

www.tardebiggechurch.org.uk ✉ Email: contact@tardebiggechurch.org.uk ✉ Picture "Tardebigge Community Tree at Worcester Cathedral 2015"

Tardebigge and Bentley Parish Magazine



December 2017 / January 2018 - £1





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December



From Richard, the Team Rector



When the Early Church created the festival of Christmas the aim was to supplant the pagan midwinter celebration of the death of the old year and the rebirth of a new one with the feast of Christ's birthday, Jesus being the one who died for us and rose again. He does not fade and die as every year does in the gloom of midwinter; His light shines in the darkness, and cannot be extinguished or overcome. Jesus' light is a constant reality that we can symbolise through candles, but which is so much greater and complete. Hence Malachi prophesies the rising of the "Sun of Righteousness".

The most important place for this light be is in our hearts. This light is Jesus, to whom the Old Testament prophets point: "We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts."

At the very end of the Bible Jesus reveals Himself thus:

"I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

This pretty much sums up how Christmas can be a blessing to us even when the dust has settled, the wrapping paper has been recycled, and the cards taken down. When the light of Christ is in our hearts He warms us inwardly and illuminates our thinking. He will also make His word in the Bible come alive to us, so that we can gain comfort, guidance and enlightenment. We will become more aware of the truth that Jesus recognises as true, rather than the vast number of opinions that confuse and mislead so many people in a nation that has collectively turned its back on God's Son, even though they celebrate his birthday with undiminished commitment in so many different ways.

Imagine unwrapping a present and finding a box. You then open a box, and out of it pours a light that is impossible to look at. You look away, but then as you look again you begin to see in the midst of a bright, unfading golden light is a baby, a cross and a crown. All for you.



Richard

Wardens' World

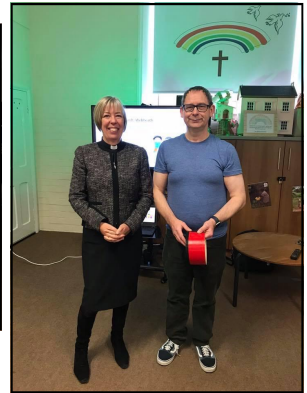
December 2017

Last month saw the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, an enormous religious, social and political upheaval which gave rise to the Protestant church and affected the whole of Europe, bringing changes which still affect us up to the present day. Its importance was recognised so much by our German colleagues that they even had an extra public holiday on October 31st to mark it (conveniently falling the day before their All Saints public holiday, so two days off in the middle of a week...we too should have more respect for religious holidays in this country!). But amongst all the turmoil, the Reformation also brought many fine innovations, like the rich language of the Book of Common Prayer, Evensong, which we still celebrate every Sunday at Tardebigge, and the architecture of our simple, plain yet beautiful church of St. Bartholomew's.

It also ushered in less formal services for us to enjoy, leading eventually to services like our own Café Church, where we were joined in November by your churchwardens' boss, Archdeacon Nikki Groarke. After a sterling performance by Dean leading the Café service,



Pictured: Archdeacon Nikki at Café Church



she then kindly moved over to St. Bartholomew's and joined the congregation for BCP Matins. Shortly after the Twitterati received two wonderful Tweets, the first one complimenting the lay worship leaders (Dean, Margaret Lloyd and Raymond Hopkins), followed by one saying: "bacon butties on offer before first service this morning, sherry in the choir vestry after the second. CofE hospitality at its best!"



Although the Reformation did remove some of the ceremony and rituals of the Church, we still have plenty of opportunities to bring a special atmosphere and some magic into the Tardebigge churches to help us in our worship. Remembrance Sunday was a case in point, with participation from members of the armed forces and the congregation helping to lead solemn and moving services for us all at both St. Mary's and St. Bartholomew's. But now this month brings a raft of more joyful Christmas services, where everyone can find something to their taste. Here's a reminder of what we have on offer:

- 3rd December 9.30 am Café Church for Advent – start the Christmas season with Archdeacon-approved bacon butties available from 9.00 am! There will also be a special gift to make and take home
- 10th December 9.30 am Carol Service at St. Mary's, Lower Bentley
11.00 am Family Gift Service, where we bring and donate gifts (unwrapped) for families less fortunate than ourselves
- 17th December 6.00 pm Carols by Candlelight – our atmospheric evening service of carols and Christmas readings.
- 24th December 4.00 pm Christingle – more candlelight, on Christmas Eve this year!
11.15 pm Traditional Midnight Communion to welcome in Christmas Day
- 25th December 11.00 am Family Communion

Do make sure you make as many of these as you can, and we look forward to seeing you. We wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and as this is our last Wardens' World of the year, all the best for the New Year 2018.

Chris and Dean

Christingle Workshop 2017

On Friday 22nd December we are meeting in the Church Hall at 10.00am - 12.00am to make Christingles in readiness for the service on Christmas Eve at 4.00pm.

It is always a friendly and enjoyable community activity with seasonal refreshments. Anyone willing to help is welcome including accompanied children.

Further details from **Val Richardson** (01527 328764)

Christingle is a celebratory event that takes place in schools and churches across the country, raising funds for The Children's Society. The Children's Society is a national charity, that works with Britain's most vulnerable children and young people.



**The
Children's
Society**

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should feel
alone

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Thursday mornings 9.30am-11.30am

Suggested donation £2 per family
Includes tea, coffee and biscuits.



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and Toddlers



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Contact Rev. Richard Clark (07970 823462) email: rhredditch@gmail.com

Café Church – 1st Sunday of the month
In the Church Hall



Family Friendly Worship in a Café Style
Breakfast is served from **9am**
Worship from **9.30am**
There is **no charge** for refreshments.

