

# Saints ALIVE

*The magazine of:*  
*All Saints, Leighton Buzzard*  
*St. Nicholas, Hockliffe*  
*St. Michael's, Eggington*  
*St. Michael and All Angels,*  
*Billington*  
*The Good Shepherd, Sandhills*

*February 2022*

*70p*

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**Outreach  
in many forms**

**Centrefold:  
A new series  
celebrating diversity of  
Christian Witness  
across the  
Ouzel Valley Team.**

This month:  
"Experience Christmas":  
trails for Lower Schools,  
a collaboration between  
All Saints and Pulford

Another new series  
looks at ways in which  
we Encounter God,  
starting with Outreach  
by Katharine Reedy

CoGS is developing a  
regular pattern of  
inside-out church

Plus news and views  
from around the team.



# All Saints Leighton Buzzard

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## *Devotion*

*by Rev'd Noel McGeeney*

I grew up with devotions. The Angelus was on the radio and TV twice daily, at noon and at 6pm, where we would stop as a family and pray together; saying the rosary before evening tea, going to Mass every Sunday, going to Devotions on Sunday evenings, and going to Mass every first Friday, after which we went to the pictures. By the age of 9, I knew the entire rosary off by heart. I made my 1st Holy Communion at 7, having learned the catechism, and was confirmed at 12.

The next level of devotions was joining the Scouts, learning the Scout Prayer and the Scout Law. I took it all seriously. I was a day boy at the Diocesan college and going back after lunch every day we dropped into the Cathedral for a couple of minutes quiet prayer. It was not just me; it was normal practice. This prayer life or life of prayer sustained me until I encountered Charismatic Renewal and devotion sunk deeper into my heart. Reading the Gospels was full of insight. It's as if a light had been switched on. This lasted 2 years, from the age of 18-20. By this time, I was in the seminary and beginning 4 years of Theology.

We were in a formation programme and had a spiritual director available every 3 weeks, for 4 years. It was very clear that our daily meditations were meant to help us cultivate a contemplative mind. The operative word being 'cultivate', doing the spade work, breaking the soil of our selfishness, digging the manure deep into the soil with daily practices and devotions. We knew as clergy we would be the face of the Church needing the heart of Christ. Devotional practice is an essential re-set button that we push many times before we can experience any genuine newness. I recommend the Jesus prayer as an excellent devotion. St. Paul is insistent that we grow up into Christ and mature into Christ. We learn to say prayers as children, but we learn to pray as adults. Whether we are aware of it or not, we are practising all the time. We are creatures of habit, so we need to learn new habits, by practising new ways to live out a life in the spirit.

Life and our life experiences are the school of prayer. Just ask yourself, "where is God in all of this". The only definition of prayer that I recommend is 'pray as you can'. Many are convinced that rituals and "practices" like processions, pilgrimages, making the sign of the cross, singing and silence have operated as a kind of body-based rewiring. The devotions and practices are not and were never meant to be an end in themselves. They must lead to new insights, deeper desire for wholeness and a more compassionate heart.

*Father Noel*

## *Our present pattern of services across the Ouzel Valley Team*

### **All Saints**

#### **Sundays:**

**Please note new times which allow for cleaning between services**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Eucharist

11.30am

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: All Age Service

2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Baptism

6pm Said Evening Prayer

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: followed by Benediction

#### **Weekdays:**

#### **Holy Communion**

7.30pm Tuesday

(Service of Healing on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday)

10.00am Thursday

9.00am Saturday

**Morning Prayer:** St. Hugh's Chapel

9.00am Tuesday – Friday

### **St. Barnabas, Linslade**

#### **Sundays:**

8am Said Eucharist

10am Parish Eucharist

6pm Evensong

[www.linslade-parish.org.uk](http://www.linslade-parish.org.uk)

### **St. Leonard's, Heath & Reach**

#### **Sundays:**

8am: Holy Communion

11am Holy Communion (in church & via Zoom)  
(1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month is a Family Service)

**Tuesdays:** 7pm Holy Communion

#### **Morning Prayer via Zoom:**

9.00am Monday - Saturday

[www.saintleonardschurch.com](http://www.saintleonardschurch.com)

### **St. Michael's, Eggington**

9.30am 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Nicholas', Hockliffe**

9.30am 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays: Family Communion

