

THE

60p

FORUM

December 2023



Serving Highley, Billingsley, Chelmarsh, Glazeley with Deuxhill

Remembrance Services across the Benefice



Remembrance Services across the Benefice were very well attended, with over 150 people taking part in the Act of Remembrance around the War Memorial in St Mary's Churchyard, which was led by the Reverend Canon Rosemary Lawley.

Thanks to all who attended. It was good to see so many people, representing our community.

Special thanks go to the children from Highley School for their contributions and engagement with this important service.



Amanda and Dave Prescott read the names of the three men from Billingsley who gave their lives in defence of their country, during a short service in remembrance of their sacrifice.

Thanks to all who took part and to those who gave of their time to create the stunning display in St Mary's Church.

Submission of Articles and photos.

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

Regular Contributions:

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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	Parish Hall Office	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 collected</p> <p>Opening Hours</p> <p>Mon 10:00—12:00</p> <p>Tues 10:00—12:00</p> <p>Wed 10:00—12:00</p> <p>Thurs 10:00—12:00</p> <p>Fri 10:00—12:00, 14:00 - 16:00</p> <p>Sat 10:00—12:00</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to lack of space, we cannot take large items of furniture.</p>	<p>.01746 861242</p> <p>Parish Administrator - Maggie Ritchie</p> <p>The Parish Office is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10am—12noon.</p> <p>For information about weddings, Baptisms (Christenings), child's Dedication or for general enquiries about church service times and parish information contact the Parish Office as above.</p> <p>If there is no answer and at other times, a telephone message service exists and if you leave your name and telephone number someone will get back to you in due course.</p>	<p>Please send correspondence to: highleyforumeditor@gmail.com</p> <p>For the attention of The Editor</p> <p>Reports and event details from groups or societies are welcome.</p> <p>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>Cost: £6 per year</p> <p>Advertising</p> <p>If you would like to advertise in the Forum please contact the Editor at highleyforumeditor@gmail.com</p>

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Severn Valley Benefice

The Severn Valley Churches:

St. Mary, Highley
St. Mary, Billingsley
St. Peter, Chelmarsh
St. Bartholomew, Glazeley with Deuxhill

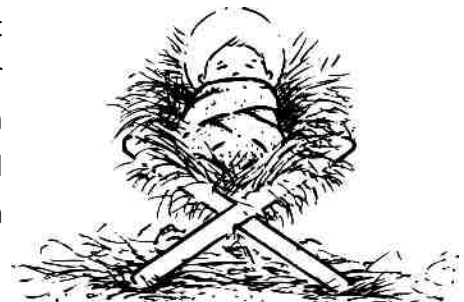
We all need a bit of Awe and Wonder

There's no escaping it; preparations for the Christmas season are well underway! Love this time of year, or not, it's very difficult to miss it. I find it fascinating that in a country that is becoming less and less identified with Christianity per se, our culture embraces all the trappings of one of the Faith's major festivals.

Christmas is the time of year when we see children's eyes light up in awe at what they see. If we adults open our eyes wide and look around us at our countryside, the skies at night and in the early morning and late evening, we too can experience at sense of awe, at our world and the intricacies of its make-up. The weather people tell us that snow is on its way. Just look at a snowflake and think of how complex just one of those is!

I was heartened to read Philip Dunne's message (page 12). If you look closely at Jesus' teaching, it was about how to live happily, contentedly and peacefully in the way God that designed us and the world. There is a part of each one of us that cries out for compassion and a sense of value and belonging. That tiny baby, born into a harsh and hostile environment of enemy occupation over 2000 years ago, brought with him a message of God's infinite and unending Love for his creation. He brought Hope to those who were oppressed. He brought the offer of a kind of Peace, which is different from any other peace we know. And he brought a sense of Joy, which doesn't come from external circumstances, but is focussed on our Creator God. All of this is there for us, if only we look up and ask. Even when there is chaos going on all around, we can have peace that God knows and is standing with us.

At this time each year we can be tempted to join in the flurry of activity to create the perfect celebrations, but run the danger of exhaustion and disappointment when things don't quite turn out the way we expected. Remember the story of Mary and Martha? If you're not familiar with it, have a look at Luke 10:38-42. Or just google it. Martha missed out on time with Jesus, because she got too caught up in being the perfect hostess. I know that I can be that way too. We have to learn the balance. If your gift is entertaining and welcoming people into your home, then that is a wonderful gift and I encourage you to exercise it and enjoy it. Just don't let it become a burden and which results in you not being able to enjoy the company of your guests.



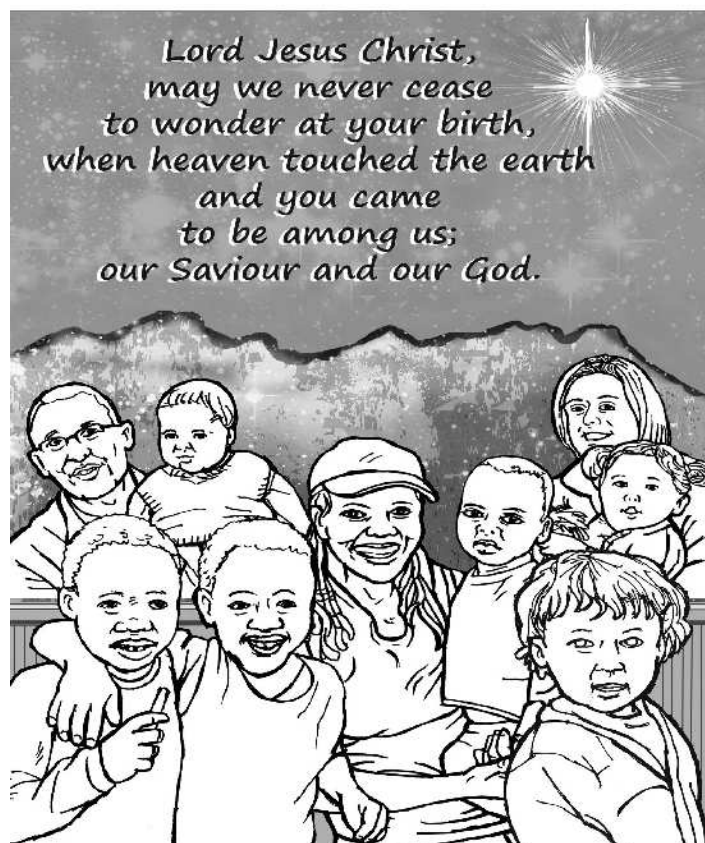
The visitors to the stable (actually probably more a cave, but we'll talk about that another time!) were drawn there for a purpose. They were the first witnesses to this amazing event, when heaven touched earth. Mary gave birth to a child and yet she knew she had had no relationship with Joseph to this point. Joseph wouldn't have believed it either if he hadn't also had a heavenly visit. The shepherds had had a supernatural experience involving angels on the cold, bleak hillside just outside Bethlehem.