Magazine subscriptions from only £10 per year

For more details please contact
Dean or Jane Hall
(contact details inside back cover)

*Thank you for supporting
St. Bartholomew's and St. Mary's Churches*

February Magazine

Please send your articles and items to our central email address:
contact@tardebiggechurch.org.uk by **MONDAY 15th January**

Thank you.

The Evergreens

The Evergreens - an informal group for people over 50 years of age who meet several times a year for fellowship. **For details please contact Vivien Mackenzie (07727 293664)**

Evergreens Christmas Lunch 2017

Calling all Evergreens! Have you bought your ticket for the Christmas Lunch?

Final numbers needed now!

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH TARDEBIGGE

The Evergreens Christmas Lunch

Saturday 9th December 2017

12.30pm for 1.00pm in the Church Hall



Ticket: £8.50

Raffle



Ring Vivien (0121 445 1245) for further information or if a lift is needed.

For more information please contact Vivien Mackenzie

(07727 293664 or 0121 445 1245)

Tardebigge Church Men's Group

The Men's Group exists for fellowship and service.

For more information please contact Rev. Richard Clark

The Spring Greens

The Spring Greens is our ladies' group for women of all ages with a young outlook. We usually meet in the Church Hall on the third Thursday of the month at 7.45pm. For more details please contact Jane Hall (07980 358252); or Email janehall73@gmail.com



At our meeting 16th November we made Christmas puddings. A big thank you to Lucy Parkes who kindly organised the ingredients, even though she was unable to attend the event.



'Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(The Collect for the Sunday before Advent)



Jane Hall

From Tardebigge Parish Magazine

December 1925

Notes by the Way

The news of the Queen Mother's death was announced just as we were holding our belated Harvest Festival. It was a day of thick fog, in spite of which a good congregation assembled. The fog was even thicker in Dudley, where travelling was impossible, and the preacher, Canon Phelps, had to telegraph at the last moment that he could not get here. The church, with its decorations of autumn leaves and bracken and masses of chrysanthemums, presented an unusual, but beautiful appearance. The services on Friday and on Sunday were partly of a harvest, partly of a memorial nature.



It is a great relief to have the work in the church finished, with the exception of the memorial slab. The white walls, though a strong contrast to the former blue colour, are, we believe, generally approved. The pavement of the chancel and sanctuary in its sober tones, is drying out gradually, and the altar rails in massive oak of simple, and even severe, design with slight decoration of swags running along them, harmonize well with the reredos. They have been beautifully worked by Mr Westover and Mr F Gwynne.



A meeting of the Mothers Union was held in the Village Hall on November 16. The Wave of Prayer, which comes to all Dioceses in turn, came here in the last week of November and many all over the Parish took part in it in their own homes on November 26th.



On the 20th, the Bishop confirmed 17 candidates from Tardebigge in this Church..



(An edition of the December 1925 magazine was found in amongst Alan White's papers recently by his daughter, Helen)

Celestial Corner

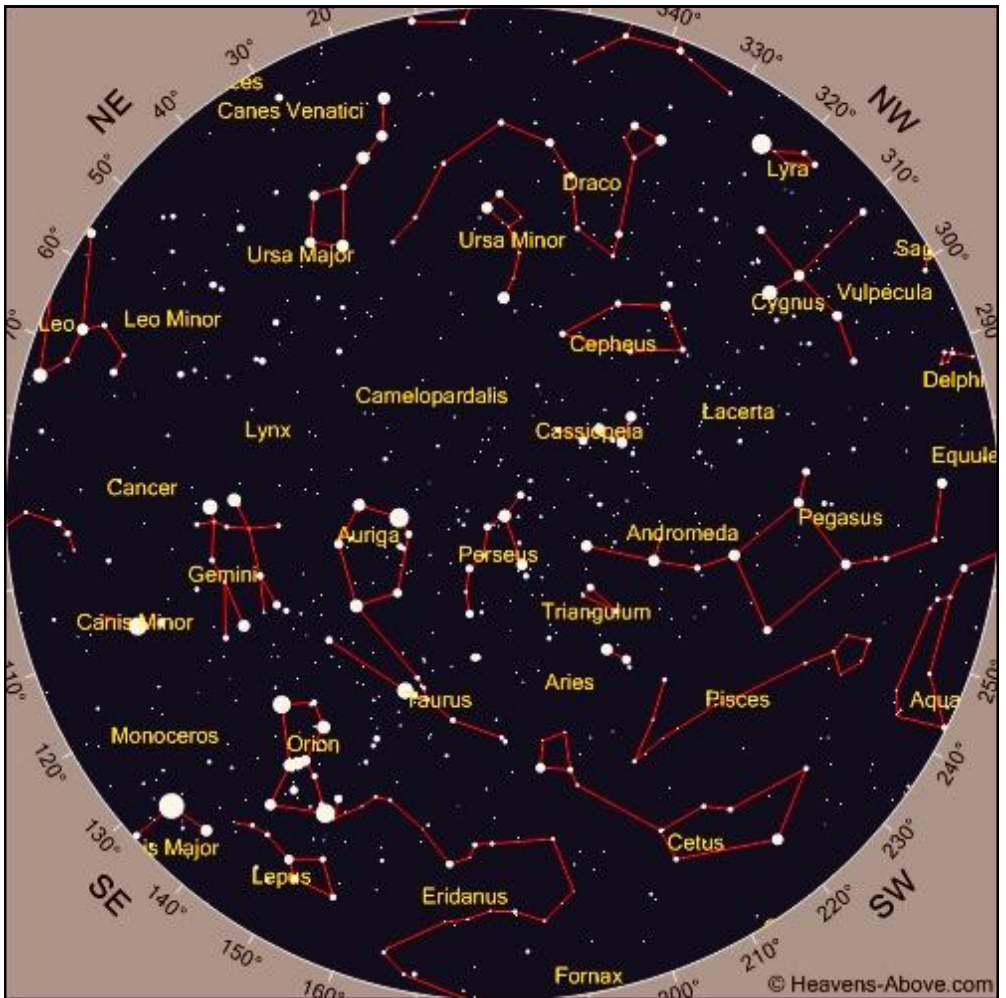
December, the month of the winter solstice, when the Sun reaches it's southern limit and is overhead on the tropic of Capricorn and the middle month of solar 'winter'. This December our evening sky is rather bare of planets as four of the bright ones are morning objects and the fifth, Saturn, is too close to the sun to be seen.

