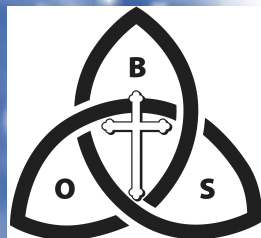
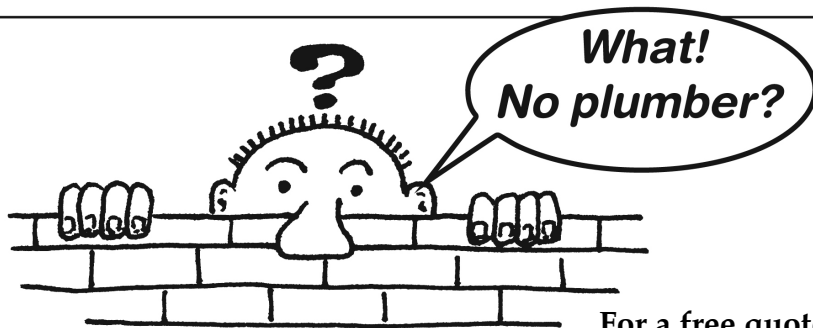


**Parish News in
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden**



GLORY
to the
new-born
KING

December 2021



*Need a plumber at any time?
Today that could be a crime,
But not with my competitive rates,
I'll soon get you out of a state.*

*Need an new bathroom, or washing machine fitted?
Just call on me – I'm very well kitted.
Need central heating or just a tap washer changed?
Give me a ring and get it arranged.*

**For a free quote
contact:
P J Bartram
25 Bedford Road
Clapham
MK41 6EJ**

**Tel:
07785 716716**

Auction Sales & Valuations

Valuation, collection and auction service
of individual items through to complete
property and commercial clearances.

Call for a free no obligation quote or
email info@peacockauction.co.uk

SALE ENTRIES NOW INVITED

Antique & Modern Furniture • Clocks • Books • Ceramics & Glassware • Pictures & Prints • Bicycles
Jewellery & Watches • Collectables • Garage Tools & Equipment • Household Electrical Items • Office
Furniture & Equipment • Retail Products & Stock • Vehicles • Horticultural & Commercial Equipment
Building Materials • Garden Furniture & Effects

www.peacockauction.co.uk



W&H PEACOCK
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS
01234 266366



Eastcotts Park,
Wallis Way,
Bedford,
MK42 0PE

**Welcome to
Parish News in
Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden**

Find us at: www.bromhambenefice.org



facebook Benefice of Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

Please note: the Church Office is closed and replaced by "working from home". Contact Administrator at 07957 126145 or the email below.

Clergy:

Vicar:	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
		vicar@bromhambenefice.org
Assistant Priest:	Revd Di Harpham	918691

Benefice Administration

Website &.....}	Administrator	
Wedding.....}	(Mon, Wed & Thurs 9.30 -12.00	
organisation..}	Tues, 9.30am -1.00pm)	
Fees Accounts...}	administrator@bromhambenefice.org	
Safeguarding Officer -	Judith Denyer	07981 928522

Parish News

Editor	Mr Edward Jones	stowensnews@btinternet.com	826551
Distribution	Mrs B Cryer		825463
<i>Pew Leaflet</i>	Sarah Smale, <i>as Administrator</i>		

Who's Who in Bromham

Church Officers

Churchwardens	Ms T Woodcock	340089
	Mrs F Bulmer	602718
PCC Secretary	Mrs Vivien Butler	407351
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Emma Harrison	823121

Organist & Choirmaster Mr David P Williams

Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers

Mrs Suzi Webb	07967 311628
---------------	--------------

Altar Guild	Mrs M Parrott	824402
-------------	---------------	--------

Who's Who in Bromham cont....

Children & Young	}Carol Jones	823307
People's work	}Rene Farquhar	307996
Electoral Roll	Mr Terry Rooke	409916
Ringers	Mr Robert Jones	881741
Thursday Prayer Gp	Mrs C Wisson	306833
Friends of St Owen's	www.friendsof stowens.org	
Secretary:	Mr David Butler	407351
	 facebook Friends of St Owens	

Who's Who in Oakley

Church Officers

Churchwardens	Mr G Palmer	07710 462535
	Mrs H Worley	262166
PCC Secretary	Mrs C Ord	823477
PCC Treasurer	Mrs S Ball	823133
Organist & Choirmaster - contact	Jenny Sudworth	822859
Messy Church for pre-school children (birth - 4yrs) & their carers		
	Revd Catherine Wilson	825665
Flowers	Mrs A Rolph	824849
St Mary's Ringers	Mr Bill Sellars	823473

Who's Who in Stagsden

Church Officers

Churchwarden	} Post holders names not published	
PCC Treasurer	} please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691
PCC Secretary	Caroline Heaton	
Ringers	Mr Richard Brown	823289
Flowers Team	please contact thru Revd Di Harpham	918691

If you know of further details for this page, or have information or articles to publish please send all material to the Editor by post or (preferably) by email - see details on page 3.

