

# LINK

Monthly Magazine

December  
2019



LOVE

PEACE



**St Mary the Virgin, Rickmansworth**  
The Church of England and The Methodist Church in Partnership  
*Serving the whole community*



## Regular Services

*PLEASE SEE CALENDAR ON CENTRE PAGES FOR FURTHER DETAILS, AND OCCASIONAL VARIATIONS AND ADDITIONS*

	<i>Time</i>	<i>Service</i>	<i>Language</i>
<b>SUNDAYS</b>			
Weekly	8.00AM	Said Holy Communion	Traditional
1st	10.00AM	All Age Sung Holy Communion followed by coffee in the Church Centre	Modern
2nd–5th	10.00AM	Sung Holy Communion followed by coffee in the Church Centre Children's Church in the Church Centre (during term time)	Modern
3rd	12.15PM	Holy Communion	Modern
Weekly	6.00pm	Evening Service	
<b>WEEKDAYS</b>			
Tue	10.00AM	Holy Communion	Modern

## Contacts

*The code for all 6 digit telephone numbers is 01923, unless otherwise indicated.*

<b>Church</b>	<b>Address:</b> Church Street Rickmansworth WD3 1JB
	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk">www.stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk</a>

## Ministers at St Mary's

<b>Vicar and Minister</b> authorised to serve within the Methodist Church	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
	vicar@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	
<b>Methodist Minister</b> at St Mary's, and three other Methodist churches	The Revd Richard Lowson	223906
<b>Associate Priest;</b> Self-supporting Minister	The Revd Scott Talbott	07802 244877
	scott.talbott@talk21.com	

<b>Reader Emeritus</b>	Michael Baker	<b>Officers</b>
<b>Churchwardens (A)</b>	David Carruthers	07831 387541
	Jane Earl	711695
	David Hibbert	773735

## Church Office

<b>Church Administrator</b>	Katrina Bond	721002
<b>Email:</b>	churchoffice@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk	
<b>Opening hours:</b> Mon-Wed 9.00am-12.30pm, Thu and Fri 9.30am-1.00pm		

# Minister's Letter

Dear Friends in Christ,



I love Christmas. I absolutely love Christmas. I love the tinsel, the trees, the lights. I especially love the angels that have lit up the road from Oxford Circus to the BBC buildings in recent years. I love the anticipation, the waiting, the sense of expectation... all of these. There's a lot to love! I do wish we would wait for it though. I wish we could hold on and that Advent could be a Season of Preparation as we wait with baited breath for all that we know is to come, all that we hope is to come, all that we dream is to come (as well as hoping for a few surprises along the way, perhaps...).

There has been a lot of hoping this past year - and more - for the members of our congregation who prepare LINK so faithfully each month. They, like me, have been hoping that people might come forward to assist in the preparation of LINK and, whilst there have been some glimmers of hope around the corners, that which has been hoped for has not yet made it from around the corner. Thus it is, that this edition of LINK will be the last one in its present form. What may come next is not yet clear, even if there *will* be a 'what comes next'.

So we, like all people at this time of the year, wait with baited breath for what is to come - surprises as to how LINK might look in the future, whether there will be LINK or a replacement in the future, who might come forward with hidden skills and offer a new path forward... we wait and we hope and we dream for the surprises.

This is a time then, to say thank you to those who have worked so hard to prepare LINK over so many years: Editing, writing articles, chasing up the clergy for their Leader items, looking ahead for what may need to be written by way of information, looking out for people to provide write-ups of events in the life of our church, taking photographs of anything and everything from flower arrangements to flags, from Confirmees to new clergy, typesetting, spending hours trying to get the photographs not to ping around on the page, dealing with recalcitrant machines when the ink runs dry, the staples run out or the \*\*\*\*\* thing simply won't work and the hoped for printing days have to

slip. The hours of work that have gone on behind the scenes to produce the magazine are, quite simply, innumerable, and we are so fortunate to have had such a dedicated team over so many years who have worked so hard to produce such a clearly set out, professionally set out Church Magazine. I, for one, am immensely grateful to each and everyone one of our LINK Editorial Team, and I know many others are too.

As well as loving all-things-Christmas, I love Advent too. It is a beautiful Season of the Church Year, and I know that many of us wait for the strains of *Come, thou expected Jesus* and, in recent years, *Christ be our Light*. As we wait, as we watch, as we ponder what will come - through the Season of Advent, at Christmas, with LINK, I share with you these lines from a beautiful poem produced by the Iona Community:

*You keep us waiting.  
You, the God of all time  
Want us to wait  
for the right time in which to discover  
Who we are, where we must go,  
Who will be with us, and what we must do.  
So, thank you...for the waiting time.*

With my thanks to you all for your constancy in worship, prayer and devotion in the year that has past, and my prayer, love and good wishes for the year that is to come.



The Revd Deborah Snowball

## Readings at Holy Communion

1 Dec	Isa 2.1-5	Rom 13.11-end	Matt 24.36-44
8 Dec	Isa 11.1-10	Rom 15.4-13	Matt 3.1-12
15 Dec	Isa 35.1-10	James 5.7-10	Matt 11.2-11
22 Dec	Isa 7.10-16	Rom 1.1-7	Matt 1.18-end
24 Dec	Isa 9.2-7	Titus 2.11-16	Luke 2.1-14
25 Dec	Isa 52.7-11	Heb 1. 1-4	John 1.1-14
29 Dec	Isa 63.7-9	Heb 2.10-end	Matt 2.13-end

# Prayers

## Prayer Suggestions

*Week beginning:*

- 1 Dec An end to hatred between people of faith
- 8 Dec Our neighbours
- 15 Dec Those who differ from us
- 22 Dec That we may be prepared to welcome the stranger
- 29 Dec For hope

## For Local Churches

### The Deanery

### The Methodist Circuit

- |        |                              |                       |
|--------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Dec  | St Mary's Rickmanworth       | High Street Harpenden |
| 8 Dec  | All Saints', Croxley Green   | Kings Langley         |
| 15 Dec | Christ Church, Chorleywood   | Ley Hill              |
| 22 Dec | Mill End, W Hyde & Herongate | Markyate              |
| 29 Dec | St Oswald's, Croxley Green   | The Scroll, N Watford |

## People Living Locally

- 1 Dec The Byeway
- 8 Dec Cedars Avenue
- 15 Dec Chorleywood Road
- 22 Dec Loudwater Lane
- 29 Dec Meadow Way

## A Prayer for December

At the beginning of this new Church year, Father may we ponder anew the great mystery of how your Son came to earth in human form and lived amongst the people of Palestine. Let us imagine what it would be like if he came here to England, even to Rickmansworth, as it is today. Help us to know what he might have to say to us and what he would want us to do.

And so may we be ready to hear with joy the news of your coming once more this Christmastide and be ready to serve you with resolve and confidence Amen.

*A prayer from the Methodist Prayer Circular used during the intercessions at the 10am service on Sunday 3 November and requested by a reader. It is by Stephen Bales, Equality and Diversity Officer, Cornwall District*

Transform us, we pray, O lord,  
from wagers of war to people of peace,  
from seekers of self to servants of all,  
from sinners trapped to saints triumphant,  
from lovers of possessions to possessors of your love. Amen.

## **Christmas at St Mary's – Part 2, and beyond...**

Following on from details provided in the November edition of LINK, below you will find information for other events and Services taking place during December and the Christmas period.

### **Christingle Service: Sunday 15 December, 2.30pm**

The observant amongst you will have noticed the error for the date given last month as compared to the *Season of Welcome* Christingle Invitation Card.

