

# NewsLink

24 January – 7 February 2021



Churches of North  
Bradford on Avon  
& Villages

## From Christmas to Candlemas

The Christmas tree is down, and you no longer hear [Mariah Carey's 'All I Want for Christmas is You'](#) every time you visit the supermarket, so you may have thought the festivities were over. Or are you one of those people who keep their Christmas decorations up until Candlemas?

The story of Christ begins on Christmas Day, but as we know, there are many more Christian celebrations in the calendar.

On Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February many churches will celebrate Candlemas, which may date back to pagan times - much like many other traditions now adopted into the Christian faith. There are many theories about Candlemas, but one of them relates to the story in Luke's gospel of how Jesus was brought to the Temple by his mother 40 days after he was born. Here, they were met by the elderly Anna and Simeon. Simeon lifted Jesus up and called him 'The Light to The World'. Later, as an adult, Jesus was to describe himself as 'The Light of the World' bringing love and peace and hope to a struggling world.

Many Christian churches will still bring candles to their local parish church on the day of Candlemas for blessing, and these candles will be used for the rest of the year. In pre-electricity times people would bring their own candles to church to be blessed and then used to bring light into their homes and to chase away the darkness, perhaps by lighting a candle for a child afraid of a thunderstorm at night.

Candles bring a sense of warmth and dispel darkness; the tiniest flame can illuminate and help us feel safe. They are a symbol of light and hope. In times gone by it was the custom to place a lighted candle in every window on Candlemas Day to bring light to the long dark winter – a tradition I think we would do well to revive today. During these dark days of winter, and during this time of lockdown, we need symbols of light and hope. Why not join me in lighting a candle on Candlemas Day, 2<sup>nd</sup> February. If you can, do place it in a window so others can see it, and share in hope for the future.

Also, when you are out on your daily walk, do notice another source of brightness clustered around our churches which was also closely associated with Candlemas: snowdrops, often called Candlemas Bells.

Candlemas is also the day on which we are told we can predict the end of winter. Candlemas may bring both cloud and rain, along with some very chilly temperatures. However, we may experience some refreshingly springlike days indicating that the worst is now behind us and spring is on its way!



May God Bless you, your families and friends. Stay safe, stay well and stay hopeful. *Ann, Rector*

## New Prayer Space at Monkton Farleigh

At St Peter's Monkton Farleigh, the Christmas trees are all gone, and the new Prayer Space set up to receive visitors. Come and enjoy this calm area of the church for private prayer, reflection or just to sit and relax for a moment. We are open Sundays and Wednesdays 10am to 12pm.

Please bring a face covering and follow social distancing to ensure your visit is Covid secure.



## Don Harwood

We were sorry to hear of the death of Don Harwood earlier this month. Don was a former Churchwarden at St Nicholas in Winsley and his wife Doreen, who died a few years ago, ran the Mother's Union locally.

Don had recently moved to a Residential Home close to his daughter Julia in Bromsgrove. The family held a simple cremation service locally and will have a Memorial Service for Don at St Nicholas Church when Covid arrangements allow more of us to gather.

## Farewell to Tess Stacey



A reminder that we will be holding a Cottee morning over Zoom on Weds 27<sup>th</sup> Jan 9.30 – 10.15 am to say thank you and farewell to Tess Stacey, our Benefice Administrator, who leaves at the end of the month. If you would like to attend please email [nboabenefice@gmail.com](mailto:nboabenefice@gmail.com) or phone the office on 01225 865046 by 26<sup>th</sup> Jan and you will be sent the link.

## LILIAN STATON.

Lilian (whom I used to bring to Church in Winsley) died on December 16<sup>th</sup>. She used to live in Avonpark, but her family moved her to Wiltshire Heights, when she needed more care. In May last year, she had her hundredth birthday but, because of lockdown, she was unable to have a party. But a large number of our congregation sent her cards, which made her day really special. She had kept them all, and they have now been given to her daughter, Heather, with the rest of her belongings. Thank you all from Heather – and from Phillip and me for making an old lady very happy.

Elizabeth Bush

## In the later pages of this week's Newslink....

- Update on Christ Church Community Project.
- Offer of lifts to vaccinations
- Poem by Malcom Guite (from Ann Keating)

You can read the full version, and access our weekly online services on the Benefice website

[www.nboachurches.co.uk](http://www.nboachurches.co.uk).

If you would like to receive a copy of Newslink electronically please Subscribe via the website.

Behind each number, once Belovéd  
face  
Malcom Guite  
(posted by Ann Keating)



Listening, to the radio I was horrified to hear that the daily death toll from Corona was once more exceeding a thousand. It was a strange and terrible déjà vu of listening to the radio last Spring, an experience which prompted this poem and this post, indeed this prayer. I am reposting it today in case anyone might find comfort in these words, or a voice for their own prayers:

'These are mind numbing numbers and only the exercise of compassionate imagination can give us even a glimpse of the harrowing personal stories behind each one. When I began to hear our statistics mount on our own evening radio news, I found myself again and again in prayer, knowing that even though I only heard the numbers, God knew and loved and died for the people behind those numbers.