4<sup>th</sup> Sundays: Holy Communion

### **St. Michael's and All Angels, Billington**

11.15am Holy Communion

### **Good Shepherd, Greenleas School, Sandhills:**

**Sundays** at 9.45am:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Holy Communion and

CGS Juniors at Greenleas School

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: 'In the Community' at Astral Park

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Family Service at Greenleas School

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Bring and share breakfast and Holy Communion at Greenleas School

**Sunday Saints:** for age 3+ year olds, meets during 9.30am Sunday service at All Saints.

**All Saints Toddler Time:** All Saints every Wednesday during term time, at 9.30am & at 1.30pm. £1.50 per parent / carer & child; 50p extra per child; refreshments included.

**ACTIVE:** (Senior Youth Group for age 11+) **not meeting at present because of a lack of leaders. If you could help, please contact the office.**

**Leighton Young Singers Club:** for children in Years 2-6, meets on Fridays at 6.30 - 7.30pm.

**Bereavement Café:** a support group offering friendship and understanding.

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month, 2.30-4pm The Spire Coffee Shop, All Saints.

**Choir Practice:** Normally Friday evenings, 6.45 trebles; 7.30 adults.

**Bellringers:** Practice on Monday, 7.30pm-9.30pm.

**Spire Coffee Shop:** Tuesday & Saturday 10am-2pm.

*Contact Details on Page 2.*

# ***News Roundup***

Saints Alive subscriptions are now due and a form should be included with this issue. Price has remained at 70p per issue and we do hope you wish to continue with your subscription.

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## ***Worth a smile, with Valentine's Day in mind...***

### **The Rules of Marriage**

**Here are the real-life answers from a group of children:**

*How do you decide who to marry?*

☺ No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with.

[Kirsten, age 10]

*What is the right age to get married?*

☺ No age is good to get married at. You got to be a fool to get married.

[Freddie, age 6]

☺ 23 is the best age because you'll have known the person FOREVER by then.

[Camille, age 10]

*What do most people do on a date?*

☺ Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each other.

Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough. [Lynnette, age 8]

*When is it okay to kiss someone?*

☺ When they're rich. [Pam, age 7]

☺ The law says you have to be 18, so I wouldn't want to mess with that. [Curt, age 7]

*How would the world be different if people didn't get married?*

☺ There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there? [Kelvin, age 8]

*How can a stranger tell if two people are married?*

☺ You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids. [Derrick, age 8]

*How would you make a marriage work?*

Tell your wife that she looks pretty, even if she looks like a lorry. [Ricky, age 10]

# Parish Registers

## Holy Matrimony, December:

18: Andrew Ord & Katy Stewart at All Saints

*'Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate'*

## Holy Baptism, December:

12: Finn Thomas Baker, Katy Louise Hall, Rory William Hall, Rocco James Hall, George Ernest Mills-Hurst, Elsie Grace Mills-Hurst

*'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'*

## R.I.P. December:

6: Geoffrey Stopford at All Saints, Michael Turney at Bieron; 9: Robert Crowther at St. Leonard's; 17: Vera Hall at Bieron; 20: Jean Shepherd at Bieron; 21: Anthony Yates at All Saints, Iain Smith at All Saints; 23: Enid Balch at Crownhill; 29: Emily Kerbey at Bieron; 30: Labibi Jalloh at St. Leonard's

*'Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die'*

## Years Mind, February:

1: Christopher Blackbird Taylor, Trevor Lunnon; 3: Frank Audas; 4: Ted Summerfield; 6: Thomas Nash; 7: Annie Turney, Stan Slater, Yiu To Lau, Lilian Baines; 8: Eric Choake, Raheem McVey; 9: George Waudby; 10: George Pepper; 11: Stanley Boyce, Doreen Perry; 12: Patricia Lethbridge Farmer, Frederick Bester; 13: Mary Yirrell; 14: John Olds, Ida Kempson; 15: Nina Bolton, Leslie Brown, Winifred Turner, Gillian Marchant; 18: Bessie Scraggs; 19: Edgar Conquest, Terence Bird; 20: Frank Bates; 21: Pamela Gilbert, Ivy Wood, Margaret Marsh; 23: Dorothy Collor, Bryn Gittins, Lilian Cowley, Janet Garfield, Madge Vincent; 25: Tara Lee; 26: Florence Walsh, Maud Mills, Elsie Bates, Peggy King, Irene Scott; 27: Tom Skevington, Ivy Francis, Graeme Lowes, Joan Russell; 28: Stanley Kemp



## LEIGHTON BUZZARD MUSIC

### LIVE PROFESSIONAL CONCERTS

In Leighton Buzzard Library Theatre 7.30pm

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

*Due to Covid-constraints, the planned concert with Abel Puustinen sadly cannot take place.*

Instead, there will be a concert with

**Arwen Newband (violin) & Anna Le Hair (piano).**

Programme to be announced.