### **The Christmas Tree of Prayer**

The tradition of decorating our Christmas Tree of Prayer with the names of those family, friends or situations we are thinking of at this time continues. The 'decorations' on this special tree are the stars that shine as lights of hope. The tree will be in Church from Sunday 15 December until Sunday 5 January. The Church is open during daylight hours for you to come and add names, and you are welcome to invite others to do so too. Feel free to spread the word about this lovely tree of prayer and hope.

### **Decorating the Church**

Decorating will take place on Saturday 21, but if you have evergreen foliage, please bring it along to church on Friday 20 and place it under the Tower.

### **Christmas Greetings**

There are two options for sharing Christmas Greetings at St Mary's this year:

Given the raised interest in ensuring care for our environment, it has been such a relief to see so many more people sending just the one card to all members of the congregation using the board at the back of church. Money that would have been spent on cards is then given

to the charities named below via the same system. We warmly encourage you to use this method.

The alphabet boxes will be available at the back of church for people to 'post' their cards. There is an invited 'charge' of 10p per card which will be divided equally between the Children's Society and Action for Children; please drop payment into the Parish Office. The boxes will be available from Sunday 8 December until after the Service on Sunday 5 January. Any cards not collected by this date will be given over to a recycling facility.

There are many cards left behind each year, which is such a pity: if you see some cards you could deliver, please take them and pop them through the person's letter box. In addition, if you feel you really would like to send a card to someone (rather than to the whole church family as in Option 1 above) - *please also consider sending a card to someone you don't know so well*, as there are many members of our congregation who don't receive a card from anyone at the church despite them having been faithful members over a good many years!

### **Carol Service: Sunday 22 December, 6pm**

As in previous years, the Carol Service will be followed by seasonal refreshments in the Church Centre. We shall need assistance for making and serving mince pies and wine. If you would like to be involved with these things, please let Katrina know.

### **Crib Service: The Journey to Bethlehem - 4pm Christmas Eve**

Principally for families with young children - but others are also very welcome to attend. If you are bringing along younger family members, please encourage them to dress up as a shepherd, lamb or an angel. (We often have far too many Marys and Josephs - but that's fun too!)

### **Services through the Christmas Season**

#### ***Sunday 29 The First Sunday after Christmas***

Yes, Services will be taking place as usual - in this most beautiful Season of the Church Year.

#### ***Tuesday 31 December***

10am Holy Communion - where we may even sing a Christmas carol or two and enjoy (yet another!) mince pie.

### **Sunday 5 January The Second Sunday after Christmas**

Yes, it's still Christmas... in addition to the Morning Services, we shall have Carols at the Crib at 6pm. Always quite lovely and intimate as we listen to seasonal readings and sing the last Christmas carols of the Season.

### **Looking forward to Epiphany, Monday 6 January**

The Kings will make their way into the Crib at the 10.00am Service (note change of time) and, on one of the very few occasions in the year when we do so, we shall use incense as a part of the devotions of our worship. Seasonal refreshments will follow at The Vicarage.

## **Music for December**

### **1 December, Advent Sunday 10.00am**

Organ music: *Messiah*: Overture, Handel

Improvisation: *O veni sapientia*

Symphony No. 4: *Scherzo*, Widor

Choir: *How brightly gleams the morning star* Sweelinck

### **6.00pm Advent Carol Service**

Organ Music: Improvisation, *Creator of the stars of night*

Chorale-Prelude: *Wachet auf*, J S Bach

Choir: *The truth from above*, Trad, arr RVW/Sykes

*And the glory of the Lord*, Handel

*Jesus Christ, the apple tree*, Gold

*There is no rose*, Ellis

### **8 December**

Organ music: *Rhosymedre*, RVW

*Fantasia Chromatica*, Sweelinck

Choir: *People, Look East*, Becanson

### **15 December Gaudete Sunday (Gaudete , Latin = Rejoice,)**

Organ music: *Prelude in D major*, J S Bach

Improvisation: Advent Prose Plainsong

Fugue in D major, J S Bach

Choir: *Rejoice in the Lord always*, Purcell

### **22 December 10.00am**

Organ music: *Prière*, Franck

Concerto in A minor: 1st Movement Vivaldi/Bach

Choir: *Ave Maria*, arr Arcadelt



### **Christmas Carol Service: 6.00pm**

Organ music: (Brass ensemble)

Choir: *A maiden most gentle*, Traditional, arr Wood  
*Coventry Carol*, Traditional, arr Shaw/Sykes  
*Rejoice and be merry*, Rutter  
*Nativity Carol*, Rutter

### **Tuesday 24 December, First Mass of Christmas, 11.15pm**

Organ music: *Prelude, Fugue and Ciaconna*, Buxtehude

Improvisation: *In dulci jubilo*

*Toccata in F major*, J S Bach

### **Wednesday 25 December 10.00am**

Organ music: Improvisation on *Sussex Carol*

*Fugue in C major*, J S Bach

### **29 December**

Organ music: Chorale-Preludes: *In dulci jubilo*, J S Bach

*Toccata & Fugue in D major*, Buxtehude

## **Library News**

*Michael Baker*

We are grateful to Jean Dodds for the gift of a selection of books to our Church Library, mostly on the subject of prayer.

## **Joseph**

*Dorothy Entwistle*

Those of us destined to take a back seat at the show of life might feel a touch of sympathy for Joseph. There he is, a distant, puzzled spectator at the opening scenes of the greatest event there's ever been - the redemption of the world. Did he ever speculate about a possible crisis to come, an eventual dénouement, and then a tremendous finale? It seems doubtful, as he was kept all the time so very busy and so very responsible. It is not possible to turn one's back, indeed, on angelic visitors. He might have been a descendant of the mighty King David, but he was only a not-very-well-off carpenter.

First they told him he must get married. And then there was a baby to protect and cherish. And then there was Herod's sudden penchant for child-slaughter and more angelic commands, this time to rush wife and child to a place of safety. In spite of all these great responsibilities,

Joseph has seldom been presented as a noble figure. In St Mary's Church he is tucked away in the south-east corner of the chancel in his own smallish window, with Mary next door in hers [see cover]. He has plenty of company for there's an ox just behind him and two sheep in front and a couple of doves perched on a piece of stable roof. It's not clear why the two sheep are there unless we are to suppose that the worshipping shepherds have been and gone and left a donation. In paintings Joseph is nearly always a background figure, large and elderly with a bushy grey beard and - though not very much - some bushy



grey hair. In a Mantegna painting (*Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1450, Metropolitan Museum, New York) he is lolling on the ground at one side, fast asleep. In a Georges de la Tour (*Joseph's Dream*, c1640, Nantes) he's asleep again with his mouth open, and we see in the candlelight the angel of his dream.



Millais' *The Carpenter's Shop*, sometimes called *Christ at the House of his Parents* (1849-50, Tate) shows a Joseph different, but no nobler, just poorer, overworked, ill-fed, even emaciated, though with a touch of passing, protective concern. The symbols are many. There are the clustered sheep gazing anxiously in, the dove waiting dozing on the ladder, and



the blood-red flower in the doorway, and that's not to mention the wound in the hand and the other boy in a furry apron bringing a bowl of water. (Some people love this painting. Dickens hated it.)



The flight into Egypt was a favourite subject and again Joseph

has a humble role, the beast of burden being inevitably a humble donkey and Joseph being inevitably the humble person leading it. He is in Giotto's fresco (the great cycle of *Life-of-Christ* frescoes in the Arena Chapel, Padua, painted 1303-1313, famous for their new naturalism and drama) leading the donkey bearing mother and child. Caravaggio shows *The Rest During the Flight into Egypt* (1595-6, Gall Doria, Rome) with Joseph released from his job as donkey-leader and now being made useful as a music-stand, for a charming angel has appeared with his violin to soothe them on their way and Joseph is patiently holding up the music for him as he plays. *The Golden Legend* (a collection of "wild fictions" as they have been called, but delightful and much used by renaissance painters) says it was seven years before the family returned to Nazareth.



