

DECEMBER 2024/JANUARY 2025

The Benefice Magazine
for the Parishes of
St Peter & St Paul,
St Peter and St Luke



*St Peter and St Paul's,
Wem*



*St Peter's,
Lee Brockhurst*



*St Luke's,
Weston-under-Redcastle*

**THE BENEFICE OF
ST PETER & ST PAUL, WEM
ST PETER, LEE BROCKHURST
ST LUKE, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE**

Rector

The Reverend John Christopher Jukes BTh (Hons) MA
The Rectory Ellesmere Road, Wem SY4 5TU
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Retired Clergy

Canon Dr William Price
The Reverend Edith Quirey
Reverend Mike Cotterell
Prebendary Rob Haarhoff

Further details are available on our website: www.wemcofe.co.uk
and on Facebook@Wemparishchurch

Whilst our website is offline information can be found at
A Church Near You – www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4601/

ST PETER AND ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WEM

Churchwardens

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568 and David Murray 01939 236134

Parish Reader

Katharine Murray

PCC Lay Chair

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568

PCC Treasurer

Caroline Sinclair 01939 232626

Organist

Glyn Williams 01939 234954

Sacristan

June Powell 01939 234412

Church Flowers

Sybil Farmer 01939 232568

Church Hall Bookings – Via website/Facebook

Baby and Toddler Group (Sweet Peas)

Alison Hope – E-Mail to alisonhope18@yahoo.co.uk

ST PETER'S, LEE BROCKHURST

Churchwardens

Val Lusby 01939 235610

Roger Ashton 01939 232425

Treasurer

Roger Ashton 01939 232425

PCC Secretary

Phoebe Ashton 07858 123669

PCC Lay Chairman

Tim Wilton-Morgan 07802 735769

Church Warden Emeritus

Robert Marsh 01939 200641

ST LUKE'S, WESTON-UNDER-REDCASTLE

Churchwardens

Frank Hosie-Kingham 01939 200618

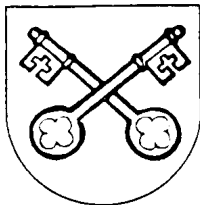
Helen O'Neill 01939 200663

Treasurer

Colin Holloway 01939 200682

Church Warden Emeritus

Arthur Fox 01630 685180



LEE



WEM



WESTON

SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE IN DECEMBER					
DAY	DATE	SEASON	WEM	WESTON	LEE
SUNDAY	1st	ADVENT SUNDAY	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	11:15 HE
THURSDAY	5th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	8th	2nd SUNDAY of ADVENT	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	11:15 MP
THURSDAY	12th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	15th	3rd SUNDAY of ADVENT	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 MP	11:15 HE
THURSDAY	19th	<i>Holy Innocents</i>	09:30 HE		
FRIDAY	20th	9 Lessons & Carols	19:30 <i>Civic Service</i>		
SUNDAY	22nd	4th SUNDAY of ADVENT	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	11:00 HE	18:30 Carols
TUESDAY	24th	CHRISTMAS EVE	15:00 CS 23:30 MNM	17:00 Carols	
WEDNESDAY	25th	CHRISTMAS DAY	09:45 HE	10:00 HE	10:30 HE
SUNDAY	29th	1st SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS	08:00 HE 10:00 HE	10:00 Benefice Service	at WEM

HE—Holy Eucharist MP—Morning Prayer CS—Crib Service
MNM—Midnight Mass





<u>PROVISIONAL SERVICES IN THE BENEFICE IN JANUARY</u>					
DAY	DATE	SEASON	WEM	WESTON	LEE
THURSDAY	2nd		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	5th	EPIPHANY	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 MP	11:15 MP
THURSDAY	9th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	12th	THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	11:15 HE
THURSDAY	16th		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	19th	2nd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	08:00 HE 09:45 HE	09:30 HE	18:30 HE
THURSDAY	23rd		09:30 HE		
SUNDAY	26th	3rd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	08:00 HE 09:45 HE 17:00 P&P	11:00 HE	11:15 HE

HE—Holy Eucharist MP—Morning Prayer P&P—Praise & Prayer

PLEASE NOTE:
These are Provisional Services for January



Notes from the Editor DECEMBER/JANUARY

The Editorial team wish our readers a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and healthy New Year. This magazine is covering two months so the next magazine will be produced at the end of January.

