

DECEMBER AND JANUARY 2021



SERVING THE PARISHES OF

ALL SAINTS'
Baschurch

HOLY TRINITY
Weston Lullingfields

ST MARY'S
Hordley

50p
Per issue



Carol Service

See page 18 for
details of the carol
services in the
benefice.



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The National Parish Magazine Awards for 2021 have recently been announced and readers may be pleased to know that our CFN was placed 27th out of 330 in the A5 category.

SUBMISSIONS FOR FEBRUARY MAGAZINE

Please send your stories, pictures or notices for the next issue by

15th January 2021

to: **churchfamilynews@gmail.com**

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Front cover: Nativity scene in the East window of St Stephen's, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria. **Photograph by Andrew Thomson**

ASSOCIATE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of this month, on December 6th, we celebrate the feast of Saint Nicholas. Up until a few years ago I knew almost nothing about St Nicholas, only that we link him to Santa Claus or Father Christmas. It was only when I was asked to preside at a Convent in Birmingham on the 6th December, the feast day of St Nicholas, that I thought I had better look him up!

We know him by another, far more familiar name, Santa Claus – though there is a long and tortuous (some would even say tenuous) journey from a Fourth Century Christian bishop of the city of Myra in what is now Turkey, to the jolly red-coated figure of modern Christmas celebrations. Our modern Santa owes more to American marketing and sentiment, than to his illustrious predecessor in Myra!

What the two have in common is that they are givers of gifts.

According to tradition, Nicholas' parents died when he was young, leaving him a large sum of money. With his inheritance, Nicholas practised charity, helping those in need. As a bishop he is remembered as a man of great faith and compassion. He was also a fierce advocate for those who had been unjustly condemned. He left behind no writings, but legends abound.

One legend in particular illustrates his generosity: a family in his community was desperate; the father had lost all of his money and had been unable to find husbands for his three daughters. The daughters were in danger of being given over to prostitution or another form of degradation when, one night, Nicholas appeared at their home. He tossed three bags of gold into the open window (or down the chimney, in some versions)—thereby saving them from a terrible fate. This tale is probably the source of his eventual connection to the tradition of gift-giving at Christmas.

So while Santa has his bundle of toys, the gift that Saint Nicholas gives is nothing short of freedom from poverty and desperation. The life of Saint Nicholas is an example of faith made flesh in actions of true love and compassion.

Christmas is a wonderful time of rejoicing and adoration of the 'Christ Child' – God incarnate. It is right that we do so, but if we stopped there, if Jesus remains 'gentle Jesus, meek and mild' in our lives, then we have missed the plot! Jesus didn't remain a baby; he grew up, sharing the life of his family, learning his trade in his father's workshop, until at the age of 30, he left home to share his knowledge of God, and God's vision for the world which He made.

Jesus spent most of his time on earth with misfits and outcasts in society, healing, forgiving and pointing them to his heavenly Father who was waiting with open arms to receive all who accepted Jesus, his Son, as their Saviour.

Saint Nicholas knew Jesus as his Lord and in response to his relationship with him, he too spent time with the poor, the destitute and the condemned, bringing them relief and giving hope to their lives.

So, this Christmas, our churches welcome you all to our services: please check on our website or in this magazine for dates and times. It is our prayer that, as you come to worship the Christ child, you would discover the living Jesus who is waiting with his Father to welcome you into his Kingdom, to share in his work just as Saint Nicholas demonstrated in his time here on earth.

May I wish you a very happy and blessed Christmas.

Deborah

If you want to be truly amazed look on the internet for
Felix Klieser.

LETTER FROM THE DIOCESE

A Generous Hope

I can't believe it's almost been four years since I travelled to South Africa with a small group led by Bishop Michael to spend time with people and churches in our companion diocese of Matlosane.

Matlosane, which borders the neighbouring Johannesburg Diocese, is a mostly black diocese, home to several townships and believed to be the only one to have a township-based cathedral.

While there, we took part in various services, visited a drug rehabilitation centre and hospice and witnessed the joyous unveiling of the new diocesan centre in Klerksdorp, bought from the Dutch Reformed Church, an historic supporter of the former Apartheid regime.

Several things linger long in my memory. One was to have the pleasure of staying with Father Sam, his wife Lisa and son Biseptho in their modest rectory adjoining the church in the middle of Khuma township. Khuma was a mix of colour, life, vibrancy and desperation. I was warned not to walk out alone, and the roads were not a safe place to be after dark. But the warmth and welcome and joy I encountered in Father Sam's church was unlike any I had ever experienced before. And the singing – the exuberant, lilting, banging worship that felt like it would lift the roof – was literally out of this world.

