

**'KEEP IN TOUCH', Autumn 2022**

**Copy by, but, if possible, before 31 July 2022**

All contributions welcome. Maximum preferred length: 500 words!

*(If longer, the editor reserves the right to edit.)*

# 'Keep In Touch'



**KEEPING YOU 'IN TOUCH' IS**

Name .....

Address .....

Tel. No. ....

**You are welcome to keep in touch with them**

## **SUMMER 2022**

***CHURCH & VILLAGE  
BIRSTALL & WANLIP***

## THE PARISH OF BIRSTALL AND WANLIP

<b>Rector</b>	The Revd Amanda Digman 251 Birstall Road, LE4 4DJ revamandadigman@me.com	07803-625049
<b>Hon Asst. Priests</b>	Revd Kerry Emmett, 1 Chamberlains Field Canon Anne Horton, 8b Copeland Road Revd Robin Martin, 22 Sycamore Road Revd Michael Webb, 31 Bramley Road	3194736 2677942 07971632268 07813144645
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Mrs Debbie Shephard, 41 Roman Road Mr John Borrajo, 8 Hallam Avenue Mrs Corinne Aldis, 15, The Oaks, Acorn Close Mrs Doreen Wilson, 13 Poplar Avenue	2673262 2209289 3482984 2674680
<b>Deputy Wardens</b>	Mr Tony Bloxam, 17 Sandgate Avenue Mrs Mary Bruce, 1 Hallam Avenue	2675381 07759602426
<b>Licensed Reader PTO</b>	Mrs Lesley Walton, 16 The Crossways	2674995
<b>Pastoral</b>	Mrs Doreen Wilson, 13 Poplar Avenue	2674680
<b>Assistants PTO</b>	Mrs Gill Pope, 26 Blenheim Road	2675086
<b>Safeguarding Coordinator</b>	Mrs Annette Marshall <i>annette.marshall8@gmail.com</i>	
<b>Sunday School</b>	Mrs Rose Parrott <i>rose.parrott@btinternet.com</i>	07811662235
<b>Church Office</b>	Mrs Sheryl Jupp, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com; SherylJupp@hotmail.co.uk</i>	2671797
<b>Treasurer</b>	Dave Owen, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com</i>	2671797
<b>Bell Tower</b>	'Normal' practice night Thurs. 7pm, but not currently	
<b>Wanlip Church</b>	Mrs Liz Davison	2671252
<b>Hall Bookings</b>		
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*The views and opinions of those who have submitted articles to 'Keep in Touch' belong to them alone and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the wider church.*

## From the Church Office

Hi. I hope you are doing OK and have a wonderful Summer. I will be in the church office on Tuesdays and Fridays between 9am and 1pm. If you have a notice you would like putting in our weekly Information Sheet please email it to [stjames.birstall@btconnect.com](mailto:stjames.birstall@btconnect.com), and/or [sheryljupp@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sheryljupp@hotmail.co.uk). I would prefer to receive it twice than not at all.

If you don't have access to the internet, please will you leave your notice on my desk or post it through the church letterbox which is at the bottom of the glass doors. If you are unable to get to church, please contact Amanda or one of the churchwardens. I will continue to send the information sheets out digitally, but if you no longer wish to receive them would you please let me know. Thank you very much. Take care

*Love Sheryl*

### Baptisms 2022

13th February	Harry John Featherstone	12 months	Birstall
20th February	Brodie Theo Turner	13 months	Birstall
6th March	Elijah Noah Larton	Freeston	13 months Birstall

### Weddings 2022

April 9th	Tony Goodman & Sarah Clifford	St James, Birstall
May 14th	David Harrison & Molly Evans	Our Lady & St Nicholas Wanlip

### Funerals 2022

28.12.21	27.01.22	Eric Orton	L Crem
24.12.21	28.01.22	Linda (Lynn) Mason	Wanlip/L Crem
09.01.22	14.02.22	Derek Cockrell	St James/LCrem
15.02.22	04.03.22	Geoffrey Stephenson	Wanlip/Wanlip Churchyard

## SWITHLAND'S ANNUAL 'BLUEBELL SERVICE'

I have very special memories of an annual event in Swithland, my last parish. It has been held very nearly every year since 1928. And I can't resist sharing it with you.



A photograph from the 1990s

In 1928, members of Swithland Church asked the Rotary Club to allow an outdoor service in Swithland Woods. The then rector and his churchwardens had conceived the idea of a service among the bluebells. Permission and support from the Swithland Woods Committee of the Rotary Club was duly given.

The first service was held on May 20th 1928 at 3.30 pm, Whitsunday. The chosen hymns were *City of God how broad and far, I vow to thee my country, O worship the King, Lead kindly light, Jesu lover of my soul* and *Abide with me*. The 'Bluebell Service' has continued an annual fixture ever since.

