

'Keep In Touch'



KEEPING YOU 'IN TOUCH' IS

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YOU ARE WELCOME TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THEM

WINTER 2018

***CHURCH & VILLAGE
BIRSTALL & WANLIP***

THE PARISH OF BIRSTALL AND WANLIP

Rector	Revd Vince Jupp, 251 Birstall Road LE4 4DJ <i>email: vincejupp@btinternet.com</i>	2674517 07840 855030
Hon Asst. Priests	Revd Sheila Skidmore, 15 School Lane Revd Kerry Emmett, 1 Chamberlains Field Canon Anne Horton, 8b Copeland Road Revd Robin Martin, 22 Sycamore Road Revd Michael Webb, 31 Bramley Road	2673318 3194736 2677942 2671651 07813144645
Churchwardens	Mr Tony Bloxam, 17 Sandgate Avenue Mr Andy Proud, 97A Wanlip Lane Mr John Ward, 28 Walker Road Mrs Debbie Shephard, 41 Roman Road	2675381 07889 807087 2677600 2672630
Licensed Readers	Mr Peter Chester, 12 Oakfield Avenue Mrs Lesley Walton, 16 The Crossways Mrs Tricia Emmett, 1 Chamberlains Field	2120236 2674995 3194736
Pastoral Assistants	Mrs Doreen Wilson, 13 Poplar Avenue Miss Sandra Robinson, 7 Lambourne Road Mrs Gill Pope, 26 Blenheim Road	2674680 2677238 2675086
Safeguarding Coordinator	Mrs Annette Marshall <i>annette.marshall8@gmail.com</i>	
Sunday School	Mrs Rose Parrott <i>rose.parrott@btinternet.com</i>	07811662235
Church Office	Mrs Sheryl Jupp, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com</i>	2671797
Treasurer	Mrs Nicki Wills, Church Office, Church Hill <i>email: stjames.birstall@btconnect.com</i>	2671797
Tower Captain	Mr Clive Mobbs, 30 Wanlip Avenue <i>Practice night—Thursday at 7.30pm</i>	2677156
Wanlip Church Hall Bookings	Mr John Ward, 28 Walker Road	2677600
Nearer Group	Peter and Gill Chester <i>pete.chester@ntlworld.com</i>	2120236
Editor of Keep in Touch	Canon Anne Horton, 8b Copeland Road <i>rahorton@outlook.com</i>	2677942
Editorial Team	Revd Vince Jupp, Mrs Lesley Walton <i>lp.walton@ntlworld.com</i>	

FROM THE REGISTERS

September - November 2018

Baptisms

9/9	Ella Clayton	St James
	Cassian Hopkins	St James
28/10	Daisy Rowland	St James
	Benjamin Moyers	Wanlip
18/11	Willow Turner	St James
	Ronnie Lyons	St James

Marriages

21/9	Aaron Kirby and Sarah Harris	St James
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Wedding Blessing

22/9	Paul and Rachel Sands	Wanlip
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Funerals

16/10	June Standfield	Wanlip
1/11	Elizabeth Gow	Wanlip
22/11	Roger Cowham	St James

'KEEP IN TOUCH' Spring 2019

Copy by February 1st, please

All contributions welcome. Maximum preferred length: 500 words.

REGULAR EVENTS AND GROUPS

Weekly

- Thursday 7.30-9.00pm **Bell ringing practice (St James)**
Contact Clive Mobbs 0116 2677156
- Saturday 10-12 noon **St James Church open** + Tea and coffee

Monthly

- 2nd Monday 7.30pm **Monday Group (Village Hall)**
Contact Jane Scott 0116 2673761
- 4th Monday 10.15am **Mothers' Union (St James)**
Contact Helen Tarry 0116 2677493
- 1st Wed. 10.30am **Contemplative Prayer** 76 Sibson Road
Contact Noreen Talbot 0116 2672756
- 3rd Tuesday 10am -12.30 **Old Nick's Coffee Shop**
Wanlip Church and Community Centre

REGULAR SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

St James, Birstall Sunday

- 8 am Holy Communion (*said*)
 10 am All Together (*1st Sunday*)
 10 am Parish Communion (*other Suns*)
 10 am Sunday School

Weekdays

- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,**
Friday 9 am Morning Prayer
Thurs. 9.30 am Holy Communion

Our Lady & St Nicholas, Wanlip Sundays, 6 pm

- 1st Sunday**
 Holy Communion
- 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sundays**
 Prayer Book Evensong
- 5th Sunday**
 Alternative Service of the Word

AN ADVENT 'WAY INTO PRAYER'



Reflect on the signs you see on your way to church
 – road signs, street signs, etc.