Later wise men from hundreds of miles away in a foreign land came to bring expensive and rather unusual gifts for a king, all because they had looked up into the heavens and seen a star so bright, that they felt compelled to follow it. Have you recently looked up into the sky at night and seen wonderful things. Stars and lights which bring an inexplicable sense of awe and wonder?

My prayer for each one of you this Christmas is that you will take time to step back and ponder on why we have this season of celebration. (The clue is in the name!) Perhaps you might choose to seek out this baby king, whose life and actions confounded those who expected a warrior to come and deliver them from Roman occupation. That's Jesus; completely different to what you'd expect from God.

You are welcome at any of our services (see pages 27 and 36). May you find some of the awe and wonder of that first Christmas over the coming weeks and may you meet with the Prince of Peace. Happy Christmas.

Val Smith



Highley St. Mary	Billingsley St. Mary	Chelmarsh St. Peter	Glazeley St. Bartholomew
Roy Adlington 861666 Canev Clayton 862578	Vacancy	Vacancy	Laura Jones

St Mary's Highley



There was a lot happening in November in the life of St Mary's Church family. The month kicked off with the Allsorts Group Christmas Lunch. Thanks to Pat Whitefoot and Melvin and Lin Evans and their team for a wonderful afternoon.

A change of ambience a week later as the village turned out to honour those who gave their lives in conflict in our annual Act of Remembrance. It was one of the biggest gatherings for many years, which only goes to show how strong we can be when we work together across the community. Thanks to the

Reverend Canon Rose Lawley for leading the service and all who took part.

Sadly our Rector, Rev'd Kina, has been very unwell over the past few weeks. The team rallied round and services were largely unaffected. We pray for a complete recovery and better health in the New Year.



On 23rd November some of us were privileged to go to Church Stretton for a conference led by Rev'd Tim Hughes (a Christian songwriter and now a vicar in Birmingham). It was a perfect start to this busy season in the church. He emphasised the importance of remembering who and what our faith is all about—worshipping God. Everything else follows on from that. Thank you Tim. The world needs reminding of that!

Saturday 25th November saw the annual Christmas Lights Switch-On, which was again a very enjoyable and successful event. Reverend Kina and Reverend David Poyner oversaw the final part of the day as the lights went live.

The next event is on Saturday 2nd December, when Christmas Messy Church takes place in Highley Primary School at 11am. As well as the usual crafts and refreshments, the Open the Book team will be presenting the Christmas Story. Don't miss it. All are welcome to come and be messy!



Check out pages 27 and 36 for details of our Christmas services. **The main change this year is the Carol Service, which will be on Sunday 10th December at 5pm and not as in previous years in a mid-week service.**

From the Registers.

Funerals:

8.11.23 Sheila Winwood

16.11.23 Brenda Ann Turner

18.11.23 Raymond Arthur Field

St Mary's, Billingsley



To start, many thanks to Amanda and Dave for taking a short service on Remembrance Sunday, where they read out the names of the three Billingsley men who died whilst serving in the First World War. Whilst the main service takes place at Glazeley as Billingsley has just a plaque to Lt Gibbs (the only of the three to die in action), I think it is good that we do remember the Billingsley men in their parish church.

We will have an open-air carol service at Lincoln Fields on Monday 18th December at 7pm, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. All are welcome, meet underneath the street light at Lincoln Fields. On Christmas Day there will be carols in church at 10am combined with a short celebration of Holy Communion for those who wish to take this. Again all are welcome, whether you take communion or not; "Come you with much faith, come you with little faith".

Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their subscription to the 100 Club. This really does make a big difference to us and has been used to pay for repairs to the church roof and guttering. It also helps us to put on community events such as the Jubilee party.

A reminder that we do have a collection of books in the church, free to anyone who would like one; we also accept books that you wish to donate. Do drop round to browse.

St Bartholomew's, Glazeley



Remembrance Sunday was damp but fortunately the rain was no more than light drizzle when we were at the War Memorial. Casper and Roger Gabb, George Morley, Eileen Reynolds, Laura Jones and Andrew Jones (on behalf of the parish council) all took part in the service. We hope we honoured the memory of all those who served our communities in the two World Wars.

Our carol service will be at 10am on Sunday 17th December. As last year, we will interweave carols and Bible readings with a short service of Holy Communion for those who wish to take this. Rachael Davenhill is hoping to continue in the family tradition by playing the organ for us.

The sharp-eyed may have noticed that the ceiling has been fixed but now we have a hole in the floor at the back of the church. Rest assured that your PCC has also noticed this. The problem seems to have been that when new flooring was put here about 20 years ago, the ventilation was not adequate and so damp has set in. The area has now dried out and our architect will be visiting us in the next few weeks to advise on a solution so the problem does not reoccur. We hope to restore the floor to planks rather than the chipboard and carpet we currently have.

The churchyard is being inspected for interesting mosses and liverworts; we hope we can bring you news soon of what has been found!

Services

Sunday 17th December 2023 - Holy Communion & Carols. The church will be decorated plus tree.

Sunday 14th January 2024 - Holy Communion

Glazeley cont'd

Deaths

Margaret Joan James 10th March 1938 - 8th October 2023

Margaret originated from Attingham, Shrewsbury and married Morris in 1956. Their reception was held in the Parish Rooms, Glazeley before it was demolished!!!! Sadly Morris died earlier this year in April. Their ashes are to be interned together in the churchyard in the near future. Margaret leaves Anthony, Jennifer, Stephen, Mandy & Hailey. Sadly Daughter Shani died at age 2 years. Margaret & Morris lived at Spring Cottages for many years where Margaret worked locally - she used to help clean the church & telephone box!! She worked at The Woodlands for Mrs Pitt and also The Old Inn, Chetton, The Down, The Punch Bowl & The Down School.

