

Parish News



St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

St John, Little Walden and St James, Sewards End

Part of Saffron Walden & Villages Team Ministry

February 2024

FREE

There was a Warm Welcome at the Christmas Fair St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden

The weather was cold and clear, but a warm welcome awaited visitors who enjoyed a variety of stalls at a traditional Christmas Fair on Saturday 25th November. Most stalls were run by members of the congregation and included seasonal mulled wine and mince pies, visits to the bell tower, handicrafts and flowers, Christmas gifts and games, not to mention a large amount of coffee and cake, and were enjoyed by all.



Choir members serving mulled wine and mince pies (Photo: Martin Hugall)

Sue Birchall, who led the Christmas Fair Team, said, “St Mary’s Church, which has been the site of Christian worship for over 800 years, is an important historical part of our beautiful town. We greatly value the visitors, friends and neighbours, who came to support us in so many generous ways. St Mary’s supporters and congregation are not only vital to share together in worship but also to care for the beautiful building. Thank you all again for your continued support.”

The total raised so far for church funds by this year’s Fair is about £4,600.

Clifford Want

Contents for February 2024

THE RECTOR'S LETTER 4

NOTICEBOARD

New Editor of Parish News Needed	7
Gifts from Christmas Eve services	13
Friends of the Parish Church	14
Calendar	16
From the Registers	20
Wiggle Church	21
QuinQua Quiz 2024	24
Friends Visit to Norwich Cathedral	31

REPORTS

St Mary's Christmas Fair	2
Extracts from PCC Meeting - 8th Nov.	9
St Mary's Music News	23

FEATURES

A Prayer for Lent	5
So how did we do in 2023?	6
What is a Deanery Synod, can I attend?	13
Not a Book Club, a Film Club - Update	18
You in the Pew	19
Gelio	20
Celebrating the now and future creation	22
Archive Group: February 1909	27
The Hundred Parishes Society	28
Smile Lines	29
Time and Place	30

PARISH NEWS - EDITORIAL DEADLINE

The deadline for contributions for each issue is the 1st Sunday of the previous month. Hence, the deadline for the **March** issue is **Sunday 4th February**.

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www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org/parishnews

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The Rector's Letter

From The Rev'd Jeremy Trew
Jeremy writes...



Being a Christian isn't always easy. We may have other things we would like to do with our time. We might have good friends who think that going to Church on a Sunday morning is a bit of a strange thing to do. Sometimes religious belief can seem a little at odds with a world built on rationality (I have issues with this last one, but that's for another month).

The main challenge I have with Christianity is other Christians. Not you, of course, but those other embarrassing ones who say and do things that are just plain silly or stupid, or worse. And here's the challenge for me. I might understandably want to write them of and put a clear distance between myself and their behaviour. I might even want to claim that they are not real Christians. Maybe they are not, but only God alone can call that one. Instead, I must accept that they are my brothers and sisters in Christ: Fellow Christians, albeit not very good ones, at least not by my estimation. Maybe I'm not always a very good Christian myself, at least not by my estimation.

That's difficult. It's far easier to turn your back on those who disappoint or disturb you. And, if you do it right, you can do it in such a way that it leaves you feeling justified and even smugly superior. It's just that does not seem to be Christ's way.

Just before Christmas, after long debates at General Synod, the Bishops authorised prayers that allow for same-sex couples to be blessed in a Church service. You may have views on this that range from "about time," to "so what," to "how can the Church of England even call itself Christian." It does, it can, and it is. It is well above your pay grade, and mine, to decide who is and who isn't accepted by God.

Our PCC's will be debating these changes and the authorised prayers over coming meetings and deciding how each parish should best respond. As individual Christians we must also decide how we respond. To do this I would like to draw your attention back to the pastoral principles introduced with the Living in Love and Faith discussions. Any Christian community would do well to take these to heart, as I believe they offer an excellent approach to being God's people together in all aspects of our common life. They are:

Acknowledge prejudice
Speak into silence
Address ignorance
Cast out fear
Admit hypocrisy
Pay attention to power

I truly believe that any Christian and any Christian community committed to these values will be richer and deeper in its faith and better equipped to live the life Christ calls us to in our place and our time. This is not an easy way. The easy way is to build barriers and retreat behind them, turning backs on all that unsettles and disturbs. The Pharisees of Jesus' day were faithful people who had done just that. He loved them, but he also grieved for them. We must resist any temptation, over any issue, to do likewise. That will sometimes be a very difficult thing to do. But, if we do it together, and if we do it trusting that Christ is with us, then it is at least possible. And it will show. And true faith is always attractive.