What signs have you noticed in the people you have met today
 (e.g. of stress, tiredness, joy)?

What do the signs/notices in church say about us?

After a few moments of silence, pray:

Lord of Advent,
 signs can warn, annoy, inform and inspire.
 May we, as your people, be signs to your world
 of your longing to unite us all as one family –
 safe from things that can discourage us,
 alert to things that can divide us,
 appreciative of things that enrich us,
 and open to things that are kingdom-shaped and spirit-filled.
Amen.

Prayer from 'Roots' resources, Nov/Dec 2018



The views and opinions of the authors who have submitted articles to 'Keep in Touch' belong to them alone and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the wider church.

RECTOR'S RAMBLINGS

Welcome to the Advent, Christmas, Candlemas and Lent edition of 'Keeping in Touch'.



We are looking forward to Christmas with expectation, but we are also committed to 'being present' throughout Advent. This is important because Christmas is made all the more special by our engagement with Advent.

Advent is a penitential season, during which we experience a paring back of the church decorations. We endeavour to be reflective, as we ready ourselves for the celebration of God's appearance in the Christ Child, God's Word become flesh. Advent challenges us to stop, to pray and to reflect.

We cannot, however, help but look ahead to Christmas. The commercial world bombards us at every turn with so much: everything from the latest toys, fancy drinks and must have pressies, not least via the advertisements that fill all the gaps in between TV programmes and our favourite music on the radio. **Our challenge, therefore, is three-fold: to enjoy the now, to be present in the now and to find God in the now.**

If we let it, the external seems to fill every gap, every space, and every bit of silence in life, our stress increasing as the shopping days to Christmas reduce. Truth is that **God is in the gap**, and in being quiet, and prayerfully going within – into the silence inside – we shall find God.

There's power in the present moment that releases us from concern for the future and from all our baggage of the past. I would want to encourage you to **notice** that Christmas is coming and that Christ is arriving, and, in engaging with Advent, to know that God is already here, within, and we can meet Him at any time, and anywhere.

As a young adult, Theodora studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London, developing her skills in designing and creating stained glass. She designed the cartoons for all her windows, also painting the glass and cutting it herself. Her windows were fired and leaded up at The Glass House in Fulham. Her subjects and designs were influenced by her strong Christian faith. Between 1925 and 1940, she worked from her own studio in Cornwall. These were her most productive years. After the war she moved to Bath to be with her sisters. She died in 1956.

The earliest of your three windows, c. 1925, is 'The Annunciation'. It is in the south wall of the old chapel. (*Top left p.24*) The second window (*right*) shows the parable of the talents. It is dedicated to Dora's parents, and is in the Howard Room. The third, c. 1932, (*bottom left p.24*) is at the back of the nave and portrays Mary and the baby Jesus.

My photographs of your windows don't do them justice, so if you haven't yet seen them yourself,

do come into the church and look at them. The church is normally open between 10 am and 12 noon every Saturday.



The peacock incidentally is the artist's signature, and can be found somewhere in all her pictures. She chose it because of her Christian faith. It symbolises Christ's Resurrection.

Anne



MISS SALUSBURY'S WINDOWS

St James the Great, Birstall



One of the aspects of St James' Church that made me feel 'at home' as I began to worship regularly with you were the three windows created for the church by Leicestershire stained glass artist Theodora Salusbury. There are two windows of hers in the church at Woodhouse Eaves where I was rector.

I confess I didn't know much about Miss Salusbury then; it was your windows that sparked off my enthusiasm, and led me to renew my acquaintance with her cousin Georgina Maltby, when she and another family member, Andrew Loutit, were researching and writing a book on their famous

relative. Despite Theodora's fame, this was the first book to be written about her. It took five years to research Miss Salusbury, to track down all her windows, and to write the book. Some of you will have met Georgina when she visited this church to see and photograph the three windows in St James', and, more recently, on the publication of the book, when she came to speak to you. Not everyone was able to get to her talk, hence my desire to share something of Theodora's story with readers of 'Keep in Touch.'

