

The Parish Magazine

St John-in-Bedwardine

St Michael's



February 2025

50p



Information

WORCESTER CITY WEST TEAM CLERGY (clergy@wcw.church)

Phil Bradford (Team Rector) (01905 423794)

Day off: Friday

Sarah Cottrill (Team Vicar) (01905 426257)

Saturday

Gilly Maxim (Assistant Curate) (gilly.maxim@wcw.church)

Friday

Stephen Buckley (Pastoral Minister) (07746 206905)

TEAM OFFICE

The office is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-12noon.	
1a Bromyard Road St John's, WR2 5BS	Tel: (01905) 420490 e-mail: office@wcw.church

ON THE WEB

St John's	Parish Website: www.stjohninbedwardine.co.uk A church near you: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18634/ Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohninbedwardine
St Michael's	Parish Website and A church near you: } www.achurchnearyou.com/church/19689/ Facebook: www.facebook.com/stmichaelsdinesgreen/

SERVICES

Please check our websites and Facebook pages, or the notices published on the church noticeboards and printed in the magazine and weekly pew sheets.

SAFEGUARDING

If you have any concerns about possible abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, contact one of the Safeguarding Officers, Fiona Templeton, Elizabeth Forman in person or via safeguarding@wcw.church, or any member of the clergy.

Churchwardens: stjohns.churchwardens@wcw.church Gordon Templeton (749025), Joy Job (423051).	St John's
Pastoral care: The church's Pastoral Care Group offers support if you are lonely, bereaved, or unable to attend church. Please contact Sylvia Render (telephone 422654/email sylviarender@talktalk.net) or Stephen Buckley (tel 07746 206905/email stephenbuckley554@gmail.com).	
Churchwardens: Mike Dowling (dowlingm28@sky.com / 424539) Val Mason (val.mason@yahoo.com /428948).	St Michael's
On Site Safeguarding Officer: Mike Dowling (details above).	

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.

A word from the editors

Welcome to our February 2025 edition. What is our theme this month? Well, this year, we are going to use the collects and post communion prayers for each month as the source of our themes this year. We've chosen the collect for the second Sunday before Lent this month. You can find it at the bottom of page 5. It's rich with ideas to explore and Sarah does just that in her letter. We hope that you will find inspiration in this collect and Sarah's thoughts. As she says: "What I do know, is that each of us, in our small sphere of influence, should be trying to show God's love." We therefore leave you with the post communion prayer from the week before our collect:

*Eternal God,
whose Son went among the crowds
and brought healing with his touch:
help us to show his love,
in your Church as we gather together,
and by our lives as they are transformed
into the image of Christ our Lord.
now and for ever.*

Graham and Sue Evans

Important information

Email address: parishmagazine@wcw.church

Next edition: Deadline is Sunday 9th February 2025.

Distribution – towards the end of February.

Subscription form: Page 50.

Cover picture: Doors within St John's church with a connection to part of our theme collect "Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth." Picture by Colin Nash.

Pictures in this magazine: Thanks to those who have provided pictures for this magazine, including Beth Broadway, Sue Fairman, Joy Job, Colin Nash, Amy Rees, Fiona Templeton, Gordon Templeton & Sarah Wilkins.

The magazine

We publish a Parish Magazine each month, except August.

Articles on all aspects of Christian and parish life, letters, jokes and anecdotes are welcome - do contribute if you can. If you have a story to tell, please make contact. Do include your name as anonymous contributions will not be considered. If you can, please use e-mail (address below left). The editors will always acknowledge items sent by email; please try again if you do not receive a response. Please send all written correspondence for the magazine to the Parish Office.

The magazine costs 50p to purchase and can be obtained from the back of church. Subscriptions are available at the discounted price of £5 per year; by subscribing you make things easier for our printing team as we know more closely how many copies to print.

You can subscribe by filling in the form near the back of the magazine or by taking a subscription form from the rack (where the magazines are) at the back of the church. Please return the form and your payment to the parish office.

Opinions!

Opinions expressed in this magazine are personal opinions of the authors concerned and may not represent the views of the editors, our Joint Council or The Church of England. Such material is offered as a source of debate or reflection.

To advertise

Please see page 12.

From Sarah Cottrill

Over the next twelve months our magazines will be following the theme of the Collects and Post Communion Prayers. As the writer of the first Clergy letter actually written in 2025, it falls to me to introduce this theme.

If you read the rubric in the Eucharist Service, you will see that, after the Gloria, it says: “The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer.”



This tends to be a fairly short period, though whether the celebrant thinks the congregation will fall asleep, or fears they will think (s)he has lost their place, I’d rather not say! The silence is then brought to an end by the celebrant saying the Collect – the special prayer designed to gather, or collect, together the prayers of all the people.

The Collect suggested for this month’s magazine is that set for the second Sunday before Lent, and it certainly offers plenty of scope for reflection. The opening lines take us immediately to the first chapter of Genesis and the creation of the world. As we (hopefully) move away from winter and towards spring, signs of new life appear and remind us of God’s continual work in creation. It is, however, the line, “And made us in your image” that takes me back to my childhood and my early efforts to make sense of that statement. “God,” I thought, must look very strange! How can he possibly look like us, when we all look so different?!” My child’s mind misunderstood two vital points: firstly that it is not that God is made in our image, but us in his; and secondly that it is not in physical appearance but in character that we are called to resemble him.

So how does this likeness show in us? There are some people – in my experience few and far between – who literally shine with the love and goodness of God. We are far more likely to come across people who, as we get to know them better, we discover to be made in the image of God, displayed through their words, actions and attitudes. These are the people who go out of their way to help others, who are regular in their worship, prayer and Bible reading and who actively try to put into practice what they read and hear. They are also the people most ready to admit when they fail in these efforts, to recognise when they fall short of what they expect of themselves, or believe God expects of them; to repent and start trying again.

When preparing a tribute for a funeral service, I often hear it said of the deceased person: “They never had a bad word to say about anybody!” Whilst this says a great deal about the kindness and generosity of the deceased, is it really an indication of Godliness? God, after all, is judge as well as Father and saviour. He has a great deal to say against individuals and nations and he laments – and rages – over wrongdoing. The important thing is that he does so in a spirit of love and from a position of willingness – even eagerness – to forgive and to encourage the sinner to repent and turn back to him and his ways.

Perhaps this then, is one important way in which we can demonstrate our being in God’s image; by being less afraid of speaking out against wrongdoing when we encounter it, but doing so, not in a pious or condemnatory fashion, but as one wishing to help right the wrong and to help others voluntarily amend their ways.

How do we do this? If I had all the answers, I’d either be a very wealthy woman, or the winner of the greatest Nobel Peace Prize ever – because I’d have put an end to all wars and wrongdoing the world over! What I do know, is that each of us, in our small sphere of influence, should be trying to show God’s love, because God is love and only through love can we truly reflect him and his image in us.

As already stated, the Collect which is our focus this month, is for the second Sunday before Lent (February 23rd) which means that we are approaching that penitential season; a time when we are encouraged to examine ourselves carefully and fully and honestly acknowledge our failings. Perhaps a good place to start in these soul searchings would be to ask ourselves: “To what extent can I see God’s image in me and how do I reveal it to others?”

Sarah

The Collect for the Second Sunday before Lent

Almighty God,
you have created the heavens and the earth
and made us in your own image:
teach us to discern your hand in all your works
and your likeness in all your children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things,
now and for ever.