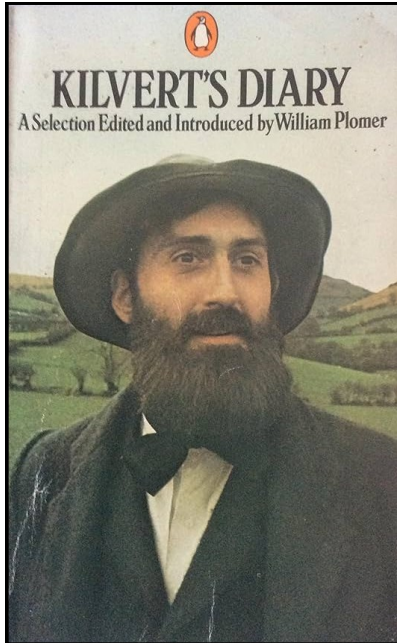
There is much to advertise for the month of December. The Christmas Tree Festival from 1st December to 13th December in St Peter's and St Paul's Church, Wem, more detail in the magazine. The Civic Service of 9 Lessons and Carols on Friday 20th December at 19.30, Carol Service at St Peter's, Lee Brockhurst at 18.30 on Sunday 22nd December, and at St Luke's, Weston at 17.00 on Tuesday 24th December. Also on 24th the Crib Service in Wem at 15.00 and finally, at 23.30 at St Peter's and St Pauls Wem, Midnight Mass. More details of these services appear in the magazine.

Looking back to last month it was a pleasant change to see the sunshine on several consecutive days after the long period of overcast and rainy weather. Now we have been surprised by the sudden onset of winter with a time of snow, low temperatures and hazardous driving conditions. Today we are contending with Hurricane Bert. However, we must be thankful that by and large we have not suffered the horrendous flash floods that occurred in central Europe and Spain.

It is very apt that Advent begins on a Sunday this year when Christians begin to prepare spiritually for the coming into the world of Jesus Christ. It also marks the beginning of a new year in the Church of England and the Gospel readings will change from Mark to Luke. Children often receive Advent Calendars however of recent years these do not appear to have much to do with the real meaning of Christmas and seem to be a form of self-indulgence with each window hiding a chocolate novelty, even the picture does not relate to the Christmas story. I had great difficulty finding Advent Calendars with nativity scenes on them although I am not sure that the pictures inside will have any religious context but will depict toys and other gifts and secular scenes. These days too I believe adults can receive Advent Calendars with beauty products or jewellery behind the "windows". How sad!

Best wishes to you all from your editorial team.

Phoebe



Canon William Continues With Insights Into Ministry In The 1870's

KILVERT IN DECEMBER

The Revd Francis Kilvert was a clergyman in the Wye Valley in Radnorshire and Herefordshire in the 1870s. His Diary gives us glimpses into ordinary life in his parishes, and I've selected some extracts from December in various years.

Sunday 25 December 1870

As I lay awake praying in the early morning I thought I heard the sound of distant bells. It was an intense frost. I sat down in

my bath upon a sheet of thick ice which broke in the middle into large pieces whilst sharp points and jagged edges stuck all round the sides of the tub like chevaux de frise, not particularly comforting to the naked thighs and loins, for the keen ice cut like broken glass. The ice water stung and scorched like fire. I had to collect the floating pieces of ice and pile them on a chair before I could use the sponge and then I had to thaw the sponge in my hands for it was a mass of ice. The morning was most brilliant. Walked to the Sunday School with Gibbons [the Vicarage maid] and the road sparkled with millions of rainbows, the seven colours gleaming in every glittering point of hoar frost. The Church was very cold in spite of two roaring stove fires. Mr Venables [the Vicar] preached and went to Bettws.

(It's interesting that Sunday School at Clyro was held on Christmas Day, although, of course, it was a Sunday. One wonders how the poor, the majority of the parishioners, managed in the intense frost.)

Sunday 10 December 1871

We do not know whether the Prince of Wales is alive or dead. Contradictory telegrams have been flying about, and we did not know whether to mention the Prince's name in the Litany or not. Mr Venables read prayers, and when he came to the petition in the Litany for the Royal Family he made a solemn pause



and in a low voice prayed 'that it may please Thee (if he still survive) to bless Albert Edward Prince of Wales'. It was very impressive. But this suspense between life and death is terribly sad. Before afternoon service a form of prayer for the Prince came down by telegraph from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the first prayer that I ever heard of as coming by telegraph. Mr Venables used it in Church and spoke about it before the sermon, but it came too late for me to take it to Bettws, so I could only use the provisional form of prayer which Mr Venables used this morning.

(Kilvert was a fervent royalist. When news of the Prince's recovery reached Clyro on 17 December, Kilvert wrote: 'I love that man now and always will love him. I will never say a word against him again'. He had clearly not always been an admirer of the Prince!)