December is the month when we have one of the best meteor showers of the year, the Geminids. So called because if you trace their trails back, they all seem to originate from a point in the sky just to the right of Caster, the slightly fainter of the twins. Castor, and brighter Pollux, can be found to the left and above Orion. The Geminids are caused by the dust trail of a 'near Earth' asteroid, known as 3200 'Phaethon', which orbits the sun every 1.4 years. It is thought to have collided with another object in the distant past and the dust trail is the result. The shower was first noted in 1833 and is still going strong. In fact it is getting stronger as Jupiter's gravity has tugged the stream of particles closer to the earth over the centuries. The shower peaks on the night of 13th/14th Dec when, if you can get away from street lights, it may be possible to see 60 meteors an hour and up to 120 meteors an hour if you are prepared to stay up until the early hours!

After allowing 20 mins for your eyes to become dark adapted, look slightly to the right of Gemini so as to see the meteors with longer trails. If you look at Gemini direct you will only see the ones that are heading toward you and so the trails will be shorter!

This month's map is for 10pm on December 14th. I chose 10pm as it will be the same at 8pm on Jan 14th and so it will cover the two months of this edition of the magazine. I appreciate that the maps in these articles are not very clear and so to overcome this, I intend to concentrate on one, or maybe two, constellations per month in future, starting in February with a look at Orion and Canis Major. But to return to the present, you will note that Orion is in the south east, along with Canis Major which is just rising above the horizon. To the left of Orion you will see Gemini (The twins) with Procyon, the brightest star of Canis Minor (the little dog) to their left and lower down. To the right of Orion, and higher up you will see the "V" of Taurus (the bull) and higher still, almost overhead, Auriga (the charioteer).

You will not fail to notice the bright star, low in the SE near Orion. This is Sirius, the dog star, the brightest star in the sky. If ever there was a star 'like a diamond in the sky', it is Sirius, as it twinkles and flashes different colours like a diamond in a bright light! This twinkling, although all bright stars seem to do it at times, is most pronounced in Sirius, especially on a cold night. Obviously it is not changes in the star that causes the twinkling, it is due to atmospherics. Sirius, being rather low down in the sky, its light has to pass through air over the tropics to reach us. Warm air that is rising and, as it rises, cooling and it is differences in this air temperature, along with our cooler air, that is the cause of the twinkling effect. It is the same effect as a mirage on the road on a hot day, the rising air waves making it shimmer!



R.B.

Altar flowers rota 2018

"The church windowsills are being decorated for Christmas on Saturday 16th December, starting shortly after 11 am. Mince pies and tea/coffee will be provided; if you are not part of the usual team but would like to be involved, you would be most welcome! To ensure we have enough mince pies, please ring Lucy on 01527 871132 if you are planning to come along and help."

Lucy Parkes 01527 871132 ljparkes@btinternet.com

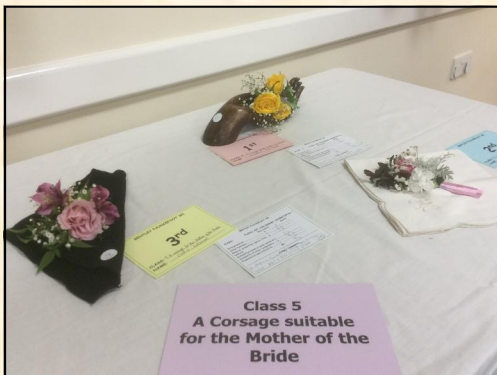


Bentley Pauncefoot WI

A visit to the Kidderminster Carpet Museum and the annual Produce Show were the highlights of November for our members. A sizable party of members and guests made the pilgrimage to Kidderminster which was once one of the most important centres for carpet making in Britain. The first carpet was woven in 1735. It was flat without pile and it became known as the "Kidderminster" carpet. As factories adapted to new developments in carpet making, the town grew and by 1900 Kidderminster was thriving with a population of 24,000.

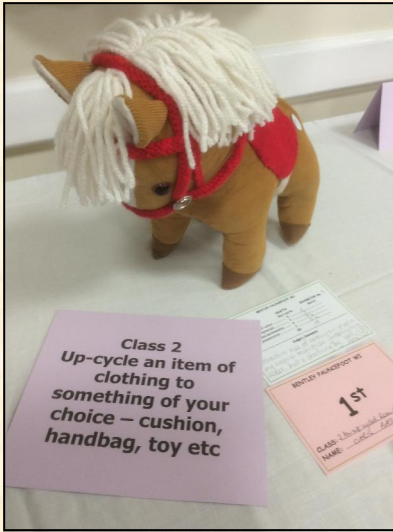
Almost every household in the town was dependent on the industry for its livelihood. It is fitting that the museum is housed in the former Woodward Grosvenor Carpet Mill which was built in 1835. The Museum recalls and celebrates the town's proud carpet making history with fascinating, often interactive, displays in seven galleries and an archive centre.

