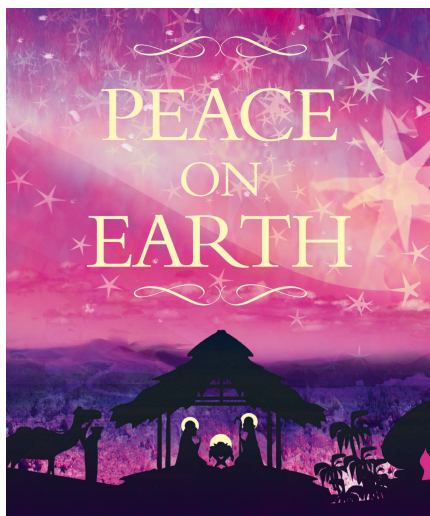
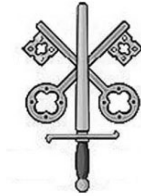


Parish Magazine for  
Wem, Lee Brockhurst and Weston-under-Redcastle

December 2020 and January 2021



St Peter & St Paul's, Wem  
St Peter's, Lee Brockhurst  
St Luke's, Weston-under-Redcastle



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The Revd Mike Cotterell, Preb Pam  
Freeman, Preb Rob Haarhoff, Canon Dr  
William Price, The Revd John Tye

**Readers Emeriti:**

Celia Camplin, Cathy Dibben

## **ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM**

Churchwardens:	Elaine Shaw	236575
	Chris Mellings	809521
PCC Lay Chair:	Sybil Farmer	232568
PCC Treasurer:	Caroline Sinclair	232626
Planned Giving Officer:	Bob Dibben	236178
Organist & Choir Master:	Rodney Bellamy	01630 652564
Deputy Captain of Bells:	Karen Compton	236561
Sacristans:	June Powell	234412
	& Kath Ridgway	290162
Church Flowers:	Olive Kenward	234774
	& Sybil Farmer	232568
Church Hall Bookings:	Elaine Shaw	07969 511590
Baby and Toddler Group:	Alison Hope	07526 757492

Further details are available on our website:

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

Find us on 

@Wemparishchurch

**From the Registers of  
St Peter and St Paul's Wem**

**At Rest**

30 October Ernest Gordon Dudley (interment)

3 November David James Carter

10 November Christine Olive Murray

12 November Lesley Joan Thomas

14 November Dorothy Eileen Dulson

20 November David Massey

**“Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord and let  
light perpetual shine upon them.”**

**Lines from Invocation of Peace**

Deep peace, pure white of the moon to you;  
Deep peace, pure green of the grass to you;  
Deep peace, pure brown of the earth to you;  
Deep peace, pure grey of the dew to you,  
Deep peace, pure blue of the sky to you!  
Deep peace of the running wave to you,  
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,  
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.

By Fiona Macleod (19th century Celtic visionary and romantic)

## **Book of Remembrance for December**

1 <sup>st</sup>	William Prendergast	20 <sup>th</sup>	Roy William Parkhurst
1 <sup>st</sup>	Walter Henry Brisbane	20 <sup>th</sup>	Mary Elizabeth Sherwood
1 <sup>st</sup>	Ronald Ivor Watkins	21 <sup>st</sup>	Sylvia Margaret Dowley
3 <sup>rd</sup>	John Henry Payne	21 <sup>st</sup>	Jim Jones
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Edith Annie O'Rahilly	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Cicely Beryl Jenkins
4 <sup>th</sup>	Wilfred Roy Smith	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Doreen Greaves
4 <sup>th</sup>	Peter Jones	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Cyril Shufflebottom [Priest]
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sidney Vincent Didlick	24 <sup>th</sup>	Neil Wallace
4 <sup>th</sup>	Elsie Primrose Griffiths	25 <sup>th</sup>	Angela Marion Watkins
7 <sup>th</sup>	Brian Harrington	25 <sup>th</sup>	Theodore Clarence (Tim) Griffiths
7 <sup>th</sup>	Edna Bayliss	26 <sup>th</sup>	Thomas William "Tony" Powell
8 <sup>th</sup>	William James Woodcock	26 <sup>th</sup>	Joyce Brisbane
12 <sup>th</sup>	Gerald George William Chidlow	27 <sup>th</sup>	Eric Pierce
13 <sup>th</sup>	George Christopher Sage	27 <sup>th</sup>	Anthony Johnson
13 <sup>th</sup>	Leslie John Bailey	27 <sup>th</sup>	Claudine Myrtle Mackenzie-Kennedy
13 <sup>th</sup>	Doris Grocott	28 <sup>th</sup>	Keith Wilkinson
14 <sup>th</sup>	George Henry Loveday	29 <sup>th</sup>	Christine Faith Huxley
14 <sup>th</sup>	Olive Westbrook Loveday	31 <sup>st</sup>	Freda May
15 <sup>th</sup>	Herbert Keeling Roberts	31 <sup>st</sup>	Doris Ena Sullivan
19 <sup>th</sup>	Kenneth Walker Horton		

