

ST. PHILIP & ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH WHITTINGTON PARISH NEWS



FEBRUARY 2024

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50p

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In the Worcester South East Team

St Philip & St James Whittington and St Mark in the Cherry Orchard

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Miss Jayne Rayer 01905 351344

Asst. Warden: Mrs Brenda Giles 01905 25709

Organist:

Hon Secretary: Mrs Liz McKinnon 07803 600807

Email: lizziemck@rocketmail.com

Hon Treasurer: Mrs Brenda Giles 01905 25709

Safeguarding Officer: David Chestney 01905 359708

Elizabethan Room bookings coordinator:

Mrs Caroline Mayfield 01905 764822

Email: caroline.mayfield40@gmail.com

Magazine Editor: David Chestney 01905 359708

Email: david.battenhall@outlook.com

St. Martin with St. Peter

Team Rector: Rev'd Peter Hart 01905 355119

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Richard Wood

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Mike Bunclark

Holy Trinity & St Matthew Ronkswood

Vicar

Rev'd Rob Farmer

Team Administrator:

Rebecca Caskie: Team Office, St Martins Church,
London Road, Worcester WR5 2ED

Tel: 01905 358083

email: worcestersoutheastteam@gmail.com

*For enquiries about Baptisms, Thanksgivings, Marriages and Blessings,
please contact the Team Administrator as above.*

***The Team Office at St Martin's is open on Mon, Tues, Thurs & Friday,
10am - 1 pm, visits ideally should continue to be by appointment.
Rebecca can always be reached by phone and email.***

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Sometimes women are overly suspicious of their husbands. ..

When Adam stayed out very late for a few nights, Eve became upset. "You're running around with other women," she charged.

"You're being unreasonable," Adam responded. "You're the only woman on earth." The quarrel continued until Adam fell asleep, only to be awakened by someone poking him in the chest. It was Eve. "What do you think you're doing?" Adam demanded.

"Counting your ribs," said Eve.

Letter from the Vicarage

February 24



Hi Everyone,

I appreciate that when you read this letter we will be over a month into the New Year, but nonetheless as this is the first magazine letter of 2024, may I begin it by wishing you all a Very Happy New Year.

I hope you had an enjoyable Christmas season and experienced some of God's great love for us all in our remembrance of the Christmas stories.

In my last magazine letter for our December/January issue I wrote of some my experience of Christmas 2022 which was tinged with sorrow at the anticipated loss of my Mum, who in the run up to Christmas 2022 was seriously ill, and who eventually died at the beginning of March last year.

I know that for some of you Christmas 2023 will have been similar, as the St. Mark's congregation have lost a couple of their long standing members, including one of our centenarians, who sadly died just 8 days or so shy of her 102nd birthday - what a great age to have reached!

At the time of writing, I am thinking about our services for Candlemas that will have taken place by the time this magazine is published, but that mark the end of what I like to refer to as the Greater Christmas season. As part of that service we shall hear in our Gospel reading the story of two great and faithful witnesses of faith, Simeon and Anna, and of their meeting the baby Jesus, in the temple precincts in Jerusalem when he was just 40 days old, and his parents had brought him to the temple to offer sacrifice as prescribed by the Jewish law at the time.

Continued....

Anna, in the gospel accounts is described as a prophet who had reached a 'great age' and who, 'never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day.' Simeon's response to encountering Jesus, that day was to sing a song which these days we call the Nunc Dimitis: It is a song of joy, recognising that Simeon's life purpose has been fulfilled: he has met his God in the flesh!

The introduction to the Candlemas service reminds us of the hinge point that the service represents: partly looking back 40 days to Jesus' birth, but also looking forward towards our marking of Jesus death and our celebration of Easter. It would seem that no sooner have we finished Christmas than we begin our preparations for Easter.

The 14th February this year, as well as marking St. Valentine's day, is also Ash Wednesday, the first of the 40 days of preparation for Easter, that we call Lent. Traditionally, it is a period of self-denial, fasting and of alms (charitable) giving. It is a time when we are encouraged to be intentional about nurturing our awareness of God's presence and love, with us and for us; and a time, too, when we should be intentional about our prayer life making space for God's love to shine through us.