The last we know of biblical Joseph is when he is helping to search Jerusalem when the boy Jesus has given them the slip. Joseph disappears here but he remains (and any sympathy would be misplaced) for one thing, the recognised patron of the homeless, of exiles, of all manual workers, and of families. And it is Joseph who is essential to the whole theme. He is the devoted guardian without whom there would have been no

theme at all, no dénouement, no finale, and no redemption at the last, for it was, after all, Joseph who saved the child Redeemer's life.

### ***Illustrations, in order of appearance***

1. Methodist window on South side of the chancel in St Mary's
2. Mantegna, *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1450, Metropolitan Museum, New York
3. Georges de La Tour *Joseph's Dream*, c1640, Nantes
4. Millais *The Carpenter's Shop or Christ at the House of his Parents* 1849-50, Tate Gallery
5. Giotto, Fresco: *Flight into Egypt*, Arena Chapel, Padua, 1303-1313
6. Caravaggio *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* 1595-6, Gallery Doria Pamphilj, Rome

# Giving at St Mary's

*John Rhodes*

*Chair of the Stewardship and Finance Committee*

We are always grateful for the generosity shown by so many in their giving to St Mary's. However, we are now at the point where it is necessary for me to address this article to you all and ask whether you could increase your giving.

At present, 83 people have joined the Parish Giving Scheme. For this financial year we estimate the income from the Parish Giving Scheme will be £91,000 and other income from collections in the purple and white envelopes will be £15,000. Were it not for a very generous legacy very recently received, our expenditure would exceed income by approximately £15,000 in the current year. You may ask why this is a problem when our accounts show fairly large capital reserves. Much of those reserves are restricted funds and can only be used for specific purposes, for example for the fabric of the church building. If we continue to spend more than our income at the same level as now, our available funds will have been spent in the foreseeable future without an increase in our income.

The money that we receive, week by week, and month by month, is spent not only on maintaining our church as a place of worship but also on the ministry and mission of the Church here at St Mary's and in the wider community. There is one exception to this and this is our Charitable Giving. It has been our proud tradition over very many years to give 20% of our planned giving and the Gift Aid which we recover on it to a wide range of charities both at home and abroad. The United Church Council is being asked to agree to reducing this to 15% for next year. This, of itself, will not resolve the problem. Be assured that the Finance and Stewardship Committee has been rigorous in setting a budget for 2020 which can be presented to the United Church Council for approval.

Our expenditure for this year is estimated to be £208,000 so, just by way of an example, that would need 100 people to give £40 each week or £173 each month. If you have any questions arising from this please do not hesitate to speak to me or to David Gilbert, our Stewardship Advisor, or to Adam Shiels, our Treasurer. Let me thank you in advance for your response to this article.

# St Mary's People

## June Poppleton: Methodist Born and Bred

John Poppleton

It is impossible and at this remove personally difficult, to sum up in a few words the life and interests of this lovely intelligent, lively active woman.

Many of you attended June's funeral service – and for this the family thank you all – and you would have heard the eulogies and the poems we wrote for her, so I'll concentrate this piece on her involvement with the church and her wider connections with Ricky.



Born into a devout Methodist family, June followed her Mother's footsteps and became a Sunday School teacher herself and also at 17 the youngest Girl Guide captain in Yorkshire. Her mother Ettie had been awarded a special commendation from the Methodist Conference for achieving 60 years as a Sunday School teacher; and even late in life June could never hear *Jesus bids us shine* without shedding a tear.

In our early marriage days we lived in Hampstead and regularly attended Kingsway Hall where June was elected Chairman of The Young Wives Club and as such got to know Donald Soper and his wife and daughters very well. Dr Soper subsequently baptised both Antony and Beverley.

We moved to Northwood Hills and attended Oaklands Gate during which June vociferously and actively supported the ex-missionary minister in his hope to accommodate and support the Ugandan refugees who were fleeing to the area to escape Idi Amin. A reluctant congregation ousted the minister and we left!

Coming to Ricky in 1969 we first attended the St Peter's group of churches where the children had started Primary School and subsequently we settled at St Thomas' at West Hyde. Beverley was married there and her children christened. June took an active part in all church affairs and led the committee and congregation in fundraising several hundred pounds for a commemorative window or church bench in memory of the chairman. She was quite horrified when the minister spent the money on a solid silver box to hold the

communion wafers! Not surprisingly we left. "Methodism vs Walsingham" she said.

Our dear friend Julie Smethurst suggested we came to St Mary's which had not long before incorporated the Methodist Church from the High Street. Here she was most happy and we as a family have developed many close friendships within the church community. Once again she volunteered for active involvement; such as cleaning, organising the reading rotas and attending numerous meetings both for St Mary's and for the wider circuit, when she succeeded Derek Day as Chief Methodist Steward. She was 'first up' to lay on a dinner party to welcome Richard Lowson to the area and hosted dinners and Christmas celebrations for members of the church.

Outside of church she loved Rickmansworth and was actively involved in many local activities. In earlier years the schools played a large part in her commitments, always in the PTA or such. It was her idea to hold a May Fayre when it first became a bank holiday and it is now an established feature of St Clement Dane's School and the wider community in Chorleywood, where she was also Akela for Chorleywood cubs.

In her later years she joined Rickmansworth Ladies Golf Club and was elected Captain. Ironically on her Captain's Day she raised £3,000 for cancer charities. Lately she joined the Townswomen's Guild which met at St Mary's and enjoyed several meetings and outings (and so did I!) Her last outing was to *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Barbican. She was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer the next day.

Privately apart from the family matters she loved the countryside and there cannot be a path, byeway, cornfield or rivulet in the whole of Chess Valley she has not walked in the company of one of her dogs especially her favourite "Goldie"- a present for our Golden Wedding. I wish to thank everybody for the many letters, cards and emails we have received - almost 200 in total - and especially Deborah for her pastoral care to the whole family in June's last few days. Thank you and God Bless.

*What shone out of her funeral, which she had planned herself, was her love for all her family, theirs for her, and her zest for life. She loved holidays, Christmas, nature, books, golf... She met life's tribulations with humour and 'just got on with it'. As was said at her funeral, "she lived life to the full and died with everything crossed off her bucket list."*

## **A Thank You from Janet Page**

Janet has asked us to say that she and her family and friends really appreciated all the love and support they received from Deborah and the people of St Mary's following Tony's recent death and at his funeral and she wants to pass on her thanks.

## **Congratulations**

Congratulations to **ALAN HALL**, son of Angela and Geoff, who has been awarded a PhD (at age 49!) by the Open University.

## **St Mary's in the Past**

### **1913**

The Revd Parkinson's letter concerned death, judgement, Advent and Christmas. There followed short reports of the activities of the GFS (Girls' Friendly Society) and St Mary's Young Men's Institute. The girls had a speaker who described a beautiful garden and then advised on the flowers they should always grow: lilies, honesty, thrift and heartsease, the first three to remind them to be pure, honest and thrifty, heartsease 'to give to a sick or weary friend to brighten their path'. The Young Men's Institute had recently re-opened and was ready to recruit Church Lads of 14 –18 years.

That took up about a page and it was followed by the transcript of a sermon about bells of four imperial pages of small print given on the day when ours were rededicated. [Bells seem to have been a particular interest of that Vicar's; we found a detailed account of how bells were cast that he had written earlier in the year.]