**Please note: Tickets will not be available on the door,**

**and must be pre-ordered either at the box office downstairs in the library; or via TicketSolve**

Please see links on the website, [www.lbmusic.co.uk](http://www.lbmusic.co.uk)

Leighton Buzzard Music is a registered charity no: 1183681

# ***Pulford VA Lower School***

***Head Teacher: Mr Dave Heather***

***Office Manager: Mrs Alison Quick***

***Tel: 01525 372188***

***Website: [www.pulfordschool.org](http://www.pulfordschool.org)***

A church school for  
a whole community



In these COVID times it is a blessing that we can still congregate in church. The festival of Candlemas has just passed and was celebrated by the children at Pulford School. It is based upon the account of the presentation of Jesus at the temple. The children like to make their cardboard candles and sing the songs about light they have chosen. Some traditions remove their Christmas decorations on Twelfth Night (Epiphany Eve), while others don't remove them until after Candlemas.

The church has many symbols such as crosses and candles. But there are others taken from nature too. Many flowers have traditions associated with them. Almond – hope; Lily – purity etc.

A daffodil flower represents eternal life in Christianity. One reason for this is that daffodils are perennial flowers, appearing year after year. In addition, daffodils are one of the first flowers to appear in spring, which represents rebirth. It is good to see their tips begin to peek up through the grass and remind us of this cycle of life.

Schools have their own cycle, and the PTA at Pulford are being very active in finding creative ways to raise money for the school. They are doing this to contribute towards a canopy to make outdoor learning more possible all year-round. This is a very worthwhile project and we look forward to festivals and fun activities to make this a possibility.

We are very grateful to all those in the community who continue to help and sponsor schools so generously.



***Tessa Rees, Deputy Head***





## The Gentleman Gardener

Let your local RHS qualified gardener make your garden beautiful, from simple garden maintenance to redesigning your garden.

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**Eileen Naples**

BSc. DC(OCC), MBAAC

**Telephone (01525) 377 384**

## St Leonard’s Church Hall Heath and Reach

Refurbished Hall available for hire.  
Regular or occasional bookings



Capacity approx 130  
Easy access. Car parking  
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stleonardheath@gmail.com



36 High Street, Leighton  
Buzzard, Beds, LU7 1EA  
01525 372 204

## *Selections*

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*selections\_pet\_garden  
www.selections-  
web.co.uk/petandgarden*



# On a musical note.....

## Music, Singing and the Leighton Linlade Corona Quilt Project 2020-2021

In February 2021, Susanna Booth suggested that a decorated Quilt should record the experiences of LU7 residents during the 2020-2021 Pandemic. Cloth Squares would record experiences, things missed, memories, messages of hope, anything which would record a very difficult time. The squares would be stitched together to produce the Quilt which would then be displayed. My wife and I decided that this would give us a welcome distraction from stress and isolation. Margaret rapidly planned six squares to illustrate walking, gardening, knitting, reading, Zoom and masks.



I decided that what I missed most was playing and listening to music as well singing in church so my square contained the words “Music, Singing and Record” together with a treble recorder, guitar and a mobile phone with headphones. These were used to represent how I accessed the music and singing which I needed. In the absence of live concerts and singing, I used a wide variety of sources such as CDs, vinyl records, tapes, TV, digital media on a lap top, I-phone and I-pad as well as the “Sounds app” on BBC radio.

But I also needed to sing and perform music, so I played the treble recorder and guitar. In addition, I recorded the singing of anthems and hymns. No week was complete without at least a 30 minutes session in a home-made studio where I sang the bass or tenor line of an anthem using my I-Pad to play the enhanced backing track. I used my I-Phone to record a track which was then stitched together with other recordings to produce the impressive 17 anthems on the “Playlist” accessible on the Allsaints1b YouTube site. These recordings were used in our Church Services streamed on-line. This was no substitute for live singing with the choir in church but it was an enormous help to keep singing.