In Memoriam

Olive Mary Peggy Outram	2 February 1992
William John Davies	3 February 1999
Charles Gordon Burnett	7 February 2021
Rosanna Walker	14 February 1990
Eileen Bennett	17 February 2009
Maurice Charles Pearson	24 February 1999
Reginald Edward Osborne	25 February 1984
William Joseph Probyn	28 February 1987
Doris Betty Dear	28 February 1989
Doreen Iavarone	28 February 1998

Additions to In Memoriam are not automatic but must be specifically requested via the clergy.

Inclusion only needs to be requested once; entries are then included until the fortieth anniversary.

An extension may be requested by family or friends of those named.

From the Registers, December 2024

St John's

BAPTISM: *We welcome you into the Lord's family*

No baptisms in December

WEDDINGS: *Those whom God has joined together*

No weddings in December

FUNERALS: *Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord*

d. 18th November Dorothy Parry

d. 30th November Simone Bird

SERVICES: Communicants 268. Total attendance at all services 1298
including 234 at two funerals.

St Michael's

SERVICES: Communicants 79. Total attendance at all services 92.

Weekday services

The following mid-week Eucharists are scheduled in February:

Tuesday St John's 10am (Eucharist - Book of Common Prayer)

Thursday St Michael's 10.30am (Eucharist - Common Worship)

Daily offices take place in St John's Church from Monday to Thursday. Morning Prayer is at 8.30am all year. Evening Prayer is at 4pm (until 30th March 2025).

There are occasional days when other commitments prevent a service happening; the schedule for each week will be published in the pew sheet.

Dates for your diary

<i>Location key</i>	(J) St John's Church	(M) St Michael's Church
	(V) The Vicarage, 7 Manor Road	

(J) Mondays in term time, 10am: Little Lambs. 17th February is the half-term break when Little Lambs will not meet.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 1st February, 4pm: Messy Church, see pages 8 and 26.
Doors open and drinks available from 3:30pm.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 8th February, 9am: Women's Breakfast, see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(J) Thursday 13th February, 1pm: The Good Old Days present Discover History, "Secrets of the Old Town", see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(M) Monday 17th February, 2.30pm: Mothers' Union, see page 15.

--- 000 ---

(J) Wednesday 19th February, 2.45pm: Tea/Coffee & Cake, see page 8.

--- 000 ---

(M) Thursday 20th February, 2pm - 4pm: West Worcester Friendship Group.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 22nd February, 10.45am: Café @ 10.45, see page 9.

--- 000 ---

(V) Date to be confirmed: Fourth Friday Friendship Group. Look out for details/sign-up sheets in church or contact Sarah Cottrill for details.

--- 000 ---

(J) Saturday 29th March, 8.30am to 11am: Community Breakfast, see page 9.



Kingdom Arts...

...is on the following Tuesdays in 2025:

11th February, 11th March, 8th April, 13th May,
11th June, 14th October, 11th November,
9th December.

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Events at St John's

St John-in-Bedwardine



Saturday 1st February, 4pm.
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“The Lord’s Prayer”

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Women's Breakfast Meetings for Friendship and Christian Fellowship

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**Saturday 8th February
9.00am until 11.00am**

St John-in-Bedwardine
in The Blakefield Room

Contact Margaret Rutter (425396)



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Wednesday 19th February

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Little Lambs

We will not meet on
Monday 17th February
as that is our
half-term break

St John in Bedwardine



**Join us for Fresh Coffee and
Danish**

'Friendship and Thoughts'

At 10.45am on

**Saturday
22nd February**

Guest Speaker Beth Hialt from Snoezelen

ALL WELCOME

WELCOME



Free

Community Breakfast

Saturday 29th March

8.30am to 11.00am

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St John's Church



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Sometimes we sing

When attending church services, you are usually handed a book to follow, joining in with text in bold. You may notice that some words change with the time of year or the type of service, whereas others are constant. Clergy wear different outfits and perform various manual actions. Certain parts of the church are used for certain things. Sometimes we sing.

None of this is random. The services we have, the variations, and the way we worship are all the result of centuries of historical and theological development. Our way of worshipping in West Worcester is not the only way; there is a great variety of liturgical material and ways of using it in the Church of England.

For four weeks during Lent this year, we will look at our liturgy in more depth.

We will look not just at liturgical texts, but at everything that accompanies and supports them: vestments, church architecture and furnishings, people. Our focus will be both historical and theological as well as focussed on the present, looking at how we have the services we have as well as how we devise and use liturgy today.

No specialist knowledge is required, just interest and a willingness to ask if there are things you want to know or explore.

Sessions will be in the Blakefield Room at St John's on the last four Wednesdays of Lent:

Week 1 (26 March) - Liturgy before the Reformation

Week 2 (2 April) - The Book of Common Prayer

Week 3 (9 April) - BCP to Common Worship

Week 4 (16 April) - Liturgy Today

Tea and coffee will be served from 7pm, with sessions starting at 7.30pm and finishing by 9pm.

If anyone has any queries, please just let me know!

Phil Bradford

Sundays and Principal Feasts in February

Sunday 2nd February: Candlemas (The presentation of Christ in the temple)

Sunday 9th February: The fourth Sunday before Lent

Sunday 16th February: The third Sunday before Lent

Sunday 23rd February: The second Sunday before Lent

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There are eleven issues each year,
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Discretion is the better part of valour

This wise proverb may have been at the basis of our thinking when the regular participants of Walking Church decided to curtail their activities in January!

Given the coldness of the weather, we felt it would be unwise to subject ourselves to a walk of around an hour, to an hour and a half, with stops to discuss points of scripture. Loath to cancel our meeting, we hit on a compromise; each of us walked to St John's Church where, in the comparative warmth of the Blakefield Room, and braced by a hot cup of tea, we shared our Walking Church liturgy, had a very interesting discussion around points raised by the Gospel reading of the day, and ended with the Walking Church prayer.

The Gospel on the day of our meeting, (January 12th) was Luke's account of the baptism of Christ and John the Baptist's warnings about the Messiah's winnowing fork separating wheat from chaff.

Our discussion therefore ranged from the place of judgement and punishment in church teaching, via how to balance humility with confidence, to how to make baptism inclusive and the "hoops to jump through" which may surround and potentially impede this.

Walking Church returns on the second Sunday of March (9th March), when we hope for kinder weather!

Sarah Cottrill

West Worcester Friendship Club

Our December meeting was our Christmas Party when we enjoyed a delicious spread as well as games of "pass the parcel" and general chat.

In January we will be catching up with each other's news from the festive period and finalising our programme for 2025. At the moment, with a few gaps still to be filled, this includes an afternoon of board games, an Easter craft session, a summer outing, a return visit by the So Xsighted Morris Dancers and some potentially very interesting visiting speakers.

West Worcester Friendship Club is open to anybody who lives alone following bereavement. We meet from 2.00 – 4.00 at St Michael's Church on the third Thursday of each month. For more information, please speak to me, Val Mason or Jo and Mike Dowling.

Sarah Cottrill

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News from St.David's

On Sunday 22nd December we held our Carols Round The Tree service which was taken by Rob Little. We had a larger than usual congregation so it was lovely to hear the carol's being sung by a larger number of people. We also heard the readings telling the Christmas story. After the service everyone was invited to stay for refreshments.

Christmas Eve saw us celebrate the First Eucharist of Christmas and again this service was well supported. Phil and Gilly took this service for us.

On New Years Day we held our usual coffee morning and although the weather was not the best quite a few people came to have a coffee and cake. Our next coffee morning will be on Wednesday 5th February at 10-30am to which you are very welcome.