All this found its way into the concluding section of my [Quarantine Quatrains](#) which I am posting here as a poem on its own'

## [VII](#)

35

*At close of day I hear the gentle rain  
Whilst experts on the radio explain  
Mind-numbing numbers, rising by the day,  
Cyphers of unimaginable pain*

36

*Each evening they announce the deadly toll  
And patient voices calmly call the roll  
I hear the numbers, cannot know the names  
Behind each number, mind and heart and soul*

37

*Behind each number one belovèd face  
A light in life whom no-one can replace,  
Leaves on this world a signature, a trace,  
A gleaning and a memory of grace*

38

*All loved and loving, carried to the grave  
The ones whom every effort could not save  
Amongst them all those carers whose strong  
love  
Bought life for others with the lives they gave.*

39

*The sun sets and I find myself in prayer  
Lifting aloft the sorrow that we share  
Feeling for words of hope amidst despair  
I voice my vespers through the quiet air:*

40

*O Christ who suffers with us, hold us close,  
Deep in the secret garden of the rose,  
Raise over us the banner of your love  
And raise us up beyond our last repose.*

## Future for Christ Church Community Project update

Many people and passers-by have told us how much they have valued and enjoyed our Christmas lights, trees and crib scene in the south porch. So much so that we are looking to continue this engagement with the wider community by having evolving displays throughout the coming year.

We continue to make progress towards gaining the necessary permissions and grant aid to make our community project a reality.

Following input from Historic England and our architect, we think that in order to maximise the potential for grant funding we should propose a phased project to:

- Deliver the urgently needed flexible open space, toilets and kitchen, plus bring forward the plans for a Parish office and storage
- Restore the nave walls and wall paintings
- Restart and re-gild the landmark spire clock

We are very pleased to report that our fundraising for the project has now passed the £3000 mark 😊 Most recently this includes a £900 grant from the Church Buildings Council towards the cost of the Conservation Report to define how the wall paintings will be restored, £350+ from Dorna's marmalades and preserves, and £681 in recent generous donations. A long way to go, but given the constraints of Covid, this is a fabulous total! We are most grateful to all our supporters.

### **Plant pots and jam jars please!!**

Following the success of our 2020 plant and produce stalls, we desperately need small (approx. 3-4") plant pots to ensure this year's supply of tomato plants etc.

We also need 1lb jam jars with lids to ensure a continued supply of marmalades, chutneys and jams for your delectation! Please either call Gillian on 866503 or drop off at 13 Newtown

Thank you!

### **Dorna Daw also gives an update on the fundraising:**

Thank you to all who bought marmalades and chutneys for the Christ Church Community Project. Sales exceeded £350 plus £81 from Zoe Yeoman's impressive model of Christ Church, the most eye-catching collection Box. *Dorna Daw and Gillian Ellis-King*

Chutneys and marmalade made before Christmas have sold out and I hope everyone has enjoyed eating them. Apples given to me in October have kept well and will be enough for more chutney. Seville oranges arrived this month and marmalade will be available from 25<sup>th</sup> January. The oranges are organic, and I use Fairtrade sugar. Thanks to all for the glass jars – I may need more!

Making preserves is a most enjoyable activity during lockdown. If you would like some, please ring Dorna on 01225 862834. Chutneys, prices various; Marmalade £3.

### **Covid Vaccinations.- offer of lifts**

Margaret Blagbrough from Winsley is happy to offer lifts to any parishioners invited for Covid vaccination if required, to avoid them using public transport etc. She is not available on Wednesdays, but can be flexible at most other times. She is happy to be contacted on 01225 862676. Margaret is DBS checked.

### **Covid Scams**

Please be alert to various scams which are circulating by text and email regarding invitations for Covid vaccinations. There have been reports that members of the public are being sent text messages, claiming to be from the NHS, asking them to sign up for coronavirus vaccination. The texts ask the recipient to click on a link which takes them to an online form where they are prompted to enter bank details. In some cases, the online form looks very similar to the real NHS website – but it is a scam.

The vaccine is only available on the NHS, is free of charge and you will not be asked for payment. The NHS will never ask for bank account details. They will not ask to see your passport or utility bills and will not arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine. You will be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a local GP surgery or pharmacy to receive your vaccination. If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk). Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726, which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk).

### **Contact Details:**

#### **Ministry Team**

Rector: Rev Ann Keating  
Rev.ann.keating@btinternet.com (722230)  
Rev Tessa Mann (309374)  
LLM: Rachel Pound (862223)

#### **Benefice Office**

Tessa Stacey (865046)  
nboabenefice@gmail.com  
*Website:* [www.nboachurches.co.uk](http://www.nboachurches.co.uk)

#### **Church Wardens**

Winsley:  
Roy Ludlow (868779) Linds Batson (720069)  
Christ Church: Vacant  
Monkton Farleigh: Vacant. Contact Rachel Exley PCC Secretary. (851485)  
South Wraxall: Dave Wyper (865384)  
Valentine Thornhill (862552)

#### **Lay Pastoral Assistants**

Denise Leigh (863916)  
Stephen Pike (782537)  
Denise Davies (863678)  
Gill Fairhurst (867560)  
Daphne Cox (868224)  
Elizabeth Bush (866624)  
James Middleton (920564)

#### **Children's and Families Worker**

Zoe Yeomans - [zyeomans3@gmail.com](mailto:zyeomans3@gmail.com)

***Do check the website as resources are added regularly and check Instagram and Facebook for all our latest news.***