

THE LINK

50p

December 2024

Tarporley Parish Magazine



Advent and Christmas
in our Parish

ANDREW P. DEAN

Dip N.T.C., C.G.L.I., A.V.C.M.

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TARPORLEY PARISH

St Helen's, Tarporley
St Thomas', Eaton
St John and the Holy Cross, Cotebrook



Posada 2024—adults

Mary, Joseph, the donkey and the star leave on Advent Sunday (**Sunday 1st December**) following and return to St Helen's in time for the **Crib service at 4pm on Christmas Eve.**

Revd Jim Bridgman 732 491
revjimb1017@gmail.com

facebook.com/ParishOfTarporley

PARISH DIRECTORY – TARPORLEY

Services See Calendar tab on the website or page 5 in 'The Link'

Weekday Service At St Helen's each Wednesday at 10.00am Holy Communion

Rector: Jim Bridgman, Rectory, High St, Tarporley CW6 0AG **01829732491**

Email: revjimb1017@gmail.com 07526243702

Tarporley: St Helen

Churchwardens Phillip Posnett 01829260251

Liz Neely email: neelyeliza@hotmail.com 07890470899

Treasurer Dave Smithson

email tarporleyparishtreasurer@btinternet.com

P.C.C Secretary Paul Emerson 01829290372

Cotebrook: St John and the Holy Cross

Wardens Walter Gibson

Peter Copland 01829732618

Eaton: St Thomas

Warden Amelia McCourty aemccourty@btinternet.com 01829 730155

Link Editor Andy Jobson 01829732437

email jobsonajpj@btinternet.com items for 'The Link' should be emailed to the above by the 16th of the month.

Safeguarding Officer Liz Neely email StHelenssafeguarding@outlook.com

Contact points

Please do not hesitate to report cases of sickness, pastoral need to the Rector.

To make arrangements for a Funeral please contact the Rector. 01829732491

Done Room Booking Phillip Posnett 01829260251

To ask about Wedding arrangements, Baptisms or general enquiries

please contact our Rector Jim by email on

Email: revjimb1017@gmail.com

Website: www.tarporleyparishchurch.org

SERVICES FOR THE MONTH

December 2024

December 1st	ADVENT SUNDAY	
	St Thomas	9.00am Blessing of the Crib
	St Helen	10.00am Holy Communion
	St John	11.15am Holy Communion
8th	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
	St Thomas	9.00am Holy Communion
	The Done Room	9.30am Café Church
	Tarporley High Street	2.00pm The Blessing of the Crib
15th	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
	St Thomas	9.00am Holy Communion
	St Helen	10.00am Holy Communion
	St John	4.00pm Carol Service
	St Helen	6.30pm Carol Service
19th	St Thomas	7.30pm Carol Service
22nd	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
	St Thomas	9.00am Songs of Praise
	St Helen	10.00am Holy Communion
23rd	Eaton	6.00pm Carols on the Green
24th	CHRISTMAS EVE	
	Tarporley High Street	3.30pm Community Carols on The High St
	St Helen	4.00pm The Crib Service
	St Helen	11.00pm Midnight Communion
25th	CHRISTMAS DAY	
	St Thomas	9.00am All Age Communion
	St Helen	10.00am All Age Communion
29th	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS	
	St Helen	10.00am Joint Parish Communion
January 5th	THE EPIPHANY	
	St Thomas	9.00am Holy Communion
	St John	11.15am Communion for the 150 th Anniversary

Each Wednesday at 10.00am at St Helen's: Holy Communion.

Follow us on Facebook:-Search:- [facebook.com/ParishOfTarporley](https://www.facebook.com/ParishOfTarporley)

If you have time, please stay for refreshments after the service. Every Sunday at St Helen's, 1st and 4th at St Thomas', 1st Sunday at St John's

The Rector Writes:- *All is calm, all is bright....*

It's that time of the year when I start to get annoyed by Christmas carols: while carols have almost universally good tunes, I find their lyrics are more of a mixed bag. Aside from the Victorian ideals of childhood in 'Once in Royal' (*Christian children all must be/Mild, obedient, good as he*), my most common gripe is the portrayal of Jesus' birth as a quiet/silent/peaceful event, and with Jesus himself being a silent infant (*little Lord Jesus no crying he makes*). My experience of the maternity wards, and the early hours and days of new life would not be described using the words quiet, silence or calm. Maybe that is just our kids, but I'm more inclined to think that it is the portrayal of Jesus' birth that is rather romanticised...!