Our Window appeal will close at the end of the month, so if you would like to sponsor a window pane or a sill please see Sarah or myself. A big thank you to all who have already done so.

Carole Stone
Deputy Church Warden.

Mothers' Union Report

Jean Chidlow, a very long-serving member, sadly died at the end of November. Her funeral took place in St Clement's church on Friday 3rd January. The church service was well-attended, and included 10 MU members from around the diocese.

On Monday 17th February, the speaker will be Dilys Round, one of our members who is going to give us a fascinating talk about the Chelsea Pensioners. New members are always welcome.

On Wednesday 19th February at 2.00pm in Great Malvern Priory there will be the Commissioning of Jill Crofton as our new President, Mary-Anne Cox as the Vice-President for the Dudley Archdeaconry, Gwen Clifford from Claines as the Vice-President for the Worcester Archdeaconry and Trustees including Jan Hayden and me. The service will be followed by refreshments. This will be a wonderful occasion with Bishop Martin leading us and preaching.

On Saturday 1st March at 2.30pm at St Peter, Cradley, members from all over the diocese are invited to a festival service to celebrate 100 years of their MU branch.

On Monday 17th March (St Patrick), we will welcome Revd Mike Gardner to lead a Lenten Bible Study. 2.30pm. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Jo Dowling

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Christmas Flowers 2024

The Flower Ladies spent a very enjoyable morning on Saturday 21st December arranging the Christmas flowers. It was lovely to meet up again after the break of Advent and we were grateful to Margaret and Poppy for their help on such a busy morning. We enjoyed a well deserved coffee break and were joined by Phil!



Thank you for your generous donations in memory of loved ones and also for contributions of greenery. We hope you enjoyed our arrangements.

We also say “Thank you” to Liz and her Guides for decorating our Christmas tree so beautifully.



Joy Job

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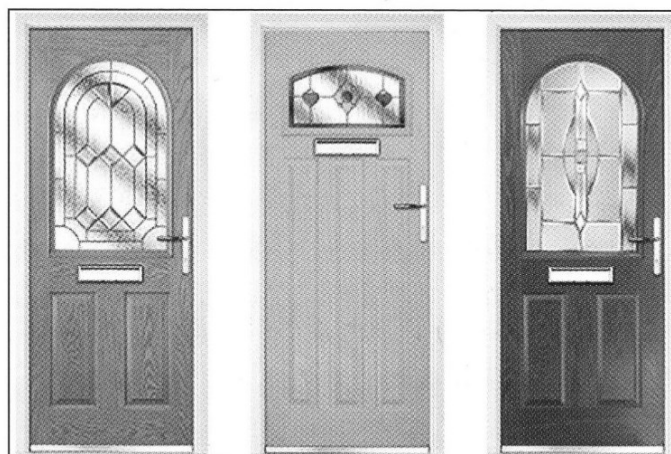
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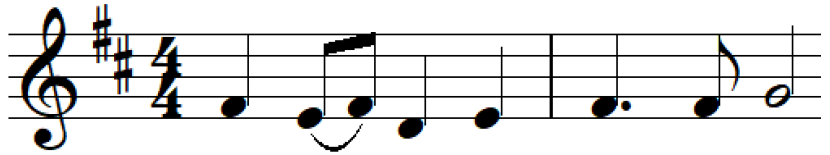
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Notes from the choir



Almighty God has made us in His Image.

That is a great statement, wonderful and inspiring.

I am left wondering though, if we are made in his image and we have been given the gifts of speech and song, does God sing? There are certainly many references in the bible to singing. Indeed, there are over 400 mentions of singing and of course the book of psalms is a collection of sacred songs and poems intended for singing.

In the New Testament there is a lovely verse in the letter of James: ‘Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise’. (Chapter 5, verse 13 NIV). Lifting our voices to God in song does seem to be something we are drawn to in moments of joy, and we can certainly honour God in our singing.

Does God himself sing though? This passage in the book of Zephaniah in the Old Testament in Chapter 3, verse 17 would suggest that He does: ‘The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you: in his love he will no longer rebuke you but will rejoice over you with singing’ (NIV).

God is singing and rejoicing in his created beings, expressing his eternal love for us in song. I hope that one day we will all be privileged enough to hear the voice of God in song. In the meantime, however, we can raise our voices, no matter how small or unworthy we may feel they may be, in response to God’s love for us. In the words from Eucharistic Prayer G:

‘In the fullness of time you made us in your image, the crown of all creations. You gave us breath and speech, that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven, we may find a voice to sing your praise:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest’.*

Luise Horrocks

Oh dear! (Not here!)

A choir had worked hard to raise money for new gowns. To celebrate the achievement, they decided to hold a special concert. The invites went out, and they were surprised at the amused reaction of church members. Then they reread the invitation. The choir had invited people to a ‘Concert with Cheese and Wince.’

Anne

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Prayers for February 2025

Words from Psalm 136: His faithfulness is forever. Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Let us sit quietly in a chair facing the window.

As we sit quietly enjoying the gift of creation, we remember Lord that it is you who faithfully created the heavens and earth. A beautiful world being renewed for mankind to share in with you. We see spring revealing itself, as bulbs push through the soil and unfurl their flowers; leaf buds begin to swell on trees and early blossoms fill the air with perfume. Lord, as your seasons change and the earth is renewed we give thanks for your faithfulness .

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord Jesus you call us all to be faithful in our prayer and we know that there are those living in abject poverty, living in tents with a lack of water and food. We remember the refugees of our world and those seeking safety.

We remember Ukraine, Gaza and Palestine. We hold before you Lord countries where people are fighting for democracy and their identity as a nation. We hold before you those who are hostages of war and live in a land of indiscriminate bombing where people are maimed and killed.

We hold before you the new leadership in Syria as they work together to create and restore equality for men and women, who seek peace and justice.

We hold before you the heavy burdens and pain that your people have to bear and we pray that they may know of your faithfulness in the situations they face.

Lord, you faithfully created us in your image, and created a world where we may live in harmony. We pray for your goodness to be fulfilled as we all put our trust and hope in you.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord God we thank you that your creative wisdom has come to us in Christ. With the Holy Spirit we watch and pray for the saving of all who are oppressed, enslaved and in torment. May the melody of prayer and love that we have for each other be felt by all who suffer. May your spirit fill all of creation with hope in your faithfulness to us.

His faithfulness is forever. Give thanks to the risen Lord.

Amen

Jenny English

The parable of the Shrewd Manager



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ONCE JESUS TOLD A STORY ABOUT A RICH MAN...

...AND HIS SERVANT, WHO MANAGED THE RICH MAN'S PROPERTY.

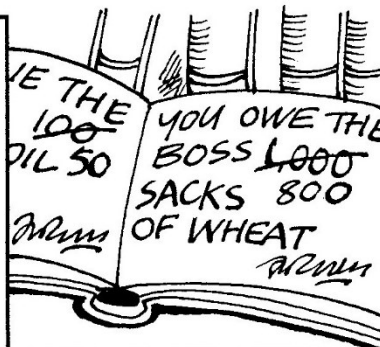


THE RICH MAN HAD HEARD THAT THE MANAGER HAS BEEN WASTING MONEY.

SO HE CALLED THE MANGER TO ACCOUNT FOR HIMSELF!



OH NO! I AM GOING TO GET THE SACK!!

