grateful to Nic for spending time with us. As usual, we finished with a tasty light supper.

Jo Carver. Chairperson

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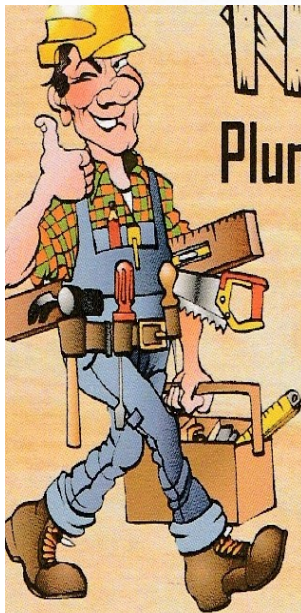
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