St Peter's, Chelmarsh

December Forum/Wheatlands News 2023

During November, we continued to benefit from the increased number of trained and trainee ministers, preachers and individuals supporting ministry within the benefice worship team. They delivered some interesting talks and sermons framing God's Word from differing angles.



As many of you will be aware, Kina has recently been unwell, we wish her a very speedy recovery. We are grateful to her for building such a strong team, and we hope that this will allow her to take the time she needs to recover fully.

Rummage Sale:

A rummage sale was held to swell church funds during November. Thanks go to Marie Ellis, Glenys and Barbara for all their help in organising and advertising. We were surprised and very pleased to raise over £500 from this venture, so thank you to all those who donated, helped on the day and attended. The money will be utilised in supporting the church and connecting the people in and around the parish.

Advance notice:

We are hoping to hold another event in aid of St Peter's Chelmarsh before Christmas (diaries permitting). Please keep an eye on the notice boards and social media for details.

The St Peter's Chelmarsh 100 club subscription renews in December for the following year, please keep an eye out for the letter delivered to your door in December. Subs will be due by the latest 31st December 2023. We are very grateful to all our supporters who continue to help us fund the church via the 100 club, it raises around £1000 per year. If you have any questions or would like a number please contact Liz Bebb at Chelmarsh Church or on 07971465811 or by email on Elizabeth.Bebb@hotmail.com.

Notices:

Church cleaning – Thursday December 14th 2pm

Dates for your diary – Christmas Services:

Christmas Crib Service (Children's Service) – Saturday 16th December 4pm

Christmas Carol Service – Sunday 17th December 5pm

James the Least of All

On how to make the most of carol singing.

The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren



Carol singing is not what it used to be. My fond memories of a group of choristers, muffled in scarves and overcoats, carrying lanterns, and walking from door to door in the snow, as they sang 'While shepherds watched ...' had to be suddenly revised when I saw your own music group, in T-shirts inscribed with 'Jesus loves You', singing 'Little Donkey', in your shopping centre. I suspect any money you raised would just about have paid for the electricity used to power your banks of electronic equipment. Singing in the main square of the Centre next to the fountain may have looked good, but it seemed to mean that the choir men were obliged to make constant trips to the lavatory.

Here at St James the Least of All, carol singing is regarded as a staff perk for the choir; the year when the Boys' Brigade tried to break their monopoly was suppressed with a ruthlessness that would have impressed Genghis Kahn.

Our annual carol-singing route involves months of meticulous planning. We find that a transparent collection box is vital, so that donors can see what earlier patrons have given. This means that those who are bound to put in notes must be visited first – *'pour encourager les autres'*. It also needs a detachable base, so that if coppers are given, they can be removed from sight before the next call.

Those homes that contain several children are visited just after bedtime, so that parents will give generously simply to get the choir to go somewhere else. Veiled threats to stay and sing more carols (unless they give generously) are usually very effective. Getting whoever looks the most innocent and photogenic to ring the bell and ask for money is a far more subtle way of ensuring a donation than planting any number of mafia lookalikes (such as our church treasurer) on the doorstep.

The choir always finishes its evening at the local pub – but again, the timing must be carefully managed. Too early and there will only be the landlord, his wife, and their Labrador to listen; too late and people will be so full of Christmas cheer that any carols will be hi-jacked and become the equivalent of back-of-the bus rugby songs.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

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Letter from Westminster



Christmas 2023

As we approach Christmas this year, I reflect back on a year that has seemed more violent and full of discord than the recent past.

The war in Ukraine continues to rage, but added to the senseless bloodshed of Putin's invasion, renewed conflict has flared up in the Middle East, with the divisions that has elicited on our own streets.

I have been deeply concerned about the impact of these divisions on different communities, particularly the fears of the Jewish population in the UK. The face of anti-Semitism has reared its ugly head once again, and we must redouble our efforts to stamp it out of our society.

War and conflict are a stark reminder of the bounty that peace gives us, and that we should never take it for granted. It is my sincere hope that, inspired by both previous generations and the message of Christ, we may live in more peaceful times in the year ahead. Even during the Great War, the Christmas truce provided some small respite from the horrendous conflict, even if it was not to last.

It is noteworthy that the 2021 Census data was the first in our history to record that fewer than half the UK population identified as Christian, at 46.6%. In South Shropshire, it remains considerably higher, at 59.2% of local residents stating their religion as Christian. But even that figure is over 10% lower than at the previous Census in 2011. Interestingly over the past two years, weekly attendance at Church of England services has actually risen, but was still significantly lower than before the coronavirus pandemic.

I mention this fact mostly to note the changing significance of Christianity in our society. Fewer of us attend church services on a regular basis compared to decades past, but at moments of national significance, faith remains a powerful motivator. From His Majesty the King's Coronation earlier this year, to the festival of Remembrance last month, we see the lasting impact of Christianity on our society.

While fewer of us may identify as Christians, that need not mean the lessons of Christianity be lost on us. Such is the cultural impact of Christmas that even the agnostic and atheists among us can embrace much of the tradition. Universal virtues of compassion, charity and the importance of family and friends are at the centre of the festive season.

For those who do wish to attend church services this Christmas, there are a great number taking place across South Shropshire. In addition to larger services in the towns, particularly in Ludlow and Bridgnorth, parish noticeboards and parish magazines are carrying details of services local to you, at which all are warmly welcome.

My heart goes out to all those for whom this Christmas is disrupted by bloodshed and violence. I pray that 2024 will bring peace on earth and goodwill towards all men.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

Philip

Rt Hon Philip Dunne

Highley Parish Council

As the weather has grown colder, the days shorter and with the end of the year rapidly approaching it was fantastic to witness the brilliant turnout at the village's Remembrance Parade and Service this year. I felt honoured to attend and lay a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council, remembering those who gave their lives for our country.