After an interesting introductory talk on the history of carpet making in Kidderminster and the foundation of Museum, we then explored the delights of the collection. It was exciting, if noisy, to see a hand loom and a power loom being operated by volunteers who had once used them in a factory. At least one member had a light bulb moment when she saw Kay's Flying Shuttle working, having never understood what the fuss was about when studying the Industrial revolution at school. Doreen, one of our members had worked in a carpet factory as a girl and her recollections added depth to the experience. All agreed that they would highly recommend a visit to the Museum to friends and family. In fact, some members of our party had to be dragged away from one exhibit for lunch. It was a computer on which you could design a carpet and then project it on to the floor to see how it looked. Magic!



Winning corsage entries by Michelle Stafford (1st), Helen Spence (2nd) and Chris Badger (3rd)

The November meeting is also the time when we elect our President. We were all overjoyed that Chris Badger agreed to stay on for another year and that the Institute is in safe hands. The Produce Show in Bentley Village Hall was keenly viewed by members. Virginie Eckersley and Chris Badger were joint winners of the Preserves Section. The Craft Section was won by Lucy Potter and the Baking Section was won by Chris Badger. Overall winner of the Show was Chris Badger. The standard of items presented was really high as can be seen in the photographs of some of the Craft class winners.



Chris Banner's winning upcycled toy



Virginie Eckersley's winning still life

Lynne Reading



Christmas Tree Festival at Worcester Cathedral

Tardebigge Community is participating in the festival again this year; the trees will be on display in the cloisters.

The festival is open daily between 9.00am - 5.30pm from Saturday 9th December until Thursday 4th January. Admission is FREE.

For more details please contact Jane Hall (07980 358252)



A verse for December

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

Isaiah 43: 18 - 19

News from School

We recently welcomed Joseph Hylton as a guest. Joseph is an England International 110m hurdler who gained inspiration as a school boy in Gloucester when he met Kriss Akabusi at his school's Superschools event. Joseph explained to the our pupils how Kriss encouraged him to join the local athletics club which helped him become an International athlete. Joseph was accompanied by Julian Golley who was a British triple jumper and won a gold medal at the 1994 Commonwealth Games.

At two days short notice, the school was informed that Pudsey Bear would be visiting the school around 9am on Friday 3rd November as part of his official tour of local schools. As you can imagine, the children were delighted and enjoyed adding their kindly donated loose change to his treasure chest. Two classes had pre-arranged to be dressed as pirates, which didn't intimidate Pudsey in the slightest. The rest of the school were invited to wear something spotty for Pudsey and BBC Children in Need. A good day was had by all!



At the time of writing we are busy rehearsing our Christmas performances. We would like to take the opportunity to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Jane Hall



Contact details:

Telephone: 01527 872886

Email: office@tardebigge.worcs.sch.uk

Website: www.tardebigge.worcs.sch.uk

Head Teacher: Julie Cutler



Epiphany

In the November edition of the magazine, we published the words of a song written by Linda Entwistle, a member of Epiphany, which she sang at the concert at Tardebigge in September. Below are the words of another song she wrote; she also sang this at the concert. (Linda lost her husband in a tragic accident three years ago).

We were privileged to have Epiphany, an ensemble of Christian musicians, perform at Tardebigge Church in September. Most of the musicians in Epiphany play in leading orchestras. We hope they will perform for us again in the not too distant future.

Here I begin

**Here I begin a new chapter of my life
And I feel all out at sea
I look – the shore is out of sight
It doesn't seem as real
The past fades out of my mind
But I have somewhere to go
My love told me so**

**And he keeps loving me, loving me, loving me – I can feel it inside
So, I keep trusting him, trusting him, trusting him – to be right by my side.**

**This journey – it seems to last for ever
When will it end?
For those who want to be a traveller there's always one more bend.
If I were alone I might be afraid
But I am not alone, as I have a friend.**

**And he keeps loving me . . . His presence is near
So I keep trusting him . . . to deal with all my fear.**

**And he keeps loving me . . . my faithful friend
So I keep trusting him to stay close by until the end.**

Memories of Worcestershire

My memories of the war and the years of rationing that followed are probably far removed for those of some of your readers. Born in Stirchley, Birmingham, at six months old my family moved to the village of Feckenham, Worcestershire.

Dad was on war work at the B.S.A. so he was always 'there'. However I saw little of him as he worked shifts and did fire watching at night. When he wasn't working he was on his allotment or working an elderly neighbour's garden to grow all kinds of vegetables.

One of my earliest memories is of a village fete to raise funds for the soldiers overseas. We drank lemonade made from powder and ate small cakes in paper cases. There was bowling, sack races, and a Punch and Judy show. I remember sitting on a red ants nest and getting badly stung. My sister Meg, six years my senior, was humiliated as I was stripped off in public to remove the beasts.

When I started school I have vivid memories of a 'game' where we had to file out of school and silently walk down the lanes, hugging the hedges, to a steep sided stream. Fox holes had been dug in the banks and we had to climb down into them with an adult to each group. Tin sheets were placed over us and covered in branches. It was feared that German paratroopers would be dropped. Our parents must have been terrified. I thought it was a huge adventure but some of the kids were crying. I remember one day standing out in the street with all the neighbours watching fleet after fleet of low flying planes towing gliders pass over, for what seemed like hours. I think it must have been for the Arnhem operation, 'A Bridge Too Far'.