Our seven squares were sent to Susanna at the White House, and 8 ladies stitched together about 80 squares to produce the Quilt. In early December, this was displayed in the Library in the presence of the Town Mayor. It will be on view in the Library for the next few months. It is well worth a detailed viewing.

**Brian Bainbridge**

*[You can read more about the project on the Town Council website.]*

# *Calendar of Events*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> February**

**Lunch Club** in the North Transept, All Saints 1pm.  
Tickets £5.00 available from the Coffee Shop.

## **6<sup>th</sup> February**

### ***Candlemas Messy Mass***

11.30am

### ***Bereavement Support Café***

Coffee Shop, All Saints

2.30pm – 4pm

## **18<sup>th</sup> February**

### ***Crafty Natter***

All Saints 1.30pm - 3.30pm

## **20<sup>th</sup> February**

Services as usual

at All Saints including

***All Age Communion*** 11.30am



## ***Candlemas, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple***

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2<sup>nd</sup> February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first ‘public appearance’. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to ‘present Him to the Lord’. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was ‘purified’. Thus, we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So, where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year’s supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon’s great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

*[From Parish Pump]*

# ***Messy Church ideas for Candlemas...***

## ***Make a Prayer Light Tube***

This is a fun way to celebrate Jesus as the light of the world, especially at Candlemas. Traditionally at Candlemas (or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple), the passage from Luke 2 where Simeon and Anna meet Jesus is read with the famous lines:



*“Lord, now let your servant depart in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light to reveal your will to the Gentiles  
and bring glory to your people Israel.”  
(Luke 2: 29-32)*

Simeon recognised Jesus as the saviour who has come to bring light to dark situations and to show people the way.

### ***What you need:***

battery operated tea lights, A6 size paper, felt tip, pens, glue

### ***What to do:***

With the paper in landscape mode, draw pictures of people and places who are going through dark, hard times and need to see some light and hope.

Wrap the paper around the tea light and glue down the edge to make a tube.

Ask Jesus to bring his light and hope to these people.

Switch off the lights and switch the tea lights on. Look at the light shining through the situations as a sign that they have been handed to Jesus.

Tell Jesus about the people if you like.



## ***Make a Quick and Simple Candlemas Candle Cake***



Ask an adult to buy some mini rolls (for small candles) or a jam and cream sponge roll (for a big candle).

Placed it vertically on the plate.

Make up a fairly thick batch of icing, using icing sugar, butter and water (vanilla essence for flavour may be nice) and cover the cake.

Make a flame with some icing or a piece of fruit (use your imagination!)

Enjoy sharing the cake, and enjoy sharing the light of Christ.

*From the Messy Church Website, by Mary Judkins*



## ***Around the Ouzel Valley Team***

***Eight churches, each special in their own way, and together, bringing Christian witness to the whole community of Leighton-Linslade and the villages of the Ouzel Valley.***



The final week of November welcomed the long-awaited and much anticipated Experience Christmas. After 2 years of Covid restrictions, the collaboration between Pulford School and All Saints was given the go ahead once again!

The fantastic team of volunteers, in the beautiful backdrop that is All Saints, were able to help showcase and recreate that first Christmas for over 600 children from many of our town's lower schools. It was a feast for the senses!



# *This month: The Town's Lower Schools Experience Christmas At All Saints*

From visiting Mary's house, and travelling the road to Bethlehem with the stable set up in the porch, to experiencing the place where the wise men may have lived, it was an exciting journey. The children got to smell frankincense, make a stained glass window, make their worries disappear, write some prayers for peace and even got to take away some gold with them!

It is always such a pleasure and a privilege to see the awe and wonder in the children's faces as they experience the church in small and big ways.

Looking forward to the next one later this year!

A big, big thank you to ALL those who helped during the week and setting up and taking down! If you would like to help with future Experiences, please do get in touch.