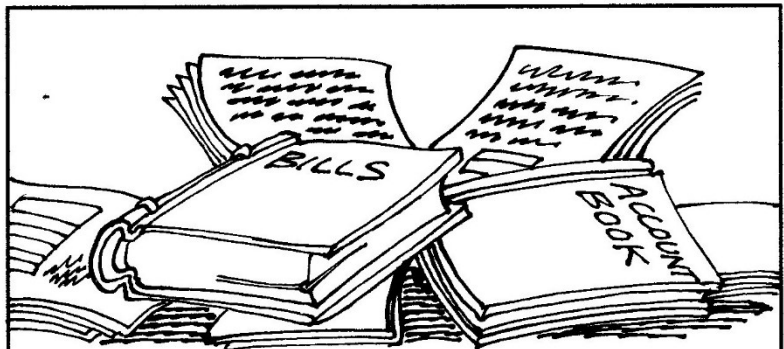
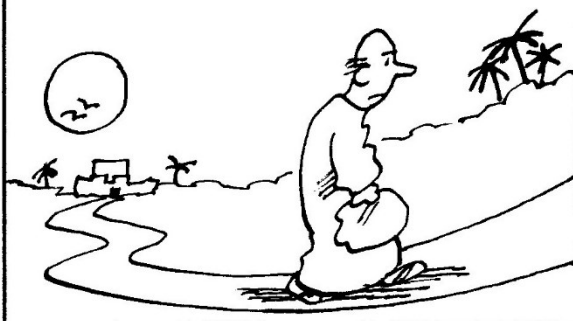


THE MANAGER AGREED TO LET THE RICH MAN'S TRADERS FIDDLE THEIR BOOKS!



SO THEY ALTERED THEIR DEBTS - AND STAYED FRIENDS WITH THE MANAGER.

JESUS EXPLAINED THAT THE MANAGER HAD BEEN WISE IN MANAGING HIS FUTURE... EVEN THOUGH HE WAS BEING DISHONEST.



JESUS WAS TRYING TO ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURES TOO. BUT IT'S A HARD PARABLE TO UNDERSTAND!

Epiphany Sunday



On Epiphany Sunday, our Team Rector, Curate, and Reader lead the service at St John's in their finest finery! Colin Nash took this picture after the service.

Graham Evans

Christmas at Children's Church

We were very excited to celebrate Christmas in Children's Church this year.

On 21st December, for the first time in five years, we staged a community nativity. We invited children from local schools, as well as willing volunteers from within our usual group.



The children were very enthusiastic and worked really hard to learn their lines and songs.



They excitedly retold the Christmas story with cheerful angels, intrepid wise men and some errant sheep roaming the countryside!

On 22nd December we had a Christmas party in our usual Sunday morning group featuring a very special visit from Father Christmas who brought along a small present for everyone. We were all very excited to meet him!



There is lots planned this year for Children's Church and with a growing number of children attending, covering a wider range of ages. New helpers are always welcome. If you'd be interested in supporting children's activities, please speak to me or email me at – fiona.templeton@wcw.church

Fiona Templeton

Christingle

Over 200 adults and children came to our Christingle service on Christmas Eve. You can see some pictures from this lovely service on pages 35 and 37.

The Editors

Children and Communion

I'm pleased to inform magazine readers that the bishop has granted permission for us to admit children to communion before confirmation. This followed the application I made to him, after consultation with the congregation and as approved by the Joint Council at the November meeting.

The plan is to undertake preparation, between now and Easter, with those children who wish to be admitted. Then we plan to formally admit them to communion in a special slot as part of the Easter Sunday service.

Phil Bradford

Jesus in the Temple



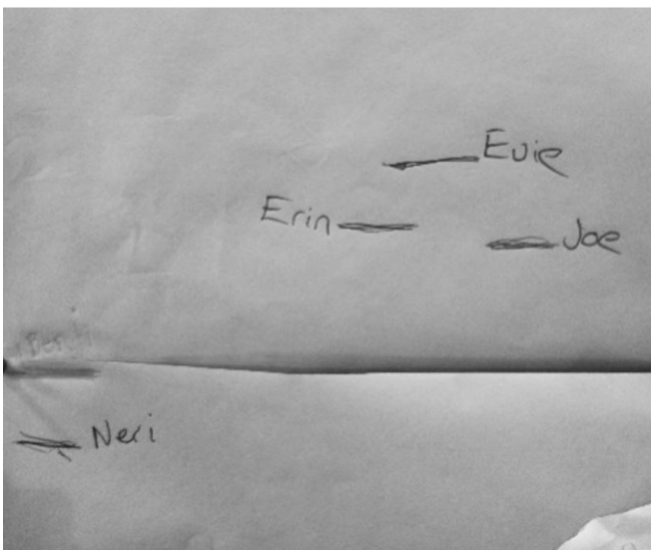
Messy Church's theme for January was Jesus as a boy in the Temple. Luke tells the story of the 12 year old Jesus staying in Jerusalem after the Passover festival, without Mary and Joseph realising. When they returned to search for him, they found him in the temple listening to teachers, asking questions, and showing a great understanding of their teachings.

Having explored Epiphany in January last year, we chose to tell a different story this year. However, it still felt that the season should be acknowledged, so the congregation enjoyed a trail around St John's church.

The challenge was to match the close-up pictures on the trail sheet to features in the church. It certainly tested the clergy's knowledge of the church when tasked with finding the close ups to know where to set the letters! Each feature had a letter beside it to write down, the easy trail had the letters in order, spelling Happy New Year, while the harder trail involved rearranging the letters to spell Happy Epiphany.

Those who successfully solved the puzzle were given a chocolate coin!

When the doors opened, the children drew pictures of what they thought Jesus might look like at their age. The aim was to imagine Jesus as a boy, rather than a man, setting the scene for the story which was going to be told just before the crafts commenced.



And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour. (Luke 2:52)

As well as activities based around the idea of the temple, such as making miniature prayer scrolls, others explored the idea of growing up. For example, alongside the pictures of Jesus as a boy, on the Messy Church board at St John's, you will now see markings, showing various congregation members' heights.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. (Luke 2:46)

During our worship focus, we considered what we know at different stages in life. Phil encouraged us to always ask questions, so that we might continue to learn and understand. While an important message to take away, it was agreed that if any of the children started the 'why?' game/phase again, they were being sent to Phil to answer their questions!

As normal, Messy Church concluded with a hot meal, this month's being chicken nuggets, chips and baked beans.

The next Messy Church service is on Saturday 1st February and our theme will be The Lord's Prayer. Please do come along and join us! Doors open 3.30pm for a cuppa, with activities beginning at 4pm. With crafts, worship and food, Messy Church lasts approximately 1.5-2hrs.

Beth Broadway

Smile lines

An auntie took her very young niece to church. When they returned home, her parents asked how it had gone.

The little girl replied: "Well, the vicar prayed, and I prayed. The vicar sang, and I sang. The vicar stood up to speak, and auntie brought me home."

--- 000 ---

A Sunday school teacher was telling her youngsters about Daniel and the Lion's Den. To illustrate the lesson, she drew a picture of Daniel standing, brave and confident, with a group of lions around him. Suddenly, one little girl started to cry. The teacher said, "Don't cry. The lions are not going to eat Daniel."

Snuffling back the tears the girl replied: "That's not what I'm crying about. That little lion, over in the corner, isn't going to get anything to eat."

--- 000 ---

Sign in a launderette: Automatic Washing Machines. Please remove all your clothes when the light goes out.

--- 000 ---

Spotted in a safari park: Elephants, please stay in your car.