## **Book of Remembrance for January**

2 <sup>nd</sup>	David Aubrey Barber	17 <sup>th</sup>	Esther Vivian Martin Fothergill
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brian Roger Perks	18 <sup>th</sup>	Nora Eileen Ashton
3 <sup>rd</sup>	John Freshwater	18 <sup>th</sup>	Geoffrey Ashton
4 <sup>th</sup>	Sean Barnes	18 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Henry Bartle
5 <sup>th</sup>	Douglas Firth Sinclair	18 <sup>th</sup>	George Evans
5 <sup>th</sup>	Wilfred Thomas Smith	19 <sup>th</sup>	Jack Ashley
6 <sup>th</sup>	Harry Saywell	21 <sup>st</sup>	Thomas Ernest Hughes (OBE)
7 <sup>th</sup>	Wilfred Jones	21 <sup>st</sup>	Peter Donald Anthony Lacy
7 <sup>th</sup>	George Henry Ridgway	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Alexander Llewellyn Williams
8 <sup>th</sup>	Ian George Ridgway	24 <sup>th</sup>	John (Jack) Peate
8 <sup>th</sup>	Kathleen Taylor	24 <sup>th</sup>	William Alastair MacEachan
9 <sup>th</sup>	Charles William Bayliss	24 <sup>th</sup>	Elizabeth Carolyn Templeman
9 <sup>th</sup>	Leslie Ann Boulcott	25 <sup>th</sup>	Ernest Lafford
9 <sup>th</sup>	Irene Margaret Cartwright	26 <sup>th</sup>	Douglas Michael Cooley
10 <sup>th</sup>	Emma Vera Nelms	27 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Keeling Roberts
10 <sup>th</sup>	Frank Alfred Stokes	27 <sup>th</sup>	John Beverley Styles
11 <sup>th</sup>	Gillian Patricia Edwards	27 <sup>th</sup>	Violet Wilkinson
12 <sup>th</sup>	Eva Phyllis Duffy	29 <sup>th</sup>	Judith Ann Ashton
12 <sup>th</sup>	Thomas William Boulcott	29 <sup>th</sup>	Edgar Higgins
12 <sup>th</sup>	Hilda Alice Thomas	29 <sup>th</sup>	Bryan Whittaker
14 <sup>th</sup>	Hugh Broomhall	30 <sup>th</sup>	Maud Mary Coles
15 <sup>th</sup>	Olive May "Peggy" Healey	30 <sup>th</sup>	Cecil Walter Jones
15 <sup>th</sup>	Grace Kathleen Walford Morson	30 <sup>th</sup>	Bill Witherspoon
16 <sup>th</sup>	Ernest Frederick Quelch		

## **ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST**

Church Warden:	Val Lusby	235610
Church Warden and Treasurer:	Roger Ashton	232425
Secretary:	Phoebe Ashton	232425
Vice Chairman:	Tim Wilton-Morgan	235703
Warden Emeritus:	Robert Marsh	200641

## **ST LUKE'S, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE**

Church Warden:	Arthur Fox	01630 685180
Church Warden:	Helen O'Neill	01939 200663
Church Warden (Deputy):	Sylvia Griffiths	01630 685204
Treasurer:	Colin Holloway	01939 200682

### **Message from St Luke's Weston PCC**

Our All Saints service on 1st November was combined with a belated Harvest Festival. The service taken by the Rev Rob Haarhoff. Considering Pandemic restrictions we had an excellent turnout. Donations of groceries etc were requested from the congregation for the Whitchurch Food Bank. They were very pleased to receive the food and we received a certificate acknowledging our contribution of 129 kilos.

On Remembrance Sunday we held our service which was conducted outside by Rev Mike Cotterell and it was very well attended. Our very own Sgt Colin Holloway BEM read the names of those Villagers who gave their lives in the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

Church warden Helen O'Neill laid a wreath on the Remembrance Seat . Although light rain fell throughout the service it did not spoil The Act of Remembrance at all.

WHITCHURCH FOODBANK  
HELPING LOCAL PEOPLE IN CRISIS

*It is painful beyond words that food poverty is a reality in our midst at any time but perhaps especially so over this coming 'festive' season, do please support as well as you possibly can.*

*Our Local Food Bank continues its **essential** and extraordinary work amongst us. The need which it meets looks set to rise over the coming month(s).*

Amongst the items they are particularly short of at present are:

Small jars of coffee   Cereals   Tins of spaghetti hoops  
Tinned pies   Packets of mashed potato  
Tins of rice pudding   Tins of meat  
Tins of custard   Tins of fruit  
Tins of peas   Bottles of cordial/squash  
Tins of carrots   Jars of jam  
Tins of sweetcorn   Chocolate snack biscuits  
Tins of tuna   Sponge puddings

All the churches in our Benefice do a wonderful job in supporting our local Food Bank. If you are now coming back to church do please consider bringing a donation to this: non-perishable food of any description plus essential toiletries will always be gratefully received - an up to date list of specific shortages is always available on their website (underneath).

If you are not yet able to resume Sunday worship, or bringing donations to church is not easy, you can still support in the following three ways:-

The Food Bank is still open to accept donations at their base, Bargates Hall Whitchurch, in the usual way between 09.30-11.30 on Tuesdays & Fridays. Social Distancing will be maintained. There are two other alternatives:

Firstly: the Wem Co-op will take donations, please ask staff for the exact location of the 'bin'.