The Editor thanks Contributors and Advertisers for their material with acknowledgements to the "Parish Pump" website. Nevertheless, views expressed, and goods and services advertised are not endorsed by the PCC. **Please send material for publication to the Editor by the 22nd of the month.**



Principal Services in the Benefice

<u>5th December</u>	<u>2nd Sunday of Advent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Bromham)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
<u>12th December</u>	<u>3rd Sunday of Advent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Stagsden)
10.30am	LEP Christingle Service (Oakley)
4.30pm	Wild Church
6.00pm	Evensong (Bromham)
<u>15th December</u>	<u>Carol Service (Bromham)</u>
<u>19th December</u>	<u>4th Sunday of Advent</u>
9.00am	Holy Communion (Oakley)
10.30am	Holy Communion (Bromham)

For Christmas Services - see page 11

<u>26th December</u>	<u>1st Sunday of Christmas</u>
10.30am	Short service for Boxing Day

Weekday Services

Mondays	
11.30am	Messy Church (Bromham)*
Thursdays	
10.00am	Messy Church (Oakley)*

**Messy Church closes at the end of School Term*

NB 10.30 church services are streamed via Zoom for those who find it difficult to attend in person (details on website www.bromhambenefice.org)

Please continue to check the Pew Leaflet or our website as venues sometimes have to change at short notice.



From the Vicarage

I received my first Christmas card today – not even the last week of November yet and here we go - although to be honest I have already had children in church talking about ‘Why Christmas is important for Christians’ and the Nativity set appeared for the first time in the 2021 festive season!

Although it felt a little early, nevertheless telling the Christmas story and explaining why I believe it is so important for Christians – and the whole world - is always a great thing to do.

The Christmas card I mentioned contained a long newsletter from a friend living in Canada, and I do enjoy receiving those letters, especially when they bring good news – in this case the birth of a third granddaughter. We all appreciate hearing ‘glad tidings of great joy’, and I was delighted to be able to share the good news recently that we will be joined next year by a part time Curate, Petra Yates, who will be ordained and begin her ministry with us in July. You can read more about Petra elsewhere in this issue; please do pray for her as she completes her studies and prepares for her ordination.

We are all hoping for the good news that we can celebrate a more ‘normal’ Christmas this year, with our families and friends. There will be Carol Services and Crib Services in all three of our churches (and many mince pies...), so do make sure you make a note of the dates so that you don’t miss them. I shall look forward to seeing many of you at these festive

events once again.

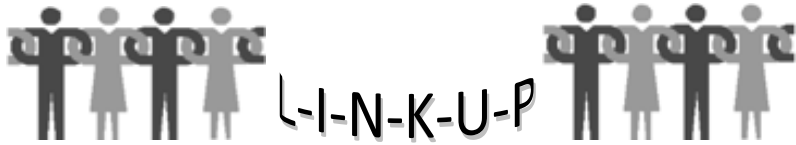
The Church of England's Advent and Christmas theme this year is entitled 'At the heart of Christmas' – I wonder what lies 'at the heart of Christmas' for you? Is it the contact with loved ones, the giving of gifts, the care that goes into preparing special meals, the chance for winter walks?

I know you will expect me to say that Jesus is at the heart of Christmas, and of course this is true, but if we dig a little deeper and ask why God sent Jesus then, perhaps, we find a different answer. I suggest that at the heart of Christmas, seen in the coming to earth of God's Son, is God's love for each and every human being. That's 'why Christmas is important for Christians' – and everyone. Whatever we have been through since the start of the pandemic, God's love for us hasn't changed. Every expression of love we share in the coming weeks from the smallest gesture to the most lavish gift represents the gift of divine love poured out for the world in the person of Jesus Christ.

You are very welcome to join us as we celebrate the good news of that amazing love: in the coming weeks as we enjoy the Christmas services but also at any time of year. And whatever you place at the heart of Christmas this year, may you know the love of God shown in Jesus – 'Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!' (2Cor 9:15)

Catherine Wilson

The Christian story is precisely the story of one grand miracle.
- C S Lewis



The next LINKUP for people living on their own will be on Thursday 2nd December at 2.30pm at 7 Leyside when we will enjoy a Christmas tea. Please let Anne Tombs know if you wish to come. Tel 01234 822949

Bring and Share

There will be no Bring and Share lunch in December but we plan to hold an Epiphany Fellowship Party in the Fellowship Room at St Owen's after the morning service on Sunday 23rd January for which ideas for games or activities and offers of help with moving tables and chairs, washing up etc most welcome.