In the early years, a harmonium was wheeled into the woods to accompany the singing. Mrs Kitty Burrows accompanied initially, then Miss Gweneth Kilby. More recently members of the local Salvation Army band regularly provided instrumental support, and, since 2008, a band of students from Welbeck Sixth Form Defence College.

I remember it as a great joy and wonderful fun!

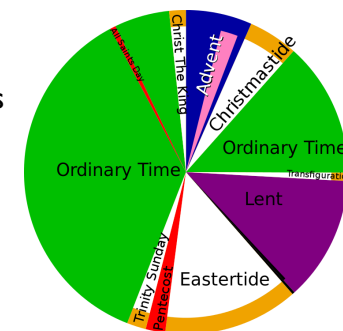
Canon Anne

## 'TIS THE SEASON TO BE GREEN

You may notice that the altar frontals and the clergy vestments will change colour this month to **green**. They were **red** on June 5th, in honour of God the Holy Spirit (**Pentecost**) and should be so again on June 11th, in honour of St Barnabas, apostle and martyr, as **red** also signifies the blood of martyrs.

**Red** is also used on June 16th, the feast of Corpus Christi, which is a day of thanksgiving for God's gift of Holy Communion.

From then until the end of October, however, throughout so-called 'Ordinary Time,' you will be gazing at **green** frontals and **green** vestments. **Green** is used during 'Ordinary Time' between the main festivals and seasons. The colour represents life and growth.



**White** or **gold** is the colour for Easter and Eastertide, for Trinity Sunday and All Saints Day, as well as for all those saints who were not martyred. It is used for other major life-affirming festivals such as **Christmas Day** and the Sundays that follow, as well for family celebrations, such as baptisms, weddings, and many Christian funerals.

**Purple** is used for times of preparation and waiting, especially during the reflective seasons of Advent and Lent. And if you are wondering about the **pink** colour, you might remember that the third Sunday in Advent is also known as Gaudete Sunday, which is named for the entrance antiphon for that Sunday's Eucharist: 'Rejoice (*gaudete*) in the Lord always, again I say, rejoice.' Hence the **pink** (3rd) candle in the Advent wreath.

In Birstall and Wanlip recently we have been encouraged to celebrate Pentecost by wearing **flame** coloured clothes, which is joyful and fun! You might even like to wear appropriate colours for the other seasons. Why not? The clergy do!!

Canon Anne

## RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS



Jesus went to a lot of parties.

His first miracle was that of turning water into wine at a wedding party in Cana. And he talked about parties, and used them in his parables. He was even on the receiving end of a certain number of complaints for going to parties - particularly about the company he kept at these parties. But that didn't stop him. He knew the value of gathering and eating together – it grows community and enables people to get to know one another better. You can have good and unexpected conversations at parties and, hopefully everyone is treated equally.

Collins English Dictionary tells us: 'A party is a social event, often in someone's home, at which people enjoy themselves doing things such as eating, drinking, dancing, talking, or playing games.' We had our first of such parties at the rectory last night. Sorry if you missed it! Due to Paul's work situation, it was rather a last-minute decision, but there will be more. It was wonderful to gather with about twenty people, have a relaxed social time together, and even a pretty heavy-weight, but friendly discussion, towards the end of the evening.

When I was at school, I was picked on because I was different and an easy target! I was shy; I was the only Christian in my year (of about one hundred and eighty young people.) I played musical instruments, and I lived in a village where not many of the rest of my year lived. If there was a party, I was rarely invited. But I didn't really notice, unless they were all talking about it in school in front of me, and then it felt pretty awful. Ever since, my policy has always been that everyone is invited – sometimes we might ask you to bring a small contribution of whatever is in your cupboard.

## OUR WORK IN THE SCHOOLS

During the Spring Term most of the schools' work was concentrated around the story of Easter. *Experience Easter* had been planned: with all the volunteers organised, paperwork distributed. We were down on volunteers anyway but when Covid struck it we had to rethink. Rev. Amanda took *Experience Easter* into Highcliffe and Riverside on her own.

Hallam Fields' *Easter Experience* was always going to be delivered in school so that didn't mean any change of plans. The primary schools had requested assemblies for Easter, so James, Rev. Amanda and Josephine went into church and provided power points with voice overs for Key Stages 1 and 2 which, with technological difficulties eventually arrived in the schools!

There was a new challenge with regard to our work with Cedars. It had been suggested we should investigate the possibility of using Wanlip Church. Rev. Amanda led a group in Wanlip church looking at the church building and working through a service with active participation by some of the pupils! The other group were in the Hall looking at Christians who have made a difference to the world. James and Josephine had an interesting time selecting a variety of people and producing laminated sheets of information. The final question as they left the Hall was "How can you make the world a better place?".

*Josephine Burgess*

### *Amanda writes*

We are very grateful for all that Josephine has done to establish and grow the work we do with schools, and, in her retirement from this role, she will be greatly missed. Thank you so much Josephine.

We had very lovely feedback from Cedars from a teacher regarding that school trip which has opened the way for more opportunities. Thank you again, Josephine, James and all the volunteers.

## CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES MINISTRY

APRIL 2021 – APRIL 2022

At the start of 2021 the Parish was in interregnum, albeit anticipating the arrival of our new Rector, the Revd Amanda Digman. At the same time, the Covid pandemic meant we were operating under various restrictions on worship, group activities and social fellowship. We kept in contact with families by delivering our news-sheet and activity pack with a doorstep visit, or via the post, until Easter 2022. Once the rules were relaxed in mid-2021, we arranged an outdoor programme in August 2021 beginning with a riverside walk and a picnic on the church lawns after an Altogether Service. Sunday School teaching was resumed after the October Harvest Festival, but with limited take up.

The Rector now includes the use of technology in Baptism services and Altogether services, so that visitors and families might follow the services more easily. We held Christingle services at both churches on Christmas Eve. The young people who returned to Church are now more involved in the planning and running of the Altogether Service. We propose to encourage young people who were previously servers or acolytes to return.

Before Covid, some young people were learning bell-ringing and we are now looking for a new teacher to re-instate this. Baptism families and wedding couples with children are encouraged to join us regularly. We would like to run an Under-5 session once a month on Sunday mornings, given this is the age group presenting. If you are reading this and have children or young people in your family, Amanda would love to hear from you about your opinions around our provision for children, young people and families. We are excited about all the possibilities.

*Rosemary Parrott, Children and Families Team Leader*

But if you hear me talking about a party and if we announce a party in church, you are invited. Don't believe you're not for some reason – you haven't been to church enough; we haven't met yet; or some other imagined reason – just come if you can, you are as welcome as the next person. Jesus invites all of us into the Kingdom of God, so I try to follow His lead on the subject of invitation!

So, watch this space, for more parties, where we can gather; get to know each other better; reminisce; debate our faith; put the world to rights; maybe come up with some practical things we can do to actually put the world to rights; and hopefully grow as a community as we expectantly wait for the greatest party to come. That party where we will be re-united with those we love but see no more; that party when we will know that we are each one of us truly invited and loved and cared for; that party when we will have all our questions answered, or it won't matter any more; that party, where I am hoping, that the chocolate will be even more delicious and totally healthy too!

*Amanda*

## FOR THE BLESSING OF FRIENDS

We are humbled with blessing  
dear God, and we bless you,  
for the lives you have gifted us  
in the shape of our friends.

Such caring, such holding,  
such sharing, such scolding,  
softening our hardnesses  
freeing our pain.

Gladly we lift up  
our friends for your blessing,  
returning them home  
to your joy once again.

*Yvonne Morland*

## Poem (for E.D.)



A cut poppy head, given,  
opens into a vermillion cup  
of silken petals  
filling a stoneware bowl.  
The red cup centres on  
a light green seed head,  
trendily coiffured.  
And, separating the colours,  
stark black forms, almost dragons.  
The whole living head, virile.

(But how could she know  
that only a day or two before,  
I had looked closely  
into such a head)

This poem was written by my cousin Alf Middleton, an artist and sometime poet. He is an interesting man who took an interest in my artistic work and from whom I learnt a lot.

**Charlotte Stephenson**

All the electrics and small appliances have been checked. The gas safety certificate will be completed later this year and the Quinquennial is due at the end of the year. We are in the process of appointing a new architect.

The **Housling Cloth** remains with the restorer until we can decide what to do with it. The Terrier is up-to-date and available for viewing. We have installed 'No Parking' signs in the car park.

**Debbie Shephard**

## WHAT IS A HOUSLING CLOTH?

According to the internet, this is a long strip of white linen or other white stuff held for the communicants by acolytes or other ministers, or spread over the rails at the time of communion: used in the Roman Catholic Church and in some Anglican churches.

A 4th century passage instructs communicants: *Approaching therefore, do not come forward with the palms of the hands outstretched nor with fingers apart, but making the left hand a throne for the right since this hand is about to receive the King. Making the palm hollow, receive the Body of Christ, adding 'Amen.' Then, carefully sanctifying the eyes by touching them with the holy Body, partake of it, ensuring that you do not mislay any of it. For if you mislay any of it, you would clearly suffer a loss, as it were, from one of your own limbs. Tell me, if anyone gave you gold-dust, would you not take hold of it with every possible care, ensuring that you did not mislay any of it or sustain any loss?*

The Church incorporated this attitude into its official liturgical practices. Altar cloths were provided to absorb any spills, and tiny fragments of the Blessed Sacrament could be recovered from the smooth starched corporal on which rested the Host and Chalice. For those who did not receive at the altar, a *Housling cloth* was employed to catch the Host if dropped by the priest, and in some cases to keep the communicant's bare hand from touching the Host.