Secondly: via online giving, please go to their website -  
[whitchurch.foodbank.org.uk](http://whitchurch.foodbank.org.uk)  
where donations can be made on line.

*'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink'*  
*Matthew 25.35a*



## **UPDATE**

**Dear Friends,**

Some of you with good memories, or a mind for such things, will recall a little under two decades ago a US Secretary of State (Donald Rumsfeld) drawing some attention for remarks he made about ‘known unknowns’:

*“there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns”*

I think I now know a little of what he was trying to say! How things changed after my update at the beginning of the November Magazine? Now looking ahead to December and January, as I write, we have some idea as to how things may be in the churches of our Benefice with regard to worship, especially over Christmas, however who at present can be *certain* about anything?

What we do know, our ‘known known’, is that from 2 December the government will again allow all places of Public Worship to be open. So the good news is that on Sunday 6 December (St Nick’s Day, or Advent 2 if you must!) our services, *irrespective* as to what tier our area is in, will be able to resume. We can safely imagine this will extend through until Christmas, but we are waiting out on any guidance from the Church as it assimilates this. The significant difference in church across the tiers will be who we can or cannot ‘interact’ with.

Specifically regarding weddings and funerals: across all three tiers these will be able to carry on. The limit for weddings, wedding receptions and ‘wakes’ is set by the government at 15 guests. However in tier 3 wedding receptions will not be allowed. The number who can attend a funeral will remain across the tiers at 30 (i.e. as now).

As distinct guidance is issued there will need to be careful planning by myself, our Church Wardens and PCCs, for instance apropos how we manage the seasonal influx of numbers which may be, if as in previous years, outside our Covid-19 safety limits.

Rest assured as guidance and detail or any other developments emerge I will let all know as soon as possible.

So whilst our services at Christmas will not be as in previous years (how on earth can they be, the virus will not be on a ‘Christmas break’?) we can still

look to celebrating the Incarnation as faithfully as we ever have. What touched me this morning was reading the response of some leaders of other world faiths in our country expressing pleasure that Christians will be able to celebrate and not endure their disappointments of late. An element our own archbishops focused on in their letter to the nation, on 4 November, at the start of this lockdown:

*In the coming weeks, there are great religious ceremonies. For Hindus, Sikhs and Jains there is Diwali, the festival of light. Sikhs will celebrate the birth of Guru Nanak. The Jewish community will observe Hanukkah. Many Muslim communities have just celebrated Eid-e-Milad, the anniversary of the birth of Muhammad.*

A gentle reminder of us all 'being in this together' and the shared burden.

Our archbishops then went on to write:

*Soon it will be Christmas. At his birth Jesus was also called Emmanuel. It's a word that appears in lots of carols. It means 'God is with us'. And this is the message of Christmas: in Jesus, God is with us, sharing our darkness and our struggles, bringing comfort and joy. It is the source of our hope. As the Bible says: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5) Let us shine in the darkness of this winter.*

As we walk together through Advent towards our yearly celebration of our central hope may we make this a time of waiting, praying and preparation? A time to hold the pain of our present before God and a time to rest on this hope in the midst of so much uncertainty, and unknown unknowns.

For what we do know is that first Christmas was a place of many unknowns (think of the vulnerability of the Holy Family, the initial fear of the shepherds). What we do know is our Christmas message - 'The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it' so as a unique Christmas starts to draw near let us 'shine in the darkness'.

***My friends, whatever you may be doing, take care, be vigilant and stay safe.***

***Nick***

## **OUR CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER**

Our Sundays and services for this month are:

### **SUNDAY 29 November ADVENT SUNDAY**

Public Worship will still be suspended by the government on this Sunday. A Eucharist will be celebrated by the Rector, on behalf of the whole Benefice, at 10.30 am in SS Peter & Paul's

### **SUNDAY 6 December The Second Sunday of Advent**

Wem: 8.00 am Holy Eucharist (a quiet reflective service)  
Wem: 9.45 am Holy Eucharist  
Weston: 9.30 am Holy Eucharist  
Lee: 11.15 am Holy Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 13 December The Third Sunday of Advent**

Wem: 8.00 am Holy Eucharist (a quiet reflective service)  
Wem: 9.45 am Holy Eucharist  
Lee: 11.15 am Holy Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 20 December The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Wem: 8.00 am Holy Eucharist (a quiet reflective service)  
Wem: 9.45 am Holy Eucharist  
Weston: 11.00 am Morning Prayer  
Lee: 11.15 am Holy Eucharist

### **SUNDAY 27 December St John, Apostle and Evangelist**

Wem: 8.00 am Holy Eucharist (a quiet reflective service)

**Wem: 9.45 Holy Eucharist**  
**A Joint Benefice Service for all three parishes**

It seems wisest at this stage to refrain from promulgating services for January until the situation is clearer and our Wardens and Church Councils are as sure as possible as to how the first part of 2021 may be.

However it is expected, and most certainly hoped, that the glorious Feast of the Epiphany can be celebrated (transferred of course from 6 January) in each parish with a Eucharist at the 'usual' times.