Anne Tombs
822949

Friends of St Owen's

Next month it will be time to renew your membership of FoSO and, if you participate in the 100 Club, to pay for your shares for 2022. For more information regarding either please contact Frances on 01234 602718.

Note for your diary: FoSO AGM on Thursday 17 Feb 2022

St Owen's Altar Guild

Decorating St Owen's Church for Christmas will take place on Thursday 23 December from 10 am. Anyone who would like to help will be most welcome. Donations for the purchase of flowers will be gratefully received. *Margaret Parrott.*
18 Tudor Close.

Exciting news...

It was announced in our services on Sunday 21st Nov that we will be joined in summer 2022 by a part-time Curate who will be serving her title post with us in the Bromham Benefice. Petra Yates will be ordained at the beginning of July, and will continue to live in her home in Bedford, commuting to the Benefice during her time here.

Petra writes:

Growing up in London, and after studying in Portsmouth, I came to Bedford in the late Eighties to take up a Humanities post in a local Middle School. A year later Charlie and I married, put down roots and have stayed put ever since. We have two sons, Jack and Charlie, now in their twenties and living away from home. I left teaching in 2012 to spend more time with my elderly Mum, who lived locally, and who was becoming more infirm.



For many years I was involved with a local inter-faith education project, which connects school groups with our local Christian, Muslim and Sikh communities. More recently I have been based in a rural parish as part of my training through Eastern Region Ministry Course.

I enjoy dog walking, baking, gardening and good coffee with friends. Whenever we can, we head to the Norfolk Coast for some fresh air, long walks, fish and chips, and a pint of Adnams.

I feel very blessed having the chance to spend my curacy in Bromham Benefice. I am really looking forward to getting to know you all by sharing in the worshipping life and community activities in Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden.



*Archbishop of Canterbury
Most Rev Justin Welby*

*Editor: here I include an
extract from Archbishop
Welby's presidential address to
the new General Synod last
month. You can read the whole
at:
archbishopofcanterbury.org>
speaking and writing>speeches*

In John 21 the disciples go fishing - they have to earn a living - put food on the table - so they pursue their trade. But to us reading, other stories of catching fish come to mind. Above all there is Luke's account of a catch of fish in Luke chapter 5. More than that, in John's gospel itself we think back to John 15:5: "apart from me you can do nothing". Failing to catch is annoying. The answer to the question from the stranger on the beach is curt. "You have caught nothing, have you?" "No". The irritation is clear, but the obedience is also clear, and the result is that in a few moments they go from no fish to more fish than they can handle. They cast the net on the right side of the boat, which is my text for this talk.

(The Archbishop goes on to describe the failures, turbulence and reorganisation of the C of E before turning to the way ahead).

Where we get to that border between external and internal: the Church has a clear and powerful vision for education of its more than 1 million people in schools and is expanding. It is planting churches in new places, casting the net in unlikely places and ways, and essentially, because it is the foundation of this Church of and for England, resources, fresh resources are being put into traditional parishes.

We are working to see how to support modern families and
cont on p12



Christmas Celebrations 2021

You are warmly invited to celebrate Christmas with us

Sunday 12th December

10.30am Children's Christingle Service at Oakley
Methodist Church - all welcome

Wednesday 15th December

6.30pm Christmas Carol Service (Bromham)

Sunday 19th December

3.30pm Christmas Carol Service (Stagsden)
6.00pm Christmas Carol Service (Oakley)

Friday 24th December - Christmas Eve

3.00pm Crib Service for younger children (Bromham)
4.00pm Crib Service (Stagsden)
4.30pm Crib Service (Bromham)
4.30pm Crib Service (Oakley)
5.15pm Short Holy Communion (Stagsden)
11.00pm Midnight Communion (Bromham)

Saturday 25th December - Christmas Day

10.00am Family Communion with carols (Oakley)

Sunday 26th December - 1st Sunday of Christmas

10.30am Short service (Bromham) followed by a Park
walk and refreshments

Bedford Refuge

Please note - Bedford Refuge have changed premises and no longer have space to store children's gifts as in the past. There will be opportunities for gifts of cash/cheques in support of their work to be made at any of the services on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day



cont from p10

households; health, education and housing are the three foundations of reform of our society; and here I speak to clergy and laity at the local level. Your extraordinary work through the crisis in which we still live has been exhausting, but it has been God shaped, Christ centred. The steady, relentless but wonderful work in parish and chaplaincy has just gone on week in and week out, and the challenge for this Synod is to support and to secure that ministry.

Our aim is to fish on the right side, to see people find faith in Jesus Christ, to proclaim the good news in word and deed.

Children's Christmas Craft Afternoon



Sunday 5th December

2.00 – 4.00pm



St Owen's Church, Bromham


Plus – Plus – Plus

Stalls, Raffle, Books and Jigsaw Puzzles
and a £1 stall



Adult admission Free
Children's Crafts £3 per child
(under 2s free)





Have you ever walked past a homeless person but wished you knew how to help?

Give £35 today and help homeless people to help themselves

To donate please call 0300 303 7555, visit www.emmaus.org.uk or return this form with
Cheque/Postal Order/CAF Voucher made out to: Emmaus

£35 ☐ or £

Name

Address

Postcode

Please send to: Freepost RTTL-LJGS-SHEY

Emmaus UK, Unit 302 Scott House

The Custard Factory, Gibb Street

BIRMINGHAM B9 4AA

Registered Charity Number 1054470 19W001

We promise that we will never
share your details with other
charities. We would like to send
you occasional fundraising appeals
and updates by post. If you do not
wish to receive information by post,
please tick here. ☐



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



emmaus
working together to end homelessness



emmaus

What a Christmas

The Bethlehem manger, shepherds, wise men, Jesus, Mary and Joseph – it's all so familiar to older people, who are shocked to hear that younger generations may be hazy or ignorant of them. Aren't they part of everyone's education?

Yet the first Christmas was restricted to just a few. What 21st Century Christians proclaim as the most significant event in history began in a remote corner of the Roman Empire, without the pomp and publicity we associate with kingship and power. What modern media have called 'The Greatest Story Ever Told', escaped everyone's attention in first century Palestine.

This year, Christmas is going to be a busier celebration than last year, but probably not yet back to the normal fuss we usually make each December. The streets will be crowded, but shops may struggle with supplies. Parties will take place, but many people will feel reluctant join in. Family gatherings are allowed again, but the vulnerable may hesitate. Christmas services will be held, but as singing has the potential for droplet and aerosol transmission, music will be muted this year. A Christmas without many carols!

Many will struggle to hold their 'usual' Christmas. Yet God does not neglect us. This may be the very opportunity to rekindle or deepen our faith in what really matters about Christmas. Away from the hordes, perhaps completely alone this Christmas, we may sit quietly and allow our heavenly Father to draw near to us. We may picture Mary inviting us to gaze with her at her Son, born to save us from our sins. In the silence of our imagination, we may join the chorus of angels announcing His birth to the shepherds:

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests."

It was that chorus which inspired an American Minister, Edmund Sears, to write the Christmas hymn, 'It Came Upon a Midnight Clear'. Sears, troubled by the world's turbulent history and failure to hear the Christmas message, was himself recovering from a breakdown. Written in 1849, his words have a timeless ring about them:

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.

Ven John Barton

Christmas Teas in Church
St Mary's Church Oakley
Sunday the 12th December
3.15pm --- 4.45pm
Enjoy festive fayre and a hot drink
for only £3 .50
Raffle

The Word of Light

The Word was in the beginning
The Word was with the Lord;
When the worlds were set to spinning
By that same Almighty Word.
Not a thing that was created
Was made without His will,
And His pow'r has permeated
Our world, and does so still.

In Him was life, and light eternal
To all men He gives His light;
Shining in the gloom nocturnal
Shines like day within the night!
And to men in sinful starkness
The Word in glory comes –
And the deep surrounding darkness
To the Word of Light succumbs!

Though by Him the world was moulded
When He came unto His own,
Yet mankind, in sin enfolded
Their Creator they disowned.
But for those who do believe Him –
Who see that He is right –
He makes those who do receive Him
Into Children of the Light!

By Nigel Beeton

Peace rules the day when Christ rules the mind. - *Anon*

Help a prisoner give their child a present this Christmas

Angel Tree gives parents in prison the opportunity to send a Christmas present to their children. In 2020, the scheme sent out over 4,400 gifts.

Christmas is especially difficult for prisoners and their children. *Angel Tree* lessens the devastation experienced because of parental absence by not only helping families connect, but by providing children with much-needed joy.

Prison Fellowship volunteers work with prison chaplains and local churches to buy, wrap and deliver the presents. As long as a prisoner is allowed access to their children, they are given the opportunity to apply for a gift to be sent to them.

Each gift is dispatched as though it is from the parent in prison and is accompanied by a personal message written by the parent for their child to make the gift extra special. The parent is also given the option of including an age-appropriate Christian story book in their child's gift.

"I can't tell you in words how much my kids are happy. I can only say from my heart, you didn't send gifts, you sent happiness and smiles." – A Dad in prison

Visit <https://prisonfellowship.org.uk/our-work/angel-tree/>

Reg Charity No 1102254

Editor: Tony Horsfall lost his wife last year to cancer. He is a former missionary in East Malaysia and former retreat leader based in West Yorkshire. This is part two of a two-part series: if you missed part one please look back to this page in the November edition.

When someone you loved is dead

Following on from last month, the other lessons that I learned following my wife's death were:

11. That it helps to talk about your loss and the person you have lost. Sharing helps you to put things together in your mind, and can be healing in itself.
12. Don't be afraid of pain, and don't anaesthetise it or avoid it – acknowledge it, face it, and you will heal more quickly.
13. That crying is normal, even for men, and it is a healing part of the grief process. Don't be afraid of this, even in public.
14. It may surprise you, to discover which people draw near to you in your grief, and who steps away. Appreciate those who come closer, without judging those who hold back.
15. Not everything people say to you about grief and your response will be helpful. Decide for yourself what is important for you, and let the rest go.
16. That grief may expose some of your inner fault-lines, but don't be afraid of this – learning more about yourself is a gift that comes with grieving.
17. No-one grieves perfectly. Following the death of your loved one, you will make mistakes, bad choices, and errors of judgment. This is normal, so forgive yourself.
18. That hope will rise again within you. The human spirit, in combination with God's grace, has its own remarkable resilience.

19. Don't be afraid to live again. God has a good purpose for you, and a plan for your life.

20. That your faith is an asset, not a liability. When you are tempted to be angry with God, remember that He is an ever-present help in time of need. Lean on Him.

21. That you have a part to play in your grief journey, so don't be passive and allow it to overwhelm you – begin to do what you can to rebuild your life.

Mary-born Lord, humble us so that we also might say, 'Let it be with me according to your word.' - *Stanley Hauerwas**

**American theologian and ethicist; chair in theological ethics at Univeristy of Aberdeen, Scotland*



From the Registers

Funeral and Burial:

2nd November - Josephine Bennett (Bromham)

19th November - Elisa Massotti (Bromham)

30th November - Margaret (Joyce) O'Donoghue
(Bromham)

Burial of Ashes:

3rd November - Ann Garratt (Bromham)

9th November - Gwendoline Purser (Bromham)

25th November - James Day (Oakley)

Crematorium Services:

9th November - Beryl Read (Bromham)

Bromham WI report

We are delighted that we have been able to resume our meetings at the Village Hall in Bromham. It is lovely to see our members in person, albeit at designated spacing, and to catch up on their news. The support this gives is irreplaceable!

The first meeting saw our members enjoying telling each other about their first jobs, which caused much laughter and intrigue. We certainly got to know each other better during this event and we appreciated the stories.

Our second meeting was a preparation for the festive season, as we made Christmas decorations – cards, baubles and collage hangings. We also had a competition for the best Christmas card. It was won by Mrs Eadie Garea, but several more could easily have been chosen. We have a very artistic and talented group of ladies, which is not always apparent when sitting next to someone.

We look forward to our next meeting on December 9 when Fiona Harrison will entertain us to a Fairytale Christmas event. We are delighted that some members from surrounding villages are coming to join us and hope this will continue into the future.

Diane Bell

Camels

In Jane's Christmas drawing, two of the camels were approaching the inn, over which was pictured a large star. The third camel and its rider were going directly away from it. "Why is the third man going in a different direction?" her mother asked. Jane replied: "Oh, he's looking for a place to park."

Eglantyne Jebb – founder of ‘Save the Children’



Here is a modern-day saint whose compassion and determination has saved literally millions of lives: she is remembered on 17th December.

Eglantyne did not begin as an obvious ‘mover and shaker’ of people. Born in Shropshire in 1876, she grew up in Ellesmere, studied history at Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford, taught at Marlborough, and then resigned as she was not physically robust.

Eglantyne moved to live with her mother in Cambridge, and it would have been so easy to settle for a life of peaceful obscurity. But she was a Christian, and at Oxford she had developed a passion for social concerns, so this compassion now drove her to take action.

She began in 1906 by publishing research on the poverty she’d found in Cambridge.

Then in 1912 the Balkan Wars broke out, and Eglantyne left Cambridge for Macedonia. Her months among the refugees led her to decide that long-term constructive aid was more effective than short-term handouts.

The First World War left Eglantyne horrified by the prolonged Allied blockade on Germany and Austria-Hungary, which even after Armistice meant starvation for millions of civilians, especially children.

And so, in 1919, Eglantyne and her sister Dorothy Buxton helped found the ‘Fight the Famine’ Council, which wanted

to end the blockade and establish a League of Nations.

One day during a rally in Trafalgar Square, Eglantyne was arrested for distributing a leaflet showing starving children which read: "Our blockade has caused this – millions of children are starving to death."