Jeremy

A Prayer for Lent

provided by the Prayer Team

Lord, we pray for your Church,
for forgiveness for those times when we have failed to show your love,
and for encouragement in our renewed efforts to bring your light to the world.

Gracious God,
You are slow to anger and rich in mercy;
In this season of penitence,
Show us where we have strayed from your love.
Teach us the meaning of true repentance
And bring us back to your generous heart,
That we may serve you and our neighbours
With the freedom of those who know that we are ourselves
Loved by you,
In Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

(From the Canterbury Book of New Parish Prayers)

So how did we do in 2023?

2023 was not a good year. After what was probably the hottest July in 120,000 years, the latest international measurements put us at 1.2 degrees above pre-industrial times. Indeed, for two days in November the world registered a staggering 2 degrees above.

In the Arctic a 580 square mile iceberg broke into the Weddell Sea; a flood in Libya killed over 11,300 people; in a single day Storm Daniel unleashed more than 250 times more rain than usually falls in the whole of September; fires burned record areas of Canada and Europe and the US broke its record of 'billion dollar disasters' with twenty-three \$1,000,000,000 disasters by August. Meanwhile, closer to home where the effects of the climate crisis are more modest, storm Henk resulted in over 300 flood warnings on 5th January, with countless homes and livelihoods damaged.

What is it about human nature that most of us are so passive as humanity continues its path to self-destruction? Issues came to a head at the COP 28 conference in Dubai, chaired by Dr Sultan Al Jaber. It got off to an appalling start when the Sultan was discourteous in his exchanges with Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland and UN Commissioner for Human Rights. He revealed the allegiances that would determine his leadership of the conference. He said, "There is no science that says phasing out fossil fuels would limit warming to 1.5C." He then told her to show him a pathway to phase out fossil fuels that "does not send the entire world back to living in caves." He urged her to show him her solutions, telling her that, "She would never solve the climate problem by pointing fingers at the fossil fuel industry." (RTE 17 Dec 23)



In the end COP 28 signalled that this is the end of the fossil fuel era, but fell short of committing to a fossil fuel phase out. There was no time scale and it allowed unlimited scope for continued profits to be made. From an environmentalist's point of view, it was probably doomed to failure. There were an estimated 2,456 fossil fuel lobbyists at the conference. Four times more than the 636 present at COP 27 and they outnumbered the Indigenous peoples' delegates, who are suffering the worst effects of climate change, by seven to one.

It is clear that the self-interest of those profiting from fossil fuels will continue to have an overwhelming influence on the future of mankind. Former

NASA scientist James Hansen and now director of the Climate Programme at Columbia University, warns that we are close to a new climate frontier. “When our children and grandchildren look back at the history of man-make climate change, this year and next will be seen as the turning point at which the futility of governments dealing with climate change was finally exposed. “Not only did governments fail to stem global warming; the rate of global warming actually accelerated.”

But there is a spark of hope. It is just possible that 2023 will be the year in which we peaked our fossil fuel emissions. For many, this long awaited flexion point was needed years ago, but I passionately hope we have finally reached it. We must now reduce emissions at a swiftly accelerating rate with faster and deeper reductions to stay within safely limits. There is no room for complacency.

The International Energy Agency Report this year found that wind and solar power are on track to displace fossil fuels on a global scale. China’s development of wind and solar power has been faster than expected and could be the key factor in making 2023 the tipping point.

The technology is there but the political will does not seem to be. Is there more that the Church can do?

Edward Gildea, Eco Team Leader

Sources

The Guardian (30/12/23) Jillian Ambrose and Jonathan Watts

Raidió Teilifís Éireann - RTE (17/12/23)

The Guardian (5/12/23) Nin Lakhani

Photo: www.energyintel.com

New Editor of Parish News Needed

After 5 years in the role, I will be stepping down as editor of *Parish News* in September 2024. The right person to take over needs to have good word-processing skills and be happy to work to a monthly deadline. If you would like to know more, you can speak to me about the job, then to Martin Hugall, chairman of the Communications Committee.

**7 issues
to go!**

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Extracts from the PCC Meeting on 8th November 2023

A prayer of thanks included the ordinations of Ella Harris and Hilary Walker, Alex Jeewan and John and Dawn Saxon beginning ministry in new places and Anthea Slater's appointment as the new Team Administrator.

New lighting and emergency lighting has been installed in the ringing chamber of the bell tower, and other maintenance work has been carried out including to the sound system. The September Quinquennial inspection report identified further repairs that need to be done and quotes will be sought. Together with the five major projects being considered (Lighting, Audley Tomb, Organ, Nave Altar, and North Aisle Roof) a lot is happening, at the limits of the church's capacity. No Fabric Officer has been found yet.