**Editor**

## WANLIP: CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT

The last year has been a bit of a rollercoaster since John passed away in May 2021. He and I had worked very much as a team and he is very deeply missed. It has been a steep learning curve to pick up on all the things he did. I have had to learn very quickly. We've had problems with the central heating controls. The heating was coming on at random times and was obviously wasting gas. During the summer we replaced the timer with a new one and took the opportunity to move the control into the lighting cupboard inside the church. This means that we no longer have to negotiate the very old stone staircase down into the boiler room! We also put in a timer to control the external lights. During the winter this comes on at 16.45 and goes off at around 21.00. We keep it on that late as we feel it helps with the church and hall security.

From the beginning of Advent these were joined by some fairy lights running along the edge of the path. We kept them alight until the clocks went forward at the end of March. They add a real sense of welcome to the church.

We still have some mysterious leaks which seem unrelated to anything going on with the roof. Paul Wilcox and Peter Lucas have been brilliant, going up on to the roof to check it over. On their first visit they discovered that someone had tried to remove the lead over the ridge. They were able to fold it back temporarily and have since been back up to finish the job. They were only approached once by the police!

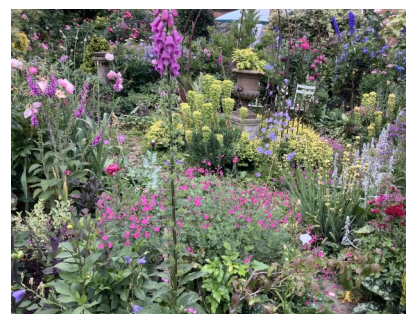
We were gifted with new pew cushions by the family of Sheila Key, which completed the job started by John and Julie Ward a few years ago. Peter Key, his sister Lynda and Lynda's husband came to a service in January when the cushions were blessed. The church really looks complete now.

The organ needs attention. I'm assured that it is a rare specimen and will get a lot of support from 'organ aficionados' when we come to do the work. Paul has organised a quote but it is still very early days.

## THE GARDEN IN CURZON AVENUE

Fifty one years ago when we moved to Curzon Avenue, we felt we were entering a wood. The house had been let for twenty-five years and the garden was filled with enormous trees and self-sown saplings. I remember digging up twenty-eight trees from one corner, and we could not see the sky from many of the windows. Even though the house demanded massive attention, we also set to work on the garden.

At first, it was a garden for children, with three lawns and play equipment, and everywhere our girls and their friends ran I made a path. There were secret circles and dens and it became a favourite hide and seek location. Gradually, as our girls grew up, plants took over, and, on our many trips to great gardens and famous nurseries, we bought unusual plants and shrubs.



The garden has been open for charity many times and our plant sales for Christian Aid have raised a lot of money. Propagating is a passion, and the sales of plants on the charity stall at Birstall Flower Club has helped to raise thousands.

No gardener who visits goes away empty handed - there is always something desirable in the cold frame to give away! And, of course, for the past twenty-nine years the garden has supplied the foliage for the flower arrangements in church.

*Sylvia Simes*

## WHO ARE THE CISTERCIANS?

### A VERY BRIEF HISTORY

To understand the beginning of the Cistercians we need to travel back to the French Benedictine monastery of Molesme in the year 1098. The Abbot, Robert, who had founded the monastery, along with his Prior, Alberic, and sub-prior, Stephen Harding, were getting frustrated at how lax the majority of the monks were at keeping the Rule of Saint Benedict. In the end they decided to leave Molesme and found a new Benedictine Monastery where the rule could be followed strictly. With them went seventeen of the monks who felt as they did. They moved to a marshland at Cîteaux where they founded the 'New Monastery' which aimed to be a reformed Benedictine monastery where the rule was followed strictly. Meanwhile the monastery at Molesme was falling apart without Robert and so they asked the Pope to order his return. So, after appointing Alberic as his successor at Cîteaux, Robert returned to Molesme. During his time as Abbot of Cîteaux Alberic gave a solid reality to a new form of Benedictine monasticism. Alberic's period was a time of systematically implemented ideals that caused a departure from the Benedictine monasticism of Molesme.

Among these ideals was a move towards simplicity and poverty, which led to Alberic giving up the costly dyed black cowls for cheaper undyed ones. The cowl is the outermost garment worn by solemnly professed monks. Thus was born the 'Grey Monks'. On 19th October 1100 Alberic obtained papal protection for Cîteaux from Pope Paschal II and with it the Cistercian order were recognised as a separate order. Taking its name from the Latin name of Cîteaux. Upon Alberic's death, Stephen Harding became Abbot. It was under Stephen's time as Abbot that the founding documents of the new order began to be written. The Charter of Love distinguished the Cistercians from other orders. It set down various common practices that all Cistercian monasteries would follow. At the same time it decreed that no monastery would be expected to

Reports on Deanery Synod, General Data Protection regulation and Safeguarding had been prepared and distributed. New PCC members would need to complete appropriate safe-guarding training. A report on School Work had been distributed. After sixteen years of face to face working with our schools, Josephine Burgess has decided to step back. Youth Worker James Blackhall from the Methodist Church and the Rector, however, will continue with this work. It is encouraging to see our churches working together. Sincere thanks were extended to Josephine who was presented with flowers.