**\*\*More details by bulk emails before Christmas\*\***

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### ***CHRISTMAS SERVICES ACROSS THE BENEFICE***

#### ***WEM***

**CHRISTMAS EVE: 11.30 pm MIDNIGHT MASS of the NATIVITY**

**CHRISTMAS DAY: 8.00 am HOLY EUCHARIST**

**9.45 am FAMILY EUCHARIST for all AGES**

#### ***WESTON***

**CHRISTMAS DAY: 9.30 am CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST**

#### ***LEE***

**CHRISTMAS DAY: 11.15 am CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST**

Christmas is followed in short order by three Festivals, 'red letter days' in the Church.

All three are really important and it is a shame when they are wholly eclipsed by our, even if understandable, concentration on the Nativity. In 'pole position is quite rightly:

Saturday 26 December: **St Stephen, Deacon and First Christian Martyr.**

Acts Chapter 7. 51 - end

Described in the Acts of the Apostles as a Deacon, Stephen served the earliest Church in Jerusalem. In chapter 7 he is recorded as delivering a passionate speech to the Sanhedrin calling for all to hear the Gospel. For this he is dragged out of the city and stoned, his last words being for

forgiveness for his persecutors. You may recall the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul....later to be St Paul.

*Gracious Father,  
who gave the first martyr Stephen  
grace to pray for those who took up stones against him:  
grant that in all our sufferings for the truth  
we may learn to love even our enemies  
and to seek forgiveness for those who desire us hurt,  
looking to him who was crucified for us,  
Jesus Christ our mediator and advocate,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and forever.*

Sunday 27 December: **St John, Apostle and Evangelist.**

John 21. 19b-25

It is so fitting that John the Evangelist, who gives us the great Christmas Gospel ('In the beginning was the Word') is celebrated so near to Christmas Day itself. However as 'Exalting Holiness' reminds us it is not clear "whether John the Apostle and John the Evangelist are one and the same," nonetheless the "Church honours on this day the one who proclaims Jesus as the Word made flesh who is 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'". John, called with his brother James, was present at the Transfiguration, The last Supper, at the foot of the cross with Mary and was a witness to the resurrection.

*Grant, O Lord, we pray,  
that the Word made flesh  
proclaimed by your Apostle John,  
may ever abide and live within us,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Monday 28 December: **The Holy Innocents**

We are very familiar with Matthew's account of Herod, the Magi, and Herod's selfish, jealous desire to kill Jesus as he saw him as a threat to his worldly power. A dreadful account of ruthless power played out in the murder of the children under two, in and around Bethlehem. For Matthew they parallel the story of Pharaoh slaughtering the Hebrew children in Egypt, they are God's innocent ones, their fate mirrored throughout time in the abuse of authority for selfish gain.

*Heavenly Father,  
whose children suffered at the hands of Herod,  
though they had done no wrong:  
by the suffering of your Son  
and by the innocence of our lives  
frustrate all evil designs  
and establish your reign of justice and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.*

***Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud  
of witnesses....let us run with perseverance  
the race that is set before us”***

## Advent Word

You may like to use this in Advent; I have enjoyed it for the last few years -  
Ruth Empson:

For the seventh year in a row, #AdventWord will gather prayers via a global, online Advent calendar. Virginia Theological Seminary is offering meditations and images during this holy season beginning Sunday, November 29. Images and meditations can be experienced via the #AdventWord website ([www.adventword.org](http://www.adventword.org)), direct daily emails, as well as on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and ASL videos via YouTube.

The next issue is scheduled to be prepared on **Thursday 21 January** and will be available on **Friday 29 January** after 4.15 pm if we are able to produce a physical magazine. Otherwise it will go out in an electronic version.

Items for the magazine can be left in the drawer at the back of  
the church in Wem (by 9 am Thursday) or sent to:

**[pamedgmond@hotmail.com](mailto:pamedgmond@hotmail.com)**

## Rudolph the ...

... Red Nosed reindeer. The much-celebrated reindeer leading the herd pulling a certain sleigh around the world on just one night of the year. Many are the children's books which portray this happy animal and his friends apparently flying from one country to the next, customarily all detailed on-line by NASA.

It would be expected that all of us have a mental picture of this flying sleigh and its happy driver with an apparently bottomless sack of presents. Given that there might be nobody who has seen the jolly gentleman it is open to illustrators of books and Christmas cards to suggest his appearance according to their mental images and the current popular style.

We can look back to Victorian times and etchings of Christmas Eve or Christmas Day where eager children welcomed their visitor distributing their presents. We should not forget that he is alleged to have come down countless chimneys and filled stockings hung by the chimney with care.

Stockings! In many households there were no doubt traditions relating to these items of legwear. Might I take a moment to describe our family traditions when stockings really were stockings, presumably cast-offs from Mother, one at a time? I am sure that she must have kept three aside for us. Christmas Eve was the time for the reading of "T'was the Night Before Christmas" and amid the excitement of the house decorated with paper chains and other paper decorations our stockings were there, ready to be hung at the foot of each bed. Our iron framed beds were ideal, having rails at the head and foot for stockings to be tied in place.

Excitement usually (not always) meant that three sleepy heads would be safely fast asleep in no time, even when one became suspicious that a human Santa was in some way responsible for filling the stockings during the night. It was difficult trying to stay awake to prove or disprove this suspicion. By the time we awoke the stockings were filled with little goodies including some sweets and a traditional orange in the toe. That was a long way down for little arms to reach.