The Nave reordering proposal is to create a dais at the East end of the Nave for the celebration of Holy Communion, to accommodate the choir, and improve facilities for concerts and other public events. The group met in October and a draft statement of needs will be brought to the PCC.

A grant of £2,250 has been awarded towards scoping the lighting project and an initial report on lighting design has been received. It was expected that a full report would be ready by end of the year to bring to the January PCC. The lighting fundraising group had its first meeting on 2nd Nov.

Andy Colebrooke has given notice of relinquishing his role as editor of the Parish News in September having completed 5 years. Andy revolutionised the publication, which is now in colour, free, web-based and full of interesting content. Members were asked to help find a new editor.

The Transition Project, started in 2010 by members of our church, has been able to help many unemployed people to help themselves to find employment. At the moment there are no major concerns and the group had decided to close. It was agreed to replace Team JC by a monthly Wiggle Church. Instead of meeting during the Communion Services, there will be an activity at 9:15 before the first 10.30am service of the month with an opportunity for families to worship together, starting 7th Jan for families with children aged from pre-school to Key Stage 1, and older siblings.

The accounts for the nine months to 30/09/23 showed a deficit of £16,256. The General Fund had increased by £102,619, £100,000 being received from the Lawrence Gooderham legacy, the Restoration fund had increased by £303, the Fabric Fund had increased by £2,842. The treasurer advised that the Finance Committee, at their December meeting, should discuss how most wisely to use the Lawrence Gooderham legacy in concurrence with their discussions concerning the 2024 budget and bring a proposal to PCC in January. It was agreed to open a deposit account at the Saffron Building Society to enable cash to be banked when

Lloyds bank in Saffron Walden closes.

Kathryn Bennet is stepping down as Parish Safeguarding Officer and a replacement must be found: someone who has a good mind for keeping records of training and who is willing to undertake training. A revised safeguarding policy received annual approval at the 8th February 2023 meeting; however safeguarding guidelines were not approved alongside this policy as they normally would be. The policy should be renewed at the next meeting.

There has been good attendance at St John's, Little Walden, and new families have started coming. Similarly, good numbers are coming to St James, Swards End, but it has been a difficult time for the village, after a much loved and active member of the community died suddenly.

The next meetings of the PCC are scheduled for 17th January and then 20th March 2024.

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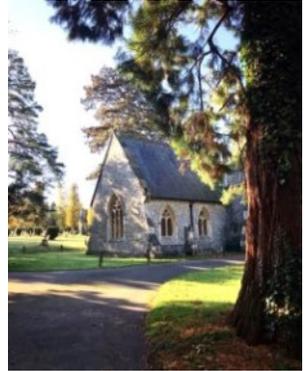


Radwinter Road Cemetery, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HU

Are you looking for a final resting place for a loved one? The Cemetery at Radwinter Road is an oasis in the town which is open 24/7 and there is tranquillity within.

Further information on burials is available from The Cemetery Officer at Saffron Walden Town Council, Saffron Walden, CB10 1HR Telephone: 01799 516501 or email enquiries@saffronwalden.gov.uk

Our local Cemetery is a peaceful space which offers a natural environment for all types of wildlife and as a result is an important nature conservation resource in the town. Daily maintenance and gardening are carried out which ensures the space is both clean and tidy, where residents and visitors can visit for peace and reflection.



The Cemetery is divided into different areas; Lawn cemetery, Traditional area, Garden of Remembrance, scattered ashes, and areas for children and young people. There is also a separate section for War graves which is cared for by The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. A small well-appointed Chapel is available to hire.

<https://saffronwalden.gov.uk/services/cemetery/>



What is a Deanery Synod and can I attend?

The Deanery Synod, through its clergy and elected Diocesan Synod Representatives is a statutory body, but one that consists of representatives from all the 25 parishes which make up the Saffron Walden Deanery. The group acts as a link between the parish and the diocesan synod. Apparently, according to a recent document "The Deanery Synod and You" written recently by the Rural Dean (our own Jeremy Trew, wearing his Rural Dean hat) a definition once offered of a Deanery Synod was, "A room full of people waiting to go home." He went on to write: "Instead, [like a PCC meeting], a Deanery Synod meeting can be an important meeting point where we hear speakers on subjects relevant to our Church life. There is a chance to discuss issues of mutual concern. It is a communications conduit both from and to the Bishop and other central Diocesan structures."