The Rector's Report. Amanda thanked everyone for the warm welcome she received in September and for her service of institution and induction. She thanked wardens John and Tony for showing her around the rectory, the 'permission to officiate' clergy and the hard work of wardens Debbie, Corinne and John Ward prior to her joining us. She added that the vestry is very organised and well run. Corinne thanked Amanda for her good leadership qualities.

A PCC Away Day is planned for the Autumn. Amanda quoted Joshua where he reminds us that God is always with us during difficult times. Although it appears the church is shrinking, worldwide the church is growing. The church will grow again in God's time, and we will have good times ahead. The meeting closed with the Grace.

A brief meeting of the new PCC followed.

The following agreed to serve: Debbie Shephard, Vice-Chair, Dave Owen, Hon PCC Treasurer, Lynn Van Ristell, Hon PCC Secretary and Elaine White as a member for the Finance and Standing Committee. A second member will be appointed at the next PCC meeting.

The PCC Away Day was arranged for Saturday 8 October 2022.

Forthcoming Meetings: Finance & Standing Committee: 25 May, 7 September, 2 November, 11 January 2023, 14 March

PCC Meetings: 8 June, 21 September, 16 November, 25 January 2023, 28 March all at 7.30pm

After the meeting, the Rector explained the rules regarding membership of the Electoral Roll.

**Next year's APM/APCM Meetings – 26 April 2023; 7.20pm**



Electoral Roll Josephine Burgess and Christine Suffolk reported that there are now 151 members on the electoral roll: four had left, four had died and 3 had been added. Josephine would not continue in this post, but Christine would. She requested computer assistance, which Corinne Aldis agreed to do. Our sincere thanks were expressed to Josephine and Christine for their commitment over the past year.

Copies of the Annual Report on the proceedings of the PCC and the activities of the parish generally were distributed. In respect of Amazon Smile, the church had received between £5 to £10 to date.

Reception of the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31/12/21. Nicki explained that just over £21,000 had been received in Gift Aid. It was agreed that Amanda sign the accounts. Nicki resigned as Treasurer at the meeting. Our thanks were expressed to Nicki and a presentation was made to her.

Appointment of an auditor to the PCC. The rector enquired whether anyone knew of a qualified accountant who could audit the accounts for three to four years free of charge or for a nominal fee. Newby Castleman had proved efficient, and it may be helpful for Dave Owen to have them audit the accounts during his first year as Treasurer. It was agreed to re-appoint Newby Castleman unless we found an alternative individual who would audit our accounts within the next three months. 14 in favour, 4 against, 3 abstained.

To receive Wardens' report upon the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church and any discussion thereon. Geoff Agar was retiring from mowing the grass in the churchyard. A letter of thanks had been written to him. We hope to continue what Geoff has done to ensure that the churchyard looks neat and tidy. Vic Dolby had offered a lawnmower and strimmer. The lawn is not the Council's responsibility, but Phil is maintaining it and the labyrinth. John Borrajo and Tony Bloxam would discuss the brown garden bins. Amanda may be able to offer brown bin space occasionally. Thanks were expressed to John Borrajo for clearing the overgrown church wall. We will wait for the Quinquennial for a full check of the church wall, but we are advised that it is safe, despite being bowed with some top stones loose.

support another financially. For other Orders each monastery was independent and so, even though they might be of the same order, their practices could vary. Furthermore when a Mother House set up a Daughter House the Daughter House was expected to help support the Mother House. It was during Stephen's time that the Cistercians started wearing the white cowl (hood) and they became known as the 'White Monks'. They kept the black scapular and hood of the Benedictines in recognition that they were still part of the Benedictine family. As the Order grew, another development to insure they followed the common practice was a regular Chapter when the Abbots would meet together to discuss any matters that needed sorting out.

Just as Robert, Alberic and Stephen had felt that the Benedictines had become lax in 1098, so in 1664 Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé, Abbot of the Cistercian Monastery La Grande Trappe, felt the Cistercians had become lax, and he started an austere reform of his monastery. His reforms spread to other monasteries leading to a split in the Cistercian order into the Order of Cistercians of the Common Order with the reformed monasteries becoming the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Order, or Trappists for short. Nowadays there is very little difference between the two orders.