November proved to be another busy month for Highley Parish Council. We began our November meeting with the co-option of another new councillor to the council, and I am delighted to welcome Adam Lucas as our newest Parish Councillor. Adam brings a wealth of experience and innovative ideas to the council. Adam's appointment marks a milestone - for the first time in a long time we have no vacancies and a full compliment of councillors which is fantastic news. Since all our councillors are volunteers, having more hands to share the workload enhances our ability to serve the village effectively.

When I assumed the role of Chair, one of my key objectives was to ensure that Highley Parish Council was operating as it should be, that all the necessary governance was in place and that we could demonstrate this to the people we represent – the residents of Highley. In November we took a significant step forward by approving an entire set of new policies to guide our operations. For those interested, all the policies are on our website. They are comprehensive yet concise, maximising their usefulness, whilst not impeding our day-to-day activities.

Policing is a topic that consistently features in our Parish Council discussions, often accompanied by a shared sense of frustration. In November we agreed to establish a Police Working Group to revamp our interaction with the police as a council. This initiative aims to involve more councillors and enhance our communication with the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and the broader police force covering Highley. We are fully aware of the issues with the quality of the service Highley receives from the police and we are committed to working tirelessly to effect positive change.

As the festive season approaches the Parish Council's focus turns to the village's Christmas lights and the event to switch them on. A considerable amount of planning goes in to this involving multiple councillors. The Christmas Light Switch On also incorporates the Highley Civic Awards providing an opportunity to recognise those who contribute to the village throughout the year. I'm thoroughly looking forward to the day and I hope to see as many of you there as possible.

As the year draws to a close I would like to extend my heartfelt wishes to everyone in Highley for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tom Quinn



County Councillor's Report

Hello again Highley,

Firstly, a quick thank you to everyone involved in this year's Remembrance events. From the short and poignant time at the war memorial on the Saturday to the frankly huge procession through the village on Remembrance Sunday. There were so many of you helping that I'm deliberately not going to name anyone, because I'll miss someone out. The Sunday itself was a great community event with representatives of so many of our village groups present and the coffee and biscuits at the end were very welcome having been stood in the drizzle for some time!

The days are getting colder and the nights are getting longer and as we approach the time of celebration and the festivities around Christmas and New Year (and in my family's case, three birthdays as well!) I think that it is timely to remember that some people in our village will find this time of year incredibly difficult. There are those that are lonely or unwell and those for whom the time of year has sad memories, so as families gather to enjoy each other's company we should remember our neighbours and friends too. There are opportunities to help, if you know of anyone who'd benefit from a Christmas meal being delivered to them this year please let the church know either through their charity shop or directly to the Rector, Kina. I'm sure that if you'd like to help to deliver a few as well they would be very grateful. Or why not simply knock on your neighbours door and say hello, you never know, you might like them!

As I'm typing this, an email has just come in telling me that the final Ts have been crossed and is dotted and the permanent home for the new Doctor's Surgery has been given the go ahead! IT IS DEFINITELY HAPPENING. I happen to know that the plans already exist and that specialist builders have already been spoken to, so the timescale isn't too long. Potentially we could be looking at completion some time around Easter next year (2024). Watch this space, or more helpfully, watch the Severn Centre!

This December will also see me putting forward a motion to a full Council meeting to ask that all post-16 students are treated fairly and equally when it comes to transport. Because of where we live, our young people need to buy two season tickets for two different bus services to get to most of the colleges. This is not fair and can cost upwards of £1500 in total for the year. Students living in areas serviced by Arriva buses (and some other services on the other side of the county) or within walking distance of a college, don't have this issue. I already have support from within my own group, so we'll see whether other councillors also believe in a level playing field for education.

Sorry to get on my soapbox but I'm passionate about this village and its people, I'll let you all know how it goes next month.

So all that remains is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Peace-filled New Year.

Mark Williams.

Shropshire Councillor - Highley 07725595555 mark.williams@shropshire.gov.uk

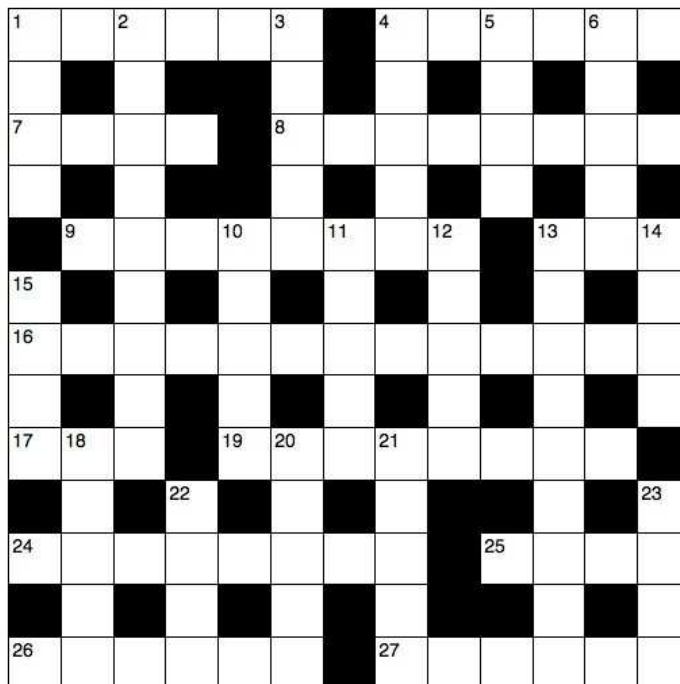


Crossword Clues*Puzzles***Across**

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
- 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
- 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
- 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
- 19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
- 24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
- 25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
- 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
- 27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
- 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
- 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
- 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
- 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
- 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
- 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
- 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
- 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
- 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
- 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
- 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
- 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
- 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
- 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
- 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
- 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)

**Solutions on page 33**

THE SEVERN CENTRE

Proud to be home

to the following community based clubs, groups & businesses:

- Library
- Dementia/Alzheimer's support group
- Dynamic Taekwondo Club
- Uplifted Pole & Yoga
- Highley Table Tennis Club
- 50+ Table Tennis & Badminton drop in sessions
- Women's Institute and Knit & Natter
- Jodie-Leigh School of Dance
- Highley Parish Council Drop In Sessions
- Highley Reach Youth Club
- Highley Minors Child Care
- Highley Community Project
- Mini Minors Toddler Group
- Warm Welcome Space

WANT TO GET MORE ACTIVE MORE OFTEN?