The Lay Chair of our Synod is Canon Graham Cook and our Secretary is Sandie Turner (sandrajturner@hotmail.com). Anyone can attend Synods, but only members can vote. If you would like to contact the Deanery Synod you can email our representatives, Anna Martin at stmaryssaffronwaldenpcc@gmail.com 07562 506867 or send a letter via the Parish Office.

The dates and venues for two Deanery Synod meetings in 2024 are:

February 7th 2024 at Thaxted Church Hall

May 15th at Wendens Ambo

There will be a Deanery Service at Wimbish (venue tbc) on July 10th.

Anna Martin
PCC Secretary

Gifts from Christmas Eve Tree Services

The ever-popular Christmas Tree Services were held at St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden in two sessions on Christmas Eve. There was an opportunity to bring Christmas presents to the services for a women's refuge. Gill Caswell, church warden, said, "We received a lovely lot of parcels at the services. The women's refuge express their thanks for the wonderful generosity of all those who came to the services. We received even more gifts than last year."

There was also a collection for the Mayor's Charities and the combined cash collections came to £1,468.22 and, with gift aid of £147.88, an amount of £1,616.10 is being paid over to the Town Council for the Mayor's Charities.

Clifford Want



FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH

The Friends of the Parish Church is a very active group who have been working hard for St Mary's for 90 years. We are able to help financially with minor and major projects, the last major funding paid for the beautiful oak Welcome Furniture that greets you at the West door.

Almost 40% of our members also help on a regular basis with the various activities in the daily running of the Church; you will note Welcomers wearing Friends badges at the 10.30am service. We have a bookstand offering postcards, prints and books for sale to our many visitors as well as our own congregation. On the social side, twice a year we travel around the country to visit different towns and cities to tour Cathedrals.

Why not join us and feel part of the process and feel that sense of pride in the work we carry out. There are application forms on our bookstand, and on the website so **come and join us**. Watch this space for update, news and activities. Should you wish to help the Friends further by leaving a Legacy there are leaflets to assist you in that process, also to be found on the bookstand.

Chairman : Denis Tindley,

Secretary: Pamela Mugliston Treasurer: Sandra Marsh

THE FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH would like to wish you all a **Very Happy and Healthy New Year**. We look forward to working together with our current and hopefully new members to help maintain our Church not just for today but for generations to come.

THE FRIENDS CATHEDRAL TRIPS

As you will have seen we had a great time on our visit to Norwich Cathedral and everyone had a look around town after our lunch together. In April (date not fixed at time of going to print) we are off to Rochester Cathedral, the 2nd largest Cathedral in the UK, so we look forward to that. I hope you are able to join us in the town with lots of history to explore in the afternoon. Watch out for a Cathedral visit late summer, *hopefully with a twist*, full details next issue.

FUND RAISER

We are looking for ideas for a fund raiser in the summer, do you have any? Please let Pamela know on pjmteddybear@btinternet.com

NEXT ISSUE OF OUR FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER

This will be distributed in March so watch your emails or pick up a copy from The Friends' bookstall.

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For further information please contact Ros Darton or Rita Williams on 01799 551046

The Calendar

This calendar is provisional. See The Grapevine or the church website for the latest information.

St Mary's, Saffron Walden

One service in church each Sunday is streamed on YouTube [Y]: details on the church website. Coffee is served after the Sunday 10.30am services.

Thursday 1 February

10am Silent Prayer in North Chapel

Sunday 4 February

8am BCP Holy Communion
9.15am Wiggle Church in Parish Rooms
10.30am Holy Communion [Y]
6.30pm H2H: Youth-led Service for all in Parish Rooms



Sunday 11 February

8am BCP Holy Communion
10.30am Second Sunday Holy Communion [Y]
4pm Choral Evensong

Ash Wednesday - 14 February

8am Morning Prayer
9.30am Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes
7.30pm Choral Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

Sunday 18 February

8am BCP Holy Communion
10.30am Holy Communion [Y]
4pm Living Stones in Parish Rooms

Sunday 25 February

8am BCP Holy Communion [Y]
10.30am Family Service
4pm Taizé Service

Regular weekday services at St Mary's

Tuesdays

5pm Evening Prayer by Zoom, see weekly bulletin for login details

Wednesdays

8am Morning Prayer

9.30am Holy Communion (with Prayers for Wholeness and Healing on the 1st Wednesday of the month)



St James', Swards End

Sunday 4 February

10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 18 February

10.30am Morning Praise



St John's, Little Walden

Sunday 11 February

10.30am Family Service

Saturday 25 February

10.30am Holy Communion

Not a Book Club, a Film Club – An Update

Our Film Club has now met on three occasions, for both evening and matinée performances (!), to watch films before chatting about them from a Christian perspective. This means each film needs to be roughly 90 minutes long to allow time for a good discussion afterwards. This cuts out many Hollywood films, but there are still plenty of others to choose from, including lesser-known gems that go under the radar.