These were people with little in terms of physical possession who poured their souls out on a Sunday morning and emptied their pockets – often time and time again – during lengthy and celebratory offerings.

Lichfield Diocese's two-way relationship with Matlosane has been mutually beneficial for many years, with churches in the Midlands being enriched by visitors from South Africa and vice versa.

We all know the effect covid has had on our churches, and the future challenges it poses. Suffice to say, the impact of the pandemic on our brothers and sisters in South Africa has been severe. Clergy have taken a 30% pay cut – if they've been paid at all – and their medical aid has been

downgraded.

As a diocese, our Advent focus for 2021 is Generous Hope, reflecting on the God of abundance who supplies all we need, and so much more. During this period we're raising money for the Church in Matlosane. If you can, please give generously to bless them this Christmas at <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/matlosane>.

Pete Bate, Diocesan Director of Communications



© www.parishpump.co.uk

*We don't sing carols no more...
you 'ave to listen to 'em off me iPod!*

WESTON LULLINGFIELDS

Many of us have connected more with nature since the Pandemic started, especially by walking a lot locally or visiting parks, National Trust estates, woodlands or the coast. The BBC showed a series of programmes for the short list and prize allocation of Prince William's Earthshot prize, which awards cash to creative schemes which contribute to the saving of our planet. One of the inspiring things to come across is that almost all these schemes have been started in a very small way by a single individual. The issues of climate change and habitat loss are global in scale and can therefore seem impossibly daunting. It is all the more vital to remember that we can all make a small change which contributes to the overall effort. It was once said that "no one makes a greater mistake than the person who does nothing because they can only do a little".

Prince William is quoted as saying 'what am I going to do in the next decade that means I can look my children in the eye and say that I did my bit during a moment in history when it really mattered?'

There are five categories and the 2021 winners of £1m were announced in an inspiring television programme:

Protect and Restore Nature – Costa Rica – restoration of forests

Fix our Climate – Thailand/Germany/Italy – AEM Electroliser's green hydrogen technology.

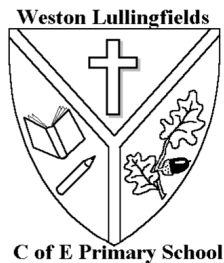
Clean Our Air – India – Takachar – cheap technology to turn crop residues (no more burning) into sellable bio-products like fuel and fertiliser.

Revive Our Oceans – The Bahamas – Coral Vita – Restoration of Coral reefs by growing coral and planting it back on the reefs

Build a Waste-free World – Italy – City of Milan Food Hubs.

There will be 5 more prizes of £1 million pound for the next four years.

Anita Weeks



Hello: my name is Elizabeth Madin and I would like to introduce myself as the new Headteacher of Weston Lullingfields CE Primary.

I have been working for a few years now with the Federation of schools that Weston is part of so am familiar with the school. However it was not until I started here as Headteacher in September that I could see what a truly special place this school, and community, is!

The motto 'Small school, big family' is certainly apt. The size of the school enables staff to provide a nurturing atmosphere where each child is individually valued and appreciated, just like in a family.

With the smaller class sizes too staff are able to be extra creative with their activities and with the wonderful facilities and countryside on our door step, you will usually find something vibrant and exciting going on.

But never mind me – please let me introduce you to our new Reception starters. They are just amazing!



Baschurch News

All Saints "100" Club Winners

Nov 2021	No 2	Jane Martin
	No 23	Amy Barnett
	No 27	Jean Gasser

All Saints "100" Club

The "100" Club is a lottery registered with the local Council. It has now been operating for over 20 years and generates a modest income for the Church. The original subscription was set at £12.00 for the year and has remained the same ever since. It now seems appropriate after this length of time to increase the annual subscription to £15.00 and in line with this, the monthly prizes will increase to £30.00. Your collector will be in touch in the New Year and we hope you will still feel able to support our village Church in this way.

Given the changes in banking and the increasing difficulties in managing cheques we now plan to pay out winners in cash and to request a signature to confirm receipt of winnings. This new system of paying out winners will begin in the New Year and we hope that subscribers will find this more convenient.



Churchyard of the Year Award for All Saints'

We are delighted to announce that All Saints' has been awarded a Gold Award, a Nature Friendly Award, and 'Churchyard of the Year' by the Diocesan Churchyard Award Scheme 2021.