Wednesday 25 December 1878

Immediately after dinner I had to go back to the Church for the funeral of little Davie of the Old Weston who died on Monday was fixed for 2.15. The weather was dreadful, the snow driving in blinding clouds and the walking tiresome. Yet the funeral was only 20 minutes late. The Welcome Home, as it chimed softly and slowly to greet the little pilgrim coming to his rest, sounded

bleared and muffled through the thick snowy air. The snow fell thickly all through the funeral service and at the service by the grave a kind woman offered her umbrella which a kind young fellow came and held over my head... I asked the poor mourners to come in rest and warm themselves [in the Vicarage at Bredwardine] but they would not and went into Church. The poor father, David Davies the shepherd, was crying bitterly for the loss of his little lamb. Owing to the funeral it was rather late before we began the afternoon service. There were very few people in Church beside the mourners. The afternoon was very dark. I was obliged to move close to the great south window to read the Lessons and could hardly see even then. I preached from Luke ii. 7. 'There was no room for them in the inn', and connected the little bed in the churchyard in which we had laid Davie to rest with the manger cradle at Bethlehem.

(A poignant Christmas Day afternoon. Rectors and vicars never know when they will have to deal with sudden sadness. Kilvert had visited the little boy's home on Christmas Eve and had knelt by Davie's bed with his mother and prayed. He was reminded of the death of his own little sister over 30 years earlier. This was to be Kilvert's last Christmas. He died on 23 September 1879 at the age of 38.)

William Price.

**The Memorial Tablet for
Revd Kilvert
in St Michael's Church, Clyro**



A BIBLE SUNDAY SERMON FROM CANON WILLIAM PRICE

St Luke's Parish Church, Weston under Redcastle

27 October 2024

Today's wonderful Collect asks God to help us to 'read, mark, learn and inwardly digest' the holy Scriptures, the Bible. The Bible is a curious book in one way. It has been described as the 'least read best seller'. Millions of copies in many languages are published every year, but one wonders how often the Bible is actually read. Do you read it ever, or sometimes, or regularly? Of course you hear it read on Sundays in church, but what about reading it at home?

But what exactly is the Bible? The story is told of a young trainee librarian who was asked to catalogue – on cards, not a computer – a pile of books including a Bible. The first question she had to write down was the name of the author. What should she put? God? Various? Don't know?

Some Evangelical Christians say that the Archbishop of Canterbury is not a 'Bible believing Christian'. What they mean of course is that the Archbishop does not share their interpretation of the Bible. And it is certainly true that there *are* different interpretations of the Bible. Some Christians, for example, see the Bible as literally true in every word, dictated to the writers by God himself. Others see it as a collection of writings of different sorts – history, poetry, prophesy, proverbs, Gospels, letters, and so on – written over hundreds of years by many different writers, inspired by God, perhaps with different degrees of inspiration.

What matters to me is that the Bible tells us what we would otherwise not know. It reveals truth from God. The Bible tells us in the Old Testament that God is holy, that God created everything, and that God gave his people laws. The Bible tells us in the New Testament that God sent his Son, Jesus, to show us what God is like and that God inspired the followers of Jesus to establish the Church to carry on God's work in the world. This is all 'good news'.

The great acts of God are revealed in the Bible. But it's not just an account of what people did and thought centuries ago. It's not just a history book. As we read or hear the words of the Bible the Holy Spirit leads us to make them part of our lives today – if we will let him. There should be a dialogue between the words of the Bible and the reader or hearer. As we read or hear the words of the Bible we can notice different things at different times. I read four passages of the Bible every day, two (Old Testament and New Testament) in the morning and similarly two in the evening, and I've done that every single day for over 50 years. I know most of the Bible almost by heart. I always use the same edition of the Bible and I usually know the next words coming up when I turn a page. And yet when I read even the parts which I do know by heart something new can strike me, something which I'd never noticed before. It's a living book.

This morning I've kept calling the Bible a book, but of course it's actually a library of books, 66 in all. It is called the Holy Bible because it is written from faith (of the writers) to faith (of the readers or hearers). It is a living book because it tells of a living God, and if God is contemporary – as he is – then the Bible too is contemporary, a living book.

Above all the Bible tells us about Jesus. God gave us the Bible so that we might confess that Jesus is Lord, Jesus is our Saviour, Jesus is the Son of God, in whom we can find peace and joy in this life and the next. Or, to go back to the Collect, the whole point of our being given the Bible to 'read, mark, learn and inwardly digest' it is to help us to 'embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life' which we have in Jesus Christ.

William Price



Notes from The Diocese for December



A Gospel of Songs



Revd Simon Foster

It's Advent!

Christmas and New Year are on the horizon – but for the church, a new year has just started. The next twelve months at church will be full of readings from Luke's Gospel.

Like each gospel, Luke's gospel very much has its own character. For many, Luke is the gospel of inclusiveness and especially the poor. The parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son appear only in Luke.