How did Santa manage this feat when there was no fireplace, no chimney and when all of the windows were shut tight to keep the cold out? Various explanations must have been offered but the realisation that “blowing his cover” might mean no goodies in stockings the following year ensured that the eldest in the family kept very quiet on the subject.

Tradition had it that in our household presents were invisible until after lunch. Until then we had the Stocking presents to keep us occupied. In the morning we all attended church, then Mother would be hard at work in the small kitchen, preparing the lunch. I suppose that the washing up was done after lunch but I cannot confirm that! We did know that in a special space above a cupboard was the “secrets cupboard” where presents were kept until the 25<sup>th</sup>. Presents time arrived and the carefully wrapped items spilled out of their bags onto the floor. Bearing in mind that I am looking back to the time soon after WW2 when certain items were in short supply we were encouraged to unwrap the presents carefully in order for the paper to be re-used. Now, was that the same paper that Santa used to wrap his Stocking Presents? Sh! Don't say anything.

These days wrapping paper is ripped off without such cares, such is our throw-away society's attitude and are not the boxes in which today's presents are presented so much larger? Indeed, the very presents themselves are far larger than they used to be, but that's perhaps a subject for another time.

It remains for us all to watch out for Rudolph and his friends on the 24<sup>th</sup> to ensure that they take Santa safely on his rounds. I hope that this piece might have jogged a few memories of Christmases past and provided encouragement for COVID Christmas 2020.

**Bob Dibben**





## A Time to Celebrate



Lockdown 2 has meant our Church is sadly yet again closed for public worship and, at the time of writing this article, we have no idea of what will be allowed at Christmas.

However Wem's flower committee (which needless to say has had a very quiet year) has decided that more than ever it is very important that we celebrate Jesus's Birthday, and so will be decorating the windows as last year. The poinsettias have been ordered and will bring much needed cheer to us all even if we can only visit for private prayer.

*The flowers are a thanksgiving and celebration for all the births in our parish this year. The birth of any baby is always very special and a time for much rejoicing. Many families have been separated during the difficulties of 2020 but the safe arrival of a new life brings much pleasure to everyone.*

Government restrictions have meant very few baptisms have taken place this year but we celebrate those that have:

March 1<sup>st</sup>  
March 14<sup>th</sup>  
September 27<sup>th</sup>

Jackson Mark Diamond  
Georgia Olivia Ridge  
Everlyn Hall

Last Christmas you were all very generous in sponsoring the cost of the poinsettias but this year the Flower committee are covering it. In current circumstances it is quite hard to organise a collection so we would like to suggest that you personally, as a thank you, make a donation to a children's charity of your choice.



Every cloud has a silver lining!

I have written before about the benefits of modern technology during “Lockdown”. This mainly concentrated on being able to attend sung Eucharist at Lichfield Cathedral on a Sunday morning by YouTube something Roger and I still do and did even when St Peter’s Church was open, but not necessarily on Sunday. Also our Zoom Choir Practices with the Wem Community Choir now suspended until singing is allowed in public.

Another benefit I have been able to take advantage of is the broadcasting, via Vimeo, of illustrated lectures put on by The Elgar Society. I have a particular affinity with Elgar because I studied his work “The Enigma Variations” for my GCE Music O level many moons ago and discovered that he was born on the same date as me, only 85 years earlier! Over the years I have made great attempts to hear as many of his works as possible. For many years my dearest wish was to attend a 3 Choirs Festival performance of The Dream of Gerontius in Worcester Cathedral and eventually achieved this ambition in 2015.

Roger and I have been accustomed for many years to spending a few days in the Malvern Hills during early May and one year I finally managed to persuade Roger to come with me to visit Elgar’s birthplace at Broadheath and I joined the Elgar Society there. The Society has branches all over the country and they organise lectures locally (but not in Shropshire). Most of these are a good distance from north Shropshire and I have not been able to attend them not wanting to take long car journeys on dark nights on my own. Now during lockdown these lectures are available to me without leaving the house!

I have also been able to attend lectures by the Bats in Churches Project which have proved very interesting and informative. The 3 I watched all took place in Norfolk churches and contained amazing videos of bats flying around the churches and roosting up in the roof trusses etc. Another aspect was quite a detailed tour of each of the churches prior to the lecture about the different types of bats that these churches house. I also learnt about various ways of managing bats in churches but not how much most of the equipment would cost to install.

I am sure there are other things I could become involved in at a distance but the other thing Roger and I did recently was have a virtual dinner party with a friend who was unable to visit us because the area she lived in suddenly went into Tier 2. We spent 3 hours over the dinner, having roughly the same menu in Surrey and Shropshire and it meant that our friend had some company for the evening which, as she lives alone, was very welcome and we thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.

I do hope and pray that this second lockdown will be the last and that we can start living a more normal life but I have to say I do hope some of the opportunities that we have experienced via technology will continue to be available to us.

Phoebe Ashton

## RAINBOWS

I walk across a muddy field, the sun at my back, grey sky ahead, and arched high above, stretching across the wintry landscape, is a rainbow.