You can enjoy gym, swimming in the outdoor heated pool (open seasonally), or group exercise classes on a pay-as-u-go basis but the best value for money is through a Severn Centre Leisure membership:

- JOIN online at haloleisure.org.uk/sign-up/
- Call 01746 860 000 • Pop into the Centre

Discounts available on pay-as-u-go activities for:

People aged 65+ | Young People aged 24 and under |
Carers | People on certain mean tested benefits |
People registered disabled | Full time students

Download the FREE Halo Leisure Severn Centre app to view leisure timetables and book leisure activities



Details correct at time of going to print - August 2023



Working together for the people of Highley


halo

The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD STORIES WITH HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A PARTY

HE SENT OUT LOTS OF INVITATIONS

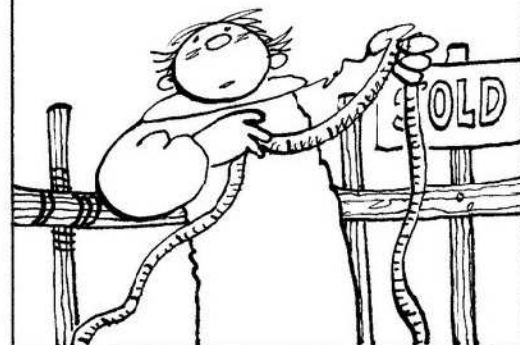


OH! NO!!



BUT PEOPLE STARTED MAKING EXCUSES

ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T LET HIM OUT!

SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



YES - I CAN COME TO YOUR PARTY

THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.

Wordsearch

Answers on Page 23



Silent	Night	Loved	Carol	Austria
First	Sung	Stille	Nacht	Heilige
Christmas	Eve	Father	Joseph	Mohr
Young	Priest	Organist	Midnight	Mass
Melody	Single	Bing	Version	Third

Have a go at Sudoku — answers on page 23



Easy

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

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Medium

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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UCB Word for Today

God will rescue you

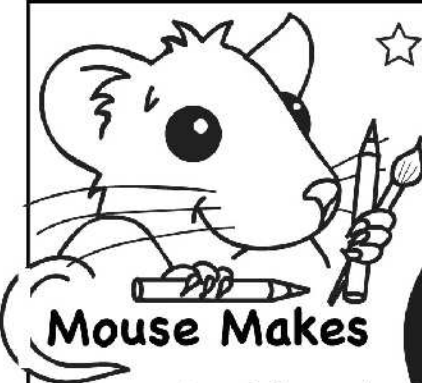
'We stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God.'

Are you feeling hopeless about the situation you're in and don't know which way to turn? Maybe you're struggling to find a reason to keep going, but you're so tired and overwhelmed that you just want to give up. If that's the case, you're in a vulnerable place. Look out – Satan will try to convince you there must be sin in your life, or that you're out of God's will, or that He is unhappy with you because you have disobeyed Him in some area you're unaware of. Don't buy it! You can be in the *centre* of God's will doing everything the right way, and still experience adversity.

The apostle Paul writes: 'You ought to know...about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. And he did rescue us from mortal danger, and he will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in him, and he will continue to rescue us. And you are helping us by praying for us. Then many people will give thanks because God has graciously answered so many prayers for our safety' (2 Corinthians 1:8-11 NLT).

Two elements are at work in your life today. First, God is teaching you to lean on Him instead of on yourself. Second, people around you are being strengthened and encouraged as they see the grace of God at work in your life.

Mouse Makes




Mouse Makes



GOD'S PROMISE
Isaiah 9:6-7

CHILD • BORN • SON
GIVEN • WONDERFUL
COUNCELLOR
MIGHTY • GOD
EVERLASTING
FATHER • PRINCE
PEACE • LORD




AN ANGEL MESSENGER
Luke 1:26-38

ANGEL • GABRIEL
JOSEPH • MARY
FAVOUR • SON
JESUS • GREAT
THRONE • REIGN
FOREVER • HOLY
SERVANT • WORD




ADVENT
comes from
the Latin
'AD VENTO'
which means
ARRIVAL

In Advent we
celebrate Jesus' birth
and look forward to
the time when Jesus
will come again.



A LONG JOURNEY
Luke 2:1-20

BETHLEHEM
REGISTER • BIRTH
MANGER • INN
SHEPHERDS • FLOCK
ANGELS • JOY
GOOD NEWS • PRAISE
SAVIOUR • CHRIST



THE BEST GIFT OF ALL
John 3:16

GOD • SO • LOVED
WORLD • HE • GAVE
ONLY • SON
WHOEVER • BELIEVES
ETERNAL • LIFE

V	R	P	R	I	N	C	E	L	R	O	D
W	O	R	D	C	F	A	T	H	E	R	E
J	A	G	M	A	N	G	E	R	G	E	B
O	W	H	O	E	V	E	R	W	I	I	J
S	J	O	Y	B	O	R	N	O	S	G	E
E	S	L	S	E	R	V	A	N	T	N	S
P	P	Y	J	C	H	I	L	D	E	P	U
H	R	O	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	S
F	A	V	O	U	R	E	F	R	W	S	O
B	I	R	T	H	S	W	O	F	O	D	L
I	S	A	V	I	O	U	R	U	R	L	O
F	E	C	O	U	N	C	E	L	L	O	R
A	N	G	E	L	B	J	V	K	D	V	D
B	E	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	G	E	S
L	A	N	G	E	L	S	R	G	O	D	V
I	G	A	B	R	I	E	L	T	D	S	M
F	P	G	I	V	E	N	A	H	U	O	A
E	E	H	G	A	V	E	S	R	W	N	R
S	A	E	G	R	E	A	T	O	N	L	Y
O	C	H	R	I	S	T	I	N	N	J	O
N	E	O	G	O	O	D	N	E	W	S	N
F	L	O	C	K	M	I	G	H	T	Y	B

Highley Companions—more adventures in 2023

Its been a few months since I last wrote an article for the Forum about what we have been doing with our lovely Companions both out and about ,and in our group sessions as I keep missing the deadlines!!! I can't believe how fast this year has flown by.

