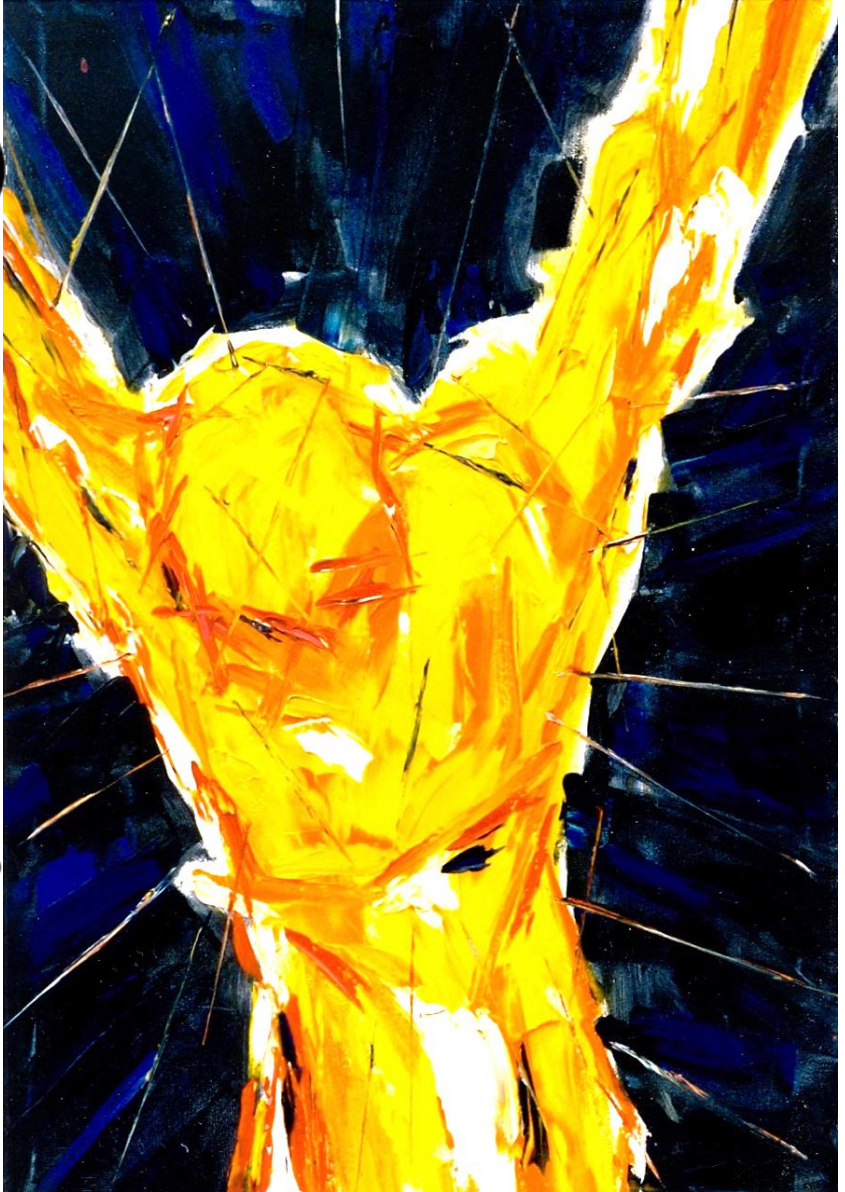


Lillington Parish Magazine
St Mary Magdalene's Church

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References available

REV ROSEMARY'S REFLECTION

Easter is a time of new beginnings. With the mild winter we've had and daffodils flowering in February, it may well be that by the time we reach Easter Day we will feel Spring has sprung rather some time ago! Nevertheless, there is something about this time of year that makes us feel especially hopeful.



There was a strong feeling for a lot of folk this winter that 2016 had been a difficult year both at home and abroad, and a certain pessimism has been apparent. The Christian hope that Easter brings is not a vague hope that if we don't dwell on the difficulties of life then somehow we can make the best of things and enjoy ourselves despite it all. On the contrary, Easter is so joyful precisely

because first we live through Good Friday.

On Good Friday we remember the worst that humanity can do, in trying to destroy what is good. Jesus was tortured and died for the same reasons that thousands die in Syria and across our world. Because of misplaced power, greed, corruption, blind prejudice and fear. Because in fact of those human traits and failings we all carry within us. If that Friday had really been the end it would not be Good. It is transformed by Easter Sunday. Jesus who was dead is alive. Jesus could not be destroyed by the worst human beings could do to him. Love conquered death. God's love for each of us promises us the possibility of our own Easter experience, that the worst that life and other people can do to us is not the end, that there is always the possibility of a new start, fresh hope.

As I write this I have heard today on the radio of a couple who have been told that their unborn child has a condition which means she cannot live. They have decided to carry her to full term and to donate her organs that other children might live. They are going through an excruciating, protracted Good Friday experience. It is love, the compassion they have for other grieving parents and suffering babies, which is transforming their terrible suffering into the joy of hope for other lives.

We all experience our own suffering, whatever it may be: pain, bereavement, depression, fear. We can sink beneath the weight of these things, or find determination to make something positive come out of our experiences. Most charities are started or supported by people who have experienced something they want to prevent others having to go through. Compassion and love is shown as those charities help people in need.

Let us ask God this Easter to help us to transform our own Good Friday situations into new beginnings of hope and love.

*Rev Rosemary
Associate Minister,*

WALKERS' GROUP

March walk

The March walk was from the village of Wilmcote, 4 miles northwest of Stratford-upon-Avon. At the start of the village is Mary Arden's house, the residence of Shakespeare's mother.

The walk started on the Stratford-on-Avon canal, heading towards King's Norton. After about one and a half miles, we turned off to the village of Newnham.

From Newnham we headed towards Rough Hills, a site of abandoned quarries. The quarries were used to supply extensive quantities of hard building stone, which can be seen in surrounding villages, like Aston Cantlow.



From here we walked around the border of Upland Pastures, then a clear path which drops down to a road, and then back to the village of Wilmcote, and the very welcome Mason's Arms, where we all enjoyed an excellent lunch.

Sue Hollins

February Walk

On Saturday February 4th a self-selected A team of five walkers gathered outside the church to consider whether we should go ahead with the walk given how few in number we were. The weather was very promising, however, and the planned walk a really good one, especially on a clear day, so off we went.



We parked at the Fish Inn, Wixford, pondered why the trees in the car park were wrapped in striped cloths and admired the large sign saying 'Goodbye Dahlings Kiss Kiss' at the exit! Early in

the walk we passed Wixford church and admired a large patch of snowdrops in the bright sunshine. Despite a lot of rain the previous day the going was generally good as we walked towards Alcester for a while along Icknield St, a Roman road. From Icknield Street we took a path climbing the hill behind it to another track past a large farmhouse overlooking the Alcester road and then turned right to walk along the edge of Oversley wood before turning back, passing Oversley castle on its prominent hilltop. Given its position it is not surprising that the site has been occupied since Neolithic times. There was once a small Norman castle and then a fortified house owned by Evesham Abbey. At the Dissolution the property was seized by Walsingham and on his execution, by the Throckmortons. It has recently been developed into a series of luxury apartments complete with helipad. The views from this elevation were superb - as far as Bredon hill and beyond and across to Ragley Hall.

On the way back we called at Wixford church to admire the eighteenth century thatched shelter for the visiting parson's horse - a listed building! (See photo)



Back at the Fish after four and a half miles we admired its extraordinary interior decoration, (especially the life-sized gorilla on the counter) and enjoyed a very good meal after a glorious day's walk rich in spectacles but sadly rather lacking in numbers to enjoy them.

WARDEN'S WORDS



It's Spring, a time of new beginnings, and as I look out at my garden I can see new buds and green leaves unfurling.

Some of you may know that Robin and I have just returned from holiday and we visited some quite amazing places – if you're interested we are more than happy to bore you with all the details! The main country that we visited was New Zealand and as well as the wildlife (much of which remained hidden) I was quite interested in learning about Maoris and how their traditions and people are received in modern NZ.



What became obvious is that all people of NZ are passionate about their country. In the South Island the contrasts and beauty of the places we visited were staggering – but there was very little about the Maori past here. However the North Island had some areas where the Maori population was much more obvious and they seemed to be respected (or perhaps tolerated?). It seems that the white Europeans predominate, although we heard many complaints that more and more Japanese, Chinese and Koreans were buying property and 'taking over'.

The Maori art is beautiful and symbolic. I am not a great fan of tattoos but their body art or *moko* is considered highly sacred and has great meaning. Since the Maori people consider the head to be the most sacred part of the body, the most popular kind of Maori tattoo was the facial tattoo, which was composed of curved shapes and spiral like patterns. Often this tattoo covered the whole face and was a symbol of rank, social status, power and prestige.

We discovered that one of the most often used symbols is the Koru. The design is inspired by the New Zealand fern frond unfurling as it grows. It represents peace, tranquility, personal growth, positive change and awakening. It is



associated with new life and harmony. So despite its pagan origin it is suitable symbolism for a Christian starting a new role – whether that be as a Churchwarden or setting up a new church!

We were only able to find a church once whilst we were on holiday and this was in the South Island at one of their bigger cities – Nelson. It is the second oldest city in the South Island and is named after Lord Admiral Nelson. We had been looking for a church and Nelson Cathedral was the closest one that was having a service whilst we were staying in the area. The Cathedral is not particularly, smaller than All Saints in Leamington and is built of grey stone, and concrete in parts where an earthquake damaged the building. Inside there are some beautiful modern stained glass windows.

It was a beautiful warm Sunday morning, the cicadas were making a lot of noise as we arrived, but we were an hour too early for the service. So after a very nice cup of coffee we tried again. The service was mostly the very familiar pattern of our own 9:30 Communion service – even the hymns and the tunes were familiar. Half way through there was a baptism – and it turned out that both parents originally came from Worcestershire. After the Baptism the mother of little Benjamin was asked to say why they had chosen to have him baptised. It would seem that Baptisms do not happen very often here but she spoke eloquently of her and her husband's faith, and their desire to bring Benjamin up in the Christian faith. It was a lovely service and yet another reminder about new beginnings.



Blessings on you all for this Easter, and for all your new beginnings.

Carol Innes

THE MANY FORMS OF PRAYER



There is more than one way to pray: in fact there are many. There is the formal sort of prayer where the content is prescribed, such as in Church and there is the informal way, which we can practice in our daily progress.

Whenever we marvel at the beauty of a flower or the majesty of a cloud formation or the wonder of a tree we are praying as we wonder in awe at the works of God. Accordingly, prayers do not always have to be in actual words and may last just a fleeting second.

As we dedicate our everyday work to God we are praying. In the words of George Herbert in 1633 "Teach me, my God and King, in all things thee to see and what I do in anything to do it as for thee" and continues "who sweeps a room as for thy laws makes that and the action fine". So while there might be merit in setting aside a quiet time for prayer there is no excuse for neglecting prayer-duty since it can be made part of our everyday lives with no extra effort. This type of prayer is an acknowledgement of the wonders of God's creation and appreciation of his gifts from day to day.

Saint Benedict formulated the Rule by which the monks of his monastery would live, laying stress on the equal value of prayer, study and work, and in this way laid the foundations for self-sufficiency in a period when a community might either survive on its own or not at all. At the core of the Rule was *laborare est orare* (to work is to pray). Benedict's monks were to be more than bibliophiles since he wanted them to get dirt under their nails. As the movement spread across Europe the Benedictines set up abbeys which prospered, safe behind their massive walls, even when the depredations of the barbarian invaders were taking their greatest toll of the country around.

Formal prayer might take the form of headings under which one can compose one's own individual prayers or those which are set out word for word whose potency can be made all the more meaningful by the use of beautiful, even poetic wording such as in the Book of Common Prayer.

It can be said that the use of prayers learned by rote, such as the Lord's Prayer, for example, can become less meaningful if one does not consider the words as they are said or thought. William Shakespeare wrote in his Hamlet "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: words without thoughts never to heaven go." And yet if one has previously grown to know and fully appreciate the meaning of the words, God will surely know how we intend them.

If we think it essential to compose and hone prayers before we can use them there is the danger that this might take too much effort and cause us to omit the duty when we are weary: while this approach might be laudable our prayers can also be said with little effort or preparation. To remember prayer and to relate it to all we do brings us closer to God, sealing our commitment to Him and encourages us to thank Him for his great blessings and mercies in everyday life.

GRAHAM E. COOPER.

THE SMILE THAT DIED ON MY LIPS

Every now and then you come across something in the Bible that takes you by surprise. I hadn't read Ecclesiastes in its entirety for quite some time but had reason to do so quite recently and a verse in the middle of it stood out.

If you remember nothing else from this book you're probably familiar with the well-known words in chapter 3 which starts, "For everything there is a season..." For those of a certain vintage - like me - you've probably started to sing, "Turn, turn, turn" as you recall the popular Pete Seeger song of the 60s made famous by the Byrds rendering in 1965.



However, it's a couple of verses in chapter 9 that took my attention - in fact the last two verses. I think if I had read it in the New International Version it would have passed me by but I was reading the NRSV, the version in our pews and at the lectern. The NIV - and

a number of other translations – use the word sinner in verse 18. But the NRSV says this...

Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one bungler destroys much good.

I have to confess to finding this hilarious initially. Looking round the world it was like, "take your pick!" Actually, I am writing this on a day when so much bungling is in the news it's as if the words were written for today.

But also on this day I've seen the tragic news of the disaster unfolding in East Africa. As Eddie Redmayne has just said in his appeal, after the events of the mid 80s we didn't expect to be in this position again. And the pictures are absolutely heart-rending.

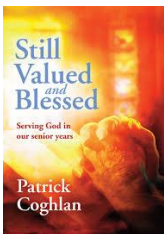
I've just had to stop writing for a few minutes because the moment's amusement at the use of the word bungler has faded to be replaced by a feeling of deep sadness. And there seems to be a connection between the bunglers and their bungling in the world and the fate of millions who have no say in the events around them - "bungler destroys much good."

But I don't believe we should feel smug or complacent when we are complicit in choosing our leaders and the policies they follow. Perhaps we should take more notice of the words in the verse preceding (v. 17) which says...

The quiet words of the wise are more to be heeded than the shouting of a ruler among fools.

Alan Wright

REVIEW



Still Valued and Blessed, By Patrick Coghlan, Kevin Mayhew, £12.99

What exactly is old age? Grey hair? A pension? A state of mind? One thing for sure: God doesn't want us to stop living fulfilling lives just because we have reached a certain age! By examining biblical teaching about God's purpose for our whole lives, older people are encouraged to be challenged by new experiences and opportunities, and to learn from those older characters in the Bible who served God in truly amazing ways.

CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING

On Thursday 27th April at 7.30 pm in the Octagon, we have our church annual meeting. We will be reviewing 2016 as well as looking to the future.



It's been another busy year at St Mary Magdalene. The summer and Christmas Fairs were as great as ever, and the church also took part in the Lillington Community Fun Day. We also hosted a bereavement service for two of our local Funeral Directors, now a regular event, and a concert in aid of the Mayor's charities.

We enjoyed a series of organ recitals in the autumn and the year ended with another wonderful Christmas Tree Festival and a packed church for Christmas – especially Christingle!

Below are just some of the reports about what went on at St. Mary Magdalene's in 2016 and the beginning of 2017. Come along on the 27th to find out more about what we did last year and what the next year might have in store.

The Choir

Once again, I am pleased to report to our Annual General Meeting a successful and productive year for the choir at St Mary Magdalene's. This has been a year, as many others often are, of new additions and fond farewells.

We have welcomed our youngest member, Millie Dixon, who started with us in September and who is settling in well. We look forward to seeing her continue to enjoy her time with the choir.

One of the joys of any choirmaster is to see the youngest members of our choir grow and develop in to accomplished choristers. I am therefore incredibly proud of Maisie, Millie Barker, Daniel and Callum who have all achieved their Dark Blue Ribbons this year. I know their

families will have supported them in working towards this achievement and I thank them for their continued support of our choir in this way. I look forward to watching all four of our newest beribboned young choristers continue to thrive in our choral community.

So many of our young choristers do, of course, look up to Isabelle, our Head Chorister, who has worked incredibly hard this year. She continues to be an excellent role model with her continued dedication.

A highlight of any church year is the Christmas Carol service. This year, we were ably supported by Rev Sue Fairhurst and Karma Aston. This year, our service was recorded and hopefully, by now, CDs will be available for you to enjoy this music once again at home.

This year, we said our farewells to James Wycherley, who has been with us for a number of years. We wish him the very best in his future musical adventures and thank him for his years of service.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all members of the choir. It is, undoubtedly, their endeavours which contribute to the musical strength we are fortunate enough to enjoy as a congregation.

Michael King, Director of music

Home and Community Communion

During the past year Rev. Charlotte and six trained members of our congregation have continued to visit the housebound and four local residential homes – Fourways, Eden Place, James Hirons and Southfields. These visits are on a monthly basis and we provide a shortened version of the Communion Service with consecrated bread and wine.

The service is greatly appreciated by those unable to attend church services and it also provides those visited with an opportunity to hear about church events and friends.

Christine Nutt



Flower Guild

I do hope that the flowers in the church throughout the year have brought happiness or comfort to focus on.

Very many thanks to everyone who has donated special arrangements for birthdays, anniversaries, retirements, thaksgivings and memorials, all of which have helped towards our funding.

My special thanks to the ladies on the flower rota who supply flowers of their choice on their duty weeks.

For some of the weddings, the couples were happy to use the flowers that were already in the church; in other cases we were able to provide what was specified.

The Christmas Tree Festival itself decorated the church, so we only had to supply garlands round the pillars and fresh flowers at the altar for Christmas Week.

If anyone is thinking of joining us to help with the floral decorations, it only works out at about twice a year plus extra help at festival times, so please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Thanks in anticipation...

Wendy Shear



Occasional Offices

In 2016 we undertook 9 weddings, 11 church funerals, 14 crematorium funerals, 10 interments of ashes, 3 burials and 10 baptisms. Having Revs Sue and Rosemary on board to help with funerals and weddings has been a huge help, and I am also grateful to the continued support of local retired clergy, especially with the funeral ministry.

In February 2017 we welcomed all our wedding couples for the year ahead (from here and St James) to a celebration service, 'Rejoicing Together'. It was a wonderful opportunity for us to gather together to pray and to think a bit about what marriage means, as well as giving everyone a chance to chat over lovely refreshments.

Rev Charlotte

Lillington Bellringers

We have thirteen members in the band ranging in age from 14 to 70+. We are usually able to ring all eight bells prior to the 9.30am Sunday morning service, and rarely less than six.

Practices on Tuesdays from 7.30 – 9pm have continued throughout the year and been well supported by members.

We opened the tower during the Summer Fete in June. Forty three visitors joined in the guided tours up to the roof. Other events included a 'Christmas' Dinner in January and a ringing outing to Bedfordshire in May.

We rang Quarter peals for HM Queen's 90th birthday in April and for HRH Duke of Edinburgh's 95th birthday in June 2016.

Members of the congregation are very welcome to visit us to see what goes on – please contact the Tower Captain (450977).

Richard Taulbut

Bible Book Club

Once each half term, a group of us meet together to chat about a book of the bible which we have all read in advance of the meeting (well, mostly...). There are no set questions and no wrong answers or opinions. We never quite know where the discussion will take us, and I am always amazed at how much we learn and how much we laugh. We have been quite shocked by some of what we have read, and really excited to discover how various bits of the bible fit together. In the last year we have talked about Genesis, the Acts of the Apostles, Joshua, Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, and Judges. We're never quite the same group of people each time, but everyone is welcome.

Rev Charlotte Gale

Churchyard Team

Warwick District Council continue to maintain the lower churchyard to a high standard and regularly remove the green rubbish, the fruits of our Wednesday mornings' endeavour, from the bricked area. They have also repaired the boundary wall abutting Church Lane.

Unfortunately there is still no movement on the various tree issues of which they have been advised, in particular trimming the branches of the Turkey Oak which overhangs Vicarage Road.

We now have three working mowers and have recently acquired a "usable" strimmer so are well set for the upcoming growing season. All we need now are some additional pairs of hands to help us out;

what better way to spend a Wednesday morning?! My thanks as ever to the churchyard team (John, Martyn, Bob, Peter and Glyn).

John Butler

Love Lillington

Our community project really got going this year, as we offered love to people in need in our community through prayer, money and practical action. We cleared gardens, collected household items, decorated rooms, bought bedding, laid carpets and prayed for people... and a lot more besides. By God's grace and thanks to your generosity, the pot of money never seems to run dry, however much we spend! The Love Lillington team leaders will be giving a full report at the Annual Meeting so make sure you come along to hear the wonderful stories of how God has been at work through this project in the last year.

Rev Charlotte



Youth Group

Our youth group (for children aged 11 and over) meet on the 2nd Sunday of the month, from 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm in the Octagon.

We have six regular members, and occasional friends joining them. Over the last few months we have been following a course that covers the whole story of the bible, and there have been lots of games, lively discussion, and time for quiet prayer.

The group is currently led by Roderick Clark, Rev Sue Fairhurst and Rev Charlotte Gale, with Carol Innes coordinating everything.

The group enjoyed a summer trip ten pin bowling followed by a meal out, and a Christmas Party.

Just a few weeks ago, we were thrilled to celebration with one of our members, Dan, at his confirmation by the Bishop of Warwick.

Rev Charlotte Gale

SERVICE DETAILS

SUNDAY WORSHIP - APRIL 2017

2 nd Apr	08:00	Holy Communion
	09:30	Morning Praise & Sunday Club
	06:30	Music & Readings for Passiontide
9 th Apr	08:00	Holy Communion
	09:30	Morning Praise & Sunday Club
	18:30	Youth Group
16 th Apr Easter Day	08:00	Holy Communion
	09:30	Holy Communion & Sunday Club
23 rd Apr	08:00	Holy Communion
	09:30	Holy Communion & Sunday Club
30 th Apr	08:00	Holy Communion
	09:30	Holy Communion

A Time for Quiet and Prayer
Monday – Thursday, 12.00 – 1.00 pm
(Please use main entrance)

“Prayer is not what is done by us, but rather what is done by the Holy Spirit in us.”

Henri Nouwen

SUNDAY CLUB

For children of all ages up to 10 years during School Term time. Children join the main 09:30 service at the beginning and the end, and leave for a 30 minutes Sunday Club session, which has a range of age appropriate activities

WEEKDAY WORSHIP:

Tuesday	25 th April	13:30	Holy Communion
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THE CHURCH OFFICE

The office is open Monday to Thursday 9.00am till 1.00pm.

During these hours, the church may be used for private prayer - please use the office entrance.

For Baptism, Weddings and general enquiries please contact the church office (01926 470449). Outside of office hours please leave a message on the answer phone and we will get back to you.

WHAT'S ON

APRIL 2017

Sat 1	9:30	Walkers Group meets outside Church. Contact Bob Cooke. Tel: 315890
Thu 6	19:15	Parish Lent Couse in the Octagon
Tue 11	18:30 19:00	Knitters' Group in the Octagon Dementia Support Group evening at Lillington Community Centre
Tue 18	18:45	Lillington & Cubbington churches, praying together @ Lillington Free Church.
Tue 25	14:00	Tea & Chat in the Octagon
Tue 25	18:30	Knitters' Group in the Octagon
Thu 27	19:30	Annual Parochial Church Meeting in the Octagon

MAY 2017

Sat 6	9:30	Walkers' Group, meet outside church. Contact Ted & Sandra Dear: 332958
Sat 6	10:00	Coffee Morning in support of African Vision Malawi, in the Octagon
Tue 9	18:30	Knitters' Group in the Octagon
Tue 18	18:45	Lillington & Cubbington churches, praying together @ Lillington Free Church.
Tue 23	18:30	Knitters' Group in the Octagon
Tue 30	18:30	Tea & Chat in the Octagon

A reminder: Please make Cheques payable to Lillington PCC

For any events you wish to publicise please contact the Editor or email events@lillingtonparishchurch.org

FROM THE CHURCH RECORDS

FUNERALS	
8 th Feb	Rosemary Dawn Poulter, Age 66
23 rd Feb	Arthur Watson, Age 96

Home Groups

Tuesday home group: The Tuesday home group meets once a month throughout the year - usually on the 1st Tuesday. There are about eight regular attendees, and we meet at 7.30pm in someone's home. After light refreshments and greeting one another, we read one, or both of the set Bible readings for the coming Sunday. We always read the passage three times, with pauses in between, and each person suggests one word or very short phrase which leapt off the page for them. No-one takes centre stage, and we all respect one another's thoughts as we mull over the scriptures. A final informal prayer- time brings the evening to a close at 9.00pm. What could be more uplifting? You are most welcome to join us.

Glyn Wright

Thursday home group: Ten of us continue to meet monthly, to be welcomed into Delia's home. We share the joys and struggles we experience in developing our Christian faith, and learn from our readings of the bible and each other's understanding, experience and knowledge.

This year we have been working on developing our understanding of the " I AM " statements of Jesus. We have eaten fresh-baked rolls, grapes and sheep biscuits, held lighted candles and ice cubes, looked at posters and message cards and planted tulip bulbs... can you see the connection? If not, ask any member of the group! During this time we have deepened our relationships with each other and with God.

On the lighter side we celebrated a birthday with a garden party and Christmas with a bring-and-share morning, with food, readings and music. A strong team served a delicious afternoon tea to a hundred people in church to mark the launch of the Christmas Tree Festival, and we made a group visit to the Loft Theatre to see one of our number singing and dancing on stage!

During Lent we meet weekly, for last year's Lent Study we followed the same course as the Octagon sessions. This year we will be working on a "Food for Thought" course produced by the Church Urban Fund.

My personal thanks are extended to all the members of the group for their friendship and commitment as we work through the large and small questions of life.

Charlotte Sanders

Pastoral Link Group including 'Tea and Chat'

The Pastoral Link Group endeavours to be a link with and support for Church Members who are ill, live alone or are housebound. Appropriate cards are sent, occasional visits made or contact kept by a friendly telephone call.

Everyone is welcome at the Tea and Chat afternoons; the number attending is fairly stable. Our 2016 programme was, we hope, varied and interesting for those attending.

Thank you to Karen and Vivienne for organizing card making, Delia for her very thoughtful and inspiring talk about her work with The Samaritans and the Revd. Charlotte for the talk she gave us about her holiday in New England illustrated with beautiful slides.

We also had two celebrations during the year, a Strawberry Tea in June when the theme was the Queen's 90th birthday and our Christmas Party when we were entertained with songs from the musicals by Judith and Peter Irving. If any member of the congregation is willing to give a talk at Tea and Chat or can offer a lift to Church or to Tea and Chat it will be most welcome.

We would like to mention and remember Pamela Cummins, the well-loved chairman of our group for many years, who sadly died at the end of the year.

Jane Davies on behalf of Thelma Dawkes, (chairman) Christine Nutt, Hazel Baker, Jean McGaffin and Rosemary Perkin.

Sunday Club

Our church Sunday Club meets during the 9.30 am service, every Sunday during term time. We meet in the Octagon and usually have between 5 and 10 children, including three from our choir, but there are over 20 on the books, so you are never quite sure how many to expect.

The Sunday Club children helped lead the Mothering Sunday service, Harvest Festival and the Gift service as well as taking part in another wonderful Nativity play. They also helped with making 300 Christingles as well as helping out at our two Christingle services.

My huge thanks go out to the team – Rev Naomi, Roderick, Carol and Sarah – for all their hard work.

Rev Charlotte

Octotots

Our weekly baby and toddler group continues to thrive and I am constantly amazed at how new Mums (or sometimes dad or granny or granddad) continue to arrive with babies and toddlers, as the older ones move on to nursery. We rarely have fewer than 20 little ones each week.

We meet on Thursday mornings during term time, between 10.30 am and noon. I greet them and chat and move around the main room, while Karen Samwell does an amazing job serving refreshments and also chatting and getting to know people. We play and do crafts, then sing songs, hear a bible story and join in a short prayer. There is a really lovely, friendly and welcoming atmosphere, much appreciated by those who attend. Almost all of our regulars attended the Christingle service, and many of the little ones have been baptised in our church.

Rev Charlotte

Crosstalk

During 2016 Crosstalk has continued to be well received – at least that’s what you tell me! This year there were some new themes such as the Charity of the Month, and the Stained Glass Windows.

In December we published our last Crosstalk after 7 years; I started in May 2010, so by my reckoning that’s 73 editions. Reflecting back there was Maggie the Mouse and Fin the Fish hiding in the pages; we’ve done series amongst other things on Gardening, From the Archives (looking back at old Crosstalks), book reviews, plants from the bible and World War 1; then there’s been the new sections – Cooking with Crosstalk, Wardens Words, the Walkers Group and even Robin’s Round up.

Many of you will know it’s not just me that makes the magazine happen – Carol is an absolute whizz on the computer (although her typing proficiency is somewhat dodgy!) and spends many hours trying to fit everything in - and between us we have had a ball.

Crosstalk has been edited mostly from our spare room – but since our retirement from work, we have put it together when we’ve been travelling in France, Spain, Portugal, Scotland, and Somerset.

Distance is no object with the internet!

So for 2017 we have a new editor – Vanessa Cooper, the Parish Administrator. She will make changes – and her style will be different to ours, but I hope that you will continue to support her and keep her informed of all that goes on in our Parish.

Robin & Carol Innes

Walkers Group

This year we re-introduced the 'beating the bounds' walk, which turned out to be rather longer than our usual walks, at about six and a half miles. The walk attracted a bigger turnout than usual, fourteen of us and a dog. Many thanks to Wendy Shear and Sue Wakem for the extra work involved in organising and leading it.



Our summer evening walk in August took place on Warwick University campus; thanks to Godfrey and Caroline Carr for showing us an interesting mix of woodland, archaeology, and recent new building

work.

Other walks took in Dunchurch, Wolston, Ufton, Barston, Preston Bagot, Church Lawford and Claverdon. Our numbers seem to be falling a little, so new members will be very welcome.

Our annual dinner was held, for the fourth year, at the Angel Hotel in Leamington on 25th January 2017, where 18 members met for a very pleasant social occasion, and very good food!

Photo from January 2017 walk near Baddesley Clinton, courtesy of Roderick Clark.

Bob Cooke

Schools Work

As a newish member of the Diocesan Board of Education, I have recently seen more clearly how links with schools offer to local churches such valuable opportunities to show, gently and consistently, what they are all about. This is of course mainly true for the 74 church schools in the Coventry diocese – whereas non-faith schools are under no obligation to co-operate with any religious bodies. That applies to all Lillington's schools - but we do continue to have links with most of them and are on the lookout for anything extra that we can do.

Lillington Nursery and Primary School visit the church four times a year for special services; I am sometimes invited to lead an assembly there (often with Gaynor Cook); I also have the privilege of going into a different class each week for a short session about a Bible story or some aspect of this wonderful life of ours; the informal questions and answers are probably more useful than what I actually go to say!

The Year 3 pupils of both Lillington School and Telford Junior School came again to the *Looking at Lillington* event (see separate report).

Revd Charlotte links with Telford Infants' School; she takes an assembly there each half term and the children come to the church three times a year, for Harvest Festival, for an Easter service and for their wonderful carol service, when the church is packed to overflowing with children and parents.

Roderick Clark

Looking at Lillington

Looking at Lillington 2016 took place over three mornings in March. This event has been one of our links with the local junior schools for a number of years and each day about 45 Year 3 children from either Lillington School or Telford School were welcomed into St Mary Magdalene's. The children took part in a variety of activities intended to give them a sense of the place of the local church within its community and to learn a little about some of the ways in which Christians worship God here. They explored what happens in a baptism service; they thought about the events of the Last Supper and why Christians celebrate Holy Communion; they heard the story of Noah's Ark and across the three days, created a beautiful altar frontal for the Lady Chapel by cutting out outlines of their own hands and decorating them; they looked at the war memorial and the role of the church as a place of remembrance; and they learnt a little local history to help them understand something of being grounded in a place and time. On their return to school, they carried out a range of follow-up activities and their work was displayed in church in May, when they were all invited back for an Open Afternoon.

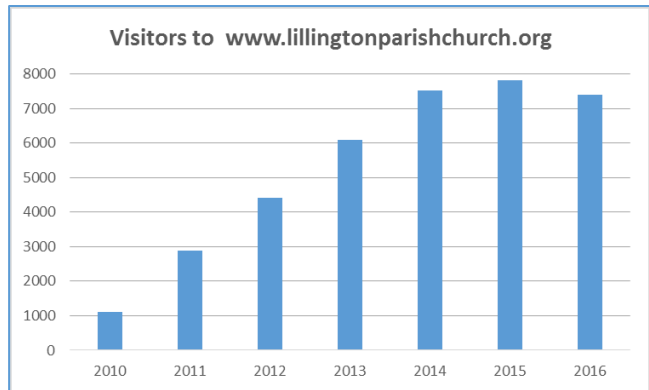
The success of this event relies totally on the willingness of many people to give their time to liaise with the schools, help staff the activities, offer refreshments and welcome the children into our building. We in return experience the pleasure of being with interested young people who stretch us with their questions and help to re-enthuse us about our lovely church.

Rev Sue Fairhurst

Church Website

www.lillingtonparishchurch.org was launched in April 2010. In the first year we had 1110 different visitors to the site. This number rose steadily up to 7500 in 2014, and levelled off in 2015.

Having done good service for five years, it was time for a refresh, so over the summer of 2016 the site was entirely re-written, to make it 'responsive', which means it automatically fits itself to any size of screen, including mobiles and tablets. We also added new menus and several new pages.



The new site went live in August 2016. Visits are now picking up again – 750 in December, compared with 600 in December 2015. Most popular downloads are the Parish Magazine – 290 magazine downloads in December alone.

If you have any comments or suggestions we will be pleased to hear from you.

Diana and Richard Taulbut

Lillington Fun Day – 23rd July 2016

Another fantastic day was held at The Holt – it was a beautiful day and local residents poured onto The Holt from all over the Lillington area. As usual, most activities and refreshments were free and a great time was had by all!!

Revd Charlotte ran the St Mary Magdalene stall which offered craft activities and was well supported by those attending.

Volunteers from St Mary Magdalene were involved in running the tea and cake stall which provided very welcome refreshments and shade!!

As ever, there was a very varied programme of live entertainment including dancing, cheerleading, gymnastics; a puppet show and lots of musicians including Spa Strummers who gave a very assured performance.

There were many stalls around the field representing local churches, history, cake decorating; face painting. This year saw the return of the ever popular climbing wall as well as other sporting activity.

There was also an Interactive Multisensory Experience looking at the Life of Jesus which ran all afternoon.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered on the day including Amanda Stevens who represented St Mary Magdalene on the organising committee and Alan Boad who stepped in to chair the group.

Thanks also to the local churches who provided many volunteers before and on the day.

Planning has already started for this year's event!!

Sarah Boad

Guides

2016 has been a busy year of lots of changes for the unit. We have moved from Friday night to Wednesday nights, so now meet following the Brownies. Our numbers have varied through the year, ending with just 5 girls in December.

The summer was a busy term, we did the Build it Challenge, where the girls made giant marble runs, researched their favourite buildings and made a castle from cakes.

At the end of term we joined South Leamington District for the 2nd time to camp at Hardiman Fields with over 100 other Brownies, Guides and Leaders. This year we have the theme of LOST, in which we learnt fire lighting, den building, pioneering, treasure hunts.

In the Autumn we held a joint sleep over with the Brownies and attended the Remembrance Day Parade Service, ending the term bouncing at Jump In.

2017 has been a promising year already with 3 new Guides joining this term and we celebrate our 100th Birthday in July this year.

Diana Bull



Girlguiding UK

TEA & CHAT

We are now 20 years old!



We were joined by Rev Richard Higginbottom and his wife Pauline who entertained us with a wonderful slide show accompanied by music to match the slides, which were divided into groups, e.g. trees, flowers, sky, sunsets etc.

On February 28th 2017 we celebrated our birthday and sang "Happy Birthday to us". We lived up to our name with lots of cake, tea, chat and a birthday cake.



In 1997 we said that we would meet for a three month trial and wish to thank everyone who has helps us to carry on.

Pastoral Link Group





DEMENTIA SUPPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

For people living with demetia and their family,
residents in the Lillington area

ARE INVITED

to a **free open meeting** for to hear about
dementia and how we might develop support
locally for this illness on...

**TUE 11TH. APRIL, 7 TO 8.30PM.
TO BE HELD IN THE HALL OF THE
COMMUNITY CENTRE, MASON AVENUE.**

THE TRUTH NOT THE MYTHS

The talk will be led by local charity
THE PAM BRITTON TRUST FOR DEMENTIA, and
hosted by varioud local community groups.

Light refreshments will be available during a Q & A session at the
conclusion of the talk.

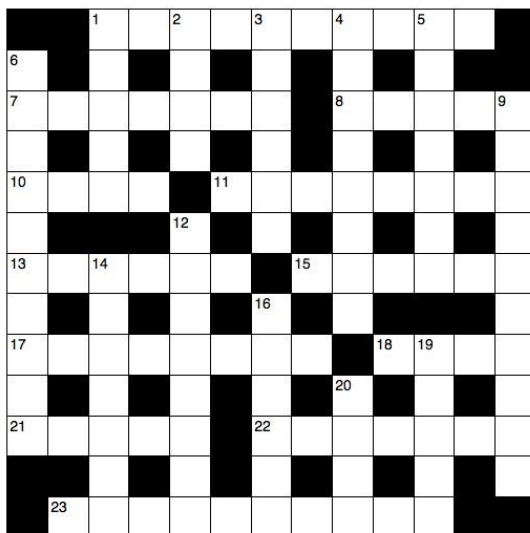
CROSSWORD

ACROSS

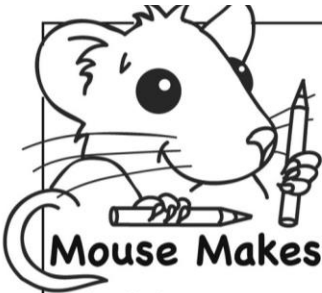
- 1** 'You are a chosen people, a royal — ' (1 Peter 2:9) (10)
7 Exact copy (Joshua 22:28) (7)
8 Jesus' first words to Jairus's daughter, 'My child, — — ' (Luke 8:54) (3,2)
10 Idol made by the Israelites while Moses was on Mount Sinai (Exodus 32:4) (4)
11 Role allotted to Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 42:6) (8)
13 'Lord, when did we — — hungry and feed you?' (Matthew 25:37) (3,3)
15 'Though seeing, they do — — ; though hearing, they do not hear or understand' (Matthew 13:13) (3,3)
17 Happening (1 Kings 21:1) (8)
18 'Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the — of Christ' (Philippians 3:7) (4)
21 National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (1,1,1,1,1)
22 Stamp on (Amos 2:7) (7)
23 Liable to rot (1 Corinthians 15:42) (10)

DOWN

- 1** Of the pope (5)
2 'The earth is the Lord's, and everything — — ' (Psalm 24:1) (2,2)
3 Hebrew word for the kind of peace that Jesus promised (6)
4 Member of a 16th-century Protestant reform movement in France (8)



- 5** Sing out (anag.) (7)
6 Ceremonial column of people on the move (1 Samuel 10:5) (10)
9 One of the things love always does (1 Corinthians 13:7) (10)
12 Esther's cousin who foiled a plot to assassinate King Xerxes (Esther 2:7, 22) (8)
14 See cape (anag.) (7)
16 'No one can — them out of my hand' (John 10:28) (6)
19 Often mistakenly identified as the fruit that led to the first sin (Joel 1:12) (5)
20 'He was led like a — to the slaughter' (Isaiah 53:7) (4)



Mouse Makes

Colour in the cross, cut out and glue onto card to make an Easter card.



**HAPPY EASTER
+
JESUS IS ALIVE!**

Read the Easter story in Luke 22-24



"God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life."
John 3:16



+ THE CROSS +
is a symbol of
DEATH

It reminds us how God's Son, Jesus, was put to death by being nailed to a cross.

+ THE CROSS +
is a symbol of
LIFE

It reminds us that Jesus has risen from the dead and is alive with God in heaven.



+ THE CROSS +
is a symbol of
LOVE

It reminds us God loves us so much that through His Son Jesus we can become God's children too.

+ THE CROSS +
is a symbol of
HOPE

It reminds us that as God's children we will one day be with God in heaven.

The Sewing Struggle by (c) Jane Rummey, 2017

I've struggled with my sewing
Over many years
I've often cried like crocodiles
With many soggy tears...

As I travel to the fabric shop
To seek and there to find
The best of inspiration
Of the sewing-expert kind!

The patterns and the fabrics
They haunt me in that place
Where they always-ever-taunt-
me
And claustrophobe my face!

I never 'get' the concept –
How opposites attract
The fabrics they just laugh at me
From cluttered glaring racks!

The wisdom of the experts
Escapes me as I try
To choose the best of contrasts
Every effort just denies...

My skill at choosing fabrics
For a pattern I have bought
I know I need a miracle J
ust one – of any sort!

I seem to be the opposite
Of others in that place
They wander 'round excited
With a smile upon their face

In contrast to their joy and glee
I take a glowering look
And keep my face inverted
Deep within the pattern book!

But, one day, filled with purpose
I opposed my fateful gloom
And gathered patterned colours
From the crowded fabric room

Bringing them together
With no thought for what was
'right'
I bought a stack of fabrics
Rushing home with great delight!

And there upon my empty floor
I scattered them around
Choose bits and pieces
For a wond'rous flimsy gown

I sewed throughout the night-
time
Where opposites now ruled
And never-ever doubted
I no longer was a fool!

The contrasts were amazing
The opposites proclaimed
They were conquerors forever
In the greatest sewing game!

I'd made a crazy garment
It fitted like a glove
Contrasting with my wardrobe
Like a rainbow – as it should

... The lesson for this poem
(I apologise right now)
Is – opposites they do attract
Be different – take a bow!



CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Priesthood. 7, Replica. 8, Get up. 10, Calf. 11, Governor. 13, See you. 15, Not see. 17, Incident. 18, Sake. 21, NSPCC. 22, Trample. 23, Perishable.

DOWN: 1, Papal. 2, In it. 3, Shalom. 4, Huguenot. 5, Outings. 6, Procession. 9, Perseveres. 12, Mordecai. 14, Escapee. 16, Snatch. 19, Apple. 20, Lamb.

NOTES FROM NESSIE



Well I hope you've enjoyed reading all about the various groups and their wonderful work within the church and community. There are some fantastic initiatives taking place and these will continue throughout 2017. You will have noticed that some articles are not featured this month and this was to make space for the church group reports but, just like Arnold Schwarzenegger "they'll be back!"



That leaves me enough space to wish you all a very Happy Easter! May you draw closer to God during this season and know His peace.

Nessie, Editor



"...and finally I'm happy to report that decision-making has become much easier following the downsizing of the Church Council."

DEADLINE

Copy for May 2017 edition is required by **14th Apr 2017** (don't miss the deadline!) to Vanessa at magazine@lillingtonparishchurch.org

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