She ended up in court and was fined, but the judge was so impressed with Eglantyne's commitment to children that he himself paid her fine. His money became the first donation to Save the Children, the new charity just set up by Eglantyne and Dorothy.

Save the Children was officially launched at the Albert Hall in May 1919, with the aim of helping the starving civilians of central Europe. It was a success, raising £400,000 in that first year alone.

When in the autumn of 1921 Russia was facing famine, Save the Children chartered a cargo ship, the SS Torcello, to carry 600 tons of lifesaving food and medical supplies to Russia – saving hundreds of thousands of lives.

By 1922 Save the Children had become one of Britain's biggest charities. Eglantyne's Declaration of the Rights of the Child, written in 1923, was adopted by the League of Nations the following year. The present-day UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is derived from it.

But ten years of running Save the Children had sapped Eglantyne's fragile strength, and she died in Geneva in 1928, aged only 52.

Learn more and Donate at savethechildren.org.uk

AMIGO Update

Recent and Forthcoming Events:

26th October - a fascinating evening with Hugh Cooke on the subject of code-breaking at Bletchley Park.

23rd November - a visit to Bedford School planetarium; report to appear in January.

14th December at 8.00pm - carol singing at The Bedford Arms in Oakley.*

23rd June 2022 - a coach trip to London; further details in the New Year.

*More carol singing at the Bedford Arms Christmas Fair on Saturday 11th December 2-2.30pm. This is not an AMIGO event but is a fund raiser for prostate cancer.

Further details from John Dixon 01234 824959 or e-mail jwdixon30@gmail.com



FRIENDS OF ST OWEN'S 100 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS NOVEMBER 2021

First Prize - Anne Rooke

Second Prize - Alison McLellan

Third Prize - Pat Tanner

Fourth Prize - Tessa Woodcock

Fifth Prize - John Rigney

Books for Children at Christmas

Christmas Activities by Bethan James, Authentic, £2.50

All the events of the first Christmas are retold and illustrated in this small format paperback book with on-the-page puzzles and activities to complete. Kids will enjoy reading the story and immersing themselves in the related activities.

With attractive colour illustrations, age-appropriate text and a variety of puzzles, the book could be useful in church outreach activities with children aged four to seven. A little book for little fingers!

God Gave Us Christmas by Lisa Tawn Bergren and David Hohn, Authentic, £7.99

This sweet story helps young children understand the true meaning of Christmas, and to discover how very much God loves them.

As Little Cub and her family prepare to celebrate the most special day of the year, the curious young polar bear begins to wonder... "Who invented Christmas?" So Mama and Little Cub head off on a polar expedition to find God and to see how He gave them Christmas. Along the way, they find signs that God is at work all around them. Through Mama's gentle guidance, Little Cub learns about the very first Christmas.

It Begins in Bethlehem – a Nativity Rhyme for Christmas time by Bob Hartman and Mark Beech, 10Publishing, £2

This new Christmas children's booklet offers a fresh perspective on the nativity, with glorious rhymes from Bob Hartman and lively illustrations by Mark Beech. It could be helpful when sharing the message of Christmas with children in your family, church and community.

For younger readers.....

A Very Special Baby

JESUS WAS BORN ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO IN THE SMALL TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEAR JERUSALEM.



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE A VERY SPECIAL BABY.

...YOU MUST CALL YOUR BABY JESUS



MARY AND JOSEPH MADE THE LONG JOURNEY FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM. THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED THERE FOR THE CENSUS.

BUT THE TOWN WAS FULL



THE ONLY SHELTER THEY COULD FIND WAS A STABLE...

...WHICH IS WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.



SHEPHERDS IN FIELDS NEARBY RACED TO SEE THE BABY



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM WHERE JESUS HAD BEEN BORN.

WISE MEN CAME FROM THE EAST. THEY TOO WANTED TO SEE JESUS. THEY HAD BEEN GUIDED BY A STAR.