We have enjoyed two lovely trips during the summer spending 6 hours each time on the Ernest Thomas canal boat cruising along and seeing what wildlife we can spot. We've laughed, sung our hearts out and our arms have hurt from waving to the other “canal boaters” and dog walkers!! We enjoyed the lovely fish and chips which were brought onto our boat and numerous cups of tea and coffee. Its always a great fun day out for our Companions and us,of course, and it also gives their carers a much needed break.

We believe music is good for the soul and the brain. It makes us happy and this is why we not only believe its important for us to sing in our group sessions with our own dynamic duo Mick and Sian but also to have guest performers come in to entertain us as well.

Ukes on the Edge, a great bunch of musicians from Kinver came to entertain us in August and wow weren't they good. We raised the roof of the Parish Hall with their playing and us joining in the singing followed by us all enjoying fish and chips. Oh we do love our food!

Claire from Singing for the Brain came and entertained us in August with her guitar and it was lovely to see how our Companions responded to her playing on her guitar and them on the instruments she brought along.

For our 6th birthday – yes, six years!! since we started Companions, we had the pleasure of Tom Wenlock coming along to provide our entertainment. A wonderful singer bringing along some of his varied repertoire which we all joined in with. It was just like having a West End star with us and he was so good he could have performed in the West End! Everyone joined in with the singing and clapping away and would have got up and danced if they could. Something for everyone. Our Claire was smiling from ear to ear singing the words and showing us her slick moves. What a wonderful time everyone had and it was lovely to see them so happy.

We've still got a theatre trip, to go on – our first, to see the “Christmas Memories” show at Oakengates Theatre. A session of making Christmas cards, playing games, singing and lots of chatting to do before our Christmas Dinner in December with the school choir coming to entertain then but more on these next time.

Thank you for continuing to support Highley Companions for which we are most grateful.

Happy Christmas to you all

Elaine Moore



Highley Companions continued

If anyone would like more information about Highley Companions please ring me on my home number, which is in The Forum, or message or ring me on my mobile 07870262944 and I would be happy to give you some more details.

Whilst we are primarily catering for those who have either a diagnosis of mild to moderate dementia or Alzheimers, we do have a very small number who have age related memory recall, have suffered a stroke, or struggle with loneliness i.e. following a bereavement etc. Our activities help to stimulate the brain, help with co-ordination and dexterity and singing helps make everyone happy. It also helps carers have a much needed break.

We keep our numbers reasonable so that we can give help on a one to one basis to those who need it. I would add that we are NOT a drop in group so, in the first instance, please contact me on 07870262944 and I would be happy to talk on the phone and meet up and tell you more about our lovely group. A smiling face and a warm welcome awaits.



Sara preferred to let people work out the hymns for themselves



"For the next part of our carol-service, Nigel, the verger's nephew will play his interpretation of Silent Night..."

Answers to Wordsearch (from page 18)



Answers to Sudoku (from page 19)

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

Easy

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

Medium



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Sustainable Highley

We can make Highley sustainable!

Please email your ideas to mrmacnaughton@hotmail.co.uk and I can share them in the next article. Anyone is welcome, any idea that helps us save energy and resources!

Don't Dig - Charles

If you have tried to grow your own veg, but been over whelmed with the amount of preparation and ongoing maintenance, have you considered the 'no dig' approach? Instead of digging to remove weeds, it relies on applying organic matter (such as garden compost or well rotted manure) to the soil surface, which emulates the natural processes of decomposition and allows the soil's ecosystem to remain intact. Even in clay soils, the no dig approach works wonders!

If you are a short time gardener, who wants to grow your own and reduce food miles then try the following (at any time of year):

1. Cut out any Bramble crowns if present. Leave all other weeds in situ.
2. Prepare the site by layering thick cardboard (any type) over the site that is to become your beds and pathways between the beds.
3. Weight the cardboard down with stones or similar.
4. Add a 6" thick layer of compost/manure to the area of cardboard.
5. Leave until the cardboard has fully been broken down. By this point any weeds are smothered and you're left with your clean beds ready to plant!
6. Each year top up your compost to enrich the soil for the following years planting.

Most perennial weeds will be weakened and then killed off with the cardboard and mulch. However, there are always those exceptions such as Ground Elder, Bindweed and Mares Tail, all of which will require some continued observation and intervention.

Christmas dinner - David

If you want to try going meat free this Christmas, why not think about making a special Wellington? There are lots available in the supermarkets, but if you want to avoid too many ultra processed ingredients, get chopping! Beetroot, carrots and jackfruit work well for a sweet centre, surrounded by a rich umami-flavoured mushroom sauce. Check out recipes online - you won't be disappointed!



together at Christmas

At St Mary's Church we love to bless members of our community, so if:

- * you're feeling lonely or vulnerable this Christmas
or
- * you and your family are finding it difficult this year
or
- * you are spending Christmas alone

Whatever the reason, please get in touch if you would like either a free Christmas dinner delivered to your door or you would like to join others at a party. 'Together at Christmas' are holding their Christmas Day 'knees-up' at the Endowed School this year and you would be very welcome to join in. Transport can be provided if necessary.

Speak to Gay or any church member for more information: 07707470615

Christmas Services

St Mary's Highley

Carol Service—Sunday 10th December @ 5pm

NB change from the mid-week service in past years.

Top End Carols - Mon 18th December @ 7pm

Crib service—Christmas Eve @ 4pm

Midnight Communion—Christmas Eve @11pm

St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh

Crib service—Saturday 16th December @4pm

Carol Service—Sunday 17th December @ 5pm

Midnight Communion—Christmas Eve @11pm

St Bartholomew's Church, Glazeley

Holy Communion with Carols—Sunday 17th December @10am

St Mary's Church Billingsley

Carols at Lincoln Fields—Monday 18th December @7pm

Christmas Communion - Christmas Day @10am



IMMANUEL - GOD WITH US

Join us for

Songs
Have Fun
Get messy
Enjoy food together

crafts
Celebration time
Be Creative

Messy Church

Saturday 2nd December
At
Highley Primary Community School
11am – 12:30
Fun, informal, Family friendly, Everyone Welcome
No charge but donations welcome