The Scheme covers the 582 churches in the Lichfield Diocese and is a fitting recognition of the hard work put in by Martyn Lake (Church Warden) and his team of helpers, Steve Overy, Ian Moreton, and Ross Roberts.

In writing to the church to confirm the award, the scheme says: "Your churchyard is a real pleasure to visit. It is a haven for wildlife, a peaceful place for remembrance and reflection, a beautiful place to rest and a fascinating source of historical interest"

They made particular reference to the use of different mowing regimes, the well maintained entrance providing a clear welcome to visitors, the actions taken to promote a nature-friendly environment and biodiversity and said that allowing sheep to graze in the lower section 'is both a delightful and pragmatic solution to maintaining this extensive area'.

The team has worked hard to promote a nature-friendly environment and promote biodiversity providing: bird and bat boxes, log piles and several 'insect hotels' which were constructed by pupils from the Corbett School.

The team would be delighted to hear from anyone who could help with churchyard maintenance – particularly the grass cutting. If you think you may be able to offer some time either occasionally or more regularly during the year please contact Martyn Lake (01939 290777 or dnmlake@gmail.com)

Congratulations to all concerned.

Lynne Siviter

See the photograph on the back page.

Hordley News

Christmas will soon be upon us and with that in mind it was decided at the recent PCC meeting that a group would sing carols in Tetchill on the evening of Monday 13th December. Singers will gather at 6 pm by the notice board on the corner of Kenwick View and Ellesmere Road and carols will be sung in a couple of places. Fliers will be distributed to the nearby houses beforehand. If anyone would like to join the group they will be most welcome and carol sheets will be provided. Warm clothing and torches will be helpful! Any donations will go to Hope House children's hospice. For more details please ring John Willis nearer the time on 01691 623537 or 07793365199.

It will soon be time to renew your subscriptions for the Hordley Lottery Draw in 2022 with Brian Sinker (01691 770212). Do get in touch with Brian if you would like to join this fund-raiser, which does help the church funds. The cost is £12 per number per year and the winning number is the bonus ball in the national lottery on the first Saturday of each month. The winner receives £30. The amount raised during 2021 will be included in the next issue in February. Thank you to all our current subscribers.

The winner of the lottery draw in November was Andrew Thomson with bonus ball number 19.

Kahlil Gibran was a Maronite Christian; he was born in Lebanon but he lived for most of his life in the USA. He was an artist and poet who wrote a number of books that were mystical Arabic in nature. His best known book is *The Prophet*, published in 1923, from which I have selected the following quotation that I think we can all relate to.

Then said a rich man (to the prophet), "Speak to us of giving". And he answered:

"You give but little when you give of your possessions.

It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

By Clement C. Moore

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

The remaining nine verses may be found on the internet.



St James the Least of All

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

After all these years, I now understand why the non-conformist denominations sit down, rather than kneel, to say their prayers. That way, no decisions have to be taken over the number, size, shape, colour, material and design of kneelers in church.



Our present set was donated by a retired Major-General in 1899 to celebrate the Relief of Mafeking, and after more than a century of use by the pious and not-so-devout has taken its toll. Like certain members of our congregation, they now look a little worse for wear. Many have sprung leaks, so that when used, a jet of flocking is emitted all over the clothes of their neighbour, who then leaves Mattins looking like a Yeti.

Other kneelers have been occupied by grateful mice, who find them most congenial for nesting and who leave in high umbrage, creating chaos as Miss Mapp chases them down the aisle with her umbrella; that this provides her with the perfect excuse to leave before the sermon is, I am sure, entirely coincidental. The final straw came when my own, by some quirk in its design, now sounds like a whoopee cushion every time I kneel. It may cause the choirboys much amusement, but it lends nothing to the dignity of our worship.