Theodora Salusbury was born in Leicester. Before her parents settled in Birstall in in 1919, the family lived next door to St James the Greater Church, on London Road, Leicester.



Jesus said 'Be like a servant awaiting the return of your master.' He used the analogy of waiting in some of his parables, but not the usual bored or restless kind of waiting that is a denial of the present. It is not a waiting in which our focus is on some point in the future, rather a qualitatively different kind of waiting, one that requires our total alertness. Something could happen at any moment, and if we are not absolutely awake, absolutely still, we will miss it.

My interpretation? Don't let the pressures of the Advent of Christmas steal your Advent. Live fully in the now. Be still, be present and listen, so that when Christmas does arrive, you'll arrive with it, rested, resourced and ready to be in the now-ness of it, still, present and able to enjoy the celebrations to the full.

I pray that you will have an amazing Advent, a joyous Christmas, and a well-lit Candlemas. And may this season lead you prayerfully into Lent, which is yet another opportunity to draw closer in our relationship with God, through his Son, as we reflect, pray and study.

My prayer for you is this: that you will enjoy this magazine, and also that, through the many opportunities to come together over the Winter season, that we'll 'keep in touch'.

Blessings,
Vince

STATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION

You may have heard that we are considering creating our own Stations of the Cross for 2019. We have now decided that this project will be 'Stations of the Resurrection' or 'Stations of Joy'. The eighteen stations cover the period from Easter Day to Pentecost, and are based on readings and prayers in *Common Worship*. We have many of the stations covered already, with collage, tapestry, clay and paint. Could you offer to create a station in another medium, or in one of the media already offered? If you would like to take part, please contact Kerry Emmett, Lesley Walton or Anne Horton as soon as possible. We'd love you to join us.

Kerry Emmett

COMING AND GOING

Advent means coming, and there is a lot of coming and going, as we get ready for winter, for the end of term, the end of the year, and for Christmas. Like the shepherds, who were sent by angels to visit a child born in a stable, the Word of God made man, and like the wise men who followed a star to find a king of the earth and of heaven, we too travel to find gifts, and to order and to buy food for our Christmas guests or hosts. Advent also challenges us to re-order our lives. It is a time to take a good hard look at ourselves and our world, and a time to make changes.

Birstall's three traditional churches have renewed their covenant to work together; the 'Nearer' community continues to offer an alternative way of seeking God together, but without a church building; and a new church plant has arrived in our village hall.

There have been changes in Birstall village this year. The hanging baskets have gone from Sibson Road; soon Christmas trees will be seen over many of our shops. The Library has new opening arrangements. There continue to be staffed hours, except on Wednesdays. Some hours though, early morning and late afternoon, require customers to have a smart card to get in. You might like to take advantage of the library bus that picks up the less able-bodied, taking them to change books and enjoy a social time. There are some new shops in the village: a greengrocer near the Post Office and a wool shop. New people are running the dry cleaners and the Café at the Corner. There's also new pizza parlour! It's important to support them all if they are to stay, as well as to welcome each new member of staff who serves us.

Shepherds and Wise Men welcomed the new baby in that Bethlehem stable. Let's show all our newcomers that they are welcome in our community, and bring them the gift of our custom. Let's also show our Christmas joy by smiling and greeting each other as we come and go.

Noreen Talbot

At home and abroad the work continued to develop. In the 1960s the first hospital playgroup was started in an UK hospital. In 1967, shocking images of starving children in Biafra were broadcast across the world. The civil war raged over two and a half years with over 400 treated each day in clinics that had been set up.

Save the Children, working with partners, were the first to raise the alarm about the impending famine that hit Ethiopia in 1984. Between 2006 and 2009, the Rewrite the Future campaign helped 1.4 million children into school in countries affected by conflict. Response to numerous disasters over the last fifteen years has hit the headlines- 2004 the Asian tsunami, 2005 the Pakistan earthquake, 2014 the worst ever outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus, 2018 the earthquake in Indonesia. All the time these emergencies are being dealt with, **Save the Children** is working with children affected by war, those needing health care, starving children, providing education and protecting child rights.

What would Eglantyne think of our world today?