What is it about rainbows? Of course we all know there is a perfectly simple physical explanation, but still those glowing colours draw out an irresistible response of wonder. I stop and stare. "Thank you". I say it out loud, to the field, to the sky, to God.

What is it about rainbows? They have come to have many meanings. The one light split into many beautiful colours has come, appropriately, to symbolise a celebration of human difference. And now, through these difficult times, the rainbow has been seen everywhere. We have used it to express our gratitude for the sacrifices of NHS workers and others; but on a more fundamental level, it has been for us a symbol of hope. The rain will not last, the dark clouds will clear, the sun will come out again.

In the Bible story of Noah, when the flood is over, God says "I will set my bow in the clouds to be a sign of the covenant...." After a time of tragedy and suffering the rainbow speaks not only of a new beginning but the promise of a renewed relationship of trust between humanity and our Creator. It won't be wall-to-wall sunshine - there will be clouds. But with the clouds come the rainbow. There will always be hope, because we can trust in Him.

Katharine Murray

From Olive Kenward: *I came across this poem in a book given to me years ago. I remember it striking a chord with me then and although Christmas this year is not going to be as usual I don't think the date mentioned matters, the sentiment is still the same.*

My Christmas Survey  
Lucy Wainwright aged 12

My Mum and Dad said, 'Lucy,  
It's homework time for you!'  
So here's my special survey  
Of Christmas. '92.

I went down to the high street  
to see who I could find  
to answer Christmas questions.  
I hoped they wouldn't mind.

The friendly looking grandma  
had lovely sparkling eyes.  
She said that she liked Christmas cake  
and hot Tesco mince pies.

The lady with the pushchair  
and shopping bags in tow  
said she'd like actor Richard Gere,  
beneath her mistletoe.

The workman with the scruffy coat  
had not a lot to say.  
Christmas was a time off work,  
and that was without pay.

The schoolboy had two pointed ears  
And a very dirty face.  
He said, 'Scotty beam me up!'  
And vanished without trace.

And finally a postman  
came walking up to me.  
He said he liked the presents  
around the Christmas tree.

I came home from my survey.  
It seems quite sad to say  
that no one mentioned Our Lord Jesus,  
Born on Christmas Day.

## **Bible Study Update December 2020**

From Celia Camplin, Reader Emeritus

I would like to take a few moments to wish you all as happy a Christmas as you can have! And a definite Happy New Year. What a strange year this has been. I hope you have all been keeping as well as you can. It seems ages since we last met.

I'm going to ask you to remember three little words this Christmas. The first is HOPE, the 2<sup>nd</sup> is KNOW and the 3<sup>rd</sup> is LIGHT.

I HOPE you all have a happy Christmas with or without the joy of your family. Pat and I will be on our own as we don't expect to see the family and haven't seen them for months. We both KNOW that we will see them as soon as possible and enjoy every minute, but whether it will be during the Christmas season, only the good Lord knows.

With the news of this new vaccine we KNOW there is LIGHT at the end of the tunnel that gives us HOPE. What does this mean for we Christians at this time? We HOPE for better times ahead, we KNOW we are in the Lord's hands and Jesus, LIGHT of the world is shining brightly. Keep your eyes on that LIGHT, He gives us all HOPE for better times, that is the KNOWledge we have especially during this season.

HOPE, KNOW, LIGHT, just three little words with a great deal of HOPE for the future.

A message for the Bible study group – you may remember (or you may not!) that we have been reading the Acts of the Apostles. I hope you have continued to read it during the pandemic[s]. Whenever we can meet again we shall look at the Letters of St. Peter. Read ahead, if you have time. I'll enclose the dates for next year in with your Christmas cards. Where we shall meet, we can decide later.

In the meantime – Happy Christmas and a blessed New Year to you all,

Celia

## LEE BROCKHURST WI

**Wow!** Lee Brockhurst W.I. had a **record attendance** in November at their Zoom AGM (25 - over 80% of our membership)! Is this because no-one was at risk of being landed with a new job, as all post holders had agreed to stay in post, or simply because Zoom is such an easy way to connect with each other?!! Either way it was great to see so many **smiling faces**, with Jackie Clarke as the latest member taking on a new technical challenge! The National Federation of W.I.s has provided a shortlist of five resolutions on which members vote to choose the two we campaign on: to assist with this, five Lee Brockhurst members gave an insightful précis of each one – thanks to **Anna Sadler, Julie Davies, Rachel Bailey, Debbie Evans** and **Ruth Empson**. As you may be interested to know more about these I have included a synopsis of each at the end of this report.

The LBWI 70<sup>th</sup> birthday bunting, now in its final stages, was displayed by our craft club organiser **Meg Bilson**, who was thanked for her work in co-ordinating and assembling it. The next project proposed, a **cartoon map** of Lee Brockhurst, was enthusiastically embraced by members who will start researching **village anecdotes** to incorporate into the design. Treasurer **Ann Hall's** reassuring financial report, Secretary **Julie Woolfenden's** comprehensive annual report and the President's **appreciative** address were **positive records** of an unusual year. These were followed by a fun quiz compiled by the County Office. The meeting ended with members looking forward to seeing friends from other W.I.s at the Christmas social of the Wem Group on **27<sup>th</sup> November**, giving them their first opportunity to **wear festive dress**! This is also when our popular and **inspiring** Group Convenor **Chris Williams** of Harmer Hill retires from her role, to be succeeded by Sue Wilton-Morgan of Lee Brockhurst W.I.