For others it is the gospel of the Holy Spirit. Luke depicts the Spirit as a lively, intervening aspect of God. The Holy Spirit bursts into the world, actively guiding people and leading events. It's a testimony that God pushed us in the right direction at a critical moment in history. This theme is carried right into the book of Acts.

Perhaps you think of Luke in a particular way too.

For me, especially at this time of year, Luke is the Gospel of Songs. The three great 'songs' – the **Benedictus** (Luke 1.68-79), the **Magnificat** (Luke 1.46-55) and the **Nunc Dimitis** (Luke 2.29-32) all appear early in Luke's gospel.

Each is a song of God's promise fulfilled. In them, Zechariah, Mary and then Simeon each speak about what they long for and see coming. The songs are personal and prophetic, all at once! They are

songs of freedom, release, and the coming ('advent') of God's kingdom. They demonstrate a sense of joy that God is taking the burden of sin off humanity.

Tell Out My Soul! written, in 1962 by Timothy Dudley-Smith, wonderfully captures this spirit through its reworking of the words of the Magnificat.

Each of these songs is used every day in formal Church of England worship. The Benedictus is the climax of Morning Prayer. The Magnificat appears in Evening Prayer, and the much shorter Nunc Dimitis summarises our night prayer. In Daily Office, we usually speak them rather than sing them, but even so, they flow with their own rhythm and sound. They anchor us and tell our story – a bit like saying the creed together on Sunday morning. If you are lucky enough to regularly attend daily offices, you will know the power of these three songs. They will have seeped into your soul and you probably almost know them off by heart! Different words will emerge into your mind at different times of day or moments in life.

If you can't attend the daily office, you could join one online (perhaps Lichfield Cathedral, which streams Morning Prayer six days a week).

Or, why not read one of these three songs regularly at your time of prayer? You will be praying them alongside thousands of others each day. They will refresh you and remind you of your faith. As you speak them, they will become a way of expressing your Christian desire for the 'advent' of God's Kingdom. It's a desire which you share with me, and with millions of other praying Christians today and every day.

Revd *Simon Foster* is the diocese Mission and Strengthening Communities Team Leader, and can be contacted via 07496 638805 / simon.foster@lichfield.anglican.org

You can join Lichfield Cathedral for morning prayer online six day a week – visit www.facebook.com/LichfieldCathedralDailyWorship/



COUNTRYSIDE MATTERS

— DECEMBER/JANUARY

from ROGER ASHTON

THE CARBON FACTOR

So what is Carbon. Well it is a major non metallic element of our Planet and has multipurpose functions. Our bodies are one fifth carbon, diamonds are pure carbon, coal and natural gas contain it in a big way, carbon dioxide plays a vital part of our atmosphere and our plant life. We could not exist without it. Since the Industrial Revolution we have exploited its energy values and now find that nature's balance is seriously stressed. The blame for climate change and poor air quality is increasingly laid at its door. The concern is now worldwide and the United Nations Climate Change Conferences are rated as a critical monitoring body. COP29 has recently taken place.

So how does this impact on the countryside? The use of fossil fuels has transformed farming over the last seventy years but we now have to address the down side. New goals have been set up to deal with the carbon footprint, net zero, where we can balance carbon excesses, is targeted for year 2035. How do we get there? Well, using renewable energy, using regenerative practices in the daily management of agriculture, livestock and horticulture and keeping carbon stored, sequestering, are probably the most important. Upland and lowland peat bogs store vast amounts, but permanent grassland and woodland do, too. Arable farming using regenerative practices can build soil organic matter,



PEAT BOG,
THE MERES AND MOSSES, WHIXALL

the higher the organic matter the greater is the soils ability to store carbon.

What are regenerative practices and are they profitable?

Well, minimum tillage and the direct drilling

of crops which saves fuel, better use of crop rotations and the planting of deep rooting plants all help. With livestock, managing the way animals are fed and more efficient use of energy on a self sufficiency basis. Buying in artificial fertilizer, concentrate ration and diesel fuel adds to the carbon problem. Farm requirements that are imported from around the world come with a big carbon footprint. On the plus side Investment in Anaerobic Digesters would make more efficient use of animal waste and provide renewable energy. Some milk contracts build in a carbon reduction goal now. On farm carbon calculators can be used to guide carbon reduction progress but it is early days for there is not a universally agreed set of standards.

One thing is for certain, the world has to address this but it is not going to be easy. Human nature targets a high standard of living now and the use of fossil fuels is still very profitable!



CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria is often credited for making Christmas trees fashionable in Britain but the tradition of decorations and of bringing greenery into our houses and places of worship is far older than that. There are records of decorations for Saturnalia in ancient descriptions from the 5th century BC. Saturnalia fell in mid-December, around the time of the solstice, which is of course when Christmas falls. Decorating trees is also an ancient Celtic custom. A tree would be decorated at the winter solstice as a symbol of life and the Scandinavians did so to celebrate Yule, also a mid-winter festival.

Celtic tree dressing was not solely associated with the solstice, Piny the Elder describes a festival on the 6th day of the moon which involved sacred oak trees. Ash, apple, hazel alder, elder all have particular importance, with oak, ash and thorn the three primary 'magical' trees, employed by Puck, in Rudyard Kipling's "Puck of Pooks Hill", to transport the children back through time. Yew features in many traditions and beliefs, as a symbol of both death and life and yew boughs, along with holly were brought indoors to decorate homes and churches for Christmas, probably because of their evergreen foliage and red berries.



Decorating churches and homes for Christmas has been part of the church calendar for many centuries with almost all surviving church records from the late Middle Ages including entries for purchasing holly and ivy. The Christmas carol *Deck the Halls with Boughs of Holly* dates from 16th century Wales. It was Prince Albert who

popularised the use of spruce trees however, not a British tree species and imported from his native Coburg in Germany. Periodicals such as the *Illustrated London News* began to describe the royal Christmas tree each year and the custom took off amongst the public. Wreaths hung on the door also became popular during Victorian times although, like decorations and the use of greenery, wreaths were not new, having been presented in Ancient Rome as a reward for military success and excellence. Advent wreaths may have originated amongst Lutherans in 16th century Germany.

Kissing boughs are an old tradition now lost, but which may have led to the custom of kissing beneath the mistletoe. Kissing boughs consisted of a hoop of pliable sticks, probably hazel or willow, made into a sphere on which decorative greenery could be fixed. These would be hung on walls or in doorways to welcome people into the building and could be



quite large. Popular in Tudor times, they became more elaborate in Georgian times and included apples, oranges and coloured paper or baubles. Gentlemen could pluck a berry and



then kiss a lady on the cheek until the berries ran out and the kissing stopped!

Most of our churchyards and cemeteries contain a ready supply of the greenery traditionally used for decoration; holly, ivy, yew and sometimes mistletoe too. A small contribution towards more sustainable ways could be to increase use of these natural 'decorations' and reduce the need for imported flowers or artificial baubles and lights. You will be following in the footsteps of many generations celebrating both Christmas and the solstice with the hope in a dark season that both bring.

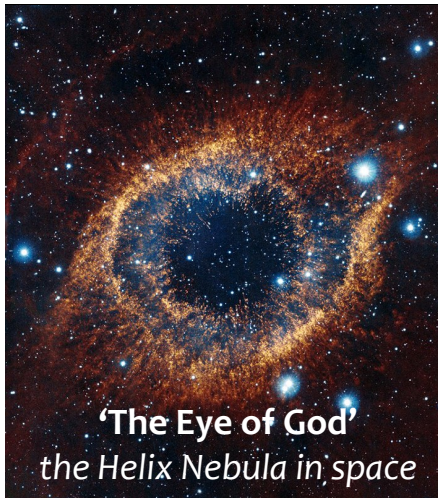
Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor,

harriet@cfga.org.uk, www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

- individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**





Abbé Michel Quoist would like to see with God's eyes: CONTINUED
'If only we knew how to look at life as God sees it, we should realise that nothing is secular in the world, but that everything contributes to the building of the kingdom of God. To have faith is not only to raise one's eyes to God to contemplate him; it is also to look at this world—but with Christ's eyes...

The Christmas Season is a time of celebration, of joy, of hope as we welcome the Christ Child on Christmas Morning—Emmanuel, God with us!

But it is also so often a time of excess; of over-indulgence, of over-spending, of over-eating, of inward looking ... Abbé Quoist suggests that this is not the way that our loving Father would have us be.

Hunger

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

Luke 16:19-21

Jesus said to his disciples, "Have them sit down..." The disciples did so, and everyone sat down. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them. Then he gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and were satisfied...

Luke 9:14-17

I have eaten,

I have eaten too much,

I have eaten only because others have done so,

Because I was invited,

Because I was in the world and the world would not have understood;




And each dish
And each mouthful
And each morsel was hard to get down.
I have eaten too much, Lord,
While at the moment, in my town, more than 1500 persons
 queued up at the bread line,
While in her attic a woman ate what she had salvaged that morning
 from the garbage bins,
While urchins in their orphanage divided some scraps
 from the old folks home.
While ten, a hundred, a thousand unfortunates throughout the
 world, at that very moment twisted in pain and died of
 hunger before their despairing families.