Kathleen Huey has already provided a review of our first film, the 1961 classic *Whistle Down the Wind* (November issue); a film full of Christian symbolism. Since then, we have seen *Belfast* (2021), a film based on the early life of actor Kenneth Branagh. It's an affectionate portrait of little Buddy, whose carefree days playing in his local streets are shattered by a protestant mob intent on forcing out catholic neighbours. Life is seen through the eyes of a child trying to make sense of the strange world of adults, who are unable to get along together. Buddy's father says religion is to blame, but our discussions saw the roots of the problem lie in fear and ignorance, resulting in tribalism, prejudice, and hatred. This took on extra meaning for us, as we watched *Belfast* in the wake of the Hamas terror attacks and on the eve of Israel's invasion of Gaza. The film opens with shots of today's rejuvenated city and waterfront, symbols of what can be achieved when enemies agree to put down their guns to talk to each other, seeking a just and peaceful way forward.

Our other film this year has been *Marvellous* (2014), a feel-good movie if ever there was one. It stars Toby Jones in the true story of Neil Baldwin, a man with learning difficulties, who joins a circus before becoming the kit man for Stoke City Football Club. Although at first rejected by some, Neil's disarming personality helps create a happy, cohesive spirit in the dressing room, ensuring he is loved by players and fans alike. Neil also welcomes and befriends students on Keele University's campus – his ministry there recognised one day by the award of an honorary degree. This is a film about friendship, so we asked ourselves what makes for a good one. A mother's love and faith were recognised as fundamental to Neil's development and it left us asking that if one hasn't ever experienced unconditional love, is it possible to believe in it?

We have greatly enjoyed ourselves this term and now look forward to our next meeting. So far, I have been interested to see the range of our discussions— from abortion to xenophobia; childhood innocence, to reception at communion; the importance of learning to love ourselves, to questioning the adequacy of our one English word *love* to cover the range of meanings we place on it. After all, the Greeks had four words for it all!

Andy Colebrooke

YOU in the PEW interviewed by Chris Bishop**Michael Lovegrove**

My mother was from Wick in Caithness in Northern Scotland but she married a Londoner, my Father. He volunteered for Army service and was sent to India My mother was living with me in East London and following an air raid when we narrowly escaped with our lives, my mother decided to evacuate herself back to Wick where I spent the early years of my life. I retain a love of Scotland and all things Scottish.

On my father's return from war service we moved to Wanstead in East London where I joined Wanstead Congregation Church. I found something special about the worshipping, serving community which made up the fellowship there. The youth leader in particular was a wonderful exemplar of Christian virtue. He had been a Prisoner of War and in an extraordinary act of forgiveness spoke up for one of his prison guards at a war crimes tribunal. As a result the former guard was acquitted and was invited to England for a holiday.

I was an active scout and gained the Queen's Scout Award, became a lay preacher and Elder. I subsequently moved to The City Temple where the minister was The Rev'd Dr Kenneth Slack who became Director of Christian Aid and I became involved in its work.

Gill and I moved to Saffron Walden in 1989 and we went first to Abbey Lane URC which had an elderly congregation and no minister. Gill (a "cradle Anglican") suggested that we go to St Mary's where Canon Peter Harlow was the Rector. Sunday by Sunday we had a happy banter and then I challenged Peter "Ah yes" I said "but you wouldn't let me preach from your pulpit". Shortly after, I preached at Evensong and before I knew it I was training as a Reader.

Gill and I are members of the Arts Society of Saffron Walden and attend monthly lectures on the fine arts. We belong to various U3A groups and especially enjoy the fortnightly Ramblers' 4 mile walk in the beautiful countryside with which we are surrounded. I also belong to The Probus Club of Audley End – an association for retired businessmen with a range of activities, including a monthly lunch.

I am asked what event sticks in my mind since I have lived here. It has to be the service at which I was ordained Priest by the Bishop in St Mary's in 2001 where I first experienced the joy and privilege of priesthood.



My Father spent all of his working life (apart from War Service) at the College of Arms. When he died I was granted Arms (effectively in memory of him) so I do actually have a coat of arms. I chose as my motto " Virtutis Avorum Praemium"- very roughly translated as "The reward of the virtue of my ancestors" in recognition of the huge debt I owe to my Father and those who have gone before me.