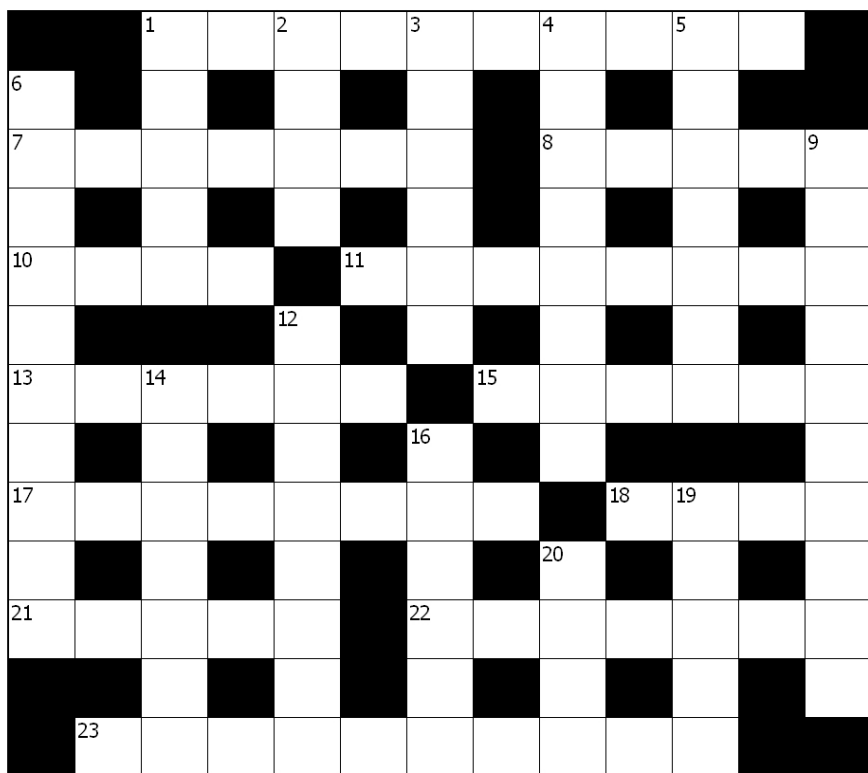


THEY BROUGHT GIFTS OF GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.

BUT MARY, JOSEPH AND BABY JESUS SOON HAD TO ESCAPE TO EGYPT...



...AS KING HEROD WANTED JESUS DEAD!!



Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14ñ15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith ____ (6)

- 17 Stormy (8)
 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for the 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)
 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

- 1 '_____ and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)
 2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as _____ as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19-20) (8)
 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
 6 'Offer your bodies as living _____, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)
 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
 20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will _____ his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Editor: The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On the peril of choosing new kneelers

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

After all these years, I now understand why the non-conformist denominations sit down, rather than kneel, to say their prayers. That way, no decisions have to be taken over the number, size, shape, colour, material and design of kneelers in church.

Our present set was donated by a retired Major-General in 1899 to celebrate the Relief of Mafeking, and after more than a century of use by the pious and not-so-devout has taken its toll. Like certain members of our congregation, they now look a little worse for wear. Many have sprung leaks, so that when used, a jet of flocking is emitted all over the clothes of their neighbour, who then leaves Mattins looking like a Yeti.

Other kneelers have been occupied by grateful mice, who find them most congenial for nesting and who leave in high umbrage, creating chaos as Miss Mapp chases them down the aisle with her umbrella; that this provides her with the perfect excuse to leave before the sermon is, I am sure, entirely coincidental. The final straw came when my own, by some quirk in its design, now sounds like a whoopee cushion every time I kneel. It may cause the choirboys much amusement, but it lends nothing to the dignity of our worship.

So, we have decided to have a completely new set – and therein lies the problem. Who makes them? What will be the

designs? Who co-ordinates the whole project? There is enough here to occupy the combined minds of our Church Council for the next Millennium and there will be enough scheming, manoeuvring, signing of non-aggression pacts and formation of tactical truces to make the United Nations look like amateurs. Unfortunately, we do not have the ecclesiastical equivalents of the blue berets to enforce peace.

The more patriotic members of the congregation have suggested they all show the Union Jack – presumably so they can be waved at appropriate moments in our services; one belligerent individual wants to see depictions of St Michael slaughtering the dragon, John the Baptist's head on a platter and other such tasteful scenes; on the other hand, dear Miss Timmins wants them all to depict doves or small fluffy creatures, which would make the church look more like pets' corner.

Cutting through these vital issues, I have suggested that the entire congregation converts to Roman Catholicism.... and then we could stand for our prayers and do without kneelers entirely.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Wildlife at St Owen's

Suspecting that there may be badgers in residence in the roots of the old lime tree in the churchyard at St Owen's, David Butler set up his camera trap one night last month.

It captured 150 photos over 4 hours and indeed there were some very active creatures - but were they badgers?

Turn the page to discover the culprits!!

No - not badgers.....just rabbits!



Buy them books

Buy your children some books for Christmas. It seems that more books in your home in childhood can help stave off dementia in later life, according to a recent study.

It found that children who are exposed to the written word from a young age, form more resilience against degenerative processes which can lead to Alzheimer's.

Nurturing our brain in our early years boosts our 'cognitive reserves', as intellectually stimulating activities like reading create extra connections in the brain. That acts as a long-term buffer against cognitive decline in later life.