We left Feckenham when I was six in the very cold February of 1946 and moved to another smaller village, Upper Bentley. I attended the local village 'all age' school (you left then at age fourteen). There were twenty eight pupils divided into two classes; Infants and the 'big class'. We had an unqualified teacher for the infants and an eighty year old headmaster. I loved Bentley, I was old enough to roam freely. There were woods and streams to explore and a Manor House which in turn housed American troops followed in succession by Yanks, British Tommies, and Prisoners of war. We village kids, about five of us including one girl, could always get under the wire and talk to them. They would give us their chocolate rations, and make small toys from bits of wood. Where are those toys now?



In the sloping field at the back of the Manor a series of open latrines had been dug with logs

dropped across to sit. One day walking up the hill a low flying plane came over. Two soldiers, happily going about their business, leaned back to watch its progress. Suddenly the point of no return was reached and the log rolled tipping them feet in the air into the mire. We fled in fits of laughter.

At the bottom of the hill was a muddy pool called Cozac Pond. On hot summer days we used to strip off and join the troops or the prisoners, similarly unadorned, to cool off in the muddy water. I shudder now to think what could have drained down the hill into the pond; however we never seemed to get ill. After bathing we would gather up our clothes and follow the men up to their shower huts to get clean. I don't know if our parents knew or if they considered it natural, but I can imagine the furore this would stir up today.

The war and the days of austerity that followed largely passed us by. Dad was a grafter. We had a large garden with pig sties and kept three pigs. We had a hundred hens in deep litter and reared three geese and six ducks for Christmas. Dad raffled the ducks off round the village and the local copper was always lucky enough to win one. We had apple, plum and damson trees; strawberries, raspberries and currants. A large greenhouse provided us with tomatoes and cucumbers and sometimes a spontaneous crop of mushrooms. Mom used to make jam, and dry or preserve the fruit and tomatoes.

We lived on the fat of the land. Out town relatives used to walk five miles from the main road in the summer for fresh produce in exchange for clothing coupons. In the autumn they would come for joints of pork, bacon, chicken and eggs. When we killed a pig the leaf, the layer of fat, was rendered down and flavoured with rosemary to produce huge mixing bowls of lard, delicious on bread toasted over the open fire. I remember being fascinated by the pie-crust pattern formed round the edges of the bowl as it cooled to a snowy white with rosemary leaves frozen in it. I remember home-made faggots, tomage and tongue, chitterlings and pigs kidneys and sweet breads.

Looking back, life was golden for us. Summers were always hot, it never rained in the school holidays and snow was always crisp. What a world away it all seems now.

Mike Ainge

Mike Ainge now lives in Walsall, and recently submitted his article after attending a family wedding at Tardebigge Church. His article also appeared in the 'Express and Star' in December 2008. Mike apologises for the quality of the image which is a copy of the original photo. The original photo belongs to his family and is stored in the loft. J.H.

God who calls us all to share
**YOUR MISSION, WE LOOK
TO YOU FOR GUIDANCE**
WE LOOK TO YOU FOR STRENGTH.

**MAY WE BE ANOINTED
BY YOUR SPIRIT AS WE
STAND IN SUPPORT OF
THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED.**

Help us, as the Spirit-filled
people of God, to be ambitious
for all of your children and
to be trusted by those whose
HEARTS HAVE BEEN BROKEN.

Help us, as the Spirit-filled
people of God, to offer
liberty to those children
who are not free, as we
bravely take up the mission
of your Spirit, to see the
world changed in the
NAME OF CHRIST JESUS.

Amen.



The
Children's
Society



Messy Church Redditch
@MessyChurchRedditch



Messy Church for families with young children

**Church Hill - at St. Andrew's Church, B98 9AA
Saturday 2nd December 10.30am - 12.30pm**

**Redditch Town Centre - at St. Stephen's Church
Saturday 16th December 2.00pm - 4.00pm**



Welcome!

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4.30pm to 5.30pm

Except
Thursday & Sunday
9.30am to 12 Noon



'Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.' Matthew 13: v 32

Pips

at St. Philip's Church, Webheath

Stories, Songs and Games
For 3-7 year olds

Every 2nd Thursday of the month
3.45pm - 4.40pm

Starting with a drink and a biscuit!



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www.stphiloswebheath.org.uk

Contact Rev. Richard Clark (07970 823462) email: trhredditch@gmail.com



St Mary's Church

St Mary's is a countryside Church located in Lower Bentley.

St Mary's is licensed to Publish Banns and for the

Solemnization of Marriage.

St Mary's is ideal for small, intimate weddings, being able to accommodate up to fifty guests.

For further information contact

Jane Hall, Parish Clerk
on 07980 358252 or email:
contact@tardebiggechurch.org.uk

Ray Burn 12.04.1943 – 17.04.2017



Ray was born in Birmingham on 12th April 1943. The family lived on the Bristol Road in Edgbaston where they kept pigs and hens in the garden. When he was 6 years old he and his best school friend knocked the pigsty down and it was about the same time that he was almost expelled from Hallfield Prep School where Mr. Rigby the Headmaster told his mother that “your son will either become the Prime Minister or the leader of a gang of crooks”. He later became a Chartered Accountant and a Merchant Banker.