From the Registers

Funerals

6 Nov	Jonathan Richards
16 Nov	Pauline Mayston
20 Nov	Vanessa Wilmott Linda Phipps
29 Nov	Jean Collins
6 Dec	Lorna Ready
15 Dec	B Barrell
19 Dec	June Hurry

Gelio's Anthology of Obscure Proverbs

These are not so much Proverbs, but a selection of 'words of wisdom' produced in the earliest Parish News we have in the Archive which is for the year 1877.

'He that would hear the sound of the flute must elsewhere bear the scrape of the fiddle.'

'The much praised should be more the prayed for.'

'Desiring the corn, despise not the clod.'



Wiggle Church

We made the decision to stop Team JC, our Children's Sunday club, at the end of last term as we felt it was time to bring in a new and more effective Sunday morning worship for young children and their families at St Mary's.

Wiggle Church, providing fun, faith and friendship, now takes place on the first Sunday of each month in the Parish Rooms starting at 9.15am with croissants and coffee - the perfect fuel for an energetic morning of dancing, singing and activities. At 9.30am our Wiggle Church starts with a lively and engaging 30 minute service of worship, songs, bible story, message and an activity for 0-7 year olds, older siblings and their families.

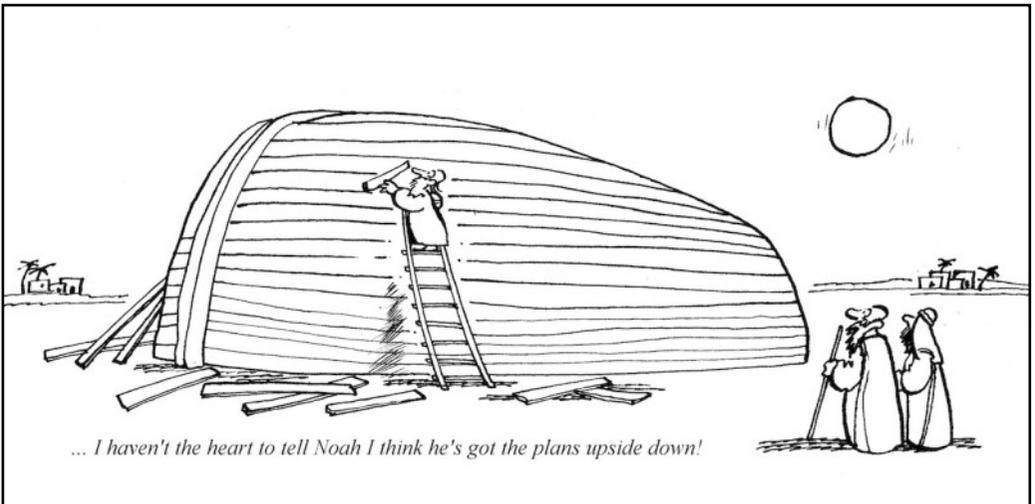
For more information feel free to contact Matt Williamson, our Children and Youth Leader, via email: youth@stmaryssaffronwalden.org or on his mobile: 07794 518 907

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WIGGLE CHURCH

1ST SUNDAY OF MONTH
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Celebrating the now and future creation

I find that watching buds swelling on trees and plants during the winter months gives me a tremendous sense of hope. After creation's winter shutdown, the sight of tiny flowers poking out of brown earth may be more important than ever.



Getting outdoors during daylight hours, enjoying green spaces and getting some fresh air and exercise are great ways to keep ourselves healthy at any time of year. A psychologist colleague wrote, "Attending to the details of nature can also inspire awe, which has been linked to positive mood and increased life satisfaction." I expect it is this sense of awe that makes it easier for many of us to connect with God outdoors.

Helping ourselves and others to thrive is a good start to 2024, but it is also vital to have hope for the future. In the face of climate change, we urgently need to care for all of Creation, both human and everything else, with God's help.

Our ultimate hope is in God's promise that He will bring about a new heaven and a new earth. We can look forward to the day when Creation will be fully redeemed and liberated from evil. The Greek word used to describe the new creation is the same as that used to describe someone who becomes a Christian, whose humanity is restored and renewed. There will be continuity between the old and new earth as it is cleansed and purified, surpassing and perfecting what has gone before. There will also be some discontinuity, as there will be no more suffering or death.

So, one source of hope for 2024 is that we can enjoy both caring for and meeting God in Creation. But the parts of Creation that we find most beautiful, giving us a sense of awe and helping us to worship, are also a reminder that there is something much better to come.