Organised by St Mary's Church and sponsored by St Mary's charity shop

Highley Community

Free information, advice and support

Halo Severn Centre
Bridgnorth Road, Highley WV16 6JG

9.30am–11.30am:
Fri 27 Oct 2023 Fri 24 Nov 2023
Fri 26 Jan 2024 Fri 23 Feb 2024
Fri 22 March 2024

You can chat, have a coffee and see how we can help you with:

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- Children's health and wellbeing
- Healthy living advice
- Dementia support
- Family life
- Home fire safety
- Domestic abuse support
- Drug & alcohol support
- Financial advice
- Getting older

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**For more information, please contact Kath or Sue on 01746 860005 or
Email highleyminors@hotmail.co.uk**

Contacts for Local Church Groups, Clubs & Organisations

Severn Valley Benefice –Rector	Rev'd Kina Robertshaw	revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com	862837
Associate Minister (retired)	Rev.'d Val Smith	valandkeiths@aol.com	861966
Associate Minister	Rev'd. David Poyner	d.r.poyner@aston.ac.uk	01562 68638
Retired clergy - Permission to Officiate	Canon Rose Lawley	rosemarylawley@gmail.com	862301
Licensed Lay Minister with PTO	Mr Keith Smith		861966
Churchwarden	Roy Adlington		861666
	Canev Clayton		862578
PCC Secretary & Church Administrator	Margaret Ritchie	secretaryhighleypcc@gmail.com	861242
Allsorts (Ladies' Group)	Mrs Lin Evans		861087
Children's Sunday Groups	Amy Williams		860230
Friday Event	Mrs. Rachel Williams	the-friday-event@hotmail.com	862875
MCMC's Discos	Mark Williams & Chris Smith		860230
The Shed	Lisa Delmar-Shaw		07376752633
Age UK		enquiries@ageconcernshrops.org.uk	01743 233123
Bowls Club	Richard Green		861052
Guide and Scout Hut Enquiries	Gay Lilley		861722
Carers Trust 4 All			03333 231990
Community Car Scheme	Mr Richard Dudson		861817
Cricket Club	Mrs Denise Goulden		861031
Rainbows, Brownies and Guides		www.girlguiding.org.uk	
Highley Community Project	Emma Aspin	hcprojectshrops@gmail.com	
Highley Colliery Band	Dave & Lisa Burge		862018
Highley Companions	Elaine Moore		861431
Highley County Primary School	School Office	(Tanya Mathers)	861541
Highley First Responders	Claire van Aswegen	claire.vanaswegen@gmail.com	861580
Highley Medical Centre	Dr J Tatton	Highley Medical Practice, Bridgnorth Road	767121 (option 0)
Highley Mini Minors Toddler Group	Emma Aspin		07752207828
Highley Minors Childcare Centre	Kath Davies	Severn Centre	860005
Highley Parish Council Parish Clerk	Holly Bowkett	clerk@highleyparish.co.uk	07496821159
Co. Cllr. & Highley Patients Group	Mr Mark Williams	mark.williams@shropshire.gov.uk	07979295387
Highley Welfare Junior Football Club	Lisa Bill	Club Secretary	07983245480
HWJFC: Mini Kickers (3.5—7 years)	Dean Boden		
Housing Support Officer	Contact Star Housing		
Parish Hall Bookings	Margaret Ritchie	secretaryhighleypcc@gmail.com	861242
Pop-in-club	Janis Rowe		860270
Severn Centre			860000
Severn Strollers	Barbara Skilton		862003
Women's Institute	Mrs Eunice Williams		861613



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Allsorts of ages

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- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 5 th Mar 2024 | = | Mark Triggs –
Christians Against Poverty |
| 2 nd Apr | = | John Martin - Comedian |
| 7 th May | = | Ian Baxter - SVR |
| 4 th June | = | Liz Bird - Foodbank |
| 2 nd July | = | Bluebird Belles |
| 3 rd Sept | = | Sally Bunn |

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**Daniel Humpage
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Stourbridge Bus Station Stourbridge (Stand A)	---	---	08:05	08:10	then at these mins		15:10	16:20	17:20	18:25
Broadwaters Drive Broadwaters (SW)	---	---	08:23	08:25			15:25	16:35	17:35	18:40
Bus Station Kidderminster (Stand B) Arrive	---	---	08:33	08:35			15:35	16:45	17:45	18:50
Bus Station Kidderminster (Stand B) Depart	---	07:27	08:37	08:37			15:37	16:47	17:47	---
General Hospital Kidderminster (A1)	---	07:34	08:44	08:44			15:44	16:54	17:54	---
Load Street Bewdley (Westbound)	06:30	07:45	08:55	08:55			15:55	17:05	18:05	---
Wyre Cottage Bilston (NW)	06:36	07:51	09:01	10:01			16:01	17:11	18:11	---
Hill Kidder (NW)	06:43	07:58	09:08	10:08			16:08	17:18	18:18	---
Bache Arms Highley (NW)	06:53	08:08	09:18	10:18			16:18	17:28	18:28	---
Castle Inn Woodhill (NW)	06:56	08:11	09:21	10:21			16:21	17:31	18:31	---
Church Chelmarsh (NW)	07:00	08:16	09:26	10:26		16:26	17:36	18:36	---	
Post Office Faulingrove (NW)	07:05	08:21	09:31	10:31		16:31	17:41	18:41	---	
Sainsbury's High Town (NE)	07:12	08:28	09:38	10:38		16:38	17:48	18:48	---	
Fosters Arms PH Low Town (NE)	07:15	---	---	---		---	---	---	---	
Stanmore Industrial Estate Stanmore (NE)	07:22	---	---	---		---	---	---	---	