Josephine Burgess

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AT LAUNDE ABBEY

15th October 2018



A CENTURY OF Save the Children

May 19th 2019

Recent months have seen the focus on Women and the Suffragette Movement, but one hundred years ago other determined women were fighting for causes they believed in passionately. One such woman was Eglantyne Jebb.

In May 1919, Jebb was taken to court, prosecuted and fined for distributing a leaflet she had produced in direct contravention of the Defence of the Realm Act. Her message: **'Our Blockade has caused this. All over Europe millions of children are starving to death.'** Four days later on the 19th May 1919 she and her sister Dorothy Buxton with friends launched **Save the Children** with a rally in the Royal Albert Hall.

Eglantyne was the first to realise that children have rights, which the international community should understand, protect and respect. It is said that on one Sunday in 1922, on Mount Salève, high above Geneva, she wrote the words that were to become the world's first declaration of rights of the child. This was adopted by the League of Nations in 1924, and evolved to become the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, coming into force in September 1990.

The first major appeal for Save the Children Fund was launched in 1921 to help feed children caught in the Russian famine, The work gathered momentum and, in the 1930s, was extended outside of Europe, with the setting up of the Child Protection Committee, which stood up for children's rights in Africa and Asia.

In 1940, supporters were asked to sponsor children living under the shadow of the Second World War. Reminiscent of the child friendly spaces **Save the Children** still run today, play centres were created in air-raid shelters in large UK cities.

The Korean War began in 1950, leaving many children destitute and living unaccompanied on the streets. Teams from **Save the Children** arrived in 1952 and stayed for more than 20 years.

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, NEWYEAR

St James the Great, Birstall

Sunday 2nd December

10:00 am Christingle All Together Service

Wednesday 19th December

7:30pm Carols for All

Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Crib Service

11:00 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day

10:00 am Parish Communion

Our Lady & St Nicholas, Wanlip

Sunday 2nd December

6:00 pm Advent Carols

Thursday 6th December

7:30 pm St Nicholas Patronal Service

Sunday 16th December

6:00 pm Readings & Carols by Candlelight

Monday 17th December

6:00 pm Carols around the Tree

Christmas Day

9:00 am Holy Communion

Monday 31st December

11:30pm Midnight Watch

THE DAY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE WENT TO LAUNDE ABBEY

They went on 15th October. In a mini-bus. And had a great time!
14 children and young people, 15 supportive adults.

Emily liked the prayer room where you could light a candle and say prayers. Also the chapel trail and the midday service. She found the animals in the chapel window.

Theo and Esme enjoyed walking the labyrinth and the swing on the tree. Amelia enjoyed the bus journey, talking with friends, and the labyrinth and the quiz with dad.

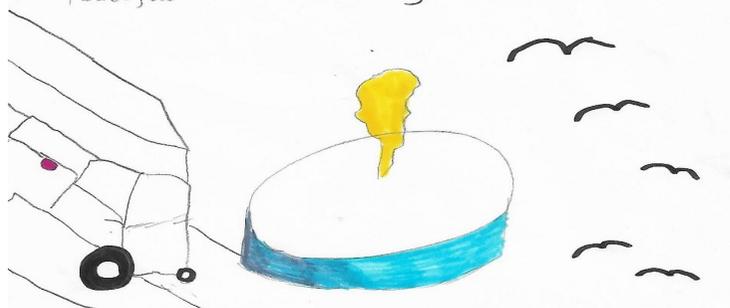
George liked the excitement of climbing the hill and looking down on Launde.

Vanessa liked the prayer room and the service in the chapel.



George said

I like the little room where we lit a candle and said a pray I felt it was relaxing peaceful it's stuck in my head.



Thank you for the mini bus for getting us there

Thank you for the beautiful Countryside and the beautiful birds

They all wanted to thank Matthew Green for driving the bus. And the church for funding the day.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Afternoon Teas

**at Birstall Methodist Coffee Shop, bi-monthly 2.30-4pm
8th December 2018; 2nd Feb, 6th April, 1st June, 3rd August,
5th October, 7th December 2019.**

If you, or someone close to you is experiencing some loss of memory, or are feeling isolated or lonely, then come and join us. 'Down Memory Lane' is a very informal get-together. It begins at 2.30 - no worries if you are a bit early or late. You will be welcomed by one of our helpers who will invite you to sit down at one of the tables and when we think everyone has arrived, we have entertainment which always involves music and singing together. After about 15 minutes tea and home-made cakes are served. After tea, the entertainment resumes for another 15 minutes or so, and after more time to chat, it's time to go home at 4 pm. So, if you think you would like to join us, we would love to see you!

To find out more, please contact **Janet 0116 267 1471.**

A COVENANT WITH GOD

Methodists hold an annual Covenant Service, mostly at the New Year, at which we celebrate all that God has done for us, and affirm that we give our lives and choices to God. The traditional Covenant prayer is so central to the Christian life that other Churches have also adopted it. You may like to use it too.

I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you, or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it.

And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.'

You may feel that you would like to host a fashion show or a beetle drive, run a crafting session or, if you are feeling a bit more active, even organise a treasure hunt round the village. The possibilities are endless. With a little bit of faith anything is possible and nothing is impossible. Nor do you have to do it alone. We have a whole ministry team, a PCC, and a social committee who have loads of experience ready to help! It can also be fun!

As we involve our friends, neighbours and families, our fund-raising also helps us raise the church profile. It takes us out into the community, giving us the opportunity to introduce others to the love of God.

I pray that I have planted many seeds. Dare I ask you to ensure that they do not fall on stony ground, but, that you will nurture them and bring home a great harvest.

Nicki Wills

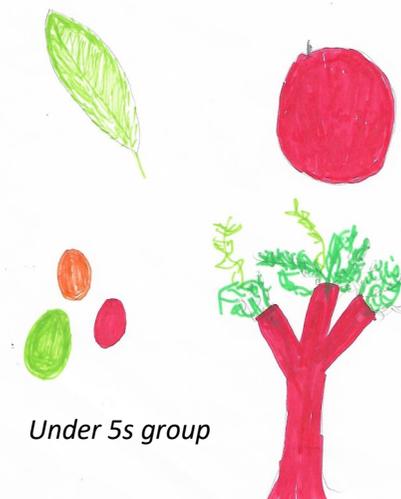
TEN THINGS YOU NEVER HEAR IN CHURCH

1. 'Hey! It's my turn to sit in the front pew!'
2. 'I was so enthralled, I never even noticed your sermon went 25 minutes overtime.'
3. 'Personally I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.'
4. 'I've decided to give our church the £500 a month I've been sending to the mission established by the church I used to be a member of 30 years ago.'
5. 'I'll volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the Sunday School class.'
6. 'Forget the Church of England's minimum stipend. Let's pay our vicar so he can live like we do!'
7. 'I love it when we sing hymns I've never heard before.'
8. 'Since we're all here, let's start the service early!'
9. 'Vicar, we'd like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.'
10. 'Nothing inspires me and strengthens my commitment to the Lord like our annual stewardship campaign.'

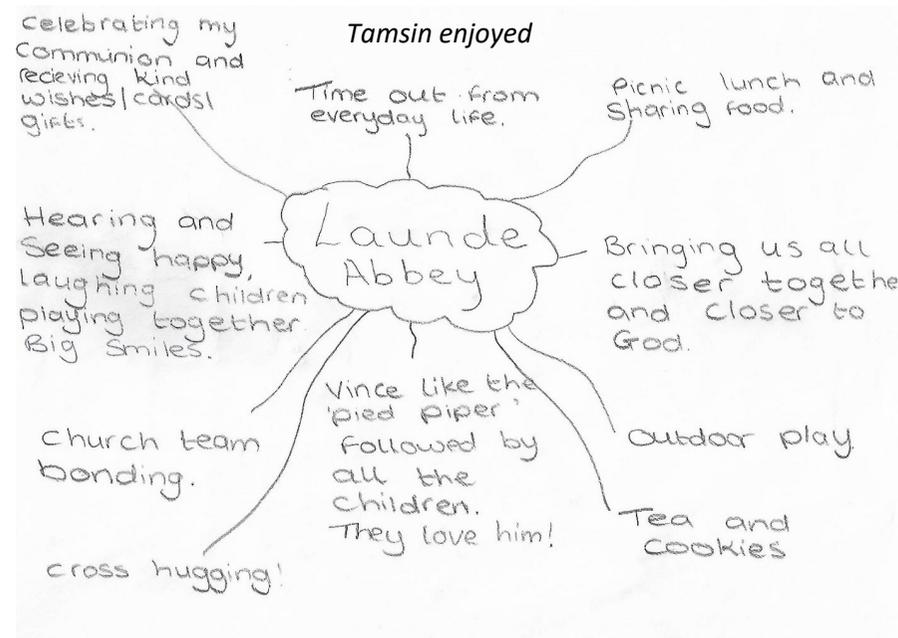
from Grove Jokes and Quotes, with permission

Janet was struck by the noise on the bus on the way home. Also exciting journey there, narrow lanes and up and down steep hills. She said that the prayer room was overall favourite with the icons and quiet space. Chapel Trail was interesting with lots to see and find out – fun to see Vince lying on the floor looking for figures under the font. Also watching Vince learning to do Yoga in the big room. Thanks to the Mothers' Union for supporting us and coming with us. Thanks to Vince for giving up his day off to be with us. He was there first!

I WENT ON A WALK WITH THE UNDER FIVES
WE LOOKED AT CROSSES AND TREES.
WE COLLECTED LEAVES, APPLES, STONES AND A FLOWER.



Under 5s group



A SPECIAL CAKE FOR EPIPHANY

At Epiphany we celebrate the coming of the Magi bringing gifts to the baby Jesus. Many countries celebrate the occasion with a cake. The traditional cake is a 'galette des rois' or 'kings' tart'. Inside you may put a figurine or a dried bean. Whoever has this in their slice is king or queen for the day and will be given a crown to wear. The spices are used to remind us of the costly gifts given by the Kings.

Ingredients

2 tblsp single cream;
13 oz packet puff pastry;
2 oz caster sugar;
2 oz butter;
1 egg yolk;
2 oz ground almonds;
½ tsp almond essence;
2 level tsp flour;
icing sugar.



Method

Prepare a hot oven (gas 7, 220°) with shelf above centre.
Divide pastry in half and roll into 2 rounds, approx. 10" diameter
Cream caster sugar and butter together, and beat in the egg yolk.
Stir in the cream, ground almonds, essence and flour.
Spread this mixture on one half of the pastry rounds leaving a border of 1 inch.
Brush round the border with water and seal the other round of pastry on top. Mark, using a sharp knife, with a pattern rather like a bicycle wheel, then brush with egg white.
Bake for 15 - 20 minutes until well risen.
Quickly remove from the oven, dust thickly with icing sugar and return to the oven (top shelf). Bake for a further 2 minutes until there is a shiny golden topping to the pie.

Julie Ward

SMALL BEGINNINGS: GREAT THINGS

from the Church Treasurer

Once again it is my privilege, on behalf of the church, to thank you all for being so generous in your giving to the church. So far in 2018 you have donated £43,000. Our necessary outgoings over this whole year, however, are £83,000. Furthermore, our latest architect's reports advise us that we need to spend in excess of £100,000 over the next five years on both our churches. We are working to obtain grants to help us to fund this work. We will though still need to find a significant amount ourselves.

We need to act now. Now is the time to sow seeds, because it takes time for them to mature, and bear fruit. Jesus told the people of his day a story about a mustard seed. He said that the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. But when it's planted, it grows, becoming the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.



As we pray about our own response to the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus encourages us to trust God's power to transform all our faith-full endeavours. **His great things grow from our small beginnings.** So, as we pray, let's ask ourselves what more we can give to God? What little thing can I do, or suggest, that might grow into something bigger? Some of us may feel that the right thing to do is to increase our regular financial giving to the church. Not every member of our congregation, however, is in a position to do that. All of us, though, can find some space to give a little of our time and talents. Each effort, however small, can make a huge difference.

We recently asked you to think about getting together with friends to run a fundraising activity. There is a list of ideas on the notice board, but don't let that limit your imagination!

Christmas is a very busy time for all Christian churches and we quite often find it difficult to find the quiet space and time to reflect on what we are truly celebrating. I know many of us heave a sigh of relief when the left-over turkey is finally finished and the Christmas decorations put away for another year, so it is a real blessing that the 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' (WPCU) comes immediately after all the activity. It gives us a time of quiet reflection where we can come together in shared worship to shed the stress of that very busy period and refocus our minds on the wider Christian church and on God's world as a whole.

In 2018 the Week of Prayer resources invited us to reflect upon the continuing impact of the Transatlantic Slave Trade upon Caribbean society and upon Christian unity and witness. In 2019 we shall be reminded again that our prayer for Christian unity is offered up amidst injustice, and that Christian dis-unity is in so many ways related to the divisions in our world. The Churches of Indonesia, who have prepared the material of the Week of Prayer 2019, speak out of a context of ethnic and religious diversity. They testify to the real need for a unity that is found in diversity, and one that is built on solidarity and collaboration. Yet they also highlight issues of economic injustice, and highlight how religious pluralism can face challenges in the face of radicalization.

The structure of our own 2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity hasn't yet been organised, so please keep an eye open for information in your pew sheets and on the church website, but, as ever, it will fall between the 18th and 25th January.

Just before I finish, let's cast our minds back to our 2018 Week of Prayer and recall the wonderful service and party with which we celebrated the 21st anniversary of the signing of our Churches Together Covenant which took place on the 22nd January.

Debbie Shephard

CTiBW Chair 2017 - 2019

Debbie.shephard54@gmail.com



THE STORY SO FAR

How did Birstall Food Hub come into being? In short, God led us step by step. It all began in 2014 when, because of running CAP Money Management courses, I made contact with Tim who was about to set up a food bank in Rothley. CAP courses came and went, the Soar Valley Food Project became established in Rothley. Then Karen, the Parent Liaison Officer for Birstall Primary schools, told me she was worried about some families who were struggling to buy food. We talked to Tim at Rothley and he agreed to make a food parcel available in school. However, we didn't really think that there appeared to be enough demand for a food bank in Birstall.

In summer 2017, however, people began to post about their need for school uniforms and food on *Spotted Birstall* (a Facebook page). Joann, a Birstall resident, set up another Facebook page, *Birstall Support Hub*, to try to respond to these needs. Through the *Hub* school uniforms and food were collected. (The strange thing was that we did not see this post ourselves, but it was sent to us by a friend who lives in Glen Parva!) There seemed to be evidence of some need for food in Birstall. I contacted Joann and suggested liaising with the Rothley food bank. The result was that Tim, from Rothley, spoke to the Cedars Academy Stakeholders group - a group concerned with the well-being of people in Birstall, particularly children and young people. From this meeting Tim arranged to lead some primary school assemblies to explain about food banks. We also arranged to collect food parcels from Rothley for anyone in need in Birstall, to avoid them having to travel.

An article in Birstall Post publicised this involvement. As a result we had several offers of food donations and some people asking for food. Delivery of food parcels was kept very low key, however. We responded to promptings from other people rather than pro-actively moving anything forward.

I was praying God would lead, and He did.

Pete Molesdale from the Methodist church was led to suggest that the food collected in the Co-op in Birstall should now go to Rothley rather than elsewhere, and that we might perhaps open a Food Parcel Collection Point in the Methodist Church. Karen at the primary schools offered to raise money at school for publicity for a local Food Collection Point if it was needed.

There now seemed to be support in the community for a local food bank, so Pete Molesdale and I started to move Birstall's Food Parcel Collection Point onto the next phase. We advertised for volunteers, because without volunteers there was no point in carrying on! That advertisement produced around twenty volunteers from the local churches and the wider community. The Food Parcel Collection Point was on its way to becoming a reality.

After training, provided by Tim from Rothley, and the renaming of the *Birstall Food Parcel Collection Point* to the rather easier *Birstall Food Hub*, we opened just before Easter 2018. Since then, we have supported several families and individuals. We are still learning and developing our procedures, but it feels like God is continuing to lead us forward. Sadly several of our volunteers have had to drop out for one reason or another, so we now have several vacancies.

Do have a chat with me if you'd like to know more.

Gill Chester



When we think of healing, our first thought is healing from illness- which may be physical or spiritual. But in Christian terms healing is something much broader, so we speak of healing and wholeness. We are then thinking of anything that makes us less than whole people. That may include unconfessed sin, worries of any sort, lack of confidence, or a hundred and one other things.

given to highlight the work of charities, the schools people are linked with etc. etc. Each meeting we are now talking about how we might be more involved with people who are not involved with church and asking God to bless our times with them as we seek to be God's hands and feet in whatever we are doing.

We continue to have strong links with the schools and with the Parish Council and are always looking to see how we might contribute to, and support, the community. As a result of these links, we have recently been invited to help at a community event in one of the primary schools, and with Christmas coming up, there may be other opportunities to offer help at community events.

Pete Chester

Churches Together in Birstall and Wanlip

Wow! Where has 2018 gone!! I'm sure I share that sentiment with many of you, it certainly has been a rollercoaster of a year. I am equally sure that you will understand when I say that the 'best laid plans of mice and men' frequently have to be changed as ideas grow and develop, and this, never more so, when bringing together ideas of three different congregations, and that is what has happened over our Christmas plans alluded to in the Autumn Edition of KiT.

We realised fairly early on that we wouldn't be able to follow through with our original plans for Advent and Christmas. But, at Wanlip, we have been able to organise a children's Advent Tea Party to which invitations have been sent out to the congregations of all our 'churches together' as well as to the villagers of Wanlip. This will take place on the afternoon of Advent Sunday, December 2nd, and will be filled with fun activities, lots of lovely food, story time with the Rector and the odd surprise! If you are reading this before Dec 2, and know of someone who would like to come, then please give me a call on 07860 951116.



NEARER UPDATE

NEARER continues to meet and to try to be a missional community that is drawing nearer to God, nearer to each other and nearer to the community.

We try to base our lives, as individuals and together, on the seven sacred spaces of Chapel (worship), Cloister (meeting), Chapter (decision making), Scriptorium (study), Refectory (Food), Garden (work) and Cell (private time with God).

So what have we actually been doing? In some of our sessions together we have been looking at how artists have illustrated events in the Bible. The pictures have served as an interesting jumping off point for us to explore our own understanding of God. In other sessions we have been looking at 'The Ninefold Path', using the Beatitudes as a pattern for life. These have been useful, challenging and thought provoking times. At the same time NEARER continues to have regular 'socials' – when people join NEARER they seem to come, first, to the social evenings so these seem to be important. In addition we have begun a monthly time of worship at the weekend ('Encounter'), where we seek to encounter God through different forms of worship together. And, of course, prayer continues to be important with us, meeting monthly to pray for our community and our world.

Recently it has been our privilege to host a group of German Pastors for an evening. They were visiting the diocese and wanted to find out about our *Fresh Expressions of Church*. At the time of writing we are expecting a similar visit from a group from Wyoming.

All sounds busy and good – maybe...

At a recent review, we wondered if we might have become too inward looking and focussing on ourselves. We decided that the 'Garden' element of the seven sacred spaces could be highlighted by regularly hearing about, and praying for, each other's involvement in the everyday things of life – the paid work some are involved in, talks

At St James', we have a Prayer Ministry Team, sometimes called 'the Healing Team'. We offer prayer during Holy Communion services on Sunday mornings for those who seek prayer for themselves, for family members or friends who need God's help.

Every two months we have a Healing Eucharist when prayer with laying-on of hands and anointing with oil is offered. We are also willing to offer prayer in private at home. In Mountsorrel, where I was vicar, I regularly had requests from those facing operations or other procedures in hospital. This has happened on a small number of occasions in Birstall.

I must emphasise that we don't do the healing. God heals through his wonderful Holy Spirit. When I was curate in Wembley, many years ago, a man in the congregation claimed to heal and on one occasion said he'd done a good job. I threw up my hands in horror and pointed out that God had done a good job.

Of course, for reasons that we do not understand, God does not always heal. He may give us the ability to be at peace about our situation. And for Christians with a belief in life beyond death and the best yet to come, even death can be seen as healing.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me or one of the team.

Kerry

A PRAYER

Almighty God,
you know that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves:
keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls,
that we may be defended from all adversities
which may happen to the body,
and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

BCP Collect for the Second Sunday in Lent

TIDES

God, Me and Art
October 2018

FOUR HAIKUS

SPRING

SPRING HARES

Three in one? Or one in three? Spring hares symbolise God's eternal life.



SUMMER

PATH OF GRACE

Summer labyrinth.
Which, of many ways, leads to God's heart? Only One.



AUTUMN

BURSTING OUT

An orange palette.
Exuberance of colours
Presage falling leaves.

and SEASONS

WINTER

PEACOCK

Immortality!
Old feathers shed; new display
God's all-seeing eye.



Anne