**Luisa Borrelli**  
**Experience Co-ordinator**



## ***Good Shepherd, Sandhills***

***Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh***

***Tel: 01525 838450***

***Churchwarden: Steve Nixon***



### ***Cheers to a cup of kindness***

Many people reflecting on 2020/21 may think of another year of lockdowns, restrictions and lessons in the Greek alphabet. The Church of the Good Shepherd (CoGS) is seeking to ease the weariness in the community with the simple offer of a cup of coffee and a kind, listening ear.

Every second Sunday of the month, CoGS, sets up a pop up café, serving a welcome, free cup of coffee to families watching children and young people play football at Astral Park on the Sandhills estate.

“We are doing inside-out church. Normally church is hidden inside a building, we have flipped something inside out and people can see it”, said Jenny Marsh. “It was never really supposed to be ‘church’, it has been very good at getting us in to the community”.

The focus of the ‘Out and About’ mission event has been to make connections with local people, invite them to enjoy something that is free with no expectations of something in return. “People can’t get over the fact that we don’t charge them, they don’t get that it’s free”, said Jenny. “We are so used to things being consumerist. Even if something is free, it is our data that is being used. We are used to having to give something in return, but God’s grace is free.”

Building on the church community’s new mission skills, the simple focus of the pop up coffee has been to show that the Church is kind. “We want to make a connection with people and give them a pathway if they want to make a connection at a deeper level. Sometimes we just have to be there and something will happen. It is this idea of a relentless presence,” added Jenny.

To break the ice, football spectators are offered vouchers for free coffee on the sidelines and encouraged to visit the stall where there are also crafts and activities for siblings of those on the pitch. Future plans are to include a tear off slip to write down a prayer so that our Wednesday night House Group can pray for them.

Jenny recalled Remembrance Sunday as a particularly poignant day, where we offered to lead the two minute silence before kick-off. The Last Post was played through speakers to the crowd and the two minutes silence was observed immaculately by the children and young people there.

Jenny said “It was really moving and we were pleased that it was something we could do for them. That may not have happened if we had not been there.”

CoGS is looking forward to building more connections this year and continuing to be a familiar, friendly presence amongst this football community by giving the gift of coffee, kindness and prayer.

***Jo Bellamy***



***St. Nicholas, Hockliffe***

***Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney***

***Tel: 01525 237633***

***Churchwardens:***

***Brian Speller: 210565; Roger Spalding: 07451 877501***



It is always wonderful and exciting to welcome young people into God's family, the Church, within our congregations. The sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation provide respectively for initiation into God's family and the personal affirmation when young people or adults make their own commitment to follow Christ in their lives. So it was even more special for the Church community at St. Nicholas to welcome Bishop Richard on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2021, when he came to baptise Oliver Wright and confirm his older sister Katie.

Whilst the attendance was low the service was beautiful and moving as Bishop Richard celebrated the Eucharist with the appropriate ceremony including the Baptism and Confirmation liturgies. In his sermon the Bishop empathised with the children including those of the Godparents; their well-spoken interaction was joyful to hear for those present. At the end of the service, Fr. Noel was clearly moved as the families gathered for photographs at the font with the Bishop. Fr. Noel's pastoral care for the family had been long in the planning and preparation with them.

I have written previously that numerical and spiritual growth are a challenge for the PCC at St Nicholas. Over the past few months we have been trying combined Sunday worship options with the congregation from St Michael's Eggington which is being reviewed by each of the PCCs. It is important that parishioners' traditions of worship and fellowship are recognised and upheld as we explore new and alternative ways of worshipping as a community. It is a challenge to discern what the 'catalyst' could be that will allow us to reach new people. Some of our PCC members will shortly be meeting to review our Mission and Action Plan using the Diocesan Mission Tree material. We will certainly need God's blessing and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to see this all through.

As you read this article we will have just celebrated the feast of The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) which ends the season of Epiphany. We now find ourselves in a period of Ordinary Time as provided by the Liturgical Calendar; the season of Lent starts on Ash Wednesday at the beginning of March. In a relatively short space of time we have welcomed our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as a new born child, and, as an adult at his public baptism by John the Baptist. Jesus shared in the life of a human family but I don't think his parents experienced anything that was ordinary at all, like we understand it.

Before we hear again how Jesus was cast into the wilderness we should take advantage of this 'Ordinary Time' and endeavour to take the time that God gives us to map our secular lives to those of Christ's. Let us try and hold fast to those values He promoted whilst events at home and abroad give us a picture of things that are not so ordinary.