The Church of England's Christmas campaign this year picks up that theme from one of those carols, 'Silent Night': *All is calm, all is bright*. Having moved passed my inner Scrouge, I reflected on why it is seen as important that Jesus comes to the earth in such a quiet way?

Well it's all relative; I am sure that Jesus' birth was not a silent event, for Mary or for him when he left the womb. I think what the carol writers were trying to express was just how 'normal' it was (but 'normal' isn't a very descriptive word to sing....). There was no massive worldwide flash of light, no earthquake or storm. Matthew tells us of the new star that appeared, but that aside, the natural world is not changed by the birth of the son of God. Instead, there is a young, poor girl, giving birth surrounded by the animals. There is almost a sense of 'Is that IT?' How can something so important be so ordinary? Yet it is the fact that God goes through this ordinary, common human experience that is so transformative. It didn't have to be this way: Jesus could have just appeared as a fully formed adult and started performing miracles, but he doesn't. Instead he goes through all that we experience, from the

vulnerability of birth, to adolescence and adulthood, and in so doing offers humanity a chance to experience God among them. I doubt much of his life was simply calm and bright, yet in his interactions with others, Jesus brings a sense of peace and vivid life.

We all probably want our Christmases, our families, our lives to be calm and bright, full of life, not chaotic and dull. But we know that we more often live in that latter reality, lurching from chaos and crisis to humdrum and boredom. I'm writing as the news breaks of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, so everything is definitely not calm and bright in the Church of England. Many across our world are not living in an atmosphere of calm or brightness. Perhaps in the birth of Christ, we glimpse for a moment what life *can* be like, what God brings to human life – a sense of calm and brightness, in the mundane and in the chaos. We know the twinkling tree lights so easily break, and the contentment of post-Christmas dinner doesn't last forever, but in Jesus God comes to bring a longer lasting sense of peace, hope and life. It is, as same the carol ends, *the dawn of redeeming grace*: it is the start, the first streaks of light that disperse the gloom.

I pray that whatever your Christmas will look like this year, whether chaotic or mundane (and everything in between), you will know the calm and the brightness that Christ brings.

Jim

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Eco Church News December 2024

On Friday 25th October we held our first Eco Church Film Evening. Welcomed with wine and snacks 30 people watched the film “2040”. Made by an Australian filmmaker Damon Gameau, the film presents an uplifting vision of what the world might look like for his daughter, (who at the time was 4 years old), when she is 20. He takes us on a journey around our precious planet investigating technologies that are available now, which, if adopted, could change our world for the better environmentally, socially and economically. Interspersed with comments from children who are asked about their visions for the future, we are reminded that we all have choices to make which could improve the world we leave behind for our children, grandchildren and generations to come. One young girl summed her vision with the phrase “Reduce, Re-use, Recycle.” All present agreed that the film was inspiring, hopeful and packed with information, in fact so much so that people asked us to screen it again. Jeanette, Walter and I have all had comments saying how impressed people were with “2040”. We plan to screen other “Eco-orientated” films in 2025. The next screening is on Friday 28th February. Watch this space.

News from St Helen's – Jeanette Oakes writes

“Jim very kindly invited me to share my ideas for improving the biodiversity of the churchyard after the service on Sunday 20th October. We discussed the following; Planting a lavender border from the Lych gate along the path to the church.

Leaving a log pile close to the gate onto the field.

Planting wildflowers in a ‘difficult to mow’ area of the churchyard.

Planting wildflower seeds beside the shady path to the left of the Lych gate.

Leave a small area of grass unmown for the summer just to see what grows.

Have a raised bed beside the compost bins in which to plant herbs.

This is very exciting and hopefully will encourage more pollinators. If anyone has any more ideas, I would really welcome them."

News from St John's – Amongst all the hard work that Walter has been putting in to increasing the biodiversity at St John's he still found time to accept an invitation to speak at Cheshire Wildlife Trust's AGM at Jodrell Bank. Introduced as a "wildlife champion" his talk was very well received. Walter is far too modest to write about himself, so I've written this paragraph for him.

Nick Parker (of Eaton)

News from St Thomas' – on Friday 8th November we held the second of our bi-annual Churchyard Tidy ups. Nick would like to thank everybody who took part over the 7th and 8th and his wife Wendy who provided lunch on site.