He was able to trace the history of our bells from 1720 from Vestry Meeting minutes. In 1720 the Churchwardens were to 'repair the great bell clapper staple and the fourth'. In 1724 the 5<sup>th</sup> bell had become 'lame' [weak or unsatisfactory]. The tenor and 2<sup>nd</sup> 'beles' were 'rejuvenated and refurbished' in 1728. [*He must have missed some of the history because the present back eight bells date from 1765, although some have been recast since then, and the treble and second were added in 1935. Ed*]

Bells used to be 'baptised' (anointed with oil, blessed and named). The Revd Parkinson proposed the following names: the 1<sup>st</sup> Faith, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hope, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Love, the 4<sup>th</sup> Prayer, the 5<sup>th</sup> Praise, the 6<sup>th</sup>

Thanksgiving, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sympathy, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Warning. Each bell was said to ring out an individual message. For example:

Let the 3<sup>rd</sup> bell bring from the belfry, like the dove from the dovecot, the voice of love. Let us remind us ever of that blessed Christmas song of the Angels.

Of the bells ringing together, he said

...not only do they ring out their most joyous peals on the Church's great days of rejoicing such as blessed Christmas Day when they ring out their birthday greeting to the Holy Babe on his Manger Throne...

And went on to list other occasions when bells were rung.

The December magazine ended with *Lessons of the Farmyard: The Unconscious Humour of Children* taken from an exhibition of essays and drawings in a competition for elementary school children. This is an abbreviated version. It is unclear from the account where one child's comment ended and another started.

Baby horses are called fillets. Horses have to be fed on proverbs (probably a confusion with a brand of oats used in porridge), are as tall as a middle-aged man; their owners are nearly always bad-tempered individuals.

A dog was said to be able to soften the hardest bone by its hot breath. Dogs have helped form English literature because they have saved the lives of literary men.

A cow was said to be like a bull except that the bull hurt more. Cows teeth were made into violin strings.

The pig was a native of China and could go into people's houses and sit down like a Christian. In wilder parts of Ireland they go in and out of houses, sit before the fire like persons and occupy the few chairs that are there. A pig is not pretty, nor is he good tempered, but he is like some of us. Although we are not pretty, we are sometimes useful, and so it is with the pig.

## Bells

Lift them gently to the steeple  
Let our bells be set on high  
There fulfil their daily mission  
Midway 'twixt the earth and sky

As the birds sing early matins  
To the God of nature's praise  
These their nobler daily music  
To the God of grace shall raise

And when evening shadows soften  
Chancel cross and tower and aisle  
They shall blend their vesper summons  
With the day's departing smile.

Christian men shall hear at distance  
In their toil or in their rest  
Joyous that in one Communion  
Of one Church they too are blest



They that on their sick bed languish  
Full of weariness and woe  
Shall remember that for them too  
Holy Church is gathering so.

Year by year the steeple music  
O'er the tender graves shall pour  
Where the dust of saints is garnered  
'Till the Master comes once more.

Till the day of sheathes in-gathering  
Till the Harvest of the Earth  
Till the Saints rise in their order  
Glorious, in their second birth.

Till Jerusalem beholding  
That-His Glory-in the East  
Shall at the Archangel trumpet  
Enter in to keep the Feast.

Christ to the the world's Salvation  
Father, Spirit, unto Thee  
Low we bend in adoration  
Ever blessed One and Three

Lift them gently to the steeple  
Let our bells be set on high  
There fulfil their holy mission  
Midway 'twixt the earth and sky.

## 1994

The Revd Derek House, Methodist Minister, had just returned from his sabbatical in the United States. In his letter he wrote of the human need of both times to celebrate and times to withdraw and ponder.

His letter was followed by an article from Anne Peat describing how many of our Christmas customs were adopted from earlier religions or none. For example, holly, ivy, mistletoe and evergreens were sacred to pagans because they stayed green ('alive') in winter; fire, light and candles were adopted from Judaism and games and pantomimes from the Romans. However, it was St Francis of Assisi who introduced a stable and the ox and ass into the Christmas story.

Michael Baker was nearing the end of his Reader's course and hoped to be admitted by March 1995. He had been set a number of tasks, one of which was to lead a House Group on *The Christian in the Workplace*.

Our kneelers were on display at the Knitting and Stitching Show at Alexandra Palace, together with a table of goods for sale from our shop with proceeds going towards The Renewal Fund.

The Sunday School, all 4 pews of them, were obviously thriving. Each received a card on their birthday and a photographic record of their activities was being compiled. They were going to *The Wind in the Willows* just before Christmas.

Joan Martin advertised a Methodist School of Fellowship Conference in Derbyshire with several very well-known speakers.

Pat and Peter Loosley's long-awaited Car Treasure Hunt in aid of the Renewal Fund was obviously both challenging and entertaining and was followed by "the sort of tea your favourite aunt gave you, with strict instructions never to tell your parents".

The final 'Celebration Fair' was to be held early in July. In December there was to be a Bouncing Baby competition (to identify members of the congregation from baby photographs, and copies of *Tales from Canterbury*, Bruce Driver's Pilgrimage, were available.

A letter contained entertaining news from Tom Driver from University, including how he was woken in the morning by the mooing of cows and that one of his housemates burnt a boiled egg.

A recently published book by Mary Whitehouse was recommended reading.

## St Mary's 750 750 Trees



I should know better. During my National Service (all those years ago) we were taught, 'Never Volunteer'. So, when suggestions were invited for possible activities for our 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations next year, I should have held my tongue, but instead wondered aloud about the possibility of our planting 750 trees in the district to mark the occasion. Also a 750 minute 'Prayerthon', but that's another story. Back to the trees: the suggestion met with the positive response, "That's a good idea. Please get on and organise it". Doh!

Happily, Timothy Tims heard of this idea and volunteered to help. Hurrah! And Beryl Baker, too, is keen to help and, with her teaching background, will I fancy, be particularly helpful in our contacts with local schools. Planting trees will not only win us brownie points with Greta Thunberg, it will make a small but useful contribution to combating climate change. It will also leave a lasting legacy of our own celebrations and evidence that St Mary's was and is keen to push out into the local community with something other than "Please, come to Church".

Tim is particularly keen to involve local schools in this venture, whether planting trees directly or growing them from seed. To that end, we have had very useful meetings with St Mary's School and also with St Joan of Arc's. At both we were received most warmly and assured of active co-operation as the initiative develops. We have also

had a helpful meeting with Julie Hughes, the District Council's Senior Tree Officer. In the meantime, we are making initial approaches to all the local environmental bodies we can think of from Friends of Stockers Lake to Friends of the Withey Beds; from the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust to Affinity Water. Our hope is that they will not only have land on which to plant trees, but will be willing to plant them themselves.

Tim has done good detective work on the internet and has discovered a supply of free trees from the The Community Volunteers in conjunction with OVO energy 'I dig trees' scheme. These trees come in four different packs to suit different sites (parkland, large garden, small garden, wildlife and shrubs.) Google 'I dig trees' for more information. We also plan a local social media campaign.

So we hope to plant 750 trees and will do all we can to meet that target. But even if we fall short, some trees are better than none, I fancy. And we shall have had some fun with it in the meantime. So, please note what is in hand and stand ready, if you are able, to pay your part by planting one or more trees yourself, by identifying other local groups who may be interested (from Lemon Tuesday to the Motley Crew), and by passing the word more generally. And a prayer or two would be good, too. Good luck.

For further information, please contact Timothy Tims (770397) or [cloistersf@aol.com](mailto:cloistersf@aol.com) or John Shaw (775219) or [jshaw@a23.org](mailto:jshaw@a23.org).