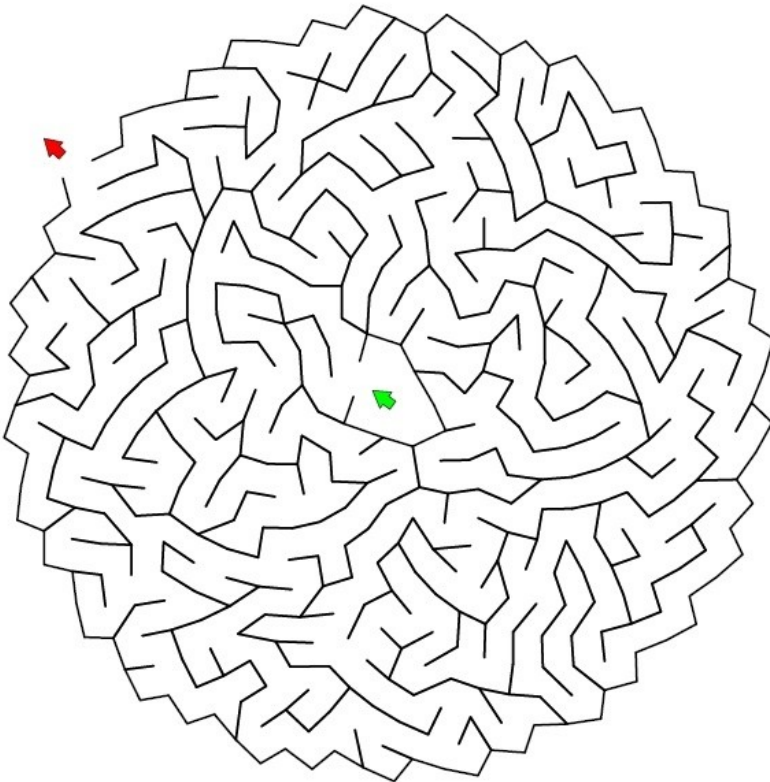
So, we have decided to have a completely new set – and therein lies the problem. Who makes them? What will be the designs? Who co-ordinates the whole project? There is enough here to occupy the combined minds of our Church Council for the next Millennium and there will be enough scheming, manoeuvring, signing of non-aggression pacts and formation of tactical truces to make the United Nations look like amateurs. Unfortunately, we do not have the ecclesiastical equivalents of the blue berets to enforce peace.

The more patriotic members of the congregation have suggested they all show the Union Jack – presumably so they can be waved at appropriate moments in our services; one belligerent individual wants to see depictions of St Michael slaughtering the dragon, John the Baptist’s head on a platter and other such tasteful scenes; on the other hand, dear Miss Timmins wants them all to depict doves or small fluffy creatures, which would make the church look more like pets corner.

Cutting through these vital issues, I have suggested that the entire congregation converts to Roman Catholicism.... and then we could stand for our prayers and do without kneelers entirely.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



Advent

During Advent we will be holding some sessions on a Monday evening at 7.30pm on Zoom, to stop and reflect as we journey towards the manger. The sessions will be based on an Advent hymn or Christmas Carol.

Sessions will last 30-45 mins.

Please let us know if you would like to be part of these sessions and we will send you the link.

Dates of sessions:

Mon 29th November

Mon 6th December

Mon 13th December

Mon 20th December

From the Registers

Valerie Irene Cole aged 90 years – Funeral service at Emstrey crematorium on 1st November

John Eric Weyham aged 75 years – Funeral service at Emstry crematorium on 16th November & memorial service 17th November at All Saints' Baschurch

Elizabeth Hockenhill aged 95 years – Funeral service at All Saints' Baschurch on 1st December

No weddings or baptisms.

Bible readings for Sundays in December and January.

Sunday 5th December

Malachi 3:1-4 & Luke 3:1-6

Sunday 12th December

Zephaniah 3:14-end & Luke 3:7-18

Sunday 19th December

Micah 5:2-5a & Luke 1:39-45

Christmas Day

Isaiah 9:2-7 & Luke 2:1-20

Sunday 26th December – St Stephen's

Acts 7:51-end & Matthew 10:17-22

Sunday 2nd January

Ephesians 1:3-14 & John 1:10-18

Thursday 6th January – The Epiphany

Isaiah 60:1-6 & Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday 9th January – The Baptism of Christ

Acts 8:14-17 & Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Sunday 16th January

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 & John 2:1-11

Sunday 23rd January

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a & Luke 4:14-21

Sunday 30th January

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 & Luke 2:22-40

Services in December and January

Sunday 5th December

8am BCP Communion – Baschurch

9.30am Worship for All – Weston Lullingfields

10am CW Holy Communion – Baschurch

4pm – Contemporary Worship at the end of the Festive Weekend – Baschurch

Sunday 12th December

9.15am CW Holy Communion – Hordley

11am CW Holy Communion – Baschurch

6pm BCP Evensong – Baschurch

Thursday 16th December

Carol Service 7.30pm – St Mary's Hordley

Sunday 19th December

8am BCP Communion – Baschurch

9.30am CW Holy Communion – Weston Lullingfields

11am Informal Service with re-telling of the Nativity story through drama – Baschurch

6pm Carol Service – Baschurch

Christmas Eve

3pm Christingle and Crib service – Hordley (a service aimed at those with children)

5pm Christingle and Crib service – Baschurch

7pm – Carol Service – Weston Lullingfields

11.30pm – Midnight Communion – Baschurch

Christmas Day

8am BCP Communion – Baschurch

9.15am CW Holy Communion-Hordley

9.30am – CW Holy Communion (more informal) – Weston Lullingfields

11am – CW Holy Communion (more informal) - Baschurch

Sunday 26th December (Boxing Day) – Please note there will be no services in the Benefice on this day- please tune in to those on the internet or TV. There will be a streamed service from Lichfield Cathedral.

This decision was taken after permission was received from the Bishop of Lichfield and PCCs voted not to have one. If anyone feels strongly about this please contact Linda.

Sunday 2nd January

8am BCP Communion – Baschurch

9.30am Worship for All – Weston Lullingfields

11am CW Holy Communion – Baschurch

6.30pm Contemporary worship - Baschurch

Sunday 9th January

9.15am Worship for All – Hordley

11am CW Holy Communion – Baschurch

6pm – BCP Evensong - Baschurch

Sunday 16th January

8am BCP Communion – Baschurch

9.30am CW Holy Communion – Weston Lullingfields

11am CW Holy Communion – Baschurch

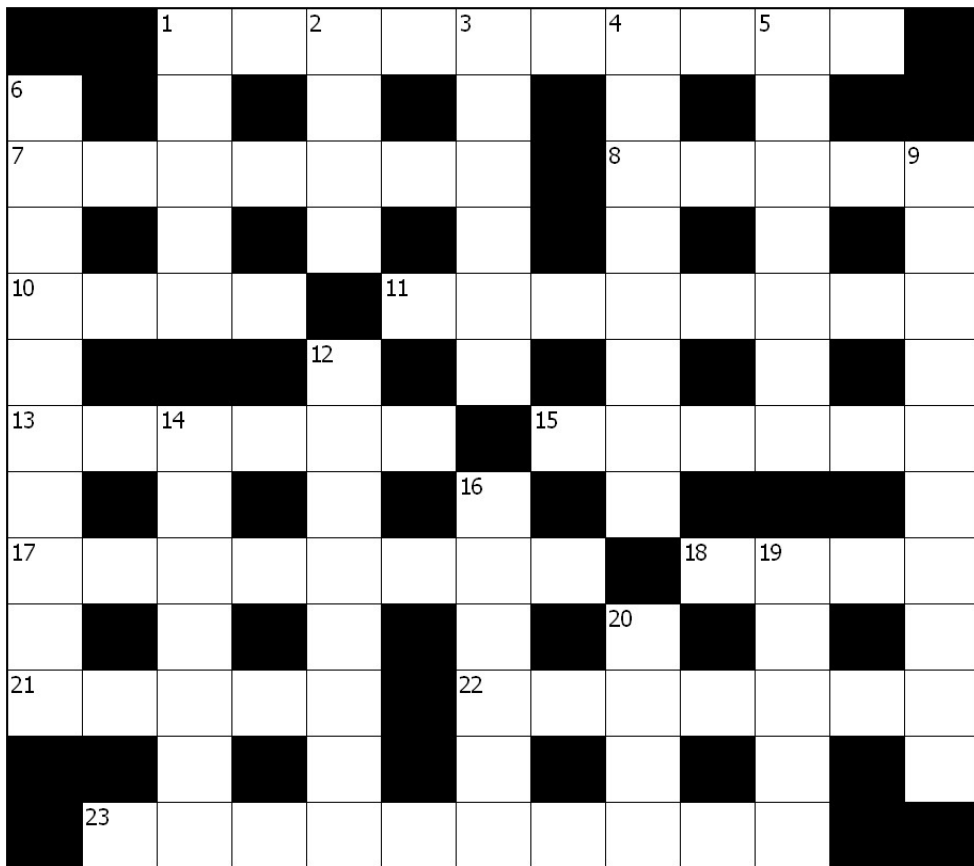
Sunday 23rd January

9.15am CW Holy Communion –Hordley

11am CW Holy Communion –Baschurch

4pm Forest Church

Sunday 30th January – A United Communion Service 10.30am at All Saints' Baschurch, where we will be inviting African Enterprise to speak.



Across

1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)

7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14ñ15) (7)

8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)

10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)

11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)

13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)

15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse

20 Edith ___ (6)

17 Stormy (8)

18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)

21 Arson (anag.) (5)

22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)

23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

1 '___ and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)

2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as___ as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)

3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)

4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19ñ20) (8)

5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)

6 'Offer your bodies as living _____, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)

9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)

12 One who accepts government by God (8)

14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)

16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)

19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)

20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ___ his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)

(Answers on page 25)



Carbon and Churchyards



Now that the COP26 conference is finished I thought it might be useful to think about churchyards in terms of the carbon that they store and the carbon that we use in managing them.

The main ways that churchyards store carbon is through the trees and the grassland that they contain. The trees, particularly large old trees, have been locking away carbon for many years, in the case of ancient yews, perhaps for millennia.

Whilst there is a laudable focus on trees and tree planting at the moment, don't forget that grassland is a fantastic carbon store too, with approximately 30% of global carbon stored within grasslands and their soils *. Interestingly grasslands which have a wide variety of plant, animal and fungi species store more carbon than less diverse ones, so churchyard soils may be really important for this as they are teeming with life.

To increase churchyard carbon storage and reduce carbon being used, why not:

Use larger pieces of wood from trees needing felling or pruning for furniture making or wood turning. This locks the carbon away beyond the life of the tree.

Compost grass cuttings or prunings and create deadwood piles. These all produce humus which improves the capacity of soils to hold carbon.

Consider replacing petrol mowers and strimmers with battery operated ones, charged with a green electricity supply using wind or solar power.

How about scything long grass? Faster than a strimmer and excellent exercise!

Reduce the amount of short grass to where you really need it such as recent graves, war graves and memorials and against paths and the church entrance.

Consider having medium length grass in some areas - this is mown monthly in the growing season with the mower bar set at its highest. This reduces the number of cuts and allows low-flowering plants such as clovers, speedwells and self-heal to thrive.

* Take a look at www.grasslandsplus.org.uk

All the best, Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor.

Be kind to the wildlife in your garden



Be kind to the wildlife in your garden – what little of it remains. The UK is one of the world's most nature-depleted countries, and it may not even have enough biodiversity – variety of plant and animal life – to prevent an ecological meltdown.

That is the finding of new data by the Natural History Museum. It says that the UK has an average of only 53 per cent of its natural biodiversity left, well below the global average of 75 per cent.

Worldwide, scientists warn that the variety of plant and animal life of earth is dwindling fast. It will have a serious impact on human life: “those systems have lost enough to mean that we have to be careful about relying on them functioning in the way that we need them to.”



A Very Special Baby

JESUS WAS BORN ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO IN THE SMALL TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEAR JERUSALEM.



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE A VERY SPECIAL BABY.



...YOU MUST CALL YOUR BABY JESUS



MARY AND JOSEPH MADE THE LONG JOURNEY FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM. THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED THERE FOR THE CENSUS.

BUT THE TOWN WAS FULL



THE ONLY SHELTER THEY COULD FIND WAS A STABLE...

...WHICH IS WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.



SHEPHERDS IN FIELDS NEARBY RACED TO SEE THE BABY



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM WHERE JESUS HAD BEEN BORN.

WISE MEN CAME FROM THE EAST. THEY TOO WANTED TO SEE JESUS. THEY HAD BEEN GUIDED BY A STAR.



THEY BROUGHT GIFTS OF GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH.

BUT MARY, JOSEPH AND BABY JESUS SOON HAD TO ESCAPE TO EGYPT...



...AS KING HEROD WANTED JESUS DEAD!!

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ACROSS: 1, Charioteers. 9, Immoral. 10, Cairo. 11, SAE. 13, Inns. 16, Firm.
17, Accuse. 18, East. 20, Ogam. 21, Judith. 22, Seba. 23, Msgr. 25, Den. 28, Inane.
29, Entreat. 30, Chrysoprase.

DOWN: 2, Human. 3, Rare. 4, Oils. 5, Ecce. 6, Raising. 7, Citizenship.
8, Commemorate. 12, Assail. 14, Sat. 15, Scouse. 19, Sabbath. 20, Ohm. 24, Seeds.
25, Deny. 26, Nero. 27, Star.

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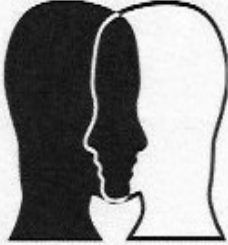
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We're on the Web - Check out our website where you'll find up-to-date information about the three parishes and much more!

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Thanks to John Russell for these photographs of the poppies being installed on All Saints' tower by the Fire Service.

Churchyard of the Year Award for All Saints'



See page 10 for details.