***Geoff Marchant***

## ***St. Michael & All Angels, Billington***

***Vicar: Rev'd Steve Marsh***

***Tel: 01525 838450***

***Churchwardens:***

***Sandra Brewin 373644;***

***Julia Haviland 850380***



The photograph of St Michael and All Angels, Billington was taken by Stephanie, Julia and Geoff Haviland's daughter during her visit from Australia. Our small congregation was longing for people to come from the village and beyond this Christmastide to share in the joy and delight of this season of God's great gift to us.

The church was candlelit, the tree was bright and sparkly with the lights and baubles, saved from years of previous Christmases and flowers and holly adorned the chancel. The tree was hung with little parcels for the children who would be coming to the Crib Service on Christmas Eve. Under the altar the stable scene was set: Mary, Joseph, Infant Jesus, shepherds, the three Magi all awaiting the arrival of the Christmas congregations.

We were delighted to welcome those who came to the Carol Service and also the First Communion of Christmas on Christmas Eve and we hope that those who came were moved once again by the amazing story of God's redeeming love. As John Betjeman so beautifully wrote in his poem:

*No love that in a family dwells  
No carolling in frosty air  
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells  
Can with this single Truth compare -  
That God was man in Palestine  
And lives today in Bread and Wine.*

On Christmas Eve, when children would have been sharing the joy and excitement of the coming days, unrelenting rain slashed down and no family could cope with venturing out to visit the little church on the hill however bright and sparkly it was.

We sincerely hope that during this coming year we can learn more about how to look outwards with care to those who live near to us.

***Sandra Brewin***

## **St. Michael's, Eggington**

**Vicar: Rev'd Noel McGeeney**

**Tel: 01525 237633**

**Church Officers:**

**Carol Hart 384634**

**Paul Brown 751861**



Hi All

I know it is a distant memory and the decorations are likely to be away for another year but Christmas does deserve a mention in this, the first magazine print in our shiny new year of 2022. It was a great disappointment that the usually packed to the rafters Christingle service was cancelled. However the equally popular carol service was held the week before and I have it on good authority that the mulled wine and mince pies went down a treat. The church looked resplendent during the festive season with various beautiful nativity scenes and decorations. So too did the church garden with many seasonal flowers thoughtfully placed on graves and in the garden of rest.

The village continues to take on a cosy glow as it gets dark. However it is still light at half past four and even longer days are just around the corner. We have new residents to welcome in the village and I have spotted at least three puppies joining the healthy village canine population in recent weeks. As for cats - well they are still in charge - and always will be!

The monthly 'Elevenses' coffee meet will re- start in April after a 2 year break. All are welcome as ever. Bring a face mask and a mug if you wish. Remember there are no washing facilities in the church but there will be hand gel and wipes to protect us as best we can.



### **Dates to Note:**

6<sup>th</sup> February 2022: Service at 9.30am

19<sup>th</sup> February 2022: church garden working party 10.30am (there are often doughnuts)

20<sup>th</sup> February 2022: Service at 9.30am

6<sup>th</sup> April 2022: Elevenses in the church 11.00am (finally)

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## Terry (Terence) Spencer RIP

We said farewell to Terry Spencer on 18<sup>th</sup> January in All Saints. Terry was well known to many over the last forty years or so in All Saints (and in some of the other churches in the team). His legs would frequently be noticed sticking out from under the sink in the coffee shop as he unblocked the drain yet again, or as a figure high up a ladder, as he dealt with blocked gutters or putting right problems with the lead flashing. He looked after the gates ensuring they were protected from the weather, he rebuilt or re-pointed the churchyard walls, built the entrance way through to the vicarage car park (see below), sorted out the flooding in the old boiler house.