*Little Wayne couldn't sing a note, so they
made him mascot*

Angel tidings

The little boy was to be an angel in the Christmas play and his one line was: "Behold, I bring you good tidings." He asked what tidings were and his mother explained that the word meant news.

On the night of the play, the youngster had stage fright and, after a long silence, blurted out: "Hey, have I got news for you!"



ESTABLISHED 1990

HOME DELIVERY AVAILABLE. Within radius of 8 miles with delivery charge. Minimum order £12.

84 High Street

Clapham

Bedford

MK41 6BW

Tel: 01234 364447/364466

Website: www.zeeraclapham.co.uk



BLACK AND WHITE REVIVAL

Traditional Photograph Restoration & Conservation

Est. 1992

Specialising in:

- Darkroom printing: Silver halide prints
- Printing from old glass & film negatives
- Cleaning & Repair of old photographs
- Copies & enlargements
- Restoration of faded & tattered photographs
- Sepia toning & Hand Colouring
- Archival storage: Advice and supply
- Framing: Antique and reproduction



Telephone: 01234 782265

email: helen@blackandwhiterevival.co.uk

Visit: just a quick call first: Magpie Cottage, Moor End Road, Radwell, Bedford MK43 7HX

Helen Dawkins LRPS



General Household
Maintenance • General Garden
Maintenance • Grass Cutting •
Hedge Cutting • Turfing •
Fencing • Shed & Playhouse
Repairs • Guttering Cleaned &
Repaired • Decorating
Preparation Internal & External
Painting Internal & External •
Labouring Services

For a free quote or advice, any job considered, please call **Paul Sheen:**

T.01234 349938 M.07925 382297

STUART PAUL SAVAGE

ALL

PAINTING AND DECORATING &
BATHROOMS & PLUMBING

01234 855780

MOBILE 07766145612

M.J.NICHOLSON

Grass Cutting &

Gardening Contractor

(Established 1968)

Wootton based: available in Bromham, Oakley and Stagsden

Telephone: (01234) 766306 or 07759 630291

Solution
to
puzzle
on page
26

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



Eastcotts Park,
Wallis Way,
Bedford, MK42 0PE
01234 266 366

Visit
www.peacockscfe.co.uk
for more details on our opening
hours and to view our full menu.

W&H PEACOCK
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS

The Cafe at W&H Peacock is OPEN

View the salerooms for our upcoming auctions and
then relax with a coffee and a slice of cake.

Our unique cafe in Bedford Auction Centre with free wi-fi
comfortably seats over 100 customers. We serve cooked
breakfasts, paninis and sandwiches, light lunches and
snacks plus a range of hot and cold drinks.





Jonathan Vowles

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

- Tax Saving Specialists
- Financial Accounts
- Management Accounts
- Business Start-Up Advice
- Payroll Services
- Bookkeeping & VAT
- Personal Tax Returns
- Business Consultancy

"Just what every business needs"

Please contact us for a free one hour consultation to find out how we can help you and your business

114 High Street, Cranfield, Beds, MK43 0DG

Tel: 01234 752566 Fax: 01234 752577 Email: info@vowles.co.uk

Website: www.vowles.co.uk

R P TESTA

PLUMBING & HEATING SERVICES LIMITED

Est. 1992

A LOCAL RELIABLE SERVICE WITH OVER **25** YEARS EXPERIENCE

All General Plumbing requirements and full design & installation for:

- Central Heating inc. LPG
- Under floor Heating
- Unvented hot water
- Bathrooms inc. tiling
- Solar Hot water
- Gas fires/hobs etc.



102217



For help and advice call **01234 781827**

www.testaplumbingandheating.co.uk



Clarabut & Plumbe

Funeral Service




- Private chapels of rest
- 24-hour personal service

Providing quality funeral service with care,
compassion and dignity for over 125 years

11 Kingsway, Bedford, MK42 9BJ | 01234 354547

6 Bedford Road, Kempston, MK42 8AD | 01234 860038

35 Chiltern Avenue, Putnoe, MK41 9EQ | 01234 865872



**ARE YOU A
LAWN LOVER?**

From as little as

£15*
per treatment

HELP YOUR LAWN TO THRIVE, NOT JUST SURVIVE

Over the last 30 years our love for lawns has grown and grown (just like our grass!). We combine our passion and enthusiasm with innovative technology as we continue to revolutionise UK Lawn Care. Our groundbreaking 12-month **Lawn Treatment Programmes**, keep your grass looking its best all year round, ensuring your lawn receives the love and attention it deserves.

Let's create the lawn we both love

Start your Lawn Care journey today:

Call us on 01234 709345/01480 597432

email: bedford@greenthumb.co.uk visit: greenthumb.co.uk/bedford