Within the Worcester, South-East team, there are opportunities for worship and reflection offered as a means of deepening our awareness of God with us: - Stations of the Cross (Mon evenings at St. Martin's), and a couple of different Lent courses (Tues afternoons at Whittington; Weds mornings at St. Martin's or Weds afternoons in Ronkswood). Why not consider joining one of these as your preparation for celebrating Easter this year?

Every blessing,

Andy



LIVE ON-LINE VIDEO SERVICES

For all churches in the South East Team

Churches in the Team are open for public worship but we are continuing to meet for worship during the week using the zoom app downloadable from the zoom.us website. To join one of the services please email the host who will send you a link:

Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday at 8.30 a.m. *hosted by Mike Bunclark (mbunclark@tiscali.co.uk)*

Compline: Monday to Friday at 8.30 p.m. *hosted by Mike Bunclark*

Monday Prayer Meeting: 4.00 p.m. *hosted by Joan Hazzard (joanhazz@gmail.com)*

Virtual 'Yew Brew' Coffee Morning: Saturday at 11.00 a.m. *hosted by Andy Stand*

Prayers for Peace and Justice: Saturday at 12 noon *hosted by Joan Hazzard*

For enquiries about Whittington please email the Vicar
andy.stand@sky.com

Sunday Services at 11.00 am will be streamed from
Whittington on Zoom.



The Elizabethan Room for Meetings

The Elizabethan Room is now fully operational and is available for meetings of up to 12/15 people. Details and conditions of use are given on the church website, or at the Church, along with an application form. This can be sent to the bookings coordinator, Mrs Caroline Mayfield, email below:

caroline.mayfield40@gmail.com
or telephone 01905 764822

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What's on at Whittington February & March 2024

Sunday 4th February 2 before Lent

11.00am Parish Communion
3,30pm Forest Church

Sunday 11th February Next before Lent

11.00am Family Service

Wednesday 14th February Ash Wednesday

10.00am **Holy Communion (BCP) at St Mark's**
7.30pm **Holy Communion at St Martin's**

Sunday 18th February Lent 1

11.00am Parish Communion

Sunday 25th February Lent 2

11.00am Family Communion

Saturday 2nd March

10.30am 'Whittington Wit & Wisdom'
Presented by David Tibbutt & Others!
Refreshments in the Elizabethan Room

Sunday 3rd March Lent 3

11.00am Parish Communion
3.30pm Forest Church

Tuesday 5th March

6.30pm PCC Meeting

Sunday 10th March Mothering Sunday

11.00am Family Service

Saturday 16th March

10.30 – 12 noon Yew Brew in the Elizabethan Room

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In Whittington Church at 10.30am

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The heart of man is like a creeping plant, which withers
unless it has something around which it can entwine. -

Charles James Apperley

**The Lent Appeal for this year
Focuses on WaterAid for those without a
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The Season of Lent in the Worcester South East Team



Eco Church: what it is and how we live it

Ash Wednesday 14 February

10.00am at St Mark's BCP Eucharist with imposition of ashes

7.30pm at St Martin's Sung Eucharist with imposition of ashes

Sundays at St Martin's Church

**Four perspectives on the environment
and the climate crisis**

Through the Week:

Stations of the Cross

**Mondays from 19 February, 7.30pm
St Martin's Church**

Eco Church Study Sessions

**Tuesdays from 20 February, 2.00pm
Elizabethan Room, Whittington**

**Wednesdays from 21 February, 11.00am
St Martin's Lower Vestry (Undercroft)**

Pilgrim Course – The 10 Commandments

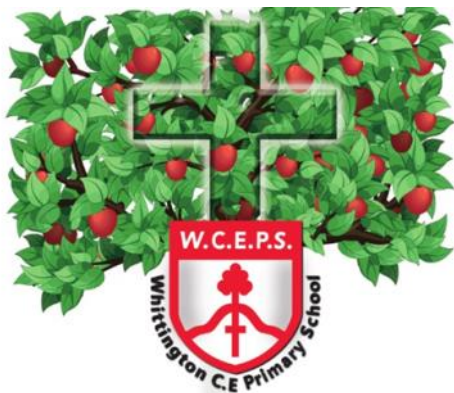
**Wednesdays from 21 February, 2.00 pm
Lincoln Green Community Room, Ronkswood**

Whittington CE Primary School

From the Head Teacher, Gary Richards

The January return to school, in the optimistically named 'spring term', is always tricky for children and staff alike. The novelty of a new teacher has waned and the festivities associated with Christmas are rapidly becoming distant memories. It's cold, it's dark and, a lot of the time, it's wet.

However, I have started to notice that the evenings are drawing out and there is a light in the sky earlier each morning. This definitely lifts everyone's spirits and there is a lightening of the mood in school. Children are more enthusiastic about the lessons they are studying and there is a buzz around the building. We are focused on enabling all the pupils here at Whittington to flourish and I believe that the changing of the seasons contributes to that. Hopefully, the optimism associated with spring will play a positive role in this flourishing.



School Vision

Jesus said, 'I chose you and appointed you to bear much fruit, fruit that will last.'

John 15:16

We are inspired by Jesus to learn with joy and flourish in love, faith and wisdom. Together, we live and grow well, valuing and respecting our differences and sharing our God given gifts. We aspire to be courageous and responsible, caring for our world and one another today

— for a better tomorrow.



Communicating with God From our new Archdeacon of Worcester, Mark Badger.



Part of our calling as Christians is to constantly examine and deepen our relationship with ourselves, the Gospel and with God, I suppose you could say to continually develop our communication skills. You could say that God is the most effective communicator there is, because if we are tuned in right – God can communicate to us through everything that exists. The Jewish writer Martin Buber points this out in his book *I and Thou*, he wrote that ‘every “thou” is a gateway through to the Eternal Thou’ – for him a tree was just as much a ‘thou’ as a cat or a human being.

The traditional Christian word for the communication between God and human beings is of course Prayer. But so often we find it hard to pray, particularly in the light of all the world’s problems! So how do we do it? What do we say?

I’m reminded of a tale I heard about an old man who has gone into the local church each and every day for many years, not a religious man, yet without fail he was there. One day his mate says to him.

Ere Alf, what do ya when ya goes into Church?

He says – I pray

What do ya say

He says, I don’t say nothin

What do ya do then?

Well – I just sits there and looks at im and he looks at me,

Unknowingly that old man had a very special prayer life- one based on giving time to gaze and listen.

When we get right down to it, prayer is not about place, posture or eloquence. Prayer is essentially about being together with God and if our relationship with God is to grow, then just as in our earthly relationships, we need to make time to be in God’s presence and of course we need to listen! This making time and taking time to listen is at the heart of our Christian discipleship and there have been many tomes written in order to help Christians to make time, to listen and to pray. One writer of such books is Sister Lavinia Byrne. ‘Listening is all’ she says; ‘and we can listen anywhere, in stillness or in the reality of the business of everyday life. But listen!’

~~~~~

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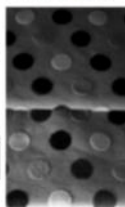
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## Looking Back.....

### A History of Christmas

Philip Bowen made a welcome return to Whittington on 2 December to give us a wide ranging illustrated talk about the History of Christmas. Starting with Dylan Thomas' evocative book *A Child's Christmas in Wales* to set the scene, he packed a huge amount of detail into how Christmas has been celebrated over the centuries. Mid-winter pagan festivals played their



part in establishing a time of feasting, bonfires, and generally looking forward to the dark days giving way to light, although the Feast of the Nativity was not as important in the early church as Easter. Mistletoe, holly and ivy had a special place in Druid worship, and Christians carried on decorating with evergreens, looking for Christian meaning in those plants. Some monarchs chose to be crowned on Christmas day for added symbolism, including Charlemagne and William the Conqueror.

The menus of past monarchs at Christmas were astonishing in their lavishness. Richard II's menu for 1377 survives, and covers pages of different courses. Henry VIII introduced turkeys to the menu, where previously there has been peacocks, elaborately decorated. Puritans banned Christmas in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but Charles II reintroduced it. Martin Luther put candles on tree branches, and Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, introduced Christmas trees at Windsor in 1761, long before Prince Albert who is usually associated with the custom.

Of course Charles Dickens is especially credited with popularising many of our Christmas customs, and it was in the Nineteenth Century that the commercialisation of Christmas really began. Sir Rowland Hill introduced the penny black stamp in 1840 and in 1843 Sir Henry Cole sold 1000 printed cards. Tom Smith invented the cracker and tree ornaments became popular.

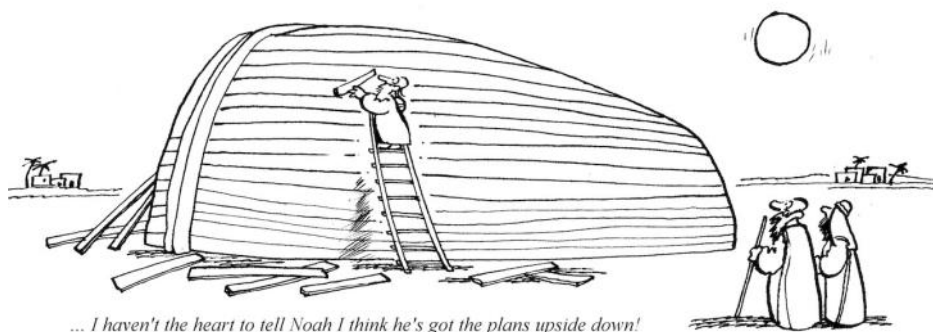
Carols have their origins in Medieval Wassails and the earliest known examples date from a list of twenty five in Shropshire in 1426. In the Twentieth Century Philip mentioned the famous Christmas truce of 1914 when English and German soldiers temporarily laid down their arms and sang *Silent Night*, each in their own language, and we were reminded how the Nazis changed the words of carols to replace the word Christ with Chancellor Hitler. *Continued.....*



George V made the first royal Christmas broadcast in 1932 and one of the most memorable since then was George VI's in 1939 when he referenced Minnie Louise Haskins' poem *The Gate of the Year*. Lovely old master paintings and a special mention of the Thirteenth Century nativity carving in the Lady Chapel of Worcester Cathedral concluded this most interesting talk.

Some fun (or startling) statistics included are that 154 million crackers would be pulled at Christmas, £19 billion will be spent on gifts, Lego is the biggest selling product, the number of sprouts consumed would reach in a line from London to Sydney, and the average number of calories consumed in food and drink is 7,000. The chances of a white Christmas are just 1 in 10....and so it proved!

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Do what we can to help...

Several women in the church prayer group were visiting an elderly friend who was ill. After a while, they rose to leave and told her: "We'll do what we can to help. We promise to keep you in our prayers."

"Thank you," she said. "But really, I can do my own praying. The thing I can't do is the dishes in the sink in the kitchen...."

Community Hall Update

Forthcoming Community Events

The next Community event will be the film nights and other events are being planned for the year. Following the success of last year's The Summer Event will take place on **Saturday 13th July.**

The website **whittingtoncommunityhall.co.uk** has full information on the facilities and booking, for the hall, which can be done online.

Regular Bookings in the hall, are set out below:

These are all open Classes

Monday 10.30 to 11.30am.

Zumba with Aimee.

Wednesday 16.30 to 17.30pm

Yoga with Natalie

Thursday 10.00 to 12.00noon.

Zumba and Yoga with Denise

Thursday 19.30 to 21.00pm

Tai'Chi with Marc

Friday 9.30 to 10.30am

Yoga with Rachel

And 10.45am to 11.45am

Zumba with Aimee

Friday 18.00 to 19.00pm

Yoga with Fiona

Community Hall Management Committee

info@whittingtoncommunityhall.co.uk



Responsible for managing, maintaining, developing
and running the Community hall.

Whittington Parish Council

The Parish Council met on Tuesday the 16th of January. The Council agreed the Parish Council budget for 2024/25. Councillors were also asked to consider a planning application and received an update on the progress of the South Worcestershire Development Plan, proposals that will have a major impact on the rural characteristics of Whittington. Reports were received from our two District Councillors, Liz Turier and Rob Adams, as well as our County Councillor Linda Robinson. Constable Molly Keeler and Community Support Officer Claire Doughty from Pershore Rural Safer Neighbourhood Team attended, providing the meeting with an update on crime and anti-social behaviour incidents within the parish and took questions from councillors and members of the public. The police presence was very welcomed, positive and reassuring.

For further details of the meeting please visit the Parish Council website at whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk where the minutes can be viewed. Matters for consideration by the parish council can be emailed to the parish clerk at clerk@whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk. The next meeting is at the Community Hall, 7.30pm Tuesday 27th February.

Information and further detail regarding the work of the Parish Council, details of the next meeting or minutes of previous meetings, can be found through the following; Clerk to the Council David Hunter-Miller, 35 Benbow Close, Malvern Wells, WR14 4JJ, email clerk@whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk Tel 07513 122918

Website: whittingtonparishcouncil.co.uk
[andfacebook.com/whittingtonpc](https://facebook.com/whittingtonpc)

What is the right age to get married?

23 is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then. - Camille, age 10

Are you searching for ways to meet new people and fill your time? Maybe you're looking for ways to increase your confidence or develop your skillset and gain experience?

If so, then you could join our team of ordinary people doing an extraordinary role: independent monitors in prisons and immigration detention. All our members are unpaid public appointees, appointed by Ministers.

We are currently recruiting at **HMP Featherstone, HMP Brinsford, HMP Swinfen Hall, HMP Stafford, HMP Dovegate, HMP Hewell, HMP Sudbury and HMP Werrington**

So why join? As one member says: "It could be the most rewarding thing you have ever done."

Volunteers are required to commit to an average of 3-4 visits a month, checking on conditions, talking to those who are detained and monitoring how they are treated.

We are looking for people who have the following qualities

- integrity and honesty

- ability to analyse situations and make decisions

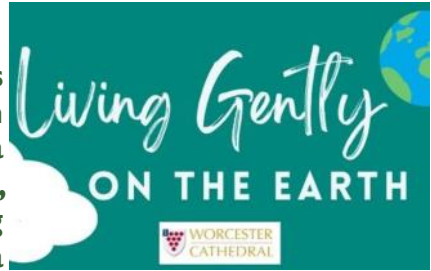
- commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion

Training and support will be provided during the 12-month induction period. Although this is an unpaid role, we pay travel and subsistence expenses, childcare/carers costs.

If you are interested, then book onto our next virtual open evening to find out more. Alternatively, please visit www.imb.org.uk to apply. We are recruiting from 29th of Jan until 25th of February.

Living Gently on the Earth

The Cathedral Eco Group is delighted to invite you to join 'Living Gently on the Earth', a series of community events, talks and workshops on caring for our planet. There is a fascinating programme between now and June to enable greener and more generous living:



- 25 January, 2pm. **Between Denial and Despair** - A Christian Perspective on Hope in an Ecological Emergency.
- 22 February, 7pm. **Social Justice in Action: Sierra Leone** - Christian Aid's profound work around gender equality.
- 21 March, 2pm. **Take the Jump** - We are hooked on 'stuff'. How to make a difference.
- 25 April, 7pm. **Human health, planetary health: Same thing?** - The food system, and how to eat more healthily to benefit the earth.
- 23 May, 2pm. **How can we all switch to a more sustainable "circular economy" and lower our environmental footprint?** - Go Green Experts give guidance.
- 27 June, 2pm. **An Afternoon of Eco Poetry** - Inspiring engagement, hopefulness, and action.

For more information, or to book free tickets to any of the events [visit the Cathedral's Eco Church webpage](#), [email Staffan Engstrom](#)

As I interpret the President, we're now at the end of the
beginning of the upturn of the downturn. -
John F Kennedy when Senator

Oswald of Worcester: the saint for Leap Year

There is a saint for Leap Year: He is St Oswald of Worcester, who died on 29th February 992. His family story was extraordinary, and full of some surprising 'leaps', all by itself. It provides a tantalising glimpse of what happened to at least one of those pagan Viking warriors who settled in Anglo-Saxon Britain.

For Oswald's great-uncle had come to England c 865, as part of the 'Great Heathen Army' of Viking invaders. But his son, Oswald's uncle, Oda, forsook paganism, and not only converted to Christianity, but actually ended up as Archbishop of Canterbury. From there, Oda was in a position to help his nephew, Oswald, which he did.

Oda sent young Oswald to be educated at the abbey of Fleury, then a great centre of learning. There Oswald absorbed the Benedictine ideals which would guide his later life and work. Back in England, he became bishop of Worcester in 961, and with the support of King Edgar, eagerly joined in major reforms of the Anglo-Saxon church. In 972 Oswald was made Archbishop of York, and seems to have taken a great interest in renewing the church in the Danelaw. He founded Ramsey Abbey, which became one of the great Fenland monasteries.

Oswald was popular as an archbishop, and always washed the feet of the poor every Lent. On 29th February 992 he had just completed this service at Worcester when he collapsed and died. In later years, Worcester adopted both him and Wulfstan to be its two chief saints: they flank the tomb of King John, which is before the high altar in the cathedral.

Don't forget those nestboxes!

On 14th February our annual National Nestbox Week begins.

Now an established part of the ornithological calendar, it aims to encourage people to help out the birds in their gardens each Spring. Everyone is invited to put up more nestboxes in their local area, and a very helpful website gives full instructions on how to do this.

More details at: <https://www.nestboxweek.com>

Remembering Sir Ernest Shackleton

One hundred and fifty years ago, on 15th February 1874, Sir Ernest Shackleton was born in County Kildare, Ireland – into a family that was English in origin and had Quaker connections. Sir Ernest was one of the leading explorers during the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration. He led three British expeditions to the Antarctic.

His father, Henry, was a farmer, who then qualified as a doctor, and the family moved to Sydenham, London in 1884. Ernest learnt seafaring in the Merchant Navy, becoming in turn second mate, third officer and first mate, before certifying as a master mariner in 1898: this qualified him to command a British ship anywhere in the world.

Expeditions he led included the *Nimrod* (1907-09), the *Endurance* (1914-17) and the *Quest* (1920-22). He was also on Scott's earlier *Discovery* expedition, but was invalided home early. From early on he had health problems, and the medical officer on the *Nimrod* expedition believed he had a hole in the heart.

Shackleton was described as spiritual but not religious. While crossing the mountains in South Georgia with two others to complete his heroic rescue of the crew of the *Endurance*, he and his companions said they were aware of a fourth presence, which they called ‘providence’, walking with them.

Although Shackleton did not make any major discoveries or register any notable firsts in Antarctica, he took part in some amazingly courageous enterprises and, although he was largely overlooked for many years, is now regarded as one of the giants of polar exploration, always admired by his crewmen. He died of a heart attack on the *Quest* at the age of 47 and was buried – at his wife’s request – in the graveyard of the English church at Grytviken in South Georgia.

Hatred and bitterness can never cure the disease of fear; only love can do that. Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonises it. Hatred darkens life; love illumines it. - *Martin Luther King*



St Mark in the Cherry Orchard Diocese of Worcester



News & Views from St Mark in the Cherry Orchard

As some of you may be aware, I am not a huge fan of Christmas because I believe that it is too commercialised, however St Marks kicked off on the 1st December with a fantastic event organised by Berny Murray and involving members of the Gilbert & Sullivan Society; it was a sell out. For St Marks, it was a joy to see the pews packed full with lots of smiling people and I think that it is safe to say that none of us knew quite what was going to happen.

The first half was made up of beautiful and familiar music and songs, some of which the audience could join in with, followed by plated refreshments that were delivered to each where they were sitting (very good idea). Whilst we were eating and drinking, the cast were changing into their costumes in the church hall and sneaking up the outside emergency steps on the north side to continue with the entertainment. The acting was wonderful and there was hysterical laughter when the 'sheep', dressed in assorted 'sheepskins' (coats, etc.) were bleating and weaving their way up and down the aisles, avoiding the shepherd who struggled to round them up. The highlight for me and for many others was the rendition of 'Oh Holy Night' that was beautifully sung, spine tingling and raised the roof!!

It would be lovely to say that the event, or something similar, might return in the future but this was Berny's swan song. She had worked incredibly hard to organise it all in each of four Worcestershire churches and we hope that she raised lots of much needed funds for the G&S; well done to all who participated in any way at all, especially as some of the G&S group succumbed to the dreaded 'flu bug that caused loss of voice. I should add that, as well as illness, the evening did not start off very well because, true to life in St Marks, things went wrong beforehand. The heating had a hissy fit so portable heaters were hurriedly provided for both church and the hall but, thankfully, Roger Rackham gave the boiler a stern talking to and it eventually sprang back into life for the duration. The urn, that was supposed to heat mulled wine, kept tripping the main socket fuse so kettles were cleaned and used and the drink was kept warm in vacuum flasks hastily gathered together. The urn was checked by an electrician and was found to be okay so it was thought that the mass use of electric heaters had overloaded the system, a warning for another time perhaps. *Continued..*

The Christmas Eve Crib Service was attended by smiling familiar faces with their children, some of whom now being taller than several of us but, I am told, that they still wanted to dress up and take part. However, it soon became apparent that their growth means that the costumes may need altering or replacing before next Christmas because they seemed a little tight; St Marks really needs new families with some littlies. Thanks are extended to Joan Rackham who kindly, as always, took the clothes, etc. home to launder.

Christingle was a lovely occasion again although it was a shame that more children didn't attend. Thanks are extended to Tesco for kindly donating the lovely large oranges and to Joan & Roger for providing the sweets, etc. that represented the seasonal 'fruits'. Joan oversaw the creation of the special orange 'worlds' with the help of the older children and ladies from the uniform groups; there was something magical about the sight of people standing around the church holding their creations with glowing candles in them.

Sadly, during December, two ladies who were known to our congregation passed away. Firstly, Bettie Griffiths who regularly attended Sunday services up until she could no longer hear died on 19 December. Bettie could be seen walking quickly to and from St Marks and, like so many others, sat in the same pew each week. Already in her nineties, she moved into a nursing home four years' ago when she developed Alzheimer's and is fondly remembered by the staff; I caught up with her on many occasions when we both used the same bus to go into town. More recently and following a fall, the lovely Dilys Rees, who regularly attended the Wednesday service, died on 30 December just a week short of her 102nd birthday. I will report her funeral in March because it will have taken place after the deadline for this edition; many of us will be thinking of both families.

Rainbows Volunteers Required!

Rainbows welcome all girls from 4-7 years old for play, learning and lots of fun in a colourful and safe environment. The group that has been meeting in the church hall for many years is currently looking for two committed volunteers to take over from September 2024 to run the existing 8th Worcester Unit that meets every Tuesday (during term time) from 4.45pm - 6pm. If you would like to put yourself forward or find out more details about what the role involves please contact the current leader, **Melanie Benson-Stelling 07825 279418. Continued....**

This is a popular group and it would be a shame for it to fold because all three uniform groups, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides, meet on Tuesday evenings so there is continuity and the children can progress from one to another with confidence and in a venue that they are familiar with. Melanie is a popular leader and has done a sterling job for seven years so please pass this plea onto anyone who you think might be interested and have the time.

Please note that all volunteers within the Girl Guiding programme are subject to a DBS check, mandatory training in First Aid and Safe Space are also required (provided and funded by Girl Guiding).

Something A Little Different

Come and join a Valentine themed **Sound Bath on Saturday 10th February from 14.00 - 16.00 in St Marks Church Hall**. A heart opening Yin yoga and a sound bath, followed by a glass of fizz and a chocolate – Tickets £25.

Please wear comfortable clothes and layers for the sound bath. Lynsey has bolsters but you may want a yoga mat to lie on plus a blanket and a pillow; it is suggested that you wear warm socks and take a bottle of water.

Please message Lynsey on 07812928861 or Sue on 07754 834699 for more details.



OPERA WORCESTER presents **DIE FLEDERMAUS** by Johan Strauss II - English translation by John Mortimer in **The Norbury Theatre, Droitwich, WR9 8E 7.30pm on Wednesday 20th – Friday 22nd March 2024**

It is New Years Eve, 1899 in Vienna and the party to end the century has begun. The cream of the city's society are there but unaware that they are unwilling participants in Dr Falke's plans to repay his former friend,

Eisenstein, for a cruel practical joke that resulted in Falke having to leave Vienna in disgrace some years' earlier.

Continued....

Aided by the jaded socialite, Prince Orlofsky, Falke has devised a devious and cunning plan, 'The Bat's Revenge'. As the evening unfolds into a web of dalliance, disguises and deceit, amidst the Dancers of the Corps de Ballet and Guest Performers, where will it end? Perhaps Frank, the Governor of the local gaol can best tell us that.

Some say that revenge is a dish best served cold, but this dish is served with champagne, lots of it and well chilled of course!

Music includes the fabulous Die Fledermaus waltz, the famous Laughing Song, exquisite Brother Mine, Gipsy Czardas, Champagne! and many more including surprise guests at the party, all accompanied by a full orchestra, The Orchestra of St John under the baton of Dr Richard Jenkinson. Also joining the Company will be award winning dancers from The Translucent Dance Studios, Worcester who will also join the party! Make sure you too go to the party by getting your tickets today asap from the Company's **box office with NO booking fee!!! Tickets from Opera Worcester on 07396 081426 or email tickets@operaworcester.uk** or, alternatively, they can be purchased from **The Norbury Theatre Box Office on 01905 770154**

The new soft play **Mini Monkey Gym** group is proving popular each Monday and **Emily's monthly Chat & Craft** had a good start; next month on 7 Feb they are going to be doing some needle felting using some bio-nylon because some members mentioned that they are sensitive to wool. Contact details for both groups are on the back of this magazine that sets out all St Marks Church Hall long term hirers.

For those interested in hiring the hall for parties, as well as children's chairs, we are now able to offer new lower tables for littlies to sit at as well as the normal sized tables.

Chat & Cuppa Club will be in the hall from 2 – 3pmish on Tuesday, 6 February even if the weather isn't on our side. Everyone, including gentlemen are very welcome to join us for a **free** cuppa and there will be cake, including gluten free, because we hope to greet some of the former members of Cherry Orchard Ladies Club; if you know previous member(s), please pass this information on to them. If the weather proves to be a problem, rest assured that we will be there on 5 March and thereafter on the first Tues of every month.

Continued....

Finally, we are still trying to find a certified gas engineer to fit the hall gas cooker for a reasonable price, please ask around plus does anyone have any Christmas lights that they no longer need, please?

Keep well and warm

Jan

janvale810@gmail.com



"Next Sunday I think I'll do a new take on the Parable of the Virgins and the Oil."

And if love should die....

While we were working at a men's clothing store, a customer asked my colleague to help her pick out a tie that would make her husband's blue eyes stand out. "Ma'am," he explained, "any tie will make blue eyes stand out, if you tie it tight enough."³⁴

The Day the Music Died

It was 65 years ago, on 3rd February 1959, that American rock-and-roll performers Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and The Big Bopper were killed in a plane crash in Iowa. Thanks to Don McLean and his eight-minute hit song *American Pie*, it became known as “the day the music died”.

Buddy Holly was a rock ‘n’ roll pioneer who is widely regarded as having sparked a ‘quantum leap’ in popular musical output in the post-war years, being admired by such stars as Elvis Presley and John Lennon. He was born in Lubbock, Texas, to a Christian family and attended a Baptist church where he made a commitment and was baptised.

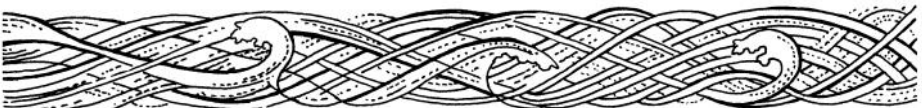
At the time of the plane crash – attributed to their young pilot’s inexperience in appalling weather conditions – Holly, 22, Valens, 17, and the 28-year-old Big Bopper (J P Richardson), together with other musicians, were on what they described as “the tour from hell”, travelling hundreds of miles each day by bus in temperatures as low as minus 35F.

After a concert in Clear Lake, Iowa, Holly decided to rent a private plane to get to Fargo, North Dakota, for the next concert. He planned to take his band members, Waylon Jennings and Tommy Allsup, with him, but Valens tossed a coin for Allsup’s seat and won. Jennings then gave his seat to the Big Bopper, who was unwell.

Holly’s young wife Maria learned about his death on television and suffered a miscarriage. His mother heard the news of his death on radio. Since then, news media have introduced rules to prevent the names of people who die in accidents being revealed before the family itself is informed.

Maria did not attend his funeral and has reportedly never been to his grave, but she preserved and promoted his music after his death.

The grave itself is but a covered bridge, leading from light to light, through a brief darkness. - *Longfellow*



Whittington Parish Magazine

February 2024 Edition