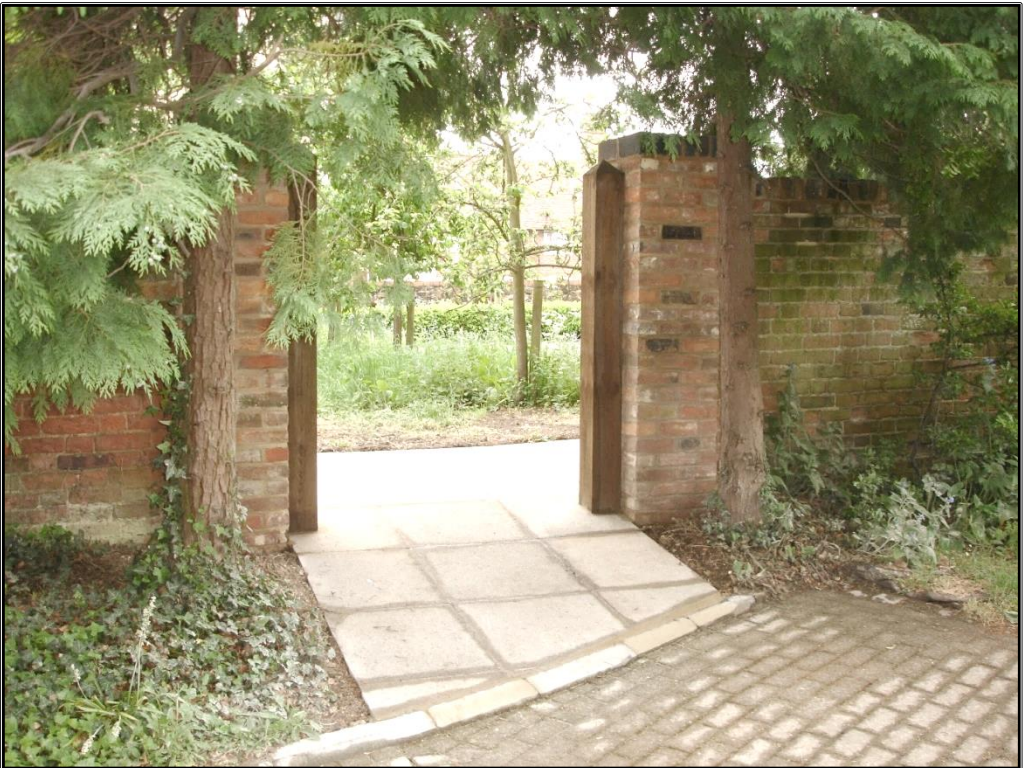
Whenever there was a fabric problem he was the first port of call. He was also the small works contractor during the sixteen year restoration project completed in 2016.

Friendly, willing to help, generous with his time and skilled in what he did, he will certainly be missed. A local man, living in Heath and Reach, married to Valerie, he died on 17 December at the age of 77.

Thank you Terry for all that you did for All Saints. May you rest in peace.

**T.W**

*This is the gate that Terry S built:*





## ... Outreach by Katharine Reedy

*A series exploring some of the ways we encounter God in the world and in our lives.*

What does it mean to encounter God in outreach? The first thing to say is that we live in God's world, and wherever we go, he is already there. We are called to serve him where we are, and God works through each of us in our day-to-day lives. The Message version of Romans 12:1-3 puts it like this: *"Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him."*

The London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (LICC) has identified six aspects – the 6Ms of fruitfulness – of how we reflect God's love in our everyday lives. These are: modelling Godly character; making good work; ministering grace and love; moulding culture; being a mouthpiece for truth and justice; and being a messenger of the gospel. All of these happen in situ, wherever our front line happens to be. It's in the messiness of everyday life that our responses mean the most, and God's character can shine through.

There is also the collective outreach we do as a church. As messengers of the gospel we want to be intentional about communicating the good news of Jesus to those around us. Church of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a missional community based on the Sandhills Estate. Amenities there and on the other new estates on the south side of the town are limited, with few opportunities to come together as a community. Our church vision is to "... be at the heart of the local community and enable, create and build the wider community." Over the last two years of living through the pandemic, some of our church activities have been restricted, but at the same time, new opportunities have opened up.



Since July 2021 CGS has provided an outdoor coffee drop-in on the second Sunday of each month, outside the Astral Park Community Centre, serving the families of children playing football as well as all others who wish to come along. Alongside this, there are craft and other activities for children not playing football.

Monthly themes have included Olympics, Back to School, Harvest, Remembrance and Christingle.

This regular monthly event was kick-started in July 2021 by Hope After COVID, which created a space for church and wider community to reflect together on the impact of the pandemic: what we are grateful for, what we have lost, and what we have learned.