Little Lambs – our prayers were answered

Thank you all! Welcome to 2025 from us all at Little Lambs!

It was Christmas time for us on 16th December. Oh yes it was, and our prayers were answered!

T'was the Monday before Christmas and Little Lambs children were eagerly awaiting their special visitor. The bells were jingling and we had all sung Jingle Bells a few times but where was he? Suddenly, in a flurry of red costume and with a fluffy white beard, Father Christmas arrived just for us bearing gifts and wishing us all a very happy Christmas.





We were so lucky that we were all on the Santa's list and we had a wonderful time.

Father Christmas had two special helpers, little Nina made a super jingle bell ringer and Phil enjoyed giving out our lovely Christmas story books.

Thank you to church for funding these books. Here is a picture of one of our regulars reading our book to her granddaughter. They go out to all our families to spread the message of peace and joy.



Today, as I write near the start of 2025, many thanks to Gail, Sally and Benjamin for all their commitment and time as they helped to tidy and check our toys ready for this term and more fun. In the dressing up box we found a child's size Father Christmas outfit so if Nina is ready to be an elf star again this year we have the suit. Please just remind us in time.

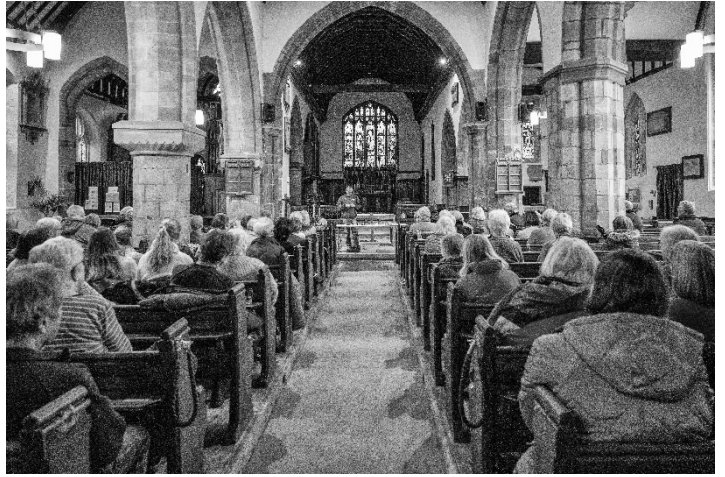
Blessings from me and Little Lambs team

Sue Fairman

PS We will not meet on Monday 17th February as that is our half term break.

Lit candles on tinder-dry trees!

On a grey drizzling day, over 70 people joined us in the church to hear Paul Harding tell us about Christmas in the 1950s. This was a period when many of the audience would have been growing up and would have brought back memories of their childhood. Christmas in the 1950s was coming out from the austerity years of the war and the early 1950s. However, it was not until the late 1950s that the commercialisation of Christmas started up again.



In the early 1950s families would get their decorations out of the attic, which could go back to the 1930s, most of which would be made of tissue paper and

cardboard. Many would be stuck to the ceiling with a drawing pin. Trails of coloured crepe paper would be hung from the ceiling.

Even older decorations would be used if the families had them, such as candles on holders on the tree. These candles would be lit - yet it is said that there are more accidents with dodgy wiring on modern decorations than there were with lit candles on tinder-dry trees. Glass baubles would be hung on the tree as well.

Fresh greenery would be brought in from the garden or countryside and weaved into garlands or wreaths to be used around the house or hung on the front door.

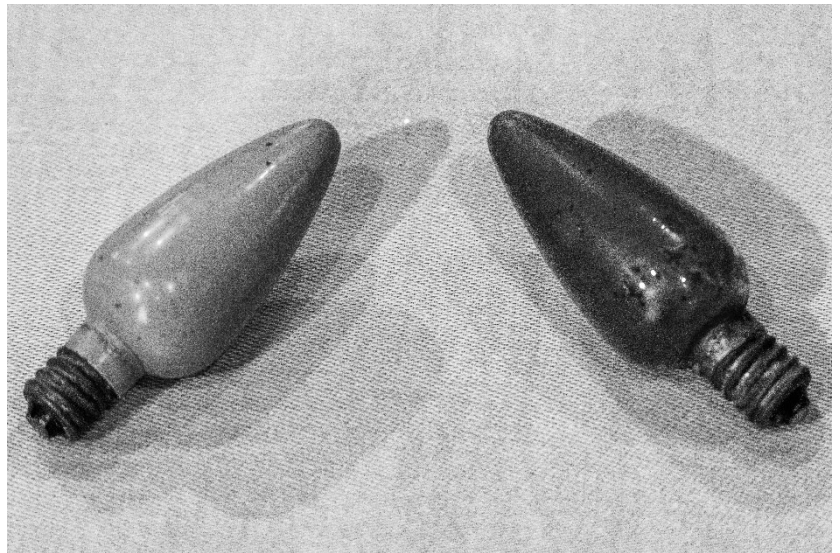
During the early 1950s, people would also make paper decorations, such as lanterns and paper chains. They would use flour and water to make the paste (glue) to stick together the paper decorations.



The women would make knitted decorations to hang on the trees as well, such as the knitted crackers pictured above.

Rationing was still in place until 1954, so things were very hard for people. In the late 1950s more decorations were becoming available, including plastic ones, and people were starting to have more spare money. The baubles would start to become more sparkly and covered in glitter. Tinsel was available before the war but disappeared until the late 1950s.

Fairy lights started to appear and be draped around the tree instead of the candles.



Christmas cards started to come back again after going into decline during the war years. Many people would get their children to make the cards that could be given to family and friends.

All of this would happen in a very short run up to Christmas. There was none of the starting to get Christmas going in October or November that we see today. It would be more like the middle of December or even later.

Traditionally the tree would go up on Christmas Eve, often after the children had gone to bed so it was there when they woke up. Stockings would be hung up for the children. The stockings of the 1950s would generally be a long sock.

Traditionally, the stocking should contain fruit, a coin, and a lump of coal.

The fruit, if very lucky an orange, and nuts, guaranteed that you would have some food in you.

A coin would be added so that you had some money in your pocket at Christmas.

A lump of coal would symbolically show that you had something to keep you warm.

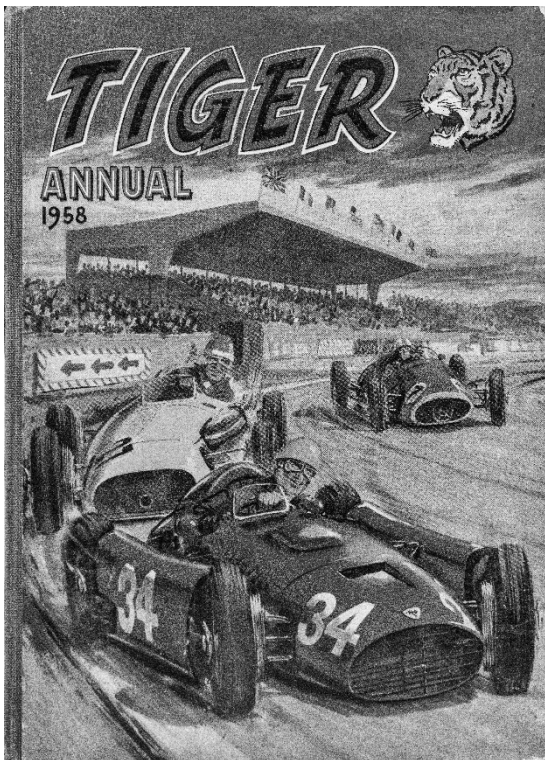
Other presents, often home-made, would be put into a pillowcase. The presents would include wooden toys or material-based presents. Many magazines would include articles on how to make toys for Christmas presents.