Around the age of 7 he went to a boarding school where the Headteacher’s wife said that he was “the sweetest boy in the school”! From there he went to The Blue Coat School in Birmingham where he became Head Boy and a children’s Church Warden in the Children’s Services at St. George’s Church, Edgbaston. He then went to George Dixon School in Birmingham followed by Worcester Royal Grammar.

He was an enthusiastic member of Moseley Rugby Club and became an articled clerk to Russell’s Accountancy firm, later qualifying in 1967. He married Louise in the same year and they had three children – Joanna, Daniel and Alexandra. Six grandchildren arrived who were the light of his life.

When he qualified as Fellow of Chartered Accountants in 1967 he was one of the youngest ever to do so at the time and received his 50 years certificate earlier this year. He worked for several firms of accountants, followed by a short career in merchant banking until he purchased Baker Horseshoes and brought the business through very difficult financial times, transforming a very old industry into a modern and successful company. He was given an award by the Gas Companies for designing a new and very efficient foundry furnace and one of his highlights was when he celebrated the company’s centenary in 1987 with Princess Anne as his guest.

All his adult life he had been involved in many charities including being Treasurer of Birmingham Youth Clubs, St. George’s Church Edgbaston, St. Bartholomew’s Church, Tardebigge and the Tardebigge Community Hall. He was always very conscientious and devoted many unseen hours organising and advising what was the best and most lucrative way of running their finances.

Ray was a very keen fisherman and member of several fishing clubs, including The White Swan Piscatorials and was appointed President in 2011. “He brought this famous Club through very difficult times with his skills”.

He was an active and very vocal member of Birmingham and Edgbaston Debating Society, being made President in 1989–90 and was invited to join the Blacksmith’s Livery in 1991.

Ray was a passionate Welsh rugby supporter with many trips down to Cardiff Arms Park. He was also a productive gardener but his motto was if you can't eat it, don't grow it! Sometimes his methods of fertilisation were a little questionable as it was not unknown for him to tell dinner guests how his beans were so good because of the contents from the septic tank which were regularly introduced into the vegetable patch each year! He was a regular champion marrow grower winning 1st prize for many years in the local Finstall Produce Show.

Some of the quotes and letters that arrived after Ray passed away sum up all the different aspects of him and included:

- “Ray was always at the centre of whatever mischief we got up to, down the pub, off to motor racing or whatever”
- “Sharp intellect and did not suffer fools gladly”
- “Life with Ray was always full of laughter, fun and good argument. He was so larger than life in every way, yet also like an overgrown school boy who needed you (Louise) to pull in the reins from time to time”
- “We respected his wisdom often delivered in outrageous fashion, his dreadful jokes and the wonderful fun we had in his company”
- “He had an absolute unique ability to make you laugh albeit his ground rules dictated this could be at your own expense or any other minorities”
- “There will simply not be a dad in our group who will be missed so sadly”
- “He always took time to ask what I was up to and I felt he genuinely cared. He had a great way of being your mate despite being my mate's dad”
- “The glory days of Welsh rugby when they won every match and every Englishman's wallet was poorer for betting against them!”
- “He was one of life's characters”
- “Practical jokes at the pub – Christmas tree scams and growing tins of new potatoes come to mind plus major pollution of the stream in his garden”

Ray was diagnosed with bladder cancer in 2005 following which he underwent chemotherapy and then surgery. He was always very positive about everything, never letting it get on top of him. He continued to lead a very full life, even skiing each year for several years after his initial treatment. Many people were not aware of what he had and what he was going through in the way of treatment. “I will always remember his immense courage and determination”– quote from one of his medical consultants. Ray was always a good and supportive friend to many, from all walks of life, and this was evident when over 300 people attended his funeral earlier this year. I think the quote – “He was one of life's characters” sums it up very eloquently.



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There were 3 women who died on Christmas Eve & went to heaven.

St. Peter at the gate said since you all died on Christmas Eve you all got to show me something that represents Christmas.

Well they didn't quite know what to do but the first woman put her hand in his pocket & realised she still had the Christingle from the church service. St. Peter was impressed and invited her in.

The Second woman thought for a moment and pulled out pulls out her mobile phone and plays a Christmassy ring tone. St. Peter was impressed and invited her in.

Third woman pockets were turned inside out and all she had was a pair of woolly mittens "Well?" St. Peter said "Now what do they have to do with Christmas?"

The woman replied "Oh these are Carols."



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A Night of Magic at the Village Hall

Forty five guests posh frocked and black tied, on five tables chatted and dined.
Magic at your fingertips was bille, Bernie circulated the tables and thrilled.

How did Gail's ring end up in the rose, all of us concentrated but nobody knows.
Ten pounds was changed into Zambian kwacha, looks to me like Bernie gotya!

Fish for the starter, pheasant the main, trio of puddings to tables it came.
Hope no one noticed the name of the port, served with the cheese where was it bought?

After the intimacy of magic at table, a cabaret followed to see all were able.
Delivered by Bernie with a dry wit, stories and jokes around magic they fit.

Peggy was chosen to have her mind read, to think of a name it could have been Fred
Bernie asked questions out of his head, rightly he guessed Leo he said.

David was chosen to help with this trick, ten pounds he gave Bernie he is a brick.
Far too difficult in verse to explain, the quiz David did his note to reclaim

Needless to say he was successful, out of a kiwi it wasn't that stressful!
Who till Saturday knew of kirigami, that's not the same as origami.

Folded card, cuts at random, produced Elvis Presley with gay abandon.
Strictly Come Dancing claimed Debbie McGee, glamorous Helen stepped in did you see?

Drawn on a playing card folded and cut, no abracadabra card's whole there's no but.
Thanks to Bernie, Guests and 'The Team,' all their hard work made faces beam.



Barbara Hampshire

P.S. Our next even is the Village Hall Christmas lunch Sunday 10th December –
further details to follow by email.

If you aren't already on our mailing list please send us an email to
bentleyvillagehall@gmail.com and we will put you on our data base.

CHRISTMAS JOKES

What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days!

What kind of motorbike does Santa ride?

A Holly Davidson!



How did Scrooge win the football game?

The ghost of Christmas passed!

What did Adam say to his wife on the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve!

How many letters are in the Christmas alphabet?

25. There's "no EL"!

What do angry mice send to each other at Christmas?

Cross Mouse Cards!

What do you call a frog hanging from a ceiling?

Mistletoad.



Why was Santa's little helper depressed?

Because he had low elf esteem.

What is the popular Christmas carol in Desert?

Camel ye Faithful.

What do you call a scary reindeer?

A cariBOO!

What do you call a bunch of chess players bragging about their games in a hotel lobby? **Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer**

A song told me to Deck the Halls...so I did.

Dean and Jane Hall are not very happy.





THE CHURCH
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WORCESTER

**Letter from the
Archdeacon of Worcester
The Venerable Robert Jones**

It seems that Christmas has been coming for several months now. I saw a Christmas tree lurking in my local pub at the beginning of September – surely a record! And yet it doesn't feel very 'Christmassy' as we look at world affairs, politics and what goes on in the lives of so many people.

It doesn't feel very Christmassy, of course, because we've made Christmas in our own image, rather than in the image and likeness of the very first Christmas. The very first Christmas was a tale of a birth – always a joyful event – in the midst of considerable human turmoil. It was not at all different from what so many of us are experiencing today; a real life born in the real circumstances of the day.

We tend to dress things up, and maybe there's no real harm in that. For example, Christmas trees came quite late to the party – introduced by Victorians. Many years later they appear in my local pub as the symbol of the season!

We do this in so many ways. Let's take Advent. No doubt inspired by those Blue Peter candle stands made out of metal coat-hangers (I'm showing my age, but do you remember them?), we tend to think of the wonderful season of Advent as a countdown to Christmas. But it has a far wider reach than that; it is a countdown to the time when God's will is done here on earth as it is in heaven.

We dress up holy seasons, and we dress up holy places. One of the great excitements of today's church is the way we are opening up the buildings to much more community activity. We have holy space and community space, and they rub along well together, which should not surprise us as Christmas people believing in the God who came to be among us.

Maybe we do it for ourselves too. I sometimes wonder whether we simply need to re-learn wonder and awe at God's beautiful creation and re-creation. At the feast of Epiphany the Magi come without commentary or explanation simply to worship and bring their gifts.

Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, these festivals give us a wonderful excuse to celebrate the God who shows us in Jesus just how much He loves us and reminds us just how valuable human beings really are. And if I was nudged to think about that a couple of months back in my local perhaps that was really no bad thing. Seasons' greetings!

Robert

The Bridge of Christmas

**An old man with arthritic knees, who many miles has ridden
Upon a camel slow as he to do as he's bidden,
His companions are both younger men and fitter both by far
Than Melchior, the aged king, each guided by a star.**

**Kings in regal splendour they have traversed the desert sands
Searching for One much greater who holds within His hands
The future of mankind so Melchior, with aching joints,
Forgets his pain and follows where the guiding star now points.**

**There is a bridge that stretches over every mortal plain
It turns war into peace and makes of wealth no gain
The three kings on their camels as they reach the stable door
Know their crowns are worthless, that their riches mean no more.**

**A babe it is that meets their eyes, before whom each king kneels
And Melchior's age means nothing, no arthritic pain he feels
The star has led them to the manger and their wealth they leave behind
As they greet the Babe of Christmas, the Bridge that spans mankind.**

L M Wadlow



Teenager's charity cycle in memory of his Upper Bentley grandfather

As an introduction, I would like to thank Mr Ian Morgan for writing about Ben's fantastic achievement.

As Ben's Granny I am so proud of his effort to plan, endure and complete such a challenge in three days, aged 14!

Pam G

A 14-year-old boy has got a taste for adventure after cycling to London in memory of his granddad.

Ben Morgan has raised more than £1,500 for the British Heart Foundation after completing a marathon 212-mile cycle over three days.

Ben's grandfather, Bert Gateley, lived in Upper Bentley and was very active at Tardebigge Church where he sang bass in the choir and was a church warden for 16 years. Bert, who died in 2007, aged 74, had moved to the village with his wife Pamela from Belbroughton in 1962. Pamela still lives in Upper Bentley, helps out regularly at Bentley Village Hall and attends St Mary's Church in Lower Bentley.

Ben is a pupil at Monmouth School for Boys and spent several months planning every aspect of the challenge from Monmouth to Greenwich. Ben admits the adventure was 'only the tip of the iceberg' and the keen rower, kayaker and windsurfer is determined to tackle other challenges in the future.



Ben was joined on the challenge by his dad Jon, while his mum Jenni, who grew up in Upper Bentley with her two brothers, provided back-up with a car in case of emergencies and she also rode parts of the route.

The teenager cycled to Chepstow before picking up National Cycle Route Four, which he followed all the way, stopping at Devizes on the first day, and Twyford on the second. He followed country lanes, disused railway lines and travelled along the Kennet and Avon Canal and River Thames.