Ruth Bancewicz, Church Engagement Director
The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, Cambridge

Photograph by Hiếu Hoàng (www.pexels.com)

St Mary's Music News - February 2024

The Advent Carol Service on 3 December traced once more the spiritual journey from darkness into light. It is the favourite of the 3 carol services for many of the choir, and this year Oli King, who does not praise lightly, described it as probably one of the most beautiful and well-sung services which he has heard at St Mary's Church. Behind the apparent simplicity of this progression is a lot of hard work, as well as a complex logistical challenge for the choir, including the many Juniors who had not participated in earlier years. The challenges include not falling down the steps in the dark and silent procession from the North door, ensuring that you can actually see the music by the West door although the batteries in your mini booklight have taken this opportunity to give up despite working perfectly during rehearsal, and remembering when to walk, where to turn, and of course what to sing. The youngest choristers did not sing, but assisted as taperers. James from the Junior Choir was the soloist in Stanford's Magnificat in G.

On the following Sunday the Junior Choir led the singing at Christingle, along with Joyful Noise, our littlest musicians. Then just 1 week later on 17 December the traditional Christmas Carol service of 9 Lessons and Carols was greatly enhanced by 8 members of the Brass Group. The Junior Choir, including soloists William, Poppy and Flo, were again present in force. The service was livestreamed, and the choir was thrilled to get a message from Mary Richardson, the composer of the music to "*A Maiden Most Gentle*", saying "I have just watched the choir's performance of my carol. Thank you so much, you all sang it so beautifully! I feel truly honoured."

While we were all singing and playing, Paul Chinnock was in the kitchen of the Parish Rooms warming up copious quantities of mince pies and mulled wine, which were very gratefully received. The Chair of the SMMA, Hannah Razzell, thanked everyone who had helped the organisation in the past year, including Bron Ferland as Choir Administrator, Kate Beare who has taken over Joyful Noise, Alison Lawrence who looks after the Junior Choir's social time during Friday choir practices and other events, Zyi our current Michael Swindlehurst Organ Scholar, Gill and Paul for the party, Jeremy Allen as Deputy Organist, and of course Oli King as Director of Music.

The choir supported 4 services over 24th and 25th December. Once again the Junior Choir (with a little help from their friends) led the singing at the 2 Tree Services on Christmas Eve. Later that evening the Adult Choir (some fortified by late evening refreshments kindly hosted by Jim and Siong Siong) sang at a very well attended Midnight Mass. Elliott, the first MS Organ Scholar,

made a welcome return to conduct the choir. And then there was the lively and joyful Christmas Day service itself. We were delighted that once again so many former Choral Scholars returned to participate in these services. Then, despite a well-earned 2 week rehearsal break, we still supported the 5th Sunday team worship at morning service on New Year's Eve.

After this busy year, Alex, James and William have completed their service as Head/Deputy Head of the Junior Choristers and joined the Adult Choir as Choral Scholars, along with Harry, also a former Junior Chorister.

Looking forward from the date of writing this Newsletter, or backward from the date of reading it, there will be Choral Evensong at 4 pm on 14 January and the Epiphany Carol Service at 6.30 pm on Sunday 29 January.

Ottilie Lefever
7th January 2024

QuinquaQuiz 2024

Dear Quizers,

the Quinqua Cup which at present is hopefully secure in a deep vault of a local Bank will be brought out again this year to be fought for during the QuinquaQuiz !

The date set for the Quiz this year is **Saturday February 10th 7 for 7.30pm start**. Once again the Quiz will be made up of Teams of 6, each member paying £5 on the night. If you are interested in taking part please register your name or your proposed team at the Parish Office.

You bring your own drinks and nibbles and a good time is had by all, and all for a good cause. There will be reminders in the Grapevine nearer the time.

Money raised by the Quiz will be given to help **The Bishops' Lent Appeal 2024**. The Appeal this year is to raise funds for the **Diocese of Jerusalem's Healthcare Ministry**.

The Diocese of Jerusalem is home to about 7,000 Anglicans worshipping in 28 congregations across the 5 different territories, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Israel. During the troubles many civilians were killed and injured at the Diocese of Jerusalem's Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza.

Canon Chris Bishop, Quizmaster



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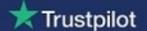
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Archive Group

**A monthly record of pieces of interest from
our past Parish Magazines**

Compiled by our Archivist Canon Chris Bishop

February 1909

On January 7th, Miss Debenham and her Company gave a performance in the Town Hall, of her Miracle Play, "The Coming of the Dawn," scenes from history of incidents in the Conversion to Christianity of these islands. Her purpose is to interest Church-people and others in the history of the Church in these islands, to show them how our ancestors came to be Christians and how they struggled to maintain their faith and succeeded against the hordes of heathen invaders.

Ignorance is the enemy that robs our Church of the enthusiasm her sons and daughters owe her, and knowledge of how she grew and passed through days of sunshine and storm and shadow is the most certain way of gaining for her the love and affection which is her due.

—|—

Children at Seward's End are not likely to forget the treat Mrs Waraker provided for them on Dec. 29th, a bountiful tea with a mammoth iced cake, a Christmas Tree loaded with presents and thoughtfully adapted to each child, besides the minor excitements of a bran pie* and an ingenious combination of see-saw and merry-go-round: nobody was forgotten, children and elders, helpers and hinderers (if there were any), and clergy too were all provided for, and trudged home through six inches of snow happy in the enjoyment of a delightful evening.

Canon Chris Bishop
Archivist

* Bran Pie. Unless you have come across an actual edible Bran Pie, please let me know, otherwise I will leave you with the knowledge that 'Bran Pie' was what we now refer to as a 'Bran Tub' full of hidden gifts to be found by eager young hands!

The Hundred Parishes Society

Editor: The Hundred Parishes Society aims to increase awareness, enjoyment and care of the Hundred Parishes (450 square miles of northwest Essex, northeast Hertfordshire and southern Cambridgeshire). It is not a church-orientated organisation - "Parishes" referring to administrative parishes. The Society is interested in all things historical and local.

Chilly conditions often greet us as we step outside in the early months of the year. The old saying - "When the wind is out of the East, tis never good for man nor beast" - certainly rings true. Before the advent of broadcast weather forecasts, people had to rely on checking nearby weathervanes for the wind direction. These were usually found on tall buildings such as church spires, while Audley End House has gilded weathervanes mounted on eight corner turrets. Today, a variety of designs can be seen.

Robert McFarlane's books of old words include about fifty that describe winds, storms or clouds. One Essex term he mentions is *aigrish*, used to describe a sharp cutting wind. The East Anglian word for a strong sudden gust is *gussock*, or *twitchy* for an unsteady wind.

Forecasting the weather for those who till the soil is helpful as weeks of westerly winds can bring relentless rain causing waterlogging of the ground, while cold easterly winds dry out the soil and retard growth.

Currently, the UK Meteorological Office operates over 200 official automated sites, each recording accurate measurements of temperature, wind speed and direction, and the amount of precipitation. These readings are processed by powerful computers and the results enable forecasters to make predictions about future weather



conditions. Local recording sites include the Cambridge Botanic Gardens and Stansted Airport. By searching the Met Office website <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk> you can check the local weather forecast to help plan your day.

Many individuals or schools are interested in operating a personal weather station and the Met Office is keen to enhance the weather observations network; it asks those who have a personal weather station, manual or automatic, to send data to its Weather Observations Website, WOW, at <https://wow.metoffice.gov.uk>.

Tricia Moxey, Trustee

Photos

- A Audley End House
- B Braughing
- C Clavering
- D Great Waltham
- E Standon
- F Wethersfield



Smile Lines

Editor: with 14th February and romantic love on the mind...

Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked.

Love in a bag

I asked my nephew whether he bought his wife anything for Valentine's Day, and he said he had bought her a belt and a bag. When I commented that I am sure she would appreciate them, he agreed: "Yes, and hopefully the vacuum cleaner will work better now."

Time and Place

Is it here?
Is this the time – this the place
where God is coming?
And can we hear
the angel chorus in the air?
And does the night breeze lift
from distant moonlit sands
the perfumes of portentous gifts?

Is this the time? This the place?
See his mother's gentle face
strained bloodless by the carrying
of such a burden
that should be unadulterated joy.
Now he is born.
She holds her boy
but does she feel the downy head
or know already in her heart the prick of thorns?
Does God have any inkling of a mother's pain?
Does God not know
how weak, how worn, his creatures are?
Full of fear, by life brought low,
is this the time we meet him?
Now ... today?
and is it here
our God is cradled in a bed of hay?

Christine Ractliff

Friends visit to Norwich Cathedral 17th November 2023



Undaunted by the recent rainy weather we set off for Norwich and chose the one sunny day for our visit to the Cathedral. We had two very knowledgeable guides to show us around this magnificent building, full of history and beauty from its intricate needlework to its powerful masonry.

In the nave is the biggest collection of masonry Roof Bosses in the world telling the stories of the Bible from Creation to the Last Judgement. The Despenser Reredos dating back to 1380 being the only surviving medieval English altarpiece with scenes from Christ's Passion. There is an area dedicated to Edith Cavell who is buried at the Cathedral.

We enjoyed a social lunch and then had time to do a little exploring in the town before our journey home.

More photos on our noticeboard.

We now look forward to our visit to Rochester in the spring.

Pamela Mugliston

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