Lord, it's terrible, for I know,
We know, now.

We know that not only a few destitute are hungry, but hundreds
 at their own doors.
We know that not only several hundreds but thousands are
 hungry on the borders of their country,
We know that not only thousands, but millions, are hungry
 throughout the world.

Maps have been made of the prevalence of hunger,
Areas of starvation and death, appalling.
The figures stand out in stark and implacable truth.
The minimum wage for a month here is, for millions and millions of
 human beings, their maximum wage for a year.
One third of humanity is underfed.

Lord, you see this map, you have read the figures since
 the beginning of time,
And you told the story, for me, of the rich man at table and
 the poor starved Lazarus;;
And you spoke, for me, of the Last Judgement.



*"... I was hungry..." **

It's you who queue up at the bread line,
It's you who eat the scraps of garbage,
It's you who are tortured by hunger and starve to death,
It's you who die alone in a corner at 26,
While in another corner of the great hall of the world—with some
members of our family—I eat without being hungry,
what is needed to save you.

*"... I was hungry..." **

Remind me of that, Lord, if I cease for a moment to give myself.
I'll never be through giving bread to my brothers and sisters, for there
are too many of them.

There'll always be some who won't have had their share.
I'll never be through fighting to get bread for all my brothers
and sisters.

Lord, it isn't easy to feed the world.
I would rather say my prayers regularly, properly;
I would rather fast on Fridays,
I would rather visit my poor man,
I would rather give to fêtes and orphanages;
But apparently that isn't enough.
It's nothing, if one day you can say to me: *"I was hungry!"* *

Lord, I'm no longer hungry,
Lord, I don't want to be hungry again.
Lord, I want to eat only what I need to live, to serve you and
to fight for my brothers and sisters.
For you are hungry, Lord,
You die of hunger while I am surfeited.

*** *The Last Judgement***

'The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats' - Matthew 25:31-46

from '**Prayers of Life**' by **Michel Quoist** ISBN 0-7171-0158-4

CHILDRENS' QUESTIONS TO GOD

Dear God
How come you did all those
Miracles in the old days and
don't do any more now ?
Semour

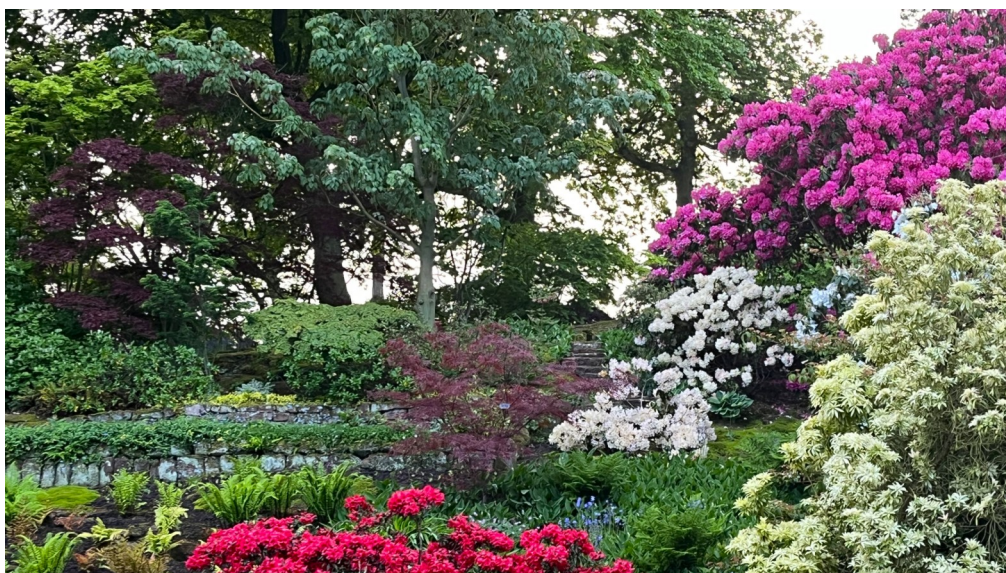


The Wedding at Cana—Water into Wine



Dear God
God - if we come back as something -
please don't let me be Jennifer Horton,
because — I hate her. Denise

*Trish reminds me that these are as written
—spellings and all!*



The Parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, Wem

FROM WEM PCC

At the November meeting of the PCC we were very pleased to welcome Karl Gough to fill what is known as a "Casual Vacancy": in other words, at the Annual Meeting in April there were fewer nominations than places on the PCC. In those circumstances the PCC themselves can elect another member. So thank you, Karl, for stepping in.