*Anglican Cistercians.  
These brothers were able to be at  
our February Chapter at Wantage.*

*Left to right  
Br Aidan (N), Br Tom (N),  
Br Christian (SP)  
Rt Rev Tony Robinson (Episcopal  
Visitor) Br Bernard (SP)  
Br James Martin (N)  
N = Novice; SP = Solemnly Professed*

*Michael, Br. Aidan*

## MAY MEMORIES

Did you ever dance around the maypole at school? It's fascinating watching the ribbons bound criss-cross round the pole. I was never chosen to dance when the Mayor came to our school's celebrations; I could not remember the moves, that spoils the symmetry. Or were you the prettiest or best-behaved girl chosen to be the May Queen, crowned and travelling on a float through the streets? How many children these days have enjoyed these events? My grandchildren don't know a single English folk song or dance, but they did learn African drumming at school. One, Elena, joined a maypole club at school last year, so maybe there's hope!



Do you remember and miss the first of May Bank Holiday, galas and coach trips? Most of the world still celebrates the day, remembering and rewarding all workers who serve us, provide services for everyone and do the jobs that keep the world running. People like Joseph, the carpenter. Or, as a girl, did you, like our grandmothers, go out, while the dew was on the ground on May 1st, to the nearest pond, river or horse trough, hoping to see your future husband's face reflected there? Or, like my mother's generation, pick may (hawthorn) leaves on the way to school to eat, and call it 'bread and cheese'?

May is a month to celebrate St Mary, the mother of Jesus. So let us celebrate this joyous month, by working for others, exploring the outdoors and 'bringing forth fruits' to make our world an even better place. And now why don't you share your memories?

**Noreen Talbot**

## BIRSTALL & WANLIP ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

At St James the Great, Birstall, on Monday 4 April 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Rev Amanda Digman (Chair), Debbie Shephard, John Borrajo, Corinne Aldis, Nicki Wills, John Aldis, Sarah Borrajo, Tony Bloxam, Doreen Bloxam, Josephine Burgess, Cynthia Coltman, Theresa Harding, Canon Anne Horton, Annette Marshall, Tricia Owen, Dave Owen, Rose Parrott, Doreen Wilson, Gill Pope, Rita Richards, Christine Suffolk, Julie Ward, Andy White, Elaine White, Paul Wilcox, Lynn Van Ristell (Sec)

It was approved that Lynn Van Ristell be clerk to the meeting.

Apologies: Paul and Helen Tarry, Kerry Emmett, Robin Martin, Lesley Walton, Noreen Talbot, Joan Folland, Janet Waters, Brenda Todd, Carol Spooner

### Minutes of the APCM held on 28 April 2021

It was proposed that the minutes, taken as read, be accepted as a true record of the proceedings. Proposed by Annette Marshall, seconded by Gill Pope, all in favour. No matters arising

Election of Representatives of the laity to the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Debbie Shephard spoke about safeguarding/DBS requirements and the demands the diocese is placing on each PCC member to undertake appropriate training/DBS checking. Dioceses will be offering face to face training for those who would prefer that to online training. Safeguarding is vital, and it is hoped that we would understand the reasoning behind these demands.

We currently have eight vacancies. Four nominations were received: Annette Marshall, proposed Corinne Aldis, seconded Tony Bloxam, all in favour; Elaine White, proposed Corinne Aldis, seconded John Borrajo, all in favour; Lesley Walton, proposed by Debbie Shephard, seconded by John Borrajo, all in favour; Dave Owen, proposed by Debbie Shephard, seconded by John Borrajo, all in favour. The four candidates were duly elected for three years.

## BIRSTALL & WANLIP ANNUAL PARISHIONERS MEETING

held at St James the Great, Birstall  
on Monday 4 April 2022 at 7.20pm

Present: Rev Amanda Digman (Chair), Debbie Shephard, John Borrajo, Corinne Aldis, Nicki Wills, John Aldis, Sarah Borrajo, Tony Bloxam, Doreen Bloxam, Josephine Burgess, Cynthia Coltman, Theresa Harding, Canon Anne Horton, Annette Marshall, Tricia Owen, Dave Owen, Rose Parrott, Doreen Wilson, Gill Pope, Rita Richards, Christine Suffolk, Julie Ward, Andy White, Elaine White, Paul Wilcox, Lynn Van Ristell (Sec)

### Opening Prayer

Amanda welcomed everyone, and the meeting was opened in prayer.

Appointment of person to act as clerk of the meeting and to record the minutes. It was approved that Lynn Van Ristell be clerk to the meeting, proposed by Debbie Shephard, seconded by Tony Bloxam, all in favour.

Apologies: Paul and Helen Tarry, Kerry Emmett, Robin Martin, Lesley Walton, Noreen Talbot, Joan Folland, Janet Waters, Brenda Todd, Carol Spooner

Minutes of the 2021 Vestry Meeting held on 28 April 2021  
Debbie Shephard proposed that the minutes be accepted, seconded by Tony Bloxam, all in favour; with no matters arising.