Catalogues, such as Timothy Whites, started to appear towards the end of the 1950s with an array of potential presents.

By the end of the 1950s commercial wrapping paper started to appear and the presents were more attractively wrapped than when they were wrapped in brown paper or newspaper.

The best toy of 1950 was the same as 1939 and it was the yo-yo. Other toys included the spinning top, Meccano, and the acrobat on a stick. And dolls!

Dolls have always been in the top list of toys at Christmas. There was a doll hospital in Worcester and people would take dolls there to be repaired when required.



Another of the main gifts given to children was the annual, often linked to weekly magazines or comics, such as Dandy, Tiger, Rupert the Bear and Girl.

More people than now would go to church on Christmas morning before the feast of Christmas dinner. The main meat in the early 1950s Christmas dinner was chicken or goose, with all the trimmings. After dinner people would tune into the wireless at 3pm to listen to the King or Queen's speech. In 1957 the Queen decided to broadcast her speech live on the television. People would take the children to see a pantomime during the Christmas holiday.

Colin Nash

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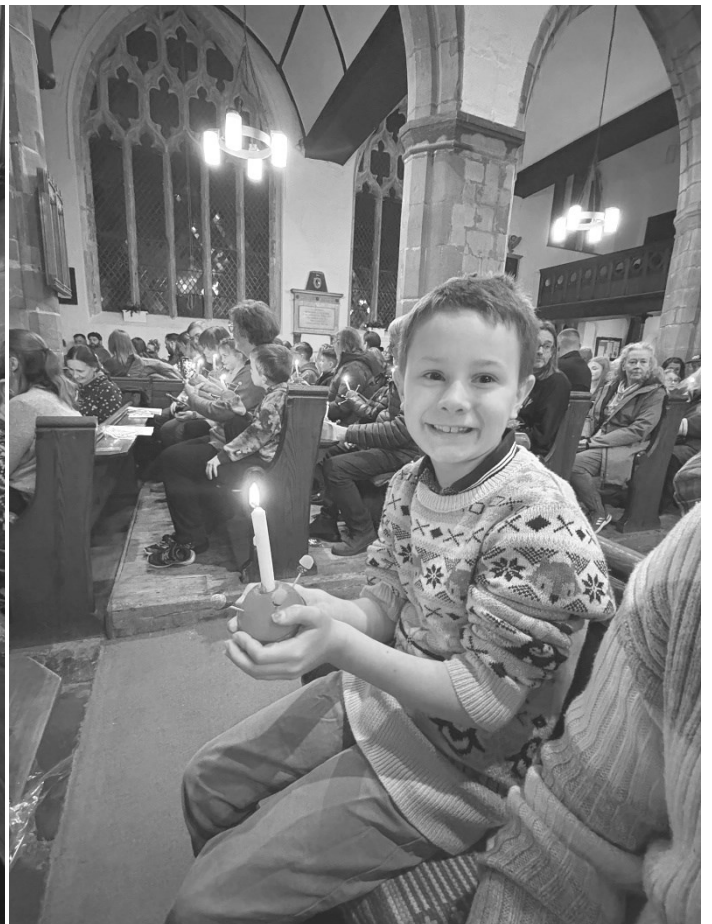


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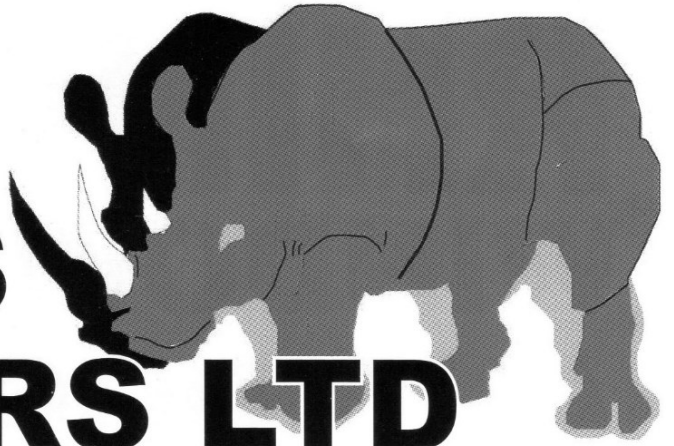


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Pictures from the Christingle service



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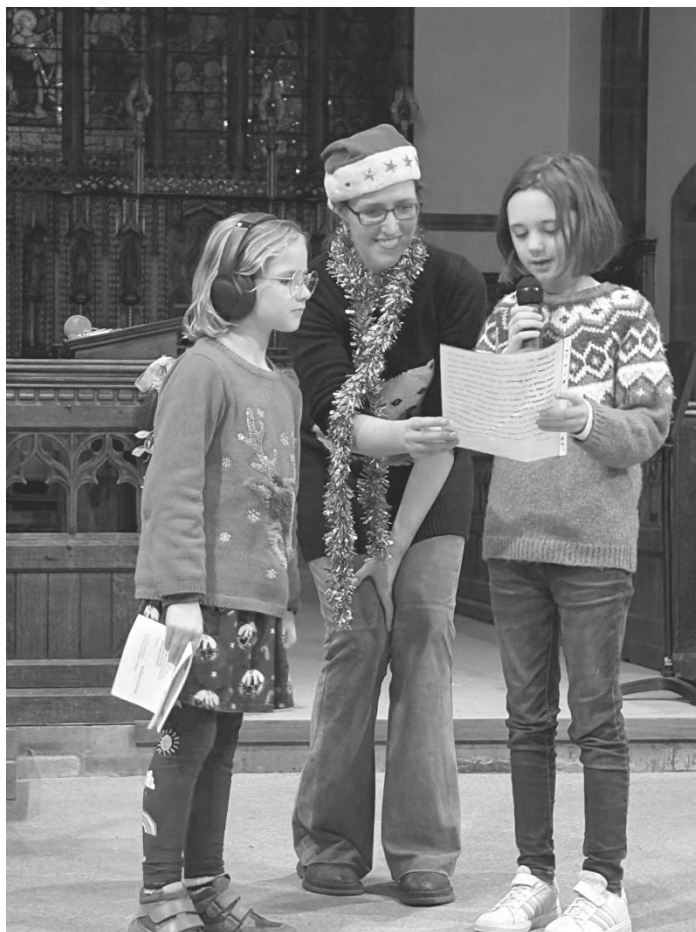
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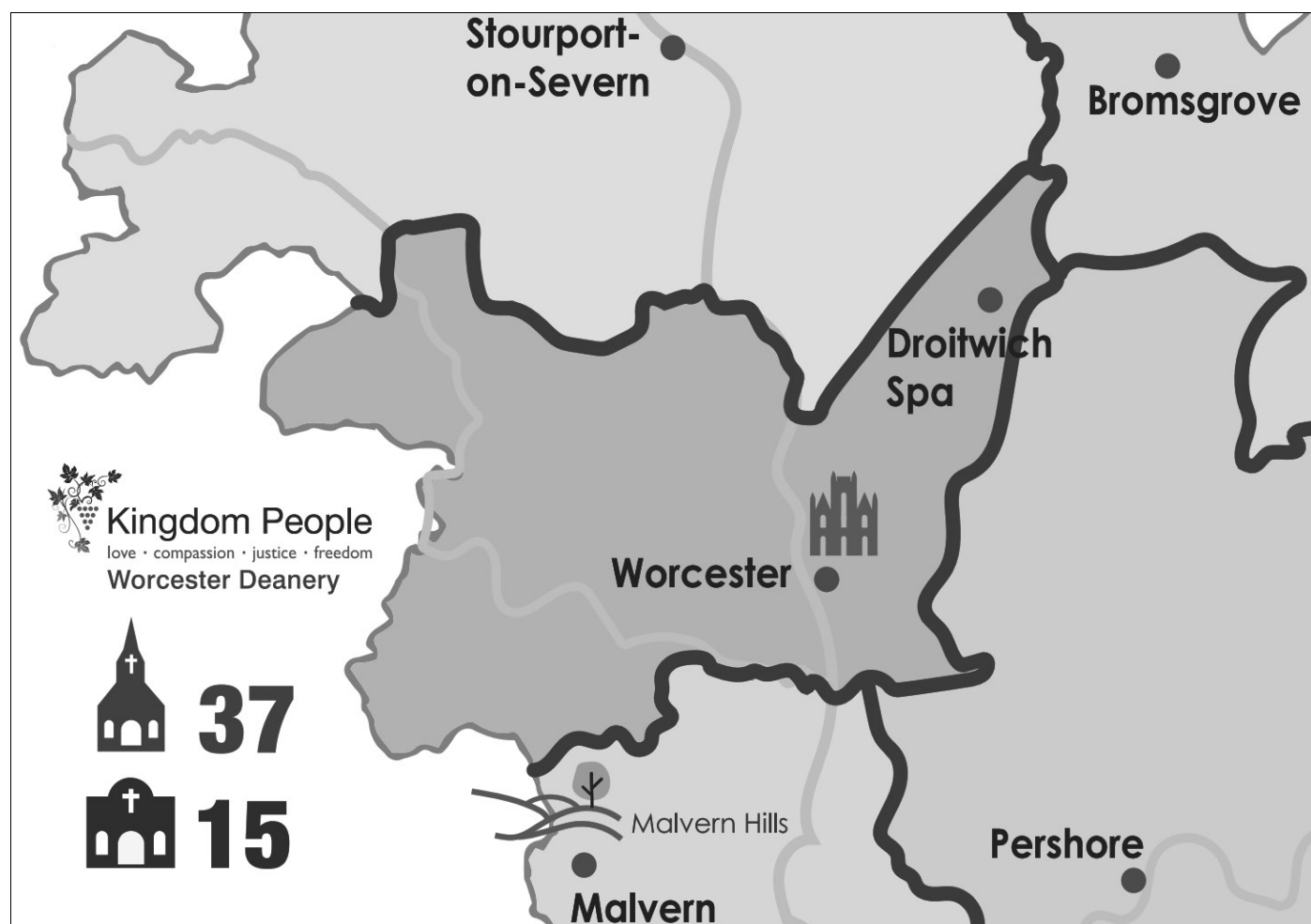
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Let's explore our diocese!