Just one Green thing – Dobbies garden centres are now recycling garden plastics. So, if you have plant pots, plant pot trays, broken seed trays or empty plastic sacks from compost, bark, fertiliser or any other empty garden centre bags you can take them back to Dobbies where they are recycled and re made by the brand Elho see www.elho.com Dobbies have garden centres at Liverpool (near the airport), Wrexham and Atrincham.

A heartfelt thank you from the Parish to Jill Robey.

On the 22nd September Jill Robey was presented with a floral bouquet by Rev Jim who thanked her for services to the Parish in particular her time as organist at St Thomas' church .

Jill organised the Songs of Praise featuring her favourite music and readings .

Jill and Jim at St Thomas'



**Our 2024 Advent Book Club discusses
and Walter Gibson reviews
'Do Not Be Afraid'.**

'The joy of waiting in a time of fear' By

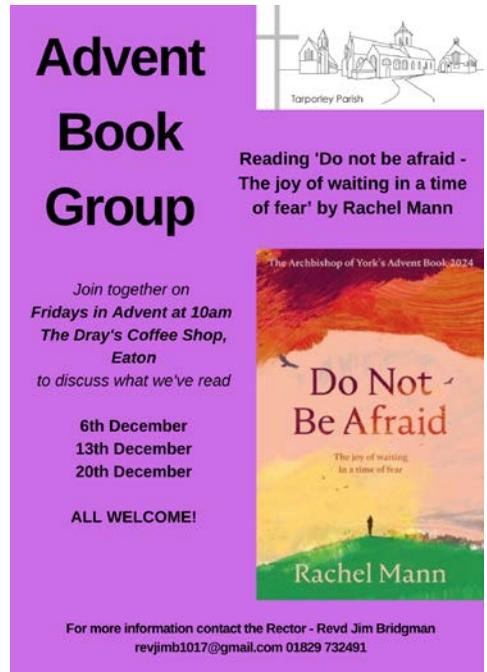
Rachel Mann

"Waiting."

Do we have to do more of it these days, or is it just my mistaken memory? Waiting for a customer service agent to pick up the phone; waiting for that important appointment to come through; waiting for the news to get better. It's easy to be fearful while we are waiting for something, especially if it's to do with health or money or the news. How can I be joyful when I am having to wait for an answer to my problems or indeed the climate crisis?

If you've ever felt like that, Rachel Mann is here to help. This book, chosen as The Archbishop of York's Advent Book for 2024 (and he knows a thing or two about writing books), will also be the subject of our Advent Book Club. It is very timely and appropriate: Advent is of course a time of waiting, and it is not so long ago that we all had to endure an anxious time of waiting during the pandemic. Rachel Mann uses her personal experiences of this and other recent events to help us understand how we can still seek God and find his peace even in the darkest times.

She doesn't shy away from the difficulties we all find in waiting: the fears, uncertainties, suffering and frustration. But in their place she offers insights into how waiting can bring us closer to God, how it can be beautiful and joyful, how it can be a blessing. She reminds us of God's promises, of what the Bible teaches us about his love and his purpose for the world. All this and her own wisdom help us to see what lies behind the title of the book, which is a phrase Jesus often used: "Do not be afraid".



**Advent
Book
Group**

Join together on
Fridays in Advent at 10am
*The Dray's Coffee Shop,
Eaton*
to discuss what we've read

**6th December
13th December
20th December**

ALL WELCOME!

For more information contact the Rector - Revd Jim Bridgman
revjimb1017@gmail.com 01829 732491

Reading 'Do not be afraid -
The joy of waiting in a time
of fear' by Rachel Mann

The Archbishop of York's Advent Book 2024

**Do Not
Be Afraid**

The joy of waiting
in a time of fear

Rachel Mann

PS Two other Advent books were considered for this year and both are available on the Parish Bookshelf. They are '**Wounded I Sing**' by Richard Harries, a study of the poetry of George Herbert, and '**Women of the Nativity**' by Paula Gooder, nine stories about women whose lives tell us something about Advent and Christmas.

Walter Gibson

A Northern Soul Night

Our thanks to John Knight who on the 5th October organised an excellent fundraiser for the Done Room restoration project at the Community Centre. Followers of Mowtown and Northern Soul music danced the night away to 60's 70's and modern mowtown records played by enthusiastic Cheshire Soul Club DJs .



Elaine Meredith

Finally

We congratulate and pray for those baptised:

Oliver Lewis

Mary Irving



We congratulate and pray for those recently married:

George Wilson and Gemma Worth

We commend to God and pray for those who mourn:

Marley Norris

Declan McKenna



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