At our festive finale on **1<sup>st</sup> December** we shall be entertained by the irresistible 'Ukulele Lady' **Gabriela La Foley**, singing and playing **toe-tapping** jolly Christmas songs. (This meeting is usually fuelled by mulled wine and a fish and chip supper but it will be 'self-service' this year!)

In the new year, LBWI will be **Going for Gold** with their virtual meeting on **January 19<sup>th</sup>** - in fact odds are **15 to 1** against a **Wipeout** when they are entertained by compulsive quizzier **Faith Powell** talking about her experiences on more than a dozen TV quiz shows.

The LBWI **Book Club**, which continues to grow in the reliable hands of **Helen James**, has Zoom meetings on **7<sup>th</sup> December** and **18<sup>th</sup> January**

reviewing 'One Day' by David Nicholls and 'Why I'm no longer talking to white people' by Renni Eddo-Lodge respectively.

If you are interested in trying out W.I. you would be made very welcome. We are a very friendly W.I. and our membership has increased during 2020, despite the shortage of physical meetings. For more information contact **Julie Woolfenden** on 01939 200237 or [jjwoolfenden@gmail.com](mailto:jjwoolfenden@gmail.com)... ***There's still time to ask Santa for a gift of membership for only £10.75!***

Shortlisted resolutions:

1. A call to increase awareness of the subtle signs of ovarian cancer – *every 2 hours someone dies from ovarian cancer, this resolution aims to make GPs & the public aware of the signs.*
2. Stop women dying prematurely from coronary heart disease – *CHD is twice as deadly as breast cancer, this resolution aims to increase awareness of symptoms, reduce misdiagnosis and tackle the inequality in treatment.*
3. Racism and discrimination – *this aims to pressurise decision makers to implement existing anti-racism policies and raise public awareness of the issue.*
4. Now's the time to act! Protect your nature space to create wildlife-friendly communities - *this urges every member to work nationally and locally to protect local green spaces, their biodiversity and environment.*
5. Stop the destruction of peat bogs to tackle climate change – *80% of peatlands are damaged releasing millions of tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere annually; members are urged to stop the use of peat-based compost.*

Well done if you have read this far!!

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!!

## **The Morning After ...**

The Morning After is so often the time for a spot of reflection upon the events of the previous day. Monday, the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020 was no exception ...

It's a dreary, damp Monday morning and during the past weekend we have experienced, amongst other events, some unusual and very moving sights and sounds, hopefully never to be repeated.

This morning's newspaper has been delivered and there is time to flick through the pages to see which headlines grab my attention.

As I would expect, two matters take key positions on the front page – The Remembrance at the Cenotaph in Whitehall; and the aftermath of the US Election for the next President. The Queen is depicted in a photograph in a most sombre mood, as one would expect. Thousands of her subjects and others have died after being infected with COVID. The previous day she had spent a few, very touching moments at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey paying her personal tribute to the fallen.

On Sunday she followed that personal Remembrance with attendance at the Cenotaph, watching proceedings from a balcony. Not this time to observe the customary sight of thousands gathered along Whitehall and massed bands, representatives of Commonwealth countries, elements of those corps who looked after the country at home during the conflicts. COVID Rules forbade such closeness in the crowds and in the ranks, so almost the entire country was obliged to remain at home and watch via their televisions and, in some cases, live 'streaming' of events via the Internet and their home computers.

The traditional Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall appeared at first to be destined to be a mere shadow of its usual self but, wait. As with the Remembrance at the Cenotaph was there not a deeply poignant atmosphere? Was the absence of the many military personnel and thousands of ordinary people contributing to an unnerving sense of days, years to come when those who contributed to the achievement of Peace have all passed away and those who remember them are all who remain?

A thought process on these lines left one with a sense of potential obliteration of mankind and provoked a time of deep thought and sadness close to fear for the future.

Across the United Kingdom cities, towns and villages observed the COVID Rules. In Wem, in place of the customary parade of uniformed organisations following the Band and marching smartly up the High Street



towards the War Memorial and the Parish Church, between pavements lined with folk from the town and elsewhere, there was nothing of that nature to be seen. At the War Memorial a handful only of representatives filed out from the Church and in turn laid their wreaths on behalf of their organisations and various others connected with them. A short time of commemoration and prayer led by Rev Nick Heron bound together the thoughts of those present and numerous others watching the live 'streaming' of the occasion (organised by the Town Council – to whom many thanks) via their televisions and computers. After the ceremony the small gathering retired into the Church. No filling of the Church with hundreds of people. No singing. No presentation of flags and banners. Just the tolling of a muffled bell in the Church tower. It was all over in a few minutes. Such was the impact of the COVID Rules in Wem and elsewhere in this year of Coronavirus - 2020.