### Election of Churchwardens

Four nominations had been received:

John Borrajo – Corinne Aldis - Debbie Shephard – Doreen Wilson  
It was approved unanimously that all four candidates be elected as churchwardens, and they were duly elected for one year.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

## HAWTHORN IN MAY

### White blossom festoons the hedge

Dewy drops on every ledge.  
Shoots and buds, spring's final flush,  
Tell of summer's surging rush.  
Tell of burning heat, the blazing sun;  
Selection of May Queen, the chosen one;  
Workers' holiday, feasts of food;  
Maypole dancing in joyful mood;  
Picnics, excursions, processions,  
With banners waving, latest fashions.



Yet they say 'Cast not a clout,  
Till may be out'.  
What? 'Till the trees their blossoms cover';  
Or 'The month itself be over'?  
No-one alive to tell us which is true.

So we'll enjoy May blossom new,  
Of hawthorn, white or pink, and  
We'll glory in this month's blessing.



Despite the disruption of the pandemic, the ‘existential threat’ of climate change has not gone away. However, it has been inspiring to see so many churches in the diocese work successfully over the last couple of years to achieve Eco-church awards. The awards are more than just a trophy, but a tribute to churches working on their worship and teaching, their buildings and churchyards, with and for their communities, to make a real difference. We pray for those churches already on this journey, and those planning to undertake it. Furthermore, local Eco-churches are the foundation of our journey together towards Eco-diocese status, which may have been achieved by the time you read this.

All of this feeds into the national Church’s commitment to reaching ‘Net Zero’ by 2030, and rising fuel prices, combined with an awareness of how fossil fuels fund regimes such as Russia’s current government, should make us redouble our efforts in this area. For many churches this is a huge challenge and much prayer and wisdom are needed.

Despite all the other troubling headlines, environmental concern remains very high in wider society, particularly among the young, so the Church speaking and acting with integrity in this area is crucial for our relevance to those currently outside our fellowship. The Eco-Church scheme, Forest Church and many other initiatives are wonderful ways of making our belief in God the Creator and our concern for His creation real to those around us.’

**Leics. Diocesan Environmental Officer, Revd Andrew Quigley**

## CAMPING ‘N COOKING

Another Bank Holiday has finished and weren't we lucky with the weather? Two lovely daughters decided we were going camping in Derbyshire, so I was hoping for something dry. We had sunshine and warmth in the day but the nights turned cold. We had taken plenty of layers and looked like Eskimos, but were very snug and warm playing ‘UNO’ and drinking wine. Recommended fresh air and some really good nights sleep. The first time ever that I used a hot water bottle camping - must be going soft in my old age!!

A treat for a pudding on holiday is good old fashioned ‘Angel Delight’ (a childhood favourite of the girls) and home made biscuits. Butterscotch ‘Angel Delight’ goes very well with these.



### Mary Berry’s shortbread biscuits

6 oz butter, 3 oz caster sugar  
6 oz plain flour. 3 oz semolina  
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon



Put butter, sugar, flour, semolina and lemon zest into a bowl. Mix until well combined. Tip dough onto a floured board, knead until smooth. Split dough in half and roll each piece into a sausage shape about six inches long. Cover and chill for 30 minutes. Slice each roll into ten discs. Arrange on greased baking trays. Bake in pre-heated oven 200° C, gas 6, for about 15 minutes, until just tinged golden and almost firm to the touch. Carefully transfer to a wire rack to cool and firm up.

**Julie Ward**

## RECONCILIATION

‘Reconciliation happens when my enemy tells me my story, and I am able to say ‘That is my story’. (Stanley Hauerwas)

Since 2020, we have seen people take to the streets to stand for racial justice; to protest violence against women; to express opposition to Covid-19 lockdowns and vaccinations; and to demand stronger action against climate change. With every demonstration, protest or flurry of social media activity, others use the same means to take the opposing line. So, what does it mean for us to be ‘reconciling communities’ in a world where there are dividing lines on everything from masks to monuments.

Unfortunately the Church is not immune to such conflict. As Christians we often create our own ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups. Our views on innumerable theological and ecclesiastical questions all threaten Christ’s prayer for us to ‘be one’ as he and the Father are one, so that the world would see God through our relationships with one another. These factions thus affect both our loving service of the world and our witness to it.



The photograph of Patrick Hutchinson, a Black Lives Matter activist, carrying a counter-demonstrator to safety, immediately went viral, with politicians and commentators praising Hutchinson's moral example. It is a striking reminder of how seeking the good of our enemy is a powerful witness to a world fractured into echo-chambers.

Living together well starts with listening well, without an agenda, and resisting the need to categorise or offer our own commentary. As the quotation from theologian Stanley Hauerwas indicates, when in conflict, it is tempting to caricature, objectify and demean our opponent. But when we are fully present, we make ourselves open to seeing Christ in friend and foe alike.

*Florence Gildea, Bishop's Social Policy Advisor*

## REFUGEE WEEK

14th — 20th June

Maryam (not her real name) was a member of a minority group from a Christian background in Iran. She tried to build a bridge to the wider society and she married an Iranian man. She was, however, abused and harmed by her husband many times after a while. On one occasion, when she was pregnant, her husband kicked her abdomen and, as a result, her son was born disabled and deaf. Eventually she decided to leave the country and she came to the UK as an asylum seeker. After her case was accepted and she had refugee status, she worked very hard as a single mother to raise her child and settle in the new country. She is now helping other refugees in Greece.

Many other people with similar stories come to our country as asylum seekers and refugees. Our Lord Jesus was not unfamiliar with their story. He was a refugee in Egypt when he was young, and suffered and was killed by the oppressive majority. But He rose from the dead and gave hope for a better world for everyone, His Kingdom.

The Bible reminds us that we are all ‘foreigners and exiles’ (1 Peter 2:11) So, in this week, we remember all refugees and asylum seekers (foreigners) among us. We should also remember that we are the disciples of our Lord, who was a refugee himself. Let us therefore pray together this collect for refugees.

Almighty and merciful God,  
whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own;  
look with mercy on those who today are fleeing from danger,  
homeless and hungry.

Bless those who work to bring them relief;  
inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;  
and guide the nations of the world towards that day when all will  
rejoice in your Kingdom of justice and of peace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Revd Mohammad Eghtedarian  
Intercultural Pioneer Minister, Diocese of Leicester*

## ST. KILDA

In 2007 my husband and I were able to join a National Trust of Scotland cruise around the Western Isles. We were piped aboard one of Fred Olsen's smaller cruise ships at Greenock along with three hundred other passengers. Later we were introduced to the specialist speakers, including Archie, a young man, about 6ft 6ins tall, resplendent in full Highland dress, who had played the bagpipes as we boarded. Every evening we had an illustrated talk about the island we would be visiting the following day. All the guest speakers were Scottish, although not necessarily still living in Scotland. We later discovered that many of the passengers were also of Scottish descent, including several from the USA and Australia who were visiting Scotland for the first time.

Although it was the beginning of May, we were blessed with glorious weather, apart from our day in and around Stornoway. It would take too long to describe each island we visited or sailed around, but I will mention the soul-lifting time we spent on Iona and the memorable opportunity to visit St Kilda. We were able to visit St Kilda because we had shared an evening meal with a lady in her eighties, who had done eight similar cruises, but, due to poor weather conditions, had never been able to go ashore. So we realised how fortunate we were that it turned out to be possible to go ashore by tender this time, despite the morning starting off misty, choppy and distinctly unfavourable.

St Kilda is an isolated archipelago 64 kilometres WNW of North Uist in the North Atlantic, comprised of the Islands of Hirta, Dun, Soay and Boreray, the westernmost islands of the Outer Hebrides. St Kilda is the UK's only dual UNESCO World Heritage site, one of only thirty-nine in the world. Its largest island is Hirta, the only one with a settlement. It got its name in the sixteenth century and is believed to be a mispronunciation of the Norse word 'skildar' meaning 'shield'. There is evidence that the Vikings regularly visited the islands for more than two thousand years. The only year-round human residents are the Ministry of Defence personnel manning the Deep Sea Range, evaluating the testing of nuclear missiles.

Many observation workers, volunteers and scientists spend time on the islands in the summer months. St Kilda is also home to nearly one million seabirds, including the United Kingdom's largest colony of Atlantic puffins. It also has its own unique wren, as well as a subspecies of mouse, which is twice the size of a British field mouse. Although we did not see any mice, a wren landed on John's trouser leg as we leant against a stone wall outside the Church. Unfortunately it happened so quickly that we were unable to take a photograph, but it was definitely a wren!

Due to the extremely harsh conditions, and with no easy means of communication, the final thirty-six islanders were evacuated on 29th August 1930 as their life was no longer sustainable.

At the time of the evacuation St Kilda was owned by Sir Reginald MacLeod of MacLeod. The Earl of Dumfries bought the island as a bird sanctuary in 1931. He became the Marquis of Bute. He also bought and renovated Cardiff Castle, profiting from the production and exportation of coal from Cardiff docks in the mid 1800s. There is an area of Cardiff known as Butetown named after him. And in 1956 he bequeathed St Kilda to the National Trust of Scotland.

The National Trust of Scotland is slowly renovating and conserving the sixteen single storey cottages that replaced the traditional thatched 'blackhouses'.



As we sailed away, the sea mist once again shrouded the islands and, instead of Archie piping us off, we were serenaded by a cacophony of circling seabirds.

*Rita Richards*