* Not including bank holidays

Monday to Friday - 125 - Stanmore Ind Est - Bewdley, Load St

Stanmore Industrial Estate Stanmore (NE)	---	07:24	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Falcon Hotel Low Town (W)	---	07:32	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Sainsbury's High Town (NE)	---	---	08:40	---	40	---	14:40	15:45	16:45	18:05
Post Office Lardington (SE)	---	07:37	08:49	---	49	---	14:49	15:50	16:50	18:10
Church Chelmarsh (SE)	---	07:47	08:54	---	54	---	14:54	15:55	16:55	18:15
Castle Inn Woodhill (S)	---	07:57	08:58	---	58	---	14:58	16:00	17:00	18:20
Bache Arms Highley (SE)	---	07:51	09:01	then at these mins	01	until	15:01	16:04	17:04	18:24
Eagle & Serpent Inn Kidder (SW)	---	08:01	09:11		11		15:11	16:14	17:14	18:34
Wyre Cottage Bilston (SE)	---	08:08	09:19		19		15:19	16:21	17:21	18:41
Load Street Bewdley (Eastbound)	---	08:15	09:25		25		15:25	16:28	17:28	18:48
General Hospital Kidderminster (NE)	---	08:27	09:35		35		15:35	16:40	17:40	19:00
Bus Station Kidderminster (Stand B) <div>Arrive</div>	---	08:35	09:41	41	---	---	15:41	16:48	17:48	19:08
Bus Station Kidderminster (Stand A) <div>Depart</div>	07:30	08:37	09:43	43	---	---	15:43	16:50	17:50	---
Broadwaters Drive Broadwaters (Opp)	07:38	08:45	09:49	49	---	---	15:49	16:58	17:58	---
Stourbridge Bus Station Stourbridge (Stand A)	07:58	09:05	10:05	05	---	---	16:05	17:18	18:18	---

* Not including bank holidays

Crossword Solution from page 15

D	E	P	E	N	D		C	A	N	O	P	Y
E		E			R		U		U		U	
B	E	A	K		I	R	R	I	T	A	T	E
T		C			N	I		S		I		
	Z	E	D	E	K	I	A	H		A	T	E
I		A		X		S		O		T		Z
J	O	B	S	C	O	M	F	O	R	T	E	R
O		L		E		A		F		E		A
N	A	E		L	A	N	G	S	Y	N	E	
	S		G		B	R			T		L	
B	L	O	C	K	A	D	E		F	I	V	E
	A		M		N		E			O		A
E	N	I	G	M	A		D	R	E	N	C	H

Regular Events

Police Surgery	Thursdays
10:00 - 12:00	Severn Centre
Severn Strollers	Mondays
	(not Bank Holidays)
10:30 / 11:00	Severn Centre
(Contact: Barbara Skilton: 01746 862003)	
Women's Institute	Tuesday
	Severn Centre
Badminton Club (Seniors)	Tuesday 19.00 SC

Waste / Recycling Collections

Black bins:

Thursday 7th & 21st December

Crates & green bins:

Thursday 14th & Friday 29th December

www.shropshire.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/*More Christmas Celebrations*

All Round Property Maintenance	11	Haycox, P & Son (Funerals)	25	Severn Edge Vets	29
Bache PR (Carpenter)	10				
Cleobury Country Centre	11	Highley Minors	28	Shropshire Registration Services	25
Cost Cutter	11	Holford, CE (Electrical)	11		
David Dexter (Motor Repairs)	10	Irena Foot Clinic	31	Tele - Satt Aerials	19
Edwards A J Decorating Services	22	Ince, B (Funeral Directors)	25	Vivians Mobile Hairdressing	25
		Kidderminster Storage & Removals	27	Wyre Forest Pest Control	29
Halo Leisure (Severn Centre)	16	Kinlet C of E School	24		
Harris, Edwin & Sons (Funerals)	25	Martin, Tony (Plumbing etc.)	33		
		Northwood & Sons (Funerals)	25		
		Ovenclean	19		
		Perry & Phillips (Funerals)	24		
		Piano Tutor - Francis Engelheart	10		
		Powell Clive - Gardening Services	10		
				Bus Information	32
				Events - Church	33
				Events - General / Waste	33
				Library	3
				Registrar's Office	25

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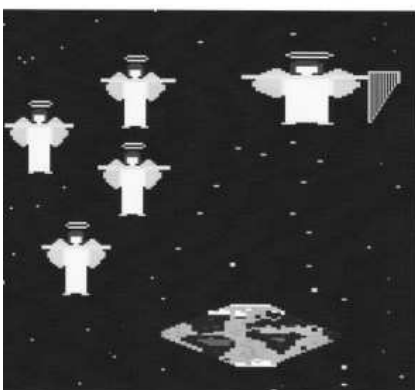
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If the First Christmas were to be in Highley



If Joseph the pit carpenter
High up on Billingsley Ridge,

Census called with expectant Mary
Crossed the starlit Donkey Bridge,

Would I welcome them with
loving arms
Joining praise angels compose,

Or a chilled heart dark and silent,
Like "The Castle Inn", doors closed?

Alan Mansell.
2023

Send your photos

Don't forget to send your photos of any events which have taken place in and around the villages. Please make sure that you have permission from anyone in them and their agreement for the pictures to be published. - Ed.

Church Services December 2023

Sunday 3rd December	9.30am Morning Worship	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
	10.30am Morning Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
Sunday 10th December	9.30am Holy Communion	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
	10.30am Holy Communion	St Mary's Church, Highley
	5pm Carol Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
Saturday 16th December	4pm Crib Service	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
Sunday 17th December	10am Holy Communion with Carols	St Bartholomew's Church, Glazeley
	10.30am Holy Communion	St Mary's Church, Highley
	5pm Carol Service	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
Monday 18th December	7pm Carols by the Green	The Shops, Garden Village
Sunday 24th December Christmas Eve	4pm Crib Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
	11pm Midnight Communion	St Mary's Church, Highley
	11pm Midnight Communion	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
Monday 25th December Christmas Day	10am Holy Communion	St Mary's Church, Billingsley
	10.30am Christmas Family Service	St Mary's Church, Highley

Mid-week Groups

Tuesday Evening Bible Study 7.30pm contact Liz and Mervyn tel 862989

Wednesday Prayer and Study Group 11am—1pm held in Parish Hall unless notified otherwise.

Wednesday Zoom 7pm Contact David Poyner email d.r.poyner@aston.ac.uk

Thursday evening Prayer Meeting @ St Mary's Church at 7.00pm

Friday Event Youth Club 7.30pm @ Parish Hall (term-time only) contact Rachel Williams

Friday Night Prayer 9pm Zoom contact David Poyner as above

For enquiries regarding Weddings, Christenings, Funerals or Churchyard memorials

Weddings: Rev'd Kina Robertshaw: email revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com

Christenings/baptisms: Rev'd Kina Robertshