



FORUM



DECEMBER 2020



How has Coronavirus impacted our local hostelries?
And is an empty Inn a sign for Christmas? See page 4.



Christmas card design
competition - more inside.



Severn Valley Benefice

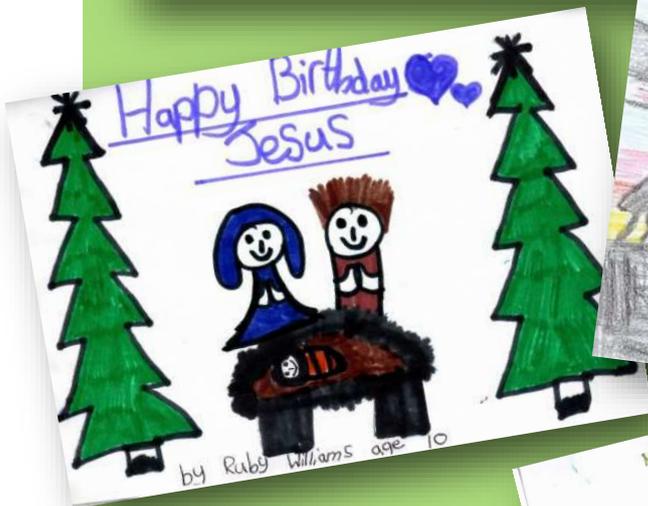


Here to Help in
difficult times, page 28.

Christmas 2019



2019 Carols with Highley Band; sadly not possible in 2020 :- (



Congratulations to these Highley Primary School children who submitted designs for the Christmas card that should arrive on everyone's doorstep in the benefice. More on pp. 23 & 36

Submission of Articles and photos.

Material must be submitted to ... 'highleyforumeditor@gmail.com' ... Photos submitted must be of the best quality possible but under 5 mpx. Please give photos titles that relate to any accompanying articles / photos.

Main Contents:

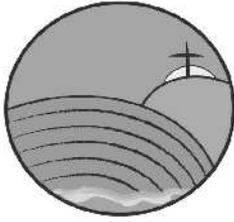
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The Highley Forum prints a wide range of articles (and welcomes your comments – some of which may be printed). The views expressed in these are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or Management Board. The Editor(s) exercise their right to edit any articles (letters, etc.) submitted for publication at their discretion without consulting the author. Decisions as to which articles to print remain with the Editor(s).

St. Mary’s Church Shop	Highley Library	Highley Forum												
<p>The shop helps to raise donations to local, national and international causes. Re-saleable items are always welcome and bulky items can be</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Currently Closed</p> <p>Opening Hours</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Mon</td><td>10:00—12:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Tues</td><td>10:00—12:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Wed</td><td>10:00—12:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Thurs</td><td>10:00—12:00, 14:00—16:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Fri</td><td>10:00—12:00, 14:00 - 16:00</td></tr> <tr><td>Sat</td><td>10:00—12:00</td></tr> </table>	Mon	10:00—12:00	Tues	10:00—12:00	Wed	10:00—12:00	Thurs	10:00—12:00, 14:00—16:00	Fri	10:00—12:00, 14:00 - 16:00	Sat	10:00—12:00	<p>Opening Hours</p> <p>Monday —Thursday 9:00—21:00</p> <p>Friday 9:00—19:00</p> <p>Saturday and Sunday 9:00—16:00</p> <p>Normally closed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Currently Closed</p> <p>Tel: 01746 860000</p> <p>The Customer First Point is available at the library, please speak to a member of the reception staff.</p>	<p>Please send correspondence to: highleyforumeditor@gmail.com</p> <p>For the attention of The Editor Reports and event details from groups or societies are welcome.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Subscriptions</p> <p>If you would like to take out a subscription to the Highley Forum please contact the Editor to be added to one of our distribution rounds.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cost: £6 per year</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advertising</p> <p>If you would like to advertise in the Forum please contact the Editor at highleyforumeditor@gmail.com or phone 862837</p>
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Every effort has been made to acknowledge sources of material in this publication. Sometimes this is not possible, because sources may be untraceable, or material may have been used unknowingly. If you recognise any unacknowledged material please notify the Editor and we will do our best to rectify this.

Deadline for submission - 15th of the month preceding the date of publication; earlier for January issue.
Please send submissions to highleyforumeditor@gmail.com



Severn Valley Benefice

The Severn Valley Churches:

St. Mary, Highley
and at the Severn Centre

St. Mary, Billingsley

St. Peter, Chelmarsh

St. Bartholomew, Glazeley with Deuxhill

Comfort and Joy in a Pandemic?

How do you celebrate Christmas in the midst of a crisis?

There will be severe restrictions over this 'holiday' period: three family and friend 'bubbles' only and further limitations depending on which tier we happen to be in. The tiers will have been announced by the time you read this, but any flouting of the rules will likely lead to further restrictions in the New Year when the vaccinations will be rolling out.

The Chancellor has laid bare that we will be facing major challenges for years to come as we work our way out of this and many will lose their jobs, if they haven't already. Our own Diocese of Hereford is expecting six figure losses in income next year which is used to support parish ministry and there have already been staff redundancies in their offices.

When we're in a national crisis we tend to retreat into home comforts: logs on the fire, a warm mug of tea/coffee, laced with something stronger! There's the classic picture of a family gathered around the table enjoying roast turkey and stuffing and a tippie. Hopefully, we will still be able to join members of our families for this, but spare a thought for those in our Care Homes and the lonely who won't be seeing family this year because they are outside the permitted number!



I have spoken to a few key people at our local pubs and restaurants to see whether there would be any room in their Inns this Christmas. Here is a summary of the responses I got:



Norma, at the **Bull's Head** said that they are hoping to re-open in early December for meals and catering for Christmas. They are open for pre-orders for Christmas Day. The biggest challenge is supply when there is uncertainty and the danger of waste if things change. Their cottages (once stables) are open for visitors from the East or from anywhere else for that matter! Check on social media.

I spoke to Dan Giles from **Highley WMC** who said that it has been tough going during lockdown. They are making no money and they may have to throw some of their real ales away (no queuing, please).

During lockdown volunteers have been outside turning the lawned area into a proper Beer Garden at a cost of £20,000. It should be good to use next Spring! Keep an eye out on their Facebook page.

.../...

... I visited **The Ship Inn** (cover picture) where I met Ann Holford and their chef, Artur. They have been offering their extensive Take-Away menu at week-ends from 5pm Friday, 4pm Saturday and 12 noon Sunday with a free delivery service (9 until 8pm). As you can see, they're not yet open for business inside or out until they know more. The frustration for them is that it seems impossible to predict orders from one day or week-end to the next. However, they are hopeful of a pick-up towards Christmas.



St. Mary's Church is stepping up to the plate (literally) on Christmas Day, offering a free dinner delivered to people's doors. This is for those who are housebound, lonely or with little or no other option of having family and friends to help. If that is you, there is still time to put in a request. Phone Gay Lilley on 01746 861722.

Being left out, ignored or hurt is uncomfortable at any time, but especially at Christmas. That first Christmas Joseph and Mary came into town desperate for a place to rest after an 80 mile journey with Mary heavily pregnant. They had to make the journey due to there being a Roman Census 'Because Joseph was a descendent of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem.' (Luke 2:4) I recall watching a version of the nativity on TV not so long ago in which, when Joseph and Mary arrived, they went looking for help from his family members in the town. They were turned away because Mary was unmarried when she became pregnant! Whether or not this really happened we do not know, but the town was crammed with people for the census and 'There was no room for them in the Inn.' (v.6) The only place that could be found to lay her baby was in an animal feeding trough.

With all the woes around Coronavirus and the pain and hurt for many in losing loved ones at any time, not least during an epidemic, there is comfort, if we choose to accept it, from God who loves us and has gone before us in His Son's life and in the cruel death he suffered on the cross. Not only comfort, but the joy of knowing we are made in His image, are loved, and though marred by the virus of sin, can be inoculated by the vaccine of grace and forgiveness offered from that cross.

As the carol reminds us: 'Remember Christ our Saviour, was born on Christmas Day! To save us all from Satan's power, when we were gone astray. 'Oh, tidings of comfort and joy!'

Mike Harris

Christmas online and in our churches

Copies of this uplifting little booklet 'Comfort and Joy' are available in our churches over Christmas. They lead us through the post-Christmas season giving us a thought for each day into the new year.



Christmas in a Bag on Christmas Eve at 4pm

Join us in Church from your own living room. We're hoping to stream our nativity service from our website: 'stmaryshighley.co.uk'. Highley School families will be given a bag of goodies so that they can join in as we go through the story: party hats, party poppers, chocolate coins. **KEEP THEM** when school breaks up until Christmas Eve at 4pm and join in the fun!

Find Service times on the back page - all preliminary, of course and in hope!

Missing singing carols? Join in with Doorstep Carols to be broadcast by Radio Shropshire and other local radio stations, Wednesday 16th December, 6pm. See www.doorstepcarols.co.uk

Highley St. Mary	Billingsley St. Mary	Chelmarsh St. Peter	Glazeley St. Bartholomew
David Rayner 862114 Roy Adlington 861666	Vacancy	Derek Arnold 07956 844854	Vacancy

Chelmarsh

Remembrance

Because of new instructions in the wake of the 2nd wave of coronavirus, the Remembrance Service looked very different this year. Led by Rev. Rose Lawley, a shortened, socially distanced service was held outside the church.



The service began with opening sentences, followed by the laying of the RAF wreath by Rob Rollings who served 2 terms in Iraq in 2003, on the grave of George Dudley, who served as an Aircraftman in WW2. An article in the Bridgnorth Journal commemorated the 80th Anniversary of the deaths of the two Dudley brothers, Arthur and George, who grew up in Chelmarsh.

Rob then read the names of the fallen, helped by his 9-year-old son Henry.

After the silence and Act of Remembrance, Maisie Rollings aged 12, read a very moving poem that she had written about war and its consequences. The poem can be found at the end of this report. (You can find Maisie's poem on page 8. – Ed.)

The service ended with prayers for peace everywhere and the National Anthem was sung. Our sincere thanks go to the Rollings family for their wonderful input into our service this year.

100 Club Draw on 8th November

No. 5 John Roberts No.46 Dave Beresford
No.30 Sue Grantham

December services throughout the Benefice

Sunday 6th December **Highley 10am**

Sunday 13th December **Chelmarsh Holy Communion 10am**

Sunday 20th December **Glazeley 10am**

Thursday 24th December Christmas Eve **"Christmas in a Bag" Highley 4pm**

Chelmarsh Midnight Communion 11pm

Friday 25th December Christmas Day **Highley 10am , Billingsley 10am**

Sunday 27th December **Chelmarsh 10am**



It is also hoped, if possible, to hold a short, socially distanced service of carols and prayer outwith the church in Chelmarsh at 3pm on a day before Christmas TBA. More information will be publicised on the notice boards in the village, so please look out for that.

Funeral Service: 28.11.2020 Francis Wilfred Burgess

Our sincere sympathy goes to his family at this difficult time.

.../...

... Lastly, but not least **HAPPY CHRISTMAS** to everyone.

CHELMARSH FRIENDS:

A notice will be posted on Chelmarsh Parish Hall Website with details of the date Friends will resume in 2021.

CHELMARSH WALKING FOR HEALTH:

Chelmarsh Walking for Health meets every Monday from the Village Hall at 10am. It will restart once the latest lockdown is lifted. A short walk is available and we are trying to limit the other walk to 1 ½ hours. We are hoping to provide refreshments in the near future providing there are no further lockdowns. For details contact Eleanor Haddon on 01746 862884



Glazeley

As Glazeley has an established war memorial, we were able to gather around it on Remembrance Sunday to mark the event. As usual we remembered by name all those on the memorial, which lists all who served in both World Wars, as well as the fallen from Billingsley and also those killed in air crashes in the area. We had a very good turnout and were able to work successfully within Government guidelines to hold the service. It was especially good to be able to sing at a service for the first time since March! I am particularly grateful to Marion and Lyn for helping to organise the service and Roger Gabb, Eileen Reynolds and Sam Leather for reading.

Our next service, Covid rules permitting, will be on the 20th December at 10.00am. This will be Holy Communion with carols, led by the Rev Val and Keith Smith. The church and churchyard remain available for anyone to visit for prayer or reflection; visitors may use the car park.



Billingsley

Due to the lack of a war memorial, we could legally not meet outside at Lincoln Fields at Billingsley on Remembrance Sunday. However, Sue and Phil Bates marked the start and end of the two minute silence by ringing the bells whilst Amanda and Dave Prescott read out the names of those from Billingsley who died in service. See the clip on our Facebook page; <https://www.facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch/videos/281101999902768> (113 views so far!).

Another three people shared over £100 in prizemoney for our 100 Club draw in November. For the Christmas draw, the prize money will be approaching £250. Numbers are available by applying at <http://www.stmarys-billingsley.org.uk/friendsofbillingsley100club/> The proceeds go to the upkeep of the church and organising projects of community benefit. We have already used some of the money to provide new heating in church and we are looking at using more of it for essential maintenance of the building. Please support us if you can!

Our next service will be on Christmas Day at 10.00am.

David Poyner, assistant curate, Severn Valley Benefice.
Tel 01562 68638/ 0121 204 3997; email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk

A Poem on World Wars

Written by an inspired young person and read at the Remembrance Day service in Chelmarsh.

The fields are full, crowded, crammed
The crosses amongst them no closer to the ground
Than the bodies under them, side by side
Of our friend and foe who fought and died
Those of us that are left stand and stare
Our comrades gone, no longer there
To stand beside us, brave and strong
Watching, listening all day long
For the signal that told us the war was won
But the signal never came, instead the sound of a gun
As bullets streaked the silence, one by one they'd fall
The price of these men, to our leaders, so small
But to us these were friends, their lives now lost
To fight for our country, at a great cost.
Their families at home would never know
Of the poppies that would come and grow
Upon the graves of those no longer here
As they stayed at home, shaking with fear
And still the war continued, more men would come
Who marched on the battlefield to the sound of a drum
None were expecting the devastation they saw
As the doubt inside them began to gnaw
As the pride they'd once had to be part of the fight
And the honour that they might
Be able to stop the suffering back home
And stand with others, no longer alone
But now they wish they'd stayed back, not joined up with the rest
Because what they saw was a lot to digest
The fields were full, crowded, crammed
The crosses amongst them no closer to ground
Then the bodies under them, side by side
Of our friend and foe who fought and died.

By Maisie Rollings





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Letter from Westminster

It feels very strange to look back to a year ago – a December in which we had just had a General Election and where nobody had heard the term coronavirus – and compare it to today.

None of us could have expected 2020 to turn out the way it has. I know it has been remarkably difficult, and my deepest sympathies lie with anyone who has lost a loved one or a friend to this dreadful virus.

All of us have been affected in various ways, but for those who may have lost their business or their job, this has been particularly tough.

Many readers will have been shielding or self-isolating for months during this year. I shared this frustration having been shielding for three months earlier in the year, and then self-isolating during the national restrictions in November. The disruption to our normal daily lives has been severe.



But I am also acutely aware of the great sense of community that has been evident throughout the year, and the way in which local people have banded together to support the most vulnerable in our society – much of which has been led or actioned by the typically generous spirit of local community volunteers and church communities – for which I am truly grateful.

Local volunteer groups sprang up all over South Shropshire, and were vital in the supply of food and medicines to those who could not get out and about. People went above and beyond to support the keyworkers on whom we all relied. Most of us also got to know our neighbours a little better in the process.

At a time of great difficulty and distress, acts of communal faith often bring great comfort. So I am also conscious that, for those of faith, it has been particularly hard to have church services disrupted by a need to forgo gatherings while the virus was spreading in our community.

I know that Christmas services will be different this year, as indeed will Christmas gatherings with friends and family that mean so much, but at the time of writing I expect some form of family gatherings at Christmas are likely to go ahead.

But while Christmas this year will be different for all of us, to my mind, this year has been one in which the spirit of Christmas has been evident nonstop. Those same timeless themes that inspire Christians and non-Christians alike at Christmas every year – charity, family and community – have been the bedrock of the way in which our communities have responded to the worst crisis to face this country since the Second World War.

So reflecting on the inspirational actions of so many this year, and with positive news of both quick testing and possible vaccine breakthroughs, it is with a renewed sense of hope for the future that I look to 2021.

We will get through this, and next year's Christmas will be all the more special, for the challenge we all overcame together.

Happy Christmas, and warm wishes for the year ahead.

Philip Dunne MP

An Invitation to Christmas Dinner served in your own home

Due to these strange times, we are sad that we are unable to invite you to Christmas lunch in the Parish Hall this year, but are hoping to celebrate by providing Christmas Dinner served in your home for those who are not able to share with family and friends. There will be limited numbers, but we would like to get some idea of interest. Maybe you'll be on your own or have been struggling this year. Please could you let us know if you'd like to have your lunch delivered on Christmas Day, between 12.30 - 1.30pm.

Gay Lilley: (01746) 861722



Illustration



Severn Valley Home Education Trust

Severn Valley Home Ed group are looking to spread a bit of festive cheer this Christmas through their new group "The Jingle Bell Knock".

They are looking for donations and supplies to make small hampers and gift packages to those in the local area who need it. The children came up with the initiative after witnessing some of the struggles families are going through this year, and wanted to try and help out those people who are sad, lonely or in need this year. The packages will be left on the doorstep, after a "Jingle Bell Knock on the Door", and of course social distancing will be applied at all times.

If you would like to nominate a person or family who needs a bit of help or cheering up this Christmas, and who lives in the Highley, Billingsley or surrounding areas, then please do so by the 5th December. Alternatively, if you are able to donate any new toys, gifts or goodies to the cause, then please let us know by the 10th December. You can contact "The Jingle Bell Knock" and keep up to date with things either through our Facebook page or by calling Amanda Ball on 07968 703541 or Lisa Scott on 07399 548213.



County Councillor's Report

Well, it looks as if we can definitely say goodbye to Shirehall; the Executive has decided.

Representative democracy is dead, long live governance by diktat determined by people who know best. Allegedly.

Based as it all is on the overwhelming assumption that information technology will see us alright, it makes me nervous for the simple reason that the reality of a governance structure SO dependent on something that is anything BUT dependable isn't what I'd call sensible.

Last week Sky went down in Highley and Virgin went down in Telford. All across social media people were reporting having lost not just their internet but their phone lines. I'm on BT, but when I tried to sort out an urgent matter that needed a quick resolution I got no reply to emails and the phone of one of the people I needed to speak to "wasn't available", so I had to drive to their house, which is when I discovered that they were on Sky.



So despite MY having the internet **connectivity** that significant parts of the county don't have, I was nevertheless still a county councillor unable to follow up on issues because the internet **provider** I subscribed to couldn't connect to others whose internet **connection** had broken down!

That's where all of Shirehall's presumptions collapse. Just one weak link.

But Shirehall is adamant that they know best. You **are** going to have a Shropshire Council that runs its business like a business. Fair enough, but that's where we begin to part company on what we each believe representative local government should be about – people connecting directly with people via tangible connections, the "old fashioned" way, when you talked to a person, not the image of a talking head on a screen.

When Shropshire Council's cabinet decided to buy into the Shrewsbury shopping centres - an off-shore investment in properties they did not ultimately own, investment they only had an "influence" over - I asked the Shirehall Executive and their consultants: "I wonder how long it will be until we feature in a Private Eye article for investing in risky town centre property portfolios owned not by us but by off-shore tax-avoiding investment companies?" The answer, as it happened, was a couple of editions, but in hindsight the questionable aspect of the investment wasn't about the ethics of the deal but the misjudgement involved when this council had a go at running its business like a business.

One of the consultants at that initial briefing insisted it was a good "long term investment", ultimately a good deal for our taxpayers. He was talking about a £55 million "investment" which, at the last valuation, is now worth around £17 million!

Shirehall getting it right? Says it all really.

Dave Tremellen
Independent Member for Highley Division of Shropshire Council

Puzzles for December

Easy Sudoku

5	7				3		6
			4	9	6		
					2	1	
2		5		8	9	6	
4	8		2		7		9
		1	3	4		7	2
	2	8					
			7	3	8		
3	9				8		7

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Medium Sudoku

6	1		7				
				4	5		2
			8				3
	7	8			9		
	2				6		
	3			2		8	
4			5				
1	6	3					
			4			9	7

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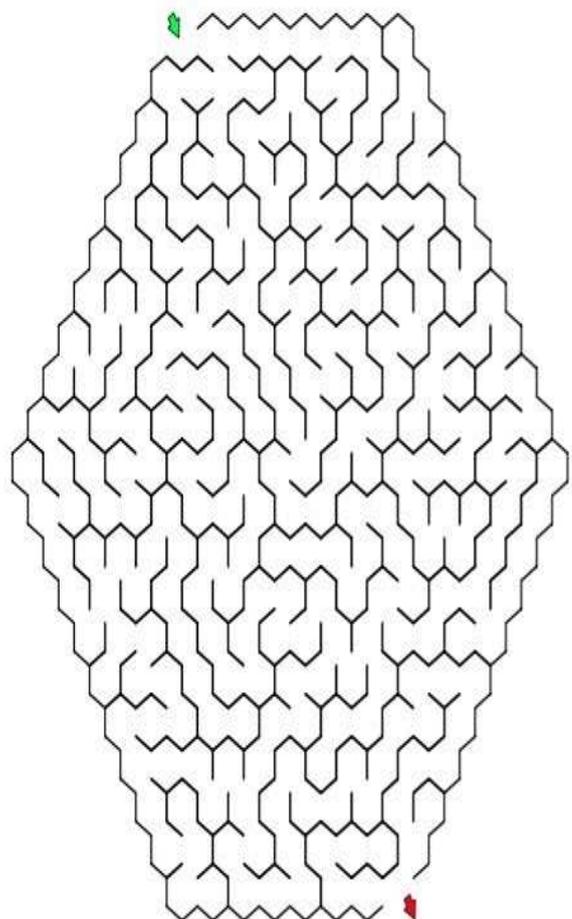
KIDS, have a go at colouring this

Solutions on page 33



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Find your way through the maze



As the Coronavirus continues...



St. Mary's **Highley Covid-19 Support Group** Highley Parish Council

Hello neighbours, as we go into the autumn and winter, we want you to know we are still here to help should you need us.

This support group has been set up by St. Mary's Highley and Highley Parish Council with the sole aim of offering assistance wherever we can during this outbreak.

If you are self-isolating due to coronavirus we can help with:

- Picking up shopping
- A friendly phone call
- Posting Mail
- Prescription collection

In responding to any of the above, please contact the following numbers relative to the day of the week (01746 or other):

- **Monday** - Thelma on 562005 or Peter on 862553
- **Tuesday** - Mike & Moira on 862837;
- **Wednesday** - Pat on 861155 or Elaine on 861431
- **Thursday** - Dave on 07979295387
- **Friday** - Bernadine on 862137 or Martin 861813
- **Saturday** - Roy on 861666
- **Sunday** - Try any of the above

Alternatively, make your specific request known through the 'Contact' section of www.stmaryshighley.co.uk.

You will need to give your name, phone number and address. The person answering your call/enquiry will then contact a member of the team who will fulfil your request to the best of their ability and contact you when the order is ready, to arrange drop-off and payment when appropriate. There is no charge for this service. **Note: We cannot manage card transactions.**

This community service is supported by Highley Medical Practice and Highley Pharmacy.

Please note: We will do our very best to help but cannot be held responsible for any shortcomings due to unforeseen circumstances.

In all cases, please observe the NHS guidelines overleaf.

At the time of going to press there was still some uncertainty about which category we would be going into after the national lockdown is over.

Whatever the case, the Support group continues if you require assistance with any of the categories on the flyer here, which was originally sent out in March.

From the beginning of November Food Share became **The Highley Community Project**. Emma Carter, who runs the project, says this will operate with zero waste and with food supplied by regular and reliable local food suppliers including the supermarkets in Kidderminster and Bridgnorth.

There is no charge made for the service, though volunteers collect the produce and deliver as requested. Therefore a donation is invited to help cover necessary costs.

Opening Hours: 10am-12noon Tuesday and Friday
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'The Highley Community Project' Facebook page is now available online

Mike Harris (Ed.)



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Word for Today

How to Overcome Discouragement

'I looked things over.'

Nehemiah 4:14 (NIV)

First, find a better way. While rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, Nehemiah said, 'I looked things over.' Realising there were enemies to be defeated and obstacles to be overcome, he 'stationed some of the people behind the lowest points of the wall at the exposed places, posting them by families, with their swords, spears and bows' (v.13 NIV). In order to overcome discouragement, Nehemiah realised they'd have to start doing things differently. They needed a new system. So he organised the people according to their gifts and strengths. Insanity has been defined as doing the same thing over and over again and hoping for different results. And there's wisdom in that. When you get discouraged, don't give up on your goals. Instead, devise a new approach! Question: was it wrong for the Jews to rebuild the walls of

Jerusalem? No, they were just going about it in the wrong way! There's a lesson here for us all. For example, do you have a problem in your marriage? Don't give up; try a new attitude. Do you have a problem in your business? Don't throw in the towel; look for a new approach, reorganise your schedule, and refocus on your goal. Have you ever heard of the 80/20 principle? That's where 80 per cent of your time is spent on the 20 per cent of activities that aren't productive and, as a result, you get frustrated. What you need to do is devote 80 per cent of your time to the 20 per cent that produces the highest results. Business managers call this ROI time – 'return on investment'. So practise devoting the majority of your time and energy to the things you know bring results.

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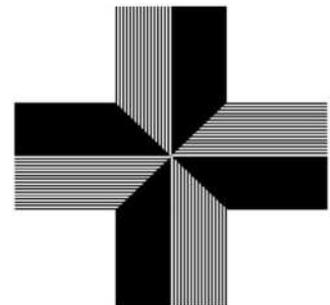
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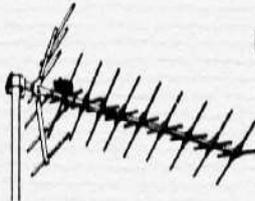
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Christmas Cheer

Tom Harris, old Dai Lewis's son-in-law, was impatiently awaiting supper after a day's work at Willy the Post's part-time grocery and small holding that he now ran since Willy was more or less retired. "Where's that old fool got to? He said he'd be back early from the pub as it is his favourite tonight, bacon with egg and beans." Megan his wife soothed him. "You shouldn't call him an old fool. After all he is your father-in-law." Tom sheepishly admitted he was wrong, then listened intently. "Someone is ringing a bell," he remarked. Indeed, on the cold December breeze, wafted the sound of a hand bell. Then came a voice, "Ho ho ho." Megan heard it too. "It's that chap who sold muffins in the summer," she said, doubtfully. "Muffins at this time of the year? I recognise that voice; it's your father." Privately he thought, "I hope he hasn't flipped his lid at last. Nursing homes are expensive." Dai came into view. "Guess what has happened. Old Willy has packed in at last and I've got the job." He rang the bell again and bellowed, "Ho ho ho." "Are you trying to tell me you are going to sell muffins?" demanded his daughter. "I'm sure Willy the Post never did that." Light dawned on Tom. "He is telling us that Willy has packed in as Father Christmas for the kids' party and he is taking over." Megan pursed her lips. "I'm glad Willy has finished. Those dirty old rags he wore, stained with beer and such stuff were a disgrace. They won't fit Dad anyway." Dai was indignant. "Willy's outfit was quite clean until he fell while carrying a few celebratory drinks for the two of us after he had given out the Christmas presents. You are right about the fit however. I certainly won't need a pillow on my chest like he did." "Hmm," commented Tom, "Your chest has slipped a bit." "The parish council has donated some money to the W.I. for a new outfit." "What about the boots?" asked his daughter. "Well, the Women's Institute have funds for those too," explained her father. "Now while you get supper I must rehearse my little speech." "I shouldn't think bellowing 'Ho ho ho' would take much practise," commented Tom. "It has to be expressive," said Dai and, with this statement, they both sat down to await supper.



It was the Vicar who suggested that they organise a party for the old folks with Father Christmas handing out presents. "No alcohol, of course, but the various churches will give some funding," as he put it. There was a minor snag. "We need two Father Christmases," said Megan. "I will get Mrs Davis the Laundry to wash the old one and repair the tears that you and Willy caused when he fell into a bramble patch in your drunken frolics." Dai drew himself up and exclaimed, "Drunken frolics indeed. My old friend Willy was demonstrating a little jig he used to perform as a child. He happened to catch his foot in the edge of the robe. A pure accident." "Because of the drink you had taken you tried to pull him out and fell in yourself. That was an accident." Dai thought he had better change the subject. "I'm sure the new outfit will look splendid with my majestic figure. I'll do the children and Willy can go to the old folks." Two bags of presents were quickly filled and Tim Gough the Thick instructed to leave one at the parish hall for the children and the other at the community hall for the old folk.

Came the great night. "You can go to the old folks' do with Willy to make sure he doesn't mess things up," Megan instructed her husband, "and I'm going as a Christmas elf to help father." Suitably attired as a somewhat buxom elf, Megan stood in front of the grotto to usher each child in turn to where Santa sat. The first child came out with a large box of chocolates beaming delightedly. There came an urgent whisper from her father. "Megan, that idiot Tim Gough has left the wrong

.../...

... bag. Willy must have the one for the children." Megan made a quick decision. "Take out a few that seem most suitable for children and I'll hove down to the community hall to swop bags before Willy starts handing out Teddy Bears and such like. Fortunately there are more than enough presents."

Panting, she arrived at the hall (Megan was not designed for running) and explained things to Tom. Willy had already given out a Teddy Bear and a sketch book, though rather surprised at the reception of the two items. "Just like the Teddy I had when I was young," cried the first old lady. The second smiled. "A memory pad. I can write out the things I need to remember." Tom took over. "I'll rush back with the proper bag and you can take over here," he suggested. The new arrangement worked well, although the Vicar at the children's party was rather surprised to see Tom in evening dress ushering in the children.

Later that evening Tom muttered to his father-in-law, "Pity the Vicar banned alcohol. I could do with a drink." Dai grinned, "I still have a few presents in my bag. Set yourself a glass. Scotch or Beer?" "What about Megan and Willy?" "There's some in their bag too. Incidentally, the Vicar was delighted at a little variety in the gifts. Old man Griffiths got a train set. He used to work on the railway, and the bag of lollipops went down well with Mrs Thomas as she used to be a lollipop lady on the crossing." Megan appeared in the doorway accompanied by Willy who had shed his Father Christmas costume. "Take yours off, father. I shall wash and press them so they won't be in the disgusting state of Willy's last year." "I quite enjoyed being Father Christmas," beamed her father. "Of course it went off so well due to my organising ability." Tom choked on his beer, "Him organise!" he thought, but said nothing.

Alan Honeybourne

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I'm writing to say while I was sat reading this month's Forum, I was horrified to see what has happened to the cherry tree in the church yard which I planted back in 1973 as part of the plant a tree in 73 campaign to plant more trees. I've always called this my tree; when I got married at Highley church it's in our wedding photos. The Bridgnorth Journal did an article in 2013 when it had been 40 years since I planted it and I was looking forward to having a picture taken by the tree in three years time when it will be 50 years but unfortunately someone has made a decision to decimate it; to say I'm disappointed is an understatement.

Regards

Cliff Brown

From the Editor: I understand your disappointment, Cliff, but the tree died a year or two back and had to be felled for health & safety reasons.



WANTED -A NEW EDITOR FOR THE FORUM NOW!

The Forum is likely to close with the March magazine. If it is to continue we need a new editor to take over in the new year when subscriptions are invited as well as new advertising contracts.

If you appreciate our local communities, have an eye for balance in published material, have some knowledge of the local churches and can use Microsoft Publisher or equivalent, this may be the job for you. 300 copies are circulated each month and it helps get the word out for local businesses during these difficult days. Like many other things, the alternative is, the end.

If interested to know more, please have a word with the current Editor, Mike Harris: 01746 862837 or speak to one of our churchwardens, David (or Mary) Rayner: 01746 862114 or Roy Adlington on: 01746 861666.

A recent survey found:

'While technology continues to develop and become more intertwined with our everyday lives, people continue to remain tactile. People love to physically hold or touch something. As a matter of fact, the Nielson survey shows a decline for the second year in a row of eBook sales and an increase in print sales in the UK. Our world is saturated with technology and digital advertisements. People are responding to this saturation with a renewed interest in print.' (Imagine Express - US)



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Our School Year

Our school day is kind of the same but we have to sanitize most of the equipment we use. We have a staggered start to the day and also leave in teams so that there are not too many people on the playground at once. Those in red and blue team arrive first, complete their morning activity and then the green and yellow team arrive and do their activity. They have time to complete it at the end of the day. An exciting start to the day is that we now have bagels to begin our day too.

When we go outside, we have to avoid the other groups as we can't mix bubbles at all.

We have settled in nicely but it took a while, at the last ten minutes of every class we go out in twos to wash our hands or sanitize so we are germ free by break! P.E. is not so different but on a Wednesday the yr5 and yr6 split up into our year groups as the yr5s have ukulele whilst the yr6s have their P.E. and after that we switch. Yr6s have a maths test and the yr5s go out for their P.E.

When it comes to lunch time we have to wash our hands and sit nicely, then usually Mrs Dalziel comes round and sends us out. We play outside for about half an hour then we get sent into the dinner hall to eat our lunch. This is a change because a couple of weeks ago we had to eat in our classroom. None of us really liked it.

Assemblies are different because we now do them in class and use the computer and Microsoft Teams. There is very little singing at the moment so it is a bit different! So, it has been a weird start to the year but I think it's going to be a good one! We are getting to know our class mates and our teacher really well as we see them all the time!



LUCY HINTON
AGE 5

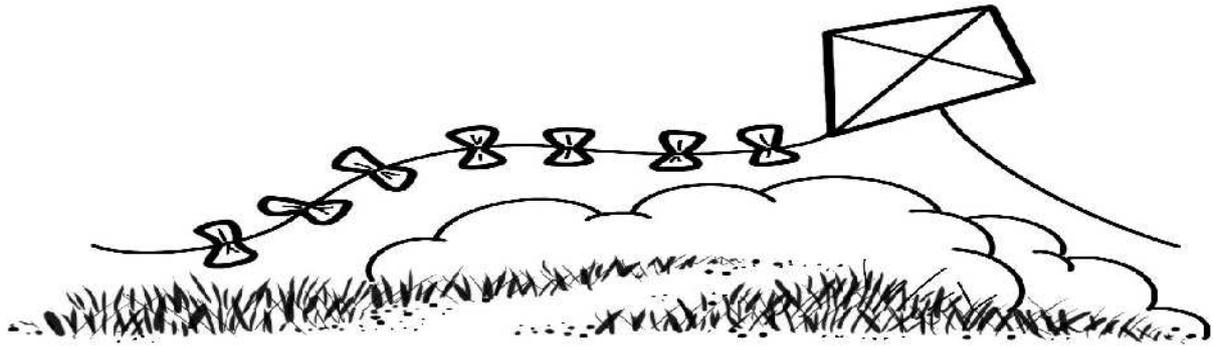


By Ellie-Mae Davies

We are looking forward to Christmas as we are really hoping to bring a little bit of Christmas to the village somehow this year! Watch this space. **Written by Charlie, Rihanna and Maisie.**



By Felicity Plant Age 9



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We can all be Friends of the Earth

In Highley we are trying to share ideas in order to live a more sustainable existence and reduce our carbon footprint. Here are some ideas from people in our area. Anyone is welcome to send them to highleyfoe@gmail.com.



Ideas of the month - from Lin and Sandra

Tom said last month that he had been struggling to find an effective ethical shampoo for his wife's long hair. Well, Lin suggests 'Friendly Soap' who make a fantastic shampoo and conditioner. They are 'kind to the skin and easy on the Earth'. During the manufacturing and packaging, plastic doesn't get a look in. Sandra recommends Gruum, who create clean skincare, haircare and shaving solutions that are kind to you, your skin and our planet. Their products are unisex, for everyone and again plastic free. Both are based in the UK.

Lin also recommends a great laundry stain remover - BioD laundry bleach. The company use natural, plant based ingredients that are cruelty free, vegan and ethically sourced. Their bottles are made from 100% recycled plastic packaging waste and they make all of their products in Hull.

Festive tips - from Sandra

The festive season is upon us, and it wouldn't be right if we missed out on some tips for Christmas. Sandra suggests that if you are left with half a lemon or lime then slice/quarter and freeze. Slices can be added frozen to drinks, and quarters can be thawed in a few minutes and squeezed over fish or pancakes.

Also, if you are still having a Turkey for Christmas make sure to use it all up! Apart from having it as cold meat and sandwiches, consider making extra gravy, then slice the meat, pour over some gravy and freeze in one or two person portions (or more if you have a family). You can then have another roast dinner some time, and you only have to do vegetables to go with it. Stuffing can be frozen with the meat, too. Or slice the meat and freeze on its own in small portions, then thaw for a few minutes and use for sandwiches or wraps.

Sustainable investments - idea from Alastair

It is important to make small changes to your life to reduce your carbon footprint, but this month I wanted to encourage everyone to consider the big changes that they may have overlooked. I have recently changed the bank that I have been banking with since I opened my first account in the 1990s. My bank has not been trying hard enough to divest from the fossil fuel industry. Instead, my new bank Triodos is committed to make money work for positive social, environmental and cultural change. It only invests in sustainable companies and publishes details of all the organisations it lends to and invests in. If you are interested in joining they'll donate £25 to a charity on your behalf, and give you a £60 voucher when they open your account (just email highleyfoe@gmail.com and I'll send you a code).

I am also recommending Ecotricity as a green energy provider. Their profits go towards building new wind turbines and sun parks, not filling the pockets of their share holders. Think green, think big!

Happy Christmas to you all!
Alastair MacNaughton



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Funeral Home opens officially in Highley

Perry and Phillips Funeral Directors have completed an 11 month project at Glen Cottage, Garage and Shops in High Street, Highley, to provide the community there with their own private Chapels of Rest. Funeral Director, Chris Adams, says, "To finally see the project come to an end is very pleasing. It has required a tremendous amount of planning from our Family to ensure that the requirements of the funeral home meet the highest possible standards, especially with the prospect of licensing and regulation coming into the funeral industry in the very near future, which we fully welcome. We truly believe in the services we offer. From the standard of the premises, the training we provide our team internally, right through to the priority of how we take care of a bereaved family and the loved one who they entrust into our care, which is always a great privilege for us. Everything has to be right. There is quite simply no second chance in what we do."



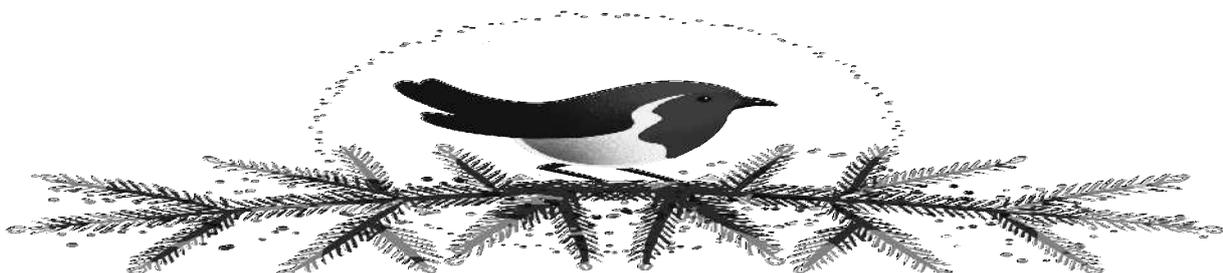
As well as the newly refurbished Funeral Home, the site also provides St. Mary's Charity Shop with a new, purpose built space, to ensure that they are also in a positive position to provide their service to the community, which The Adams Family are aware also acts as a social 'hub', as well as a practical one, for all of the Highley community. We understand that St. Mary's Church is hoping to open the Charity shop in January, which is now located on the corner of High Street and Coronation Street (entrance in Coronation Street).



The new face of St. Mary's Charity Shop
which we hope to open in the New Year. Ed.

Funeral Director, John Adams, said that, "from the very start of the refurbishment, we wanted to communicate with the community and ensure that the local population were fully aware of the reasons why we were doing this. Having their loved ones remain in the area in which they lived is really important to us. Also ensuring that the site integrates into the area in the most respectful way has always been our aim. We hope to have made a special site for the future and, as a Family, we are really pleased that local lady, Mrs. Debbie Dorman, will be the first point of contact at the Funeral Home in Highley, whom many of the community will already know."

John Adams



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Friday Event	Mrs. Rachel Williams	the-friday-event@hotmail.com	862875
MCMC's Discos	Mark Williams & Chris Smith		860230
Age UK		enquiries@ageconcernshrops.org.uk	01743 233123
Bowls Club	Lorraine Brooks		860386
Brownies		(Rainbows - Jessica Lloyd - 861090)	
Carers Trust 4 All			03333 231990
Community Car Scheme	Mr Richard Dudson		861817
Cricket Club	Mrs Denise Goulden		861031
Gardening Club	Mrs Morag Ross		862450
Guides	Mrs Gay Lilley		861722
Highley Colliery Band	Dave & Lisa Burge		862018
Highley Companions	Elaine Moore		861431
Highley County Primary School	School Office	(Tanya Mathers)	861541
Highley First Responders	Dave Fulton	Coordinator	861580
Highley Medical Centre	Dr Selva	Bridgnorth Road	861572
Highley Mini Minors Toddler Group	Mrs Sharon Dalziel		862087
Highley Minors Childcare Centre	Dawn Bethel / Kath Davies	Severn Centre	860005
Highley Parish Council Parish Clerk	Mrs Ella Preston	81 Woodhill Road	861979
Co. Cllr. & Highley Patients Group	Mr Dave Tremellen	dave.tremellen@shropshire.gov.uk	07979295387
Highley Rugby Club	Mr Rob Parr		862094
Highley Welfare Junior Football Club	Ms Emma Carter		07752207828
HWJFC: Mini Kickers (3.5—7 years)	Jo Matthews		862017
Housing Support Officer	Jan Moseley	862442	07582 003972
Highley Venturers	Mrs Chris Corfield		861477
Parish Hall Bookings			861242
Pop-in-club	Mrs Pam Stinton		861821
Severn Centre			860000
Severn Strollers	Barbara Skilton		862003
Women's Institute	Mrs Eunice Williams		861613



Do you suffer discomfort from
 Corns • Callus/dry skin • Thickened nails
 Verrucas • Athlete's foot • Ingrowing toenails
 Being unable to cut your own nails

For professional treatment of foot-related
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 IRENA s.a.c. dip. (Distinction), f.h.p.p. n.c.f.e.
 r.f.h.p



OVER 60?

In need of help and advice?

Not sure where to find it?

Age UK may be able to help.

**They are currently working on
 a fresh approach to the
 support they give locally.**

**In the mean time, please
 contact them direct on:**

01743 233123

email:

enquiries@ageconcernshrops.org.uk

Community Cars

Voluntary Driver(s) wanted

**Could you spare some time to drive
 people on essential journeys?**

**e.g. medical appointments at local
 surgeries & hospitals, occasional
 shopping trips, etc.**

Community Cars needs extra help!

Hours of work – flexible!

**Volunteers can specify times when they
 are usually available (or not)**

**Drivers receive payment for each journey
 to cover their running costs.**

**Please contact Richard Dudson on
 (01746) 861817 for further details.**

**Volunteers will need to complete a short
 application form, & a CRB check will be
 necessary.**

**No transport for essential journeys?
 We may be able to help...**



**For further information, or
 to book a car, please contact:**

**Richard Dudson
 (co-ordinator)
 (01746) 861817**

**Andrew Powell
 (01746) 861716**

**Daniel Humpage
 (01746) 862794**

Reasonable charges

The scheme is managed by Shropshire Council's
 passenger transport services

Easy Solution

5	9	7	8	1	2	3	4	6
1	3	2	4	9	6	5	7	8
8	4	6	5	7	3	2	1	9
2	7	5	1	8	9	6	3	4
4	8	3	2	6	7	1	9	5
9	6	1	3	4	5	7	8	2
7	2	8	9	5	1	4	6	3
6	5	4	7	3	8	9	2	1
3	1	9	6	2	4	8	5	7

Medium Sudoku

6	1	5	2	7	3	8	4	9
3	8	9	1	6	4	5	7	2
7	2	4	5	8	9	1	6	3
5	7	1	8	3	6	9	2	4
8	4	2	7	9	5	6	3	1
9	6	3	4	1	2	7	8	5
4	3	7	9	5	8	2	1	6
1	9	6	3	2	7	4	5	8
2	5	8	6	4	1	3	9	7

Parish Hall Office

01746 861242

For information about weddings, Baptisms (Christenings), child's Dedication or general enquiries about church service times and parish information, please contact the Parish Office. The office will be open on Thursdays (generally) from 10:00 - 12:00pm.

If there is no answer and at other times, there is a telephone message service and if you leave your name and telephone number someone will get back to you in due course or phone: 01746 862837

Waste / Recycling Collections

Black bins: Monday 14th & 28th

Crates & green bins: Mon 7th & 21st
Apart from the small area of Garden Village and Highley Park Homes which has a collection the following day.

Forthcoming Events

- Gardening Club** Wednesday
Severn Centre
- Police Surgery** Thursday
10:00 - 12:00 Severn Centre
- Severn Strollers** Mondays
10:30 / 11:00 (not Bank Holidays)
Severn Centre
(Contact: Barbara Skilton: 01746 862003)
- Women's Institute** Tuesday
Severn Centre
- Patients' Group** see Facebook page
- Computer Support Sessions**
see opposite

Star Housing

**Housing Support Officer
in Rhea Hall.**

Contact Jan Moseley: 01746 862442

Services available:

General Drop-in: Friday 9.30am-1.30pm
Coffee Morning: Thursday 11am-12noon
**Phone for more information
regarding services:**
Wednesdays 10.30am-12.30pm

Community Room,
73 Rhea Hall Estate,
WV16 6LD

Photo Gallery

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

was a quiet understated event this year, at least in this benefice, where people respected Government guidelines and came out on to their doorsteps to remember the fallen and listened for the church bells which rang the end of the silence.



Our bugler, Mr. Burge, did an excellent job and the names were read by George Poyner and Councillor Dave Tremellen. Bev Bevan decorated the church.



DECEMBER 2020

December Services

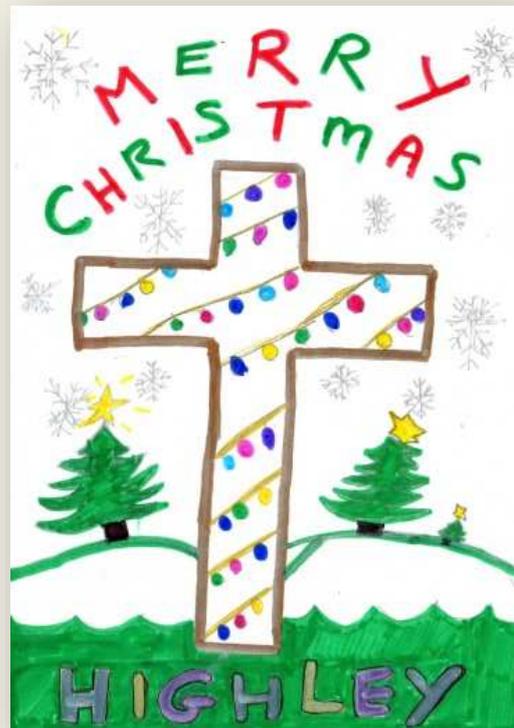
Everything subject to change, check website
*Please observe social distancing
 and wear a face covering
 Space in churches limited*

- 6th Highley 10am**
Family Communion & virtual
- 13th Chelmarsh 10am**
Holy Communion & virtual
- 20th Glazeley 10am**
Christmas Communion & virtual
- 24th CHRISTMAS EVE**
Highley 4pm 'Christmas in a Bag' for all the Family. Join in online LIVE at 'www.stmaryshighley.co.uk'
Chelmarsh 11pm Midnight Communion
- 25th CHRISTMAS DAY**
Highley 10am Family Communion
Billingsley 10am Family Service
- 27th Chelmarsh 10am** Morning Service
- 3rd January 2021 Highley 10am**
Benefice Covenant Communion & virtual

You are also warmly invited to attend the
bi-weekly St. Mary's Zoom
 gatherings at 5pm for 40mins

Contact: markandamywilliams@gmail.com

Powerful evocation of Christmas and Easter together as an entry to our card design competition.
 By Lillie-Mae Jones, Age 7



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Prayer 9:00am HOME GROUPS 7.30pm The Byre, Woodhill Farm	Morning Prayer 9:00am Coffee Morning 10:30 - 12 noon (page 34 - venues)	Holy Communion 9:30am HOME GROUPS 10.30am The Rectory, Church St 7.30pm Prestwood House, Netherton Lane	Next Copy Date: <u>December 12th</u>	Morning Prayer 9:00am Friday Event 19:30 at the Parish Hall Term time

Currently not taking place