## **Further St Mary's 750**

### **Dates for Your 2020 Diary**

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 13 June       | Hilary Pearce and friends are presenting an evening of music with an extended interval for supper |
| 10-12 July    | Flower Festival with exhibition by the Rickmansworth and District Art Society                     |
| 13 September  | Patronal Festival at which the Bishop of St Albans will preside and preach                        |
| 3 October     | Harvest Hog Roast   |
| 6-20 December | Christmas Tree Festival   |

## **Christian Aid Event**

### **A date for your diary**

- 7 March St Mary's Church Centre: Return Show by Comedian Paul Kerensa (Please watch the Pew Sheet for further details)

# Good King Wenceslas

*David Court Smith*

*Reproduced from Minehead Matters*

Carols (which derive their name from the French *carole*, a dance song) had their heyday in the Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but then developed into popular songs, rather than for liturgical use. In the Victorian period many were written on the theme of the Nativity, but *Good King Wenceslas* from the pen of the Revd J M Neale was probably conceived as a children's song to exemplify generosity. It was published in *Carols for Christmastide* (an enormously influential work), having been written in 1853, and set to a thirteenth century Spring dance-carol tune.

This unusual carol seems to have a deep and lasting impact on its hearers, possibly because there are so many levels of meaning to it: a child may hear one thing, an adult another. The lines, "Fails my heart I know not how; I can go no longer" remind us that there are sometimes times when life and its stresses seem to overwhelm us. The response of Wenceslas, "Mark my footsteps, good my page, tread thou in them boldly" reminds us that when we are alone and seem to have lost direction, life can feel very bleak, and it is at such times that solidarity with another human being can help 'our blood freeze less coldly'! The king confirms that we are not alone and subtly points to the basic Christmas message that Jesus our Master will never leave us in the cold. In the last verse there are the memorable words, 'In his master's steps he trod, where the snow lay dinted'. John Neale shows us here that the essence of true living is learning to walk in the Master's steps. Jesus said, "if anyone comes after me [ie treads in my steps], he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me". Our challenge each Christmas is to look beyond the toys and the tinsel to see 'the Master's steps'.

So much for the moral of the carol, but what about the man? His exact name seems to vary according to the source, but I think Wenzel is as good as any of them. Son of the Prince of Bohemia, he was born in 907, not far from the present day city of Prague, and brought up by his grandmother Ludmilla, who was a staunch Christian. His father died when Wenzel was still a child and Ludmilla ruled Bohemia, until she was murdered by an anti-Christian group led by Wenzel's mother, Drahomira, who promptly seized power. Two years later she herself was deposed by her son, who became ruler at the age of fifteen.

Wenzel's strong Christian principles and tireless efforts for the religious and educational improvement of his people, coupled with his willingness to accept the German emperor as his overlord, rather than try to make Bohemia entirely independent, led to much feeling among the pagan minority which manifested itself in the murder of the prince by his younger brother Boleslaw in 935 (some sources say 929). To give him some credit, Boleslaw had his brother's relics translated to the Church of St Vitus in Prague, where they became the centre of the martyr's cult and a place of pilgrimage.

The memory of this remarkable young man has been perpetuated in the English-speaking world by the poignant poetry of John Mason Neale's carol and in his own land by the use of the Crown of Wenceslas as the symbol of Czech nationalism and the naming of Prague's central square after him.

## **Errata: Cambridgeshire Churches**

*Brenda Bell*

I apologise to David Hibbert for two errors regarding The Bellingring Trip in the November issue of LINK. I assumed, wrongly, that David had passed on a copy of an article written for his bellringing magazine and also that the notice about workman overhead related to one of the churches visited. No, he had written an article specially for LINK this time; and they had been able to ring at all six churches.

## **By The Way**

**A Review of November 2019**

*John Shaw*

The clocks have gone back and daylight is in shorter supply. The din of explosions (undimmed by cold and wet weather) in memory of Guy Fawkes has now given way to the first fusillades of the General Election to be held on 12 December. So, Sir Lyndsay Hoyle has just one day in which to enjoy his new role as Speaker of the House of Commons before they all pack it in once more and head for the doorstep, the hustings, and social media. All this and Mothercare is teetering on the brink of administration. (Is nothing sacred?).

Here are some news items which caught my eye during the last month.

After years of exclusion Iranian women were finally allowed to watch their national team play football ( Iran beat Cambodia14-0)

The Archbishop of Canterbury sought medical help for depression last year after his daughter told him that mental health problems were ‘just life’

A woman from Suffolk won the Golden Spurtle, the trophy awarded to the winner of the recent World Porridge Making Championships held in Scotland (where else?)

The number of children awaiting adoption (4,140) outstrips the number of families (1,700) approved to adopt

An eight-year-old girl scaled an 18 foot replica of Donald Trump’s infamous wall in a matter of seconds, as did a man who juggled with one hand as he did so

The *Oxford English Dictionary* has embraced ‘summink’, ‘sumfin’, ‘sumthin’, and ‘sumtin’ not because they are slang but because they are ‘regional variants’

Supplies of olives and olive oil are under threat from a killer bug (*Xyletta fastidiosa*) known as olive tree leprosy. It has infected 21 million trees in the Puglia region and is advancing at the rate of 2km a month

On the subject of bugs, a tiny beetle (less than 1 mm long) has been named after Greta Thunberg. *Nelloptodes gretae* has no eyes or wings but does have two long pigtail-like antennae

GPs are to be trained to prescribe singing and gardening ‘as readily as medical care’

Just as well, as pharmacies are running out of everyday drugs in a crisis across Europe. Due to acute bottlenecks in supplies from Asia, there are shortages of painkillers, emergency contraceptives, HRT drugs, and anti-epilepsy medicines

The tight black trousers and leather jacket worn by Olivia Newton-John in *Grease* have been sold at auction for more than £300,000

Oxford students have voted to replace clapping with ‘jazz hands’ to help people experiencing anxiety to feel more at ease

The Allerton Oak in Calderstones Park, Liverpool, is more than a thousand years old and has been named England’s Tree of the Year

Those who have died recently include: Robert Hunter (aged 78), songwriter and poet, who wrote lyrics for both The Grateful Dead and Bob Dylan; Diahann Carroll (aged 84), actress and singer; Reg Watson (aged 93), the producer who created *Crossroads* and *Neighbours* and earned the nickname of ‘godfather of the modern soap’; Alicia Alonso (aged 98), one of the greatest ballerinas of the twentieth century and as much a symbol of Cuba as cigars and Castro; Deborah Orr (aged 57), fearless, left-leaning journalist, who famously documented her acrimonious divorce from the author Will Self; Raymond Leppard (aged 92), conductor and harpsichordist, who uncovered early Italian operas and famously said that the exciting thing about writing film music was the cheque.

Finally, some examples of modern folk wisdom:

The people have spoken but we don’t know what they have said

If you don’t have justice, you are left with just ice

There’s no light at the end of the tunnel because the tunnel’s not straight

No-one’s too big for a hug. *That last one gets my vote!*

## A Brief History of Our Magazine 1905-2019

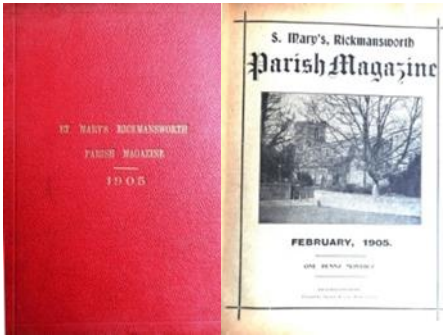
*Brenda Bell*

We thank David Hibbert for sending us these photos of a fairly random selection of our past church magazines and giving us the idea of looking into its history. A full history clearly was not possible because

our archives are incomplete and have yet to be arranged in date order. Also we cannot know whether the gaps mean that magazines were not produced or simply not saved. This is a great pity because we have seen what an interesting and precious resource past magazines can be while delving into them for our series, *St Mary in the Past*.



Our archive starts with a bound copy of 1905 issues called simply *St Mary’s Rickmansworth Parish Magazine*. It cost 1 penny (1d).