Ben cycled from Twyford to Windsor on the final day, gliding through Windsor Great Park, along the River Thames and past Hampton Court Palace. He travelled through Richmond Park and headed into Central London, eventually reaching the finishing line in Greenwich.

“I am thankful and very grateful for the tremendous support I have received from people who have made donations to the British Heart Foundation,” said Ben. “The initial fund-raising target was £500 but the figure, with Gift Aid, has gone beyond £1,500 due to magnificent support I have received.”

Ben’s mum, Jenni, said: “Ben takes after his grandad because he has a wonderful singing voice. He has just come back from the school choir tour of Rome, the highlight of which was singing at St Peter’s Basilica. My dad did his National Service in the RAF and Ben has joined the Combined Cadet Force’s RAF section. My dad was an engineer and Ben is leaning towards engineering as a possible future career.”

Mrs Morgan said Ben had first started talking about the challenge and then planning it last year. “The challenge was Ben’s idea and we were merely there to support him,” she said. “It was a great achievement and we are very proud of him.”

Second Master at Monmouth School for Boys, Mr Simon Dorman, said: “It was lovely to see Ben come up with an idea like this and then follow it through all the way to its completion. It is something, I am sure, he will remember for all of his life.”

To make a donation to the British Heart Foundation, go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ben-morgan18>

Ian Morgan
PR and Social Media Manager at Haberdashers’ Monmouth Schools



Dec 4	Kay Middleton	Jan 5	Joanne Stephens
Dec 10	Jane Hall	Jan 6	Jane Oldaker
Dec 12	Guy Milton	Jan 13	Norita Young
Dec 13	Tim Powell	Jan 22	Roger Powell
Dec 25	Fred Shrimpton		

Registers

Weddings

Nov 11 John William THEISS and Sarah Jane HARRISON



Funerals

Nov 1 Lawrence Charles BROOKES

Nov 8 Marlene Cathrine SHAW



		Sidesmens' Rota	Flowers
Dec 3	11.00am	E Price and P Hopkins	Advent (no flowers)
	6.00pm	P Hopkins	
Dec 10	8.00am	D Hall	Advent (no flowers)
	11.00am	G Price and L Parkes	
	6.00pm	M Price	
Dec 17	11.00am	J Oldaker and P Hopkins	Advent (no flowers)
	6.00pm	P Hopkins, L Parkes, M Price, D Hall	
Dec 24	8.00am	D Hall	Christmas (team)
	11.00am	L Parkes and D Stubbings	
	4.00pm	P Hopkins, J Hall, M Price, D Hall	
	11.15pm	T Powell and P Hopkins	
Dec 25	11.00am	P Hopkins and M Price	Christmas (team)
Dec 31	11.00am	J Oldaker and P Hopkins	Lucy Parkes
Jan 7	11.00am	E Price and P Hopkins	Gladys Price
	6.00pm	P Hopkins	
Jan 14	8.00am	D Hall	Norita Young
	11.00am	G Price and L Parkes	
	6.00pm	M Price	
Ian 21	11.00am	J Oldaker and P Hopkins	Sheelagh Keen
	6.00pm	P Hopkins	
Jan 28	8.00am	G R Underhill	Jane Hall
	11.00am	P Hopkins and D Stubbings	
	6.00pm	T Powell	



Services at Tardebigge & Lower Bentley

“Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, But encouraging one another” Hebrews 10: 24-25a

December

Sunday 3rd December

9.30am **Café Church** in the *Church Hall*
(Complimentary breakfast from 9am)

11.00am Traditional Morning Prayer

6.00pm Holy Communion (BCP)

Sunday 10th December

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am **Carol Service** at *St. Mary's*

11.00am **Family Gift Service**

6.00pm Evensong

Sunday 17th December

11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
and Sunday Funday

6.00pm **Carols by Candlelight**

Christmas Eve

8.00am Holy Communion

4.00pm **Christingle**

11.15pm Midnight Communion (BCP)

Christmas Day

11.00am **Family Communion**

New Year's Eve

9.30am **Worship for ALL**

11.00am Traditional Morning Prayer

January

Sunday 7th January

9.30am **Café Church** in the *Church Hall*
(Complimentary breakfast from 9am)

11.00am Traditional Morning Prayer

6.00pm 'Songs of Praise'

Sunday 14th January

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am Holy Communion (BCP) at *St. Mary's*

11.00am **Family Service**

6.00pm Evensong

Sunday 21st January

11.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
and Sunday Funday

6.00pm Evensong

Sunday 28th January

8.00am Holy Communion

9.30am **Worship for ALL**

11.00am Holy Communion

6.00pm Evensong

Word Search

"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.'" Luke 2: 8-12



SHEPHERDS FLOCKS SAVOUR
ANGEL MESSIAH MANGER
SHONE GLORY BABY

Words to be found may be forward, backward, vertical or diagonal within the puzzle

J.E.H.

Sudoku

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

Solution next month

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

Last month's solution



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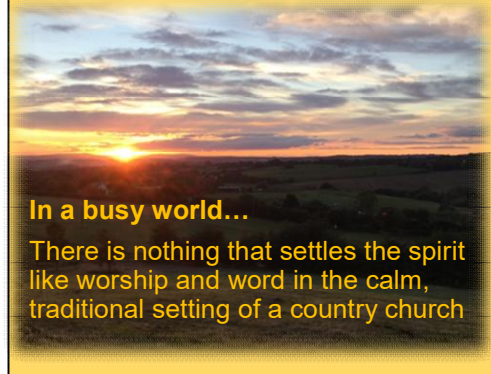
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