There were refreshments and some gentle low-key activities for all ages. Tangible takeaway signs of hope included flower arrangements and seeds planted in pots. Great conversations were had, and new connections made.

We have also been carol singing on the streets and held a successful outdoor community event (based on the Beer & Carols evening that has run on two previous occasions), with a live band, delicious hot drinks and mince pies.

Christian faith is by its very nature missional, and mission is an important dimension of church life. However, it is not just about what the church does. It is bigger than that: “God’s activity embraces both the church and the world, and ... the church may be privileged to participate.” When we turn up for our monthly drop-in at Astral Park, we don’t know what God may have in mind, but we can trust that he is already active.



*“No beer but plenty of carols”*

On Remembrance Sunday we set out our stall on a very deserted football field, and prepared to be disappointed when no-one showed up for the first hour. But at half past 10, hordes of people rolled onto the pitches and we were rushed off our feet serving refreshments. By agreement of those in charge of the football matches, a recording of the Last Post was played over a portable loudspeaker, followed by two minutes silence. Every single person on the field was still whilst we joined together, church and football communities, for a truly holy moment under the gaze of almighty God.

At our most recent gathering, unbeknownst to us, one of the young football teams had not had a good morning. As the dejected players started to leave the field, a member of our church offered round the spare chocolate brownies. In a conversation next day, it turned out that this small gesture had encouraged them and helped them to go home feeling that someone cared.

So, we encounter God in outreach in many places and people, where we often do not know the full story. By obeying the call to go – which we are reminded of at the end of Anglican worship services – we open up the possibility for God to work through us for his purposes in the world he has created. At the same time we’re building relationships within our church community and with those we meet, listening to people’s stories, and encouraging each other on our journey.

***A pioneer prayer by Tina Hodgetts***

*Jesus, you are the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.*

*Lead us to where you are already at work.*

*Transform us to become more and more like you.*

*And find you in people and places where we had never thought to find you;*

*Until we see you face to face,*

*and you are all in all. AMEN*

***Katharine Reedy.***

***Recycling:***  
***following on from December's article,***  
***here are some more Eco ideas ...***

- 7) Think about when you use hot water.
- 8) Buy less meat. I'm not saying eat no meat. This is fine if you want to, but a lot of people don't want to. Try to treat meat as a luxury flavour enhancer rather than something to fill yourself up on. If you have a roast don't aim to finish it in one meal, have fewer slices and cook more roast potatoes and seasonal veg to fill you up. You can have the meat in sandwiches or for next meals with lots of veg and whatever your favourite starch is. If making a stew add more vegetables and less meat. Using a good meat stock from the bones of your last roast chicken will help give that meaty flavour. If making something with mince you can make it with half meat and half soya mince, Quorn, red lentils and more veg including protein-filled pulses

These next suggestions cost a bit in the short term but save in the long term.

9) Buy good quality wool clothes. These can be very expensive, but if you look in charity shops or even searching carefully on-line you can find relatively cheap wool clothes. If you look after them and wash them infrequently (the natural oils in wool helps them repel dirt) they will last for years and years. Wool is very good at keeping you warm and toasty.

10) This may seem daft after saying buy wool jumpers, but buying fewer clothes will really help your pocket and reduce your environmental impact. Synthetic clothing is made from oil and cotton clothing uses lots of pesticides and water. We all need to buy things, but just think twice about whether you actually need it, or just want it. If it's the latter, save your money. If you need it, try and buy the best quality you can, so it lasts.

11) This goes with shutting doors in rooms you don't use: if possible stop the heat going up your stairs to where you aren't spending most of your time. Then you are heating a much smaller house. Hang pretty curtains on dowels or rails around the stairs. It makes it much easier to keep the house warm downstairs.

12) Finally, buy a thicker duvet / electric blanket/ hot water bottle and turn your heating off once you are in bed. You sleep better in a cold room, so it's win-win.

Well done if you have reached the end. There are lots of other things you can do and many that are a lot more expensive, but also good, such as better windows, insulation, new boiler, but what I have outlined here can make a noticeable difference to saving you money and reducing your environmental impact without making big changes to your lifestyle or costing a fortune.

Finally RECYCLE, pass things on to people, donate to charity shops, try and buy food products with no plastic packaging, or minimal plastic packaging.

***Jaine Holford***

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