With all of those thoughts in mind what headlines were the eye-catchers in the newspaper that I opened today? I quote a few, in no particular order:

- No crowds, fewer veterans ... but the same deafening silence
- Trump prepares for court battle over 'unfair' election result
- One in eight shops failed to open after first lockdown
- Grim era of demonization ends now, Biden promises America
- Harris the role model is a heartbeat from presidency
- Network loses plot over Guy Fawkes fireworks
- Brexit deal there to be done, EU told
- Super bubbles and exercise tips to keep elderly well this winter
- British firm unlocks oxygen from Moon
- Green light for longer and heavier lorries on roads
- I'll wear what I like – I don't care what anyone else thinks

Lastly, to close this brief list the daily 'political' cartoon (without words on this occasion) in my newspaper appears to depict Mr Biden with bucket and mop standing in what may be taken as the Oval Office in the White House which has been well and truly "trashed" by a former occupant. The smallest details of this possible scenario had not been omitted and were worthy of several minutes' inspection. I leave you to imagine what might have been found (and you would probably correctly guess 90% of what has been included).

There always has been an art and a skill in producing an engaging headline that says so much in so few words. Consider the front pages of newspapers of years ago when, before the presence of photographs, the major topic stood out in the boldest typeface, followed in decreasing sizes of typeface to draw the reader's attention to the lesser aspects of the report which followed. On occasions there might be up to five sub-

headings. For some interesting examples why not have a look at <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

Nowadays some newspapers use garish front pages that tell more in their photos than any words that they use in order to grab the attention of potential readers, to sell more copies than their rivals and generate more advertising revenue. Not so my newspaper which carries no such colourful front pages and probably attracts less advertising revenue (hence the cover price is considerable when compared against those of the “popular press”).

However, each to their own style of newspaper but when read on The Morning After do we receive the same news? Yes, probably, but dressed up differently and to different degrees of sensationalism. I prefer the words; others will appreciate the photos and the gossip that is attached to them for a quick read.

Any newspaper archive will tell readers of events as printed and only time might prove the headlines’ validity in the face of further investigative journalism and the passage of time. Over breakfast on “The Morning After” the headlines do help and when time allows for deeper reflection a multitude of thoughts and opinions amplify the reports for posterity in the mind of the reader.

One wise individual once declared that he would not read the papers on publication day but 24 hours later when time had given him breathing space after the events reported. Perhaps he had a point there.

**Bob Diben**

**Any queries about searches in the Whitchurch Road  
Cemetery or elsewhere**

**Please contact Mr Tom Edwards of 1 Eckford Park, Wem,  
SY4 5HL or on 01939 233932**

# CHRISTMAS

Across the white and frozen earth  
The midnight bells will ring  
Proclaiming to a silent world  
The birthday of our king

As we go to early service  
On a cold and frosty morning  
We know the joyous feeling  
Of a Christmas Day just dawning

As generations come and go  
It still will be the same  
When old and young will all join in  
To sing the glad refrain

Old Santa Claus, he still appears  
But the chimney route seems out  
For everything is different now  
And he travels round about

It doesn't matter if snow should fall  
As it makes it seem more right  
It isn't really like Christmas  
If the sun is shining bright

The tables laden with good food  
The cards and decorations  
And little children wake at dawn  
With excited exclamations

Of all the lovely things they find  
Spread out upon their bed  
It brings our childhood back again  
And the lovely times we had

As across the white and frozen world  
The joyful bells will ring  
Proclaiming to us all on earth  
To celebrate our saviour's birth

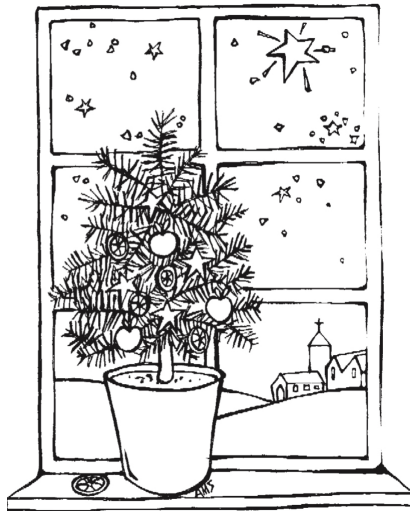
A poem from Helen Hornsby's Great Aunt Annie - A Woolnough  
(See September magazine)

## St Osmond

Osmond came to England from France shortly after 1066, and he was a Norman following William the Conqueror.

Osmond himself was no soldier, but an able and godly man, with a great gift of administration. He became royal chaplain, and then chancellor in 1072, producing numerous royal letters and charters for the king. In 1078 he was made bishop of Salisbury. As such, he completed and consecrated the cathedral, and formed such an outstanding chapter and constitution that it later became a model for other English cathedrals.

Osmond took part in the preparation of the Domesday Book and was there when it was presented to William in April 1086. He died in 1099, well respected for his purity and learning, and his lack of avarice and ambition.



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## CHRISTMAS AT LEATON FOREST

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

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*Christmas Tree Barn opens following lockdown until 23<sup>rd</sup> December  
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday- 10.00am - 5.00pm  
Thursday & Friday 10.00am - 6.00pm  
Weekends 9.00- 5.00pm*



***DIRECTIONS:*** Take the B5067 Baschurch Road from Shrewsbury.  
After approximately 3 miles, just past Leaton Church (on your right)  
turn left off the road & follow the Christmas Tree Signs to the Barn.

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