Another vacancy, mentioned last month, was for someone to manage bookings of the Church Hall. Elaine Shaw has volunteered for this valuable task. Many thanks to you too, Elaine. Also thank you to Sarah Philpott for taking responsibility for our Social Media input. We also need someone to take on church cleaning. Do you know anyone who would like to work a few hours a week keeping the Hall and church clean? Have a word with one of the Wardens.

Not many people carry cash around with them these days, and we have to move with the times. The PCC agreed to purchase a terminal for electronic donations, which will shortly appear in the church. In the meantime, it is possible to give via the QR code, a copy of which is to be found in many of the pews.

The PCC was also given the news that Revd William Price will be stepping back from parish ministry at the end of the year. He will be greatly missed. Thank you so much, Father William, for all your loving service.

WHAT'S ON IN THE PARISH

Prayer
+
Praise



Sunday 26th January
at 5 pm in the Church
*Please come along for a quiet
time together*

CHURCH FLOWERS

This year our team of flower arrangers; Olive Kenward, Gill Mellor, Sarah Philpott, Denise Morgan, Thelma Chilcott, Elaine Shaw, Alison Price and Sybil Farmer have been joined recently by Ruth Payne and Sarah Atwell.

We are most grateful to people who have sponsored flowers this year,

Alison Price

(in memory of her parents)

Peter Faulknaill

(in memory of his wife Doris),

Helen Hornsby

(in memory of her husband Chris),

Rob Ballantyne

(in memory of his mother, his sister Dorothy and his wife Janet)

Jessie Evans

(in memory of her husband Allen)

Simon Bloor

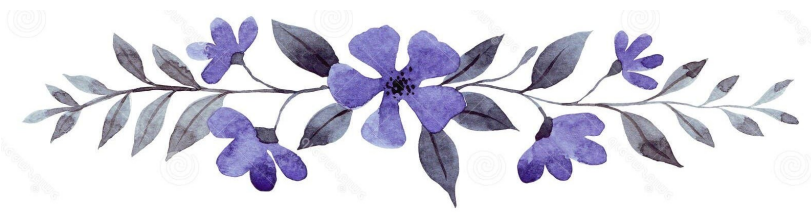
(in memory of his mother Peggy)

Penny Naylor

(in memory of her mother Roberta)

And Margaret Ward, Wendy Cook, Penny Lewis, Sue Udy & Hilary Morris.





If you would like to sponsor a particular date; look out in the new year for a form that I will be putting at back of church so that you can add your name to a specific date. Sponsorship money should be paid to our treasurer Caroline Sinclair.



We met recently to plan for Christmas. On Thursday 19th December from 10:30am we will be arranging pedestals in the vestibule, at back of church and in front of the pulpit. As the Service of 9 Lessons and Carols is to be on Friday 20nd December we will simply be decorating all the window-sills with candles. We would really appreciate help with putting the candles in place on that Thursday. Please speak to Sybil Farmer or Thelma Chilcott if you can help

with this or would be interested in helping at festivals or would like to do a pedestal occasionally.



Sybil

Email: Syb.hbcwem@btinternet.com
or 01939232568



DASHER

Floral Creations

Wreath Making Workshop
In Aid of St Peters & St Pauls Church

15th December 4:30pm - 6:30pm

St Peters & St Pauls Church Hall

Full Demonstration

Includes all materials, mulled wine
and mince pies!

£25 per person

£10 non refundable deposit secures your place

To book contact Jackie on 07376 568706
or call into Dasher Florals, High Street, Wem

Book Early to Avoid Disappointment



CHRISTMAS 2024
at SS Peter & Paul's Church, Wem.

30th November

14:00 Church Open
for Wem Christmas Lights switch on
& Christmas Tree Festival

30th November -13th December

09:00 – 17:00 Christmas Tree Festival

Saturday 14th December

10:00 -12:00 Christmas Fayre

Friday 20th December

19:30 Nine Lessons and Carols

Tuesday 24th December

CHRISTMAS EVE

15:00 Crib Service

23:30 Midnight Mass

Wednesday 25th December

CHRISTMAS DAY

09:45 Holy Eucharist

SUNDAY 29th December

10:00 Benefice Eucharist

Monday 30th DECEMBER

15:00 Afternoon Tea in the Church Hall

The Parish Church of St Peter, Lee Brockhurst

St. Peter's Church Lee Brockhurst held their annual Autumn Fayre on Saturday 16th November, in the Village Hall.

An excellent turnout of local villagers came, perhaps to take advantage of the coffee and warm mince pies. not to mention browsing the variety of colourful stalls available, and perhaps to pick up a bargain or two.



The produce stall, offering delicious home made cakes, marmalade and local honey, sold out very quickly, but there were still prizes to be won on the tombola and the raffle.

A grand total of £521.21 was raised for Church funds.
Thank you all for your support.



ST PETER'S CHURCH
LEE BROCKHURST
CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sunday 22nd December

Carol Service – 6.30 p.m.

Followed by mince pies and mulled wine

Everyone Welcome

CHRISTMAS DAY

Holy Communion

10.30 a.m.



WHAT WE DO ON OUR HOLIDAYS!

Phoebe (and Roger) continue to spill the beans...

More Churches visited on our holidays!

In early October Roger and I spent a week in The North York Moors based near Rosedale Abbey. In general the weather was kind to us and we were able to get out and about, constrained only by how far our ageing Golden Retriever, Rosy, is able to walk.

On the Sunday of our holiday we visited Whitby, this attractive little port and seaside town is situated at the bottom a steep cliff. For whatever reason the original Saxon church was built at the top of the cliff and subsequently a Norman church replaced it. Access to the church, dedicated to St Mary, is via 199 steps (see photo).



We did not plan to attend the service because in any case we were unaware of the service times. Luckily for us the service was about to start since the 10 bells were very busy being pulled by some very skilled people, however, we did not attend. Also on the top of the cliff are the ruins of Whitby Abbey which we explored on a previous visit.

We descended the 199 steps realising that to get back to our car in the car park we would have to return the same way! After a short walk round the town browsing the numerous jewellery shops selling jet and stopping for a hot drink in a café we set about returning to our car. Roger of course managed the steps with no trouble at all but I had to stop after the first hundred to catch my breath. I was helped on my ascent by observing the small discs, written in Roman numerals, on every 10th step. On reaching the top of the steps we saw that the church service was over and that people were visiting it. There are many interesting things to see in the church but the one that struck me most forcefully was the fact that all the seating was in box pews. Not the square sort that one can see in e.g. Petton church near Cockshutt but narrow oblong pews. The leaflet giving details of the church's history and architecture do not mention the pews at all!



Apparently the Saxon church was destroyed by the Danes and Abbot

William de Percy caused the Norman church to be built in about 1110. Some of this original church still stands in particular the chancel. Constant alterations continued throughout the centuries meaning that little else remains intact. I was amazed to discover that faculties were in use in the 19th century and massive changes were undertaken under one in 1818 including the taking down of the North Wall of the nave and West Wall of the North Transept and building a rectangular extension.

The second church we visited was in the village of Lavington some 5 miles south of our accommodation. We had picked the Blacksmiths Arms to visit for lunch and while Roger was being served the landlord asked him if he had visited the church, and went on to tell him about the Saxon Crypt, encouraging us to do so.



This church is also dedicated to St Mary and is a very handsome building built on the site of the Celtic Monastery of St Cedd and St Chad in 1078. There has been a place of worship on the site since the 7th century. St Chad was not at Lavington very long before he moved to become Bishop Lichfield.

Stephen, the Abbott of Whitby in the 11th century got permission to restore the church at Lavington as a Benedictine house. He first built the Crypt as a shrine to St Cedd over the place where he was thought to have been buried. Only very small modification to windows were carried out in the 13th century and it is a very simple, beautiful and tranquil place. The Crypt is thought to be the only one in England to have an apse (round end) together with a chancel, nave and side aisles. The four Norman columns which support the vault of the crypt are standing on bases which appear to be of pre-Conquest workmanship, indicating that stones from the earlier church were used in the 11th century rebuilding.





**Come and join us for Coffee and Chat
St Peter's Church,
Lee Brockhurst**

**On Wednesday
11th December**

Between 10.30 and 12.00

**No charge but donations towards church funds
are always welcome!**

**Further information from Phoebe on 07858123669
or phoebe42.lee@gmail.com**



The Parish Church of St Luke,

Weston-under-Redcastle

WESTON NEWS



CHRISTMAS IN ST LUKE'S

TUESDAY 24th

CHRISTMAS EVE CAROLS AT 5 pm

followed by Sherry and Mince Pies.

EVERYBODY VERY WELCOME!

WEDNESDAY 25th

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE AT 10 am

Come celebrate the Birth of our Lord



A VERY BLESSED AND JOYOUS CHRISTMAS
TO YOU ALL
AND
A HAPPY NEW YEAR,
FILLED WITH GOOD CHEER,
FUN AND LAUGHTER

THE ADVENT PEACE

*In the tender mercy of our God
the dayspring from on high
shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

The peace of the Lord be always with you

Thank you very much
to all our contributors.

The February 2025 Issue
needs your input by the 13th of January,
but definitely no later than 22nd, please.

All articles e-mailed to Phoebe Ashton
phoebe42.lee@gmail.com

In Word, please, and any Pictures as jpeg's