The pages were 7x9¼ inches (approximately Imperial). We also have the unbound February magazine of 1905, with a photo of the church on the cover taken from near where Bridge Motors now stands. The magazine's name was soon changed to *The Gazette*.

In the Revd Norman Hill's time, it was again re-named the *Parish News*. When metric paper sizes came in it became A5 and was given a set of brightly-coloured covers, one for each month with various scenes that were bought in and over-printed by the printer. Michael Baker became editor. External printing proved too expensive and it was decided to prepare the magazine in house and duplicate it, with Stan Smith [remember him? Some will] painstakingly typing the agreed text on a typewriter and copying it on the notoriously unreliable Office duplicator. A variety of covers were drawn by members of the congregation. The price rose firstly to 5p, then to 12p.

Sometime after 1979 when High Street Methodists began sharing the church building, we changed to a joint magazine re-christened *St Mary's LINK*, with a special logo, the clasped hands symbolising the joining of our two churches.



In due course Scott Talbott became editor, laid out the magazine using his computer and introduced pictures (mainly clipart) inside for the first time. He resorted to outside printing again.



When Scott stood down, the then Parish Secretary Suzanne Warren called a meeting of anyone interested in being on the *LINK* Committee in Autumn 1996 and I was one of six people who attended. Suzanne produced the December 1996 magazine single-handed, whilst we decided what changes we wanted to make to put our stamp upon it. In the event



changes were largely cosmetic. Michael and Scott had left us an excellent legacy.

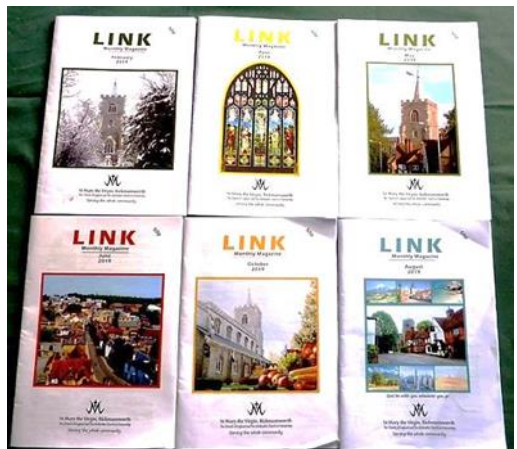
Not all of the original team of new recruits stayed on the committee; Mabel Tindall, Geoff Hall and Jane Pummell joined it and in due course the five of us, including Suzanne formed a fairly efficient team. Andrew Bond joined us for a short while and Mabel left leaving the four of us.

We continued with outside printers for a while, but they regularly failed to meet publication deadlines. It was a great relief when the Revd Stephen Mephram decided to use LINK as a justification for getting a copier to cope with the capacity to produce numbers of documents in the Church Office. It was that that enabled us to hold the price at 50p for 23 years, having raised it from 40p to 50p when we took over and better able to publish on time.

Suzanne Warren moved away eventually. We missed all her hard work. No-one came forward to replace her, and the three of us have managed to carry on until now.

There followed a time of innovation. With email we didn't have to type articles or drive round Rickmansworth with printed copies or memory sticks so much. Buzz Coster and Helen Haig encouraged and helped us to produce a digital version of LINK in which we could introduce colour pictures, but printed magazines remained in greyscale.

Digital cameras became common and we were at last able to introduce photographs of acceptable quality and receive them by email. Best of all the Office replaced its big copier with one that can print colour and we could have coloured covers. To print the whole magazine in colour would have been prohibitively expensive.



*Examples of 2019 covers*

Since we took over from Scott at the end of 1996, 277 issues of LINK have been produced, and I have been involved in all but three, that

means roughly 277 covers and at least 7,700 pages (I'm not going to count them, even though I could!). What does make me proud is that I cannot recall the editorial team being the cause of any issue being late. Two or three issues were due to breakdowns of the copier.

## **Bird News**

*Brenda Bell*

It has been a great Autumn for viewing birds from the comfort of home, with the sizzling summer ensuring good supplies of food and an early gale thinning the leaves on trees, so that while the birds still had shelter they could be seen, once they emerged with smart new feathers after moulting. A new regular delight is the cheerful chirping and antics of the sparrows hatched behind the facing tiles of our building. We have a robin again too, having been without for a year and blue, long-tailed and great tits call in often, rapidly searching the trees for food and passing on. One day some thirty long-tailed tits passed by. Then there are the resident jackdaws, magpies and woodpigeons.

Somewhat unusual near the centre of town and between high buildings, were a greater spotted woodpecker and a nuthatch. A migrating jay stayed around for about a fortnight. Three separate piles of pigeon feathers within a few days suggested that the sparrowhawk is doing well.

Endlessly fascinating is the competition for the pinnacle of the building opposite. All the local birds aspire to stand on it - even blackbirds and pied wagtails when they have a chance. Recently a herring gull returned from a summer away to find that jackdaws had claimed his prized spot. After a lot of manoeuvring, with surprisingly little aggression, he reclaimed the pinnacle and often sits there preening, the 'king of the castle'. Mind you, the jackdaws have been known to sneak in when he goes off to find food.

## **Events at St Albans and St Martin-in-the-Fields**

### **St Albans**

- 8 Dec Christingle service, 3pm-4pm
- 14 Dec Christmas Carol service, 3pm and 7pm (Tickets £7)
- 15 Dec Carols in aid of the Hospice of St Francis, 3pm
- 19 Dec *Ruskin Revisited*, A talk about John Ruskin

## St Martin-in-the-Fields

- 8 Dec Blessing of the Crib in Trafalgar Square, 5.30pm: a dramatisation of the Christmas story with ‘live donkey’ (*Well that's a relief!*)
- 9 Dec Missing People Charity Carol Service, 6.30pm
- 11 Dec Mississippi Swamp Dogs- *A night in New Orleans*: a celebration of the diverse music of that city.
- 15 Dec Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, 8pm
- 19 Dec Handel's *Messiah* by Candlelight, 7.30pm

## What's On in Rickmansworth

### Watersmeet

Pantomime: *Peter Pan*, 12 December–5 January, times vary



### The Arts Society, Rickmansworth



Sarratt Village Hall  
Tuesday 3 December

#### **Messenger or Missile?**

**Angels with glad tidings, doom, gloom or perdition**

Caroline Holmes

11.00am; tea and coffee from 10.30am

For further information contact Gill Gowing (777715)



## LINK

*Brenda Bell*

The Nativity scene on this month's cover, and the part of it of Joseph in Dorothy Entwistle's article, are taken from the Women's Fellowship window, one of two stained glass windows the Methodists brought with them from High Street Methodist Church. They were installed in our chancel to cast beautiful colours round the chancel walls at certain times of day.

## A Quiz

### *Food for Thought*

*Originally published in the magazine of Holy Trinity Northwood -  
Thank you to whoever gave it to us*

1. After whom is the 'squashed fly' biscuit named and what does 'biscuit' tell you about the baking process?
2. The chef's uniform: what is the traditional hat called; and why a double-breasted jacket and check trousers?
3. What cheese has the largest holes; and which cheese is made backwards?
4. Which common drink is named after a former prime minister and what is added to give it a distinctive flavour?
5. What distinguishes the following nuts: walnuts, chestnuts, coconuts and hazel nuts, from brazil nuts, pine nuts and peanuts?
6. What was prime minister Harold Wilson's favourite sauce?
7. For what is Hovis an abbreviation?
8. How did Bovril acquire its name?

Answers on page 32

### *Not a Lot of People Know That*

#### **The Apple of One's Eye**

*Bill Sylvester*

The **Apple of One's Eye** is someone (usually a child) who is regarded as precious and irreplaceable. Over a thousand years ago, the pupil of the eye was known as the 'apple'. The modern word, pupil, is Latin and did not form part of the English language until the 1500s. Sight was regarded as the most valuable of all the senses and therefore the 'apple' was precious and irreplaceable. King Alfred, in the late ninth century, actually linked the two and applied it to someone he was affectionate towards, but it is not known who. The first recorded reference is in the Bible: Deuteronomy 32.10 says, 'He kept him as the apple of his eye,' suggesting he watched over him to ensure his safety.

Information from *Red Herrings and White Elephants* by Albert Jack

# Memories

*Brenda Bell*



There is just time to give this evening of commemoration of the Second World War a brief mention. It certainly deserves it as a tremendous amount of work must have gone into this compilation of local people's memories by Hilary Pearce and Julie Smethurst, read by 'the usual suspects' (see picture), with music, songs and relevant photographs projected on a screen.

The set was simple: a semicircle of chairs on the chancel platform, enormous displays of poppies either side. All formed a kind of visual and aural jigsaw puzzle of those wartime days 75-80 years ago, not only reflecting the horror of war, but also the resilience and humour of a special time when everyone worked together with a common aim.

## Greetings!

*Graham Martin*

Warm greetings from the congregation of St Giles and St Nicholas parish church at Sidmouth in Devon where we stayed recently. On several previous visits there has always been a good welcome at the 10am Sunday Choral Eucharist from a large congregation, predominantly elderly but very active. Sidmouth attracts many retired people and although it is referred to as one of God's Waiting Rooms, the people are not just waiting!

The church is part of Sid Valley Churches but there has been a vacancy now for eighteen months for the team vicar and there is one other team vacancy. On this occasion the archdeacon celebrated and preached in a most dignified yet easy manner. There are some retired clergy at Sidmouth and on one occasion we met an archdeacon from St Albans.

The current list of activities is large and includes an ecumenical discussion, with house groups, on 'Our Fragile Earth'. Although there is no vicar, pastoral care continues with their system of link members. Music is a strong element in parish life, with a choir of some sixteen and regular concerts in the church.

It is good from time to time to visit other parishes and join in their worship.



## CALENDAR

### December 2019



<b>1 SUN</b>	<b>THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	
	<i>Common Worship Sunday Lectionary Year A begins</i>	
	<i>Common Worship Mid-week Lectionary 2 begins</i>	
	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Said Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>All Age Holy Communion</b>
	<b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Advent Carol Service</b>
2 Mon	2.00pm	<i>Threads for Change Craft Group</i>
	7.45pm	<i>Community &amp; Outreach Committee, Cloisters Hall</i>
3 Tue	10.00am	Said Holy Communion
4 Wed	11.30am	Collective Worship at St Mary's School
5 Thu	9.30am	<i>Little Angels</i> Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall
	2.15pm	<i>Meet for Tea</i>
7 Sat	9.30am	Set up <i>Christmas Experience</i>
<b>8 SUN</b>	<b>THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</b>	
	<b>8.00am</b>	<b>Said Holy Communion</b>
	<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Sung Holy Communion</b>
	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>X Team</b>
9 Mon	2.00pm	<i>Threads for Change Craft Group</i>
	7.45pm	<i>Fabric &amp; Churchyard Committee, Cloisters Hall</i>
10 Tue	10.00am	Said Holy Communion
	7.30pm	<i>Lemon Tuesday</i> Rehearsal, in Church
11 Wed	11.30am	Collective Worship at St Mary's School
	7.45pm	House Group (For contact see cover)
12 Thu	9.30am	<i>Little Angels</i> Toddlers Group, Cloisters Hall
13 Fri	7.30pm	<i>Lemon Tuesday</i> Christmas Concert, in church

- 15 SUN THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
 8.00am Said Holy Communion  
 10.00am Sung Holy Communion  
 12.15pm Said Holy Communion  
 1.00pm *Lunch Club*  
 2.30pm Christingle Service
- 16 Mon 2.00pm *Threads for Change* Craft Group  
 7.45pm Stewardship & Finance, Cloisters Hall
- 17 Tue 10.00am Said Holy Communion  
 12.30pm Home Communion through afternoon  
 6.00pm St Mary's School KS2 Carol Service, *in church*  
 9.00am St Mary's School End of Term Service, *in church*
- 19 Thurs
- 22 SUN THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT  
 8.00am Said Holy Communion  
 10.00am Sung Holy Communion  
 12.15pm Said Holy Communion  
 6.00pm Christmas Carol Service
- 24 Tue CHRISTMAS EVE  
 4.00pm Crib Service  
 11.15pm Midnight Holy Communion with Blessing of the Crib
- 25 Wed CHRISTMAS DAY  
 8.00am Said Holy Communion  
 10.00am All Age Holy Communion
- 29 SUN THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS  
*BCP The Sunday after Christmas Day*  
 8.00am Said Holy Communion  
 10.00am Sung Holy Communion
- 31 Tue 10.00am Holy Communion

### January 2020

- 4 Sat 3.00pm Bellringing with Watford District  
 4.00pm Watford District Annual District Meeting
- 5 SUN THE SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS  
*BCP The Second Sunday after Christmas Day*  
 8.00am Said Holy Communion  
 10.00am All Age Holy Communion
- 6 Mon THE EPIPHANY  
 10.00am Holy Communion, *with incense*



### Choir and Bellringers Regular Weekly Practices

Wed	7.30pm	Bellringing
Thu	7.45pm	Choir

*New members welcome at both practices – just come along*

## Answers to Food Quiz (p 28)

1. Garibaldi, Italian leader, fighting to unite Italy, who visited England in 1854. Peak Frean started making the biscuits shortly afterwards.  
Biscuits: *bis* = twice; *coctus* = cooked (Latin). Cooking them twice dries them out and makes them keep better.
2. A Toque; a double-breasted jacket can be reversed if soiled; check trousers show spills and stains less clearly.
3. Emmental and Edam ('made' spelled backwards).
4. Earl Grey (PM 1830-1834); the tea was specially blended to suit the water at Howick Hall in Northumberland (his family seat), with bergamot to offset the taste of lime present.
5. The first four are true nuts (simple dry fruit with one seed), Brazils, coconuts and pine nuts are seeds and peanuts are peas.
6. Worcestershire Sauce: at a dinner commemorating 100 years of HP Sauce, Mr Wilson in his speech confessed that he had been misquoted over HP Sauce and did not pour it all over his food as his wife claimed.
7. Originally called 'Mr Smith's Old Patent Germ Bread', a contest held for a shorter name came up with 'Hovi's' - 'Hominus vis': *the strength of man*'. A tilde (~) used to appear over the 'o' to mark it as a portmanteau word, but this has been dropped for a lower case 'o'.
8. From the Latin 'Bovis', of the ox, and 'Vril', a mysterious force depicted in Lord Lytton's novel, *The Coming Race* (1871).

## A Train of Thought

*Michael Baker*

*On 4 November, returning from visiting an exhibition at Oxford, we were at Marylebone station with some other St Mary's folk when we were overwhelmed by a scrum of commuters all trying to cram themselves into the same train for Rickmansworth and all stations north, there being a breakdown on the Metropolitan Line. I was put in mind of this story, dating back to the days when Marylebone was a very sleepy backwater of the LNER: -*



A young trainee priest was lamenting to his spiritual director that it was very difficult to find anywhere in London that was quiet and peaceful enough for him to meditate.

‘Have you tried Marylebone Station?’ was the reply.

*How times have changed!*

## **Goodbye!**

*Brenda Bell*

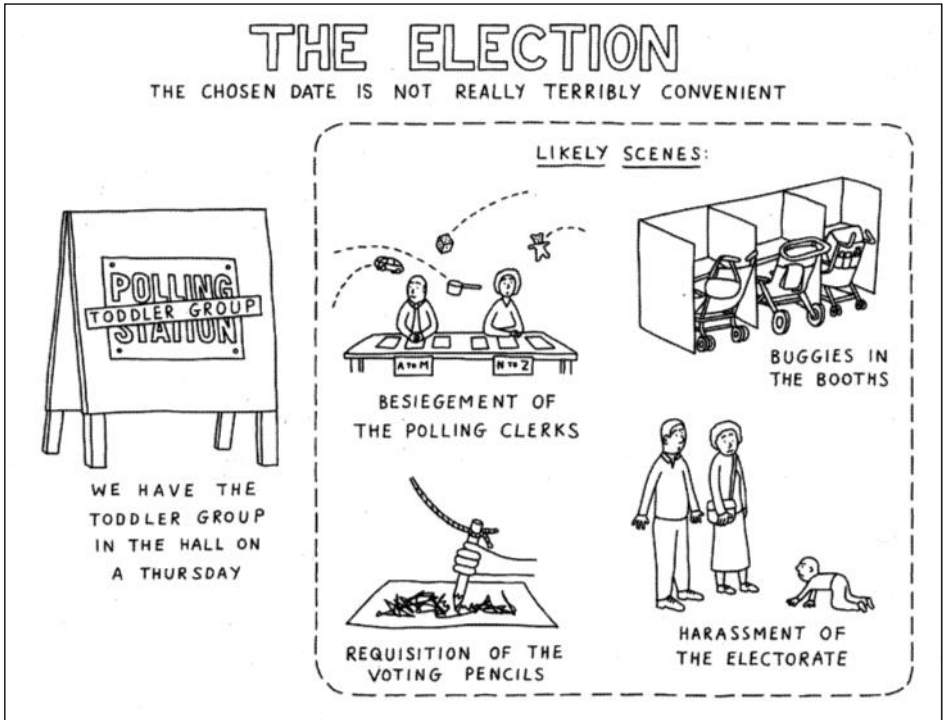
In closing it has been a privilege and a joy to be involved in our magazine for so long. It really is a great job - even if it sometimes has its moments.

But what I really want to do is to pay tribute to all the people who have helped me with it with it, particularly Geoff Hall and Jane Pummell, without whom LINK in its present form would have been impossible. We worked well together, rarely disagreeing radically and all believing in delivering a magazine that gave correct information and was published on time. However we were only part of a much larger team: Vicars, Assistant Priests and Readers who we pestered for letters and information, all the members of the congregation who supplied material and pictures, people who proof read, a succession of Parish Secretaries and a Church Administrator who have printed the copies (Suzanne, Lindsay, Louise, Karen and Katrina), Buzz Coster and Helen Haigh who posted electronic copies, Audrey Hind who sorted out magazines for delivery, and Jenny Woods and Margaret Collins who did so in the past, and those who delivered them. Thank you all.

I still pray that St Mary’s may continue to have a church magazine, but that needs at least one new person to typeset and preferably to become a full member of the team. It is simply not viable with only one person able to do this. We are not including dates for a January magazine or collecting subscriptions yet, but we still hope for someone to join the team. At the time of writing we are still unsure what we shall be doing but there will not be an issue of LINK in January, especially as it would need to be prepared before Christmas.

A Parish Magazine is one form of communication among many, but a unique one and much valued, not only among the significant number of people for whom electronic methods remain a mystery and a convenient form of reference too.

# Dave Walker Cartoon



This cartoon first appeared in *Church Times* and is reproduced with permission.

*We wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a healthy, peaceful and productive 2020*

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Please note that opinions expressed in LINK are not necessarily those of the Editors of LINK or St Mary's Church.

\*Please see back cover for phone numbers.

## Contacts (continued)

The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923

### Officers (continued)

Church Council Secretary	Buzz Coster	via Church Office
CofE Electoral Roll and Methodist Members Roll	John Glidden	223613
Methodist Council Secretary	Petra Hedges	222715
Church Giving Advisor (A)	David Gilbert	via Church Office
Treasurer	Adam Shiels	07950 262798

### Worship

Altar Servers	Chris & Sue Hillier	779580
Bellringers	David Hibbert (Captain)	773735
Intercessors	Jean Dodds	via Church Office
Lesson Readers	David Carruthers	07831 387541
Organist and Choirmaster	Andrew Sykes	07943 601717 07519 318049 organistsmr@gmail.com
Sacristan	David Gilbert and team	via Church Office
Sidespeople	David Hibbert	773735
Welcomers	David Carruthers	07831 387541

### Christian Teaching and Prayer

Bible Reading Fellowship	Sue Hillier	779580
Exploring Prayer Group	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
House Groups Tues am:	Gillian Baker, Brenda Bell	775890 772482
Wed pm:	Jane Pummell	774343

### Pastoral

Baptism (Christening)		via Church Office
Confirmation	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Children's Communion	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Home Communion		via Church Office
Home/Hospital Visiting	The Revd Deborah Snowball	772627
Wedding Bookings		via Church Office
Coffee after Church	Anne Kay	773470
Handbell Ringers	Suzanne Warren	01442 385922
Meet for Tea	Joan Martin	775433
Motley Crew (Drama Group)	Chris and Sue Hillier	779580
Sunday Lunch Club	Gill Gowing	777715 gmgowling@btopenworld.com
	Maxine Platzman	896622

### Children and Young People

	X Team (Youth Group, year 7+)	
	David Carruthers	07831 387541
<i>Little Angels</i> : babies & toddlers, Thu am, Cloisters Hall		
Girlguiding UK		
Rainbows:	Yvonne Wells	via Church Office
Brownies:	Ali Hampton	via Church Office
Guides:	Tracy Jenkins	via Church Office

*The code for all phone numbers, unless otherwise stated, is 01923*  
**Contacts (continued)**

**Children and Young People (continued)**

Church School	St Mary's CofE Primary	776529
Headteacher:	Mrs Emma Edwards	
School website:	<a href="http://www.stmarys698.herts.sch.uk">www.stmarys698.herts.sch.uk</a>	

**Administration**

Charitable Giving Committee	Jane Earl (Chair)	711695
Community and Outreach	David Carruthers (Chair)	07831 87541
Harvest Giving	Jennett Day	237248
Safeguarding officers:	Margaret West	07593 532567
	Helen Swain	07593 532567
email:	<a href="mailto:safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk">safeguarding@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk</a>	
Stewardship and Finance	John Rhodes	via Church Office

**Buildings and Support**

Church Centre Booking	Church Office	721002
Church Centre Committee	Martyn Gowing (Chair)	777715
Church Bookings	via Church Office	
Cloisters Hall Bookings	Janet Carruthers	07799 050532
Cloisters Hall Committee	The Revd Deborah Snowball (Chair)	772627
Fabric & Churchyard	David Hibbert (Chair)	773735
Flowers	Hilary Pearce	896025
Library	Michael Baker	776109
Steeple Keeping	David Hibbert	773735
Threads for Change	Beryl Baker	776109

**Communications**

LINK (Church Magazine)		
editors:	Brenda Bell	772482
	Geoff Hall	720543
	Jane Pummell (& Subscriptions)	774343
email:	<a href="mailto:link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk">link@stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk</a>	
Newsletter	c/o Communication Committee	
Website	Buzz Coster	775908

**Representatives for Organisations Beyond St Mary's**

Action for Children	Christine Butler	778001
CARE (07935 269144)	Jenny Woods (St Mary's Rep)	447417
The Children's Society	Beryl Baker	776109
Christian Aid	Gill & Martyn Gowing	777715
See Round-on-line by email	LINK link <a href="http://www.stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk">www.stmarysrickmansworth.org.uk</a>	

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