The Editors: Within the Diocese of Worcester 'Statement of Needs 2024' (compiled for the process for appointing new bishop) is a page about each of the deaneries in our diocese. We are going to use this information over the coming months, as space allows, to explore our diocese. This month we start off at home, with our own deanery, Worcester. Here is what it says about us!

Worcester Deanery

Worcester Deanery encompasses a large area spanning both the eastern and western sides of the River Severn. Serving a population of 149,405, it includes the city of Worcester and the historic Spa town of Droitwich. The deanery consists of 28 parishes with 37 churches located in areas of varying affluence across urban, suburban and rural contexts. The presence of the Cathedral and All Saints Resourcing Church located in the city centre enriches the deanery and we are blessed that both lay and ordained members from these communities are very much part of Chapter and Synod.



The symbols show that the deanery has 37 churches and 15 church schools.

Significant housing developments are underway in the deanery with urban extensions around Rushwick and Lower Broadheath

Continued on page 41

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Continued from page 39

and churches are already working collaboratively to find ways of engaging with these developing communities. Following discussions in Synod, the deanery leadership team has identified three priorities that we believe will help us to engage more fully with the diocesan transformation strategy. Through praying for each other, communicating more effectively and working collaboratively where appropriate, we hope to further the mission of the Church and see more people of all ages come to live as Kingdom People.

Increasing numbers of ordained and lay people are working together to support the mission and ministry of the Church and are embracing the diocesan priorities of engaging with children, youth and families and developing new worshipping communities. We currently have two 'Children, Youth and Family' (CYF) workers in post and in both contexts they are working across parishes, which is enabling greater collaboration. A 'Student & 20s Missioner' in post at All Saints Resourcing Church enables mission among those studying at the University.

A number of parishes are developing new worshipping communities and providing ways for people to connect with or explore faith through Messy Church, Breakfast Church, Walking Church, Wild Church and Gather. The deanery leadership team recognises the challenges that people within the parishes are facing with regards to finance, upkeep of buildings and the decline of faithful worshippers and volunteers. Through Chapter and Synod we endeavour to engage in ongoing discussions around these challenges to enable people to share concerns and feel supported. Given the challenges there is remarkable sense of hope for the future across the deanery.

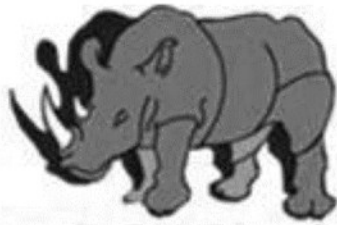
Sudoku Puzzle

© 2013

KrazyDad.com

***The
solution is
on the
inside back
cover.***

		1		6			8	
8			5				7	2
		9	2	4		3		
	5							
		3	7	1	5	2		
							5	
		8		7	9	5		
2	9				6			8
	3			2		7		



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Movement for Good 2025

The Benefact Group, the owners of Ecclesiastical Insurance, gives all available profits to charity and good causes.

The Movement for Good Awards is their annual programme of giving that anyone can get involved in, and again in 2025 they will be donating over £1 million to charities and good causes.

You can get involved by nominating a charity, and that charity will be put into six draws throughout the year for a £1,000 award. One nomination will last to the end of 2025, so **the sooner you nominate, the more draws your charity will go into.** The more nominations a charity gets, the better its chances of being drawn, so once you've nominated please tell your friends (hence this article).

Each person can only make one nomination per charity, but you can nominate as many charities as you like.

To nominate, go to <https://movementforgood.com/>



Please nominate us

We could receive a £1,000 donation with your help through the Movement for Good awards.

Please visit this link to nominate us:
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To nominate the St John's and St Michael's Joint Council, please enter our charity number 1205354.

You could also nominate (please!) the St John's Feoffees ("Churchlands") whose main purpose is to support the maintenance of the St John's church building. Their charity number is 257634.

Spread through the year, there are also additional themed draws for ten awards of £5,000 for specific areas of charity work. These have to be nominated separately and within a limited time period before each draw. You can register to be notified about these on the Movement for Good pages by scrolling down past the first nomination form. Keep on scrolling down – it's quite a long page.

Good luck with your nominations!

Graham Evans

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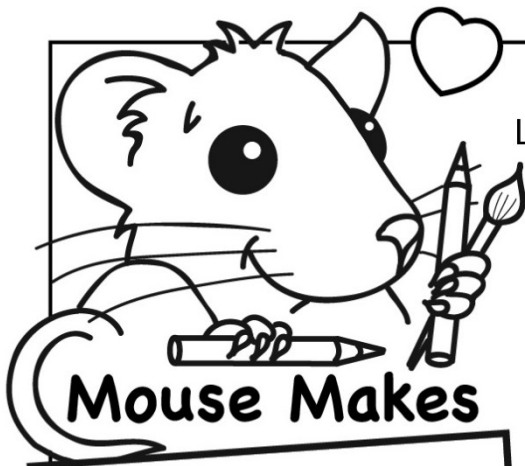


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Mouse Makes

"Love is

love is _____
It does not, _____
it does not _____
it is not _____
it does not _____

others, it is not self -

it is not easily _____
it keeps no record of _____

Love delights in

it always _____

from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

The steadfast **love** of the Lord never _____;

His _____
never come to an end;
they are new every _____

Lamentations 3:20-23



I pray... you will understand...
the greatness of Christ's **love**,

how _____
and how _____
and how _____
that **love** is.

Ephesians 3:18-19

God is **love**.
whoever _____
in **love** _____
in God, and God _____
_____ in them.

1 John 4:16



Give _____
to the Lord, for He is _____
his steadfast **love**
endures _____

Psalms 136:1

HOW DOES
GOD LOVE ME?

God sent me a saviour:

He sent His one and only
Son into the world so
that we might have
eternal life through Him.

1 John 4:9

God gave me His spirit:

He has given you the
Holy Spirit to fill our hearts
with His **love**.

Romans 5:5

God called me His child:

See what great **love** the
Father has for us that He
would call us His children.

1 John 1:3

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus told us to:

LOVE the Lord your God with
all your **heart**, all your **soul**
and with all your **mind**.

Matthew 22:37

LOVE your neighbour the
same as you **love** yourself.

Matthew 22:39

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C S K V U U I K T S F L T O
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Core (staffed) opening times:

- Monday: 2pm - 5pm
- Tuesday: 10am - 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am - 1pm
- Thursday: 2pm - 5pm
- Friday: 10am - 5pm
- Saturday: 10am - 1pm

Events at St John's Library

Weekly events:

- LEGO Club, weekly every Saturday, 11:00am to 12:00pm.
- Bounce and Rhyme, weekly every Tuesday, 11:00am to 11:30am.
- Chess Club and Scrabble Club, weekly every Tuesday, 2:00pm to 4:00pm.
- Crochet and Chat, weekly every Wednesday, 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Storytime and Song, weekly every Friday, 11:00am to 11:30am.

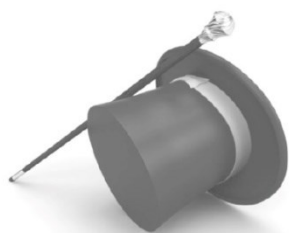
Other regular events:

- Classic Film Club, fortnightly, every other Thursday (6 & 20 February), 2:00pm to 3:30pm.
- Crime Readers' Group, first Friday of each month (7 February), 12:00pm to 1:00pm.
- Photography Group, third Friday of each month (Friday 21 February), 2:00pm to 3:00pm.
- Councillors' Surgeries (Saturday 1 February), 10:00am to 12:00pm.
- Meet the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team, St Johns and Bedwardine, on Tuesday 11 February, 10:30am to 11:30am.

The Hive - Health Walk Group

- Every Wednesday - 10:30am

Meeting outside The Hive entrance every Wednesday from 10:30am, the Health Walk group offer two walks (long and short) taking in local Worcester scenery. Most walks are on flat ground but can include slopes and some steps so please wear sensible shoes. Walks take approximately 1 hour and usually finish with coffee at a local café. Walks are free of charge and you don't need to pre-book.



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From the magazine archive, February 1930

St. John's Church Bells.

Our eight bells (with fittings, etc.), arrived last Monday, January 13th, from Loughborough. Now comes the tedious work of hanging them. This will take near to a month. So we have arranged for the Dedication of the two new bells and the Thanksgiving for the restoration, re-hanging, etc., of the old six bells to take place on Thursday, February 13th, at 7.30 p.m. Please make at once a note of this date. The special preacher on this interesting and important occasion is to be the Rev. James Hastings, Rector of Martley, who is, among the clergy of the Diocese, the chief expert on bells and bell ringing, and who has kindly acted as one of our committee.

Attendance at this service will be one way of expressing our thankfulness for the completion of this piece of work. Another way of expressing the same will be to make a worthy offering to the work of sounding out the "Gospel Bells" throughout the world; and so the collection at the dedication and thanksgiving service will be given to the missionary work of the church as represented by the S.P.G. I ask you all to remember that one of the two new bells is a gift to us, and that the restoration, etc., work is being paid for by St. John's Feoffees. So we are getting "ninepence for fourpence." Hence our thankfulness may well show itself in a very practical form on Thursday, February 13th.

--- 000 ---

I have the pleasure of thanking Mr. W. Jeynes for an oak bracket on the east wall of the south aisle on which is now placed the cross given by Mr. Edward Locke (see Parish Magazine for August, 1929).

--- 000 ---

On Monday, January 6th, the Mothers' Union held their own (very special) New Year's Party in the Parish Room, at which they were visited by the Wild Woman of Borneo.

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usually from the 4th Sunday of the preceding month).

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(£5) I live in St John's but need my magazine to be delivered.

☐

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£18.15 (Large Letter, 2nd class postage is now £1.55)

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		Total
Magazine subscription (as above)	£5 / £23.15	
Additional Donation (if applicable)		
GRAND TOTAL		

Send your payment in an envelope, or as a cheque made payable to St. Johns Parish Church, with this completed form to The Parish Office, 1A Bromyard Road, Worcester WR2 5BS. **Or, to pay by bank transfer**, please email parishmagazine@wcw.church to give your name and address details, and you will be given a reference number. Then make a bank transfer to the following account:

Account number: 20150628

Sort code: 82-12-08

Account name: WORCESTER ST JOHN-IN-BEDWARDINE AND ST MICHAEL'S JOINT COUNCIL

Please put in the reference number you have been given, as the reference for the recipient.

giftaid it

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- ☐ I want St. John-in-Bedwardine Parish Church to treat the enclosed donation as shown in the Grand Total box above, as a Gift Aid donation.

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NOTES

1. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income or capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration.
2. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
3. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity.
4. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address.



Puzzle solution

3	2	1	9	6	7	4	8	5
8	4	6	5	3	1	9	7	2
5	7	9	2	4	8	3	1	6
7	5	4	6	9	2	8	3	1
6	8	3	7	1	5	2	9	4
9	1	2	4	8	3	6	5	7
4	6	8	1	7	9	5	2	3
2	9	7	3	5	6	1	4	8
1	3	5	8	2	4	7	6	9

And finally....



“Are you late with your ‘Vicar’s Letter’ again, dear?”

Disclaimer from the editors:

Our clergy are (almost) never late with their letters.

Worcester St John-in-Bedwardine and St Michael's Joint Council is a charity with the Registered Charity Number 1205354.



Sunday Services in the Worcester City West Team – February 2025

	St. John's	St. Clement's	St. David's	St Michael's
2nd February	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong		4pm Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist
9th February	10.30am All Age Eucharist	10am Eucharist	4pm Evening Prayer	10.30am Morning Prayer
16th February	10.30am Eucharist		4pm Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist
23rd February	10.30am Eucharist	10am Eucharist	4pm Evening Prayer	10.30am Morning Prayer
2nd March	10.30am Eucharist 5.30pm Evensong		4pm Eucharist	10.30am Eucharist

The information above is correct at the time of going to press but please watch the weekly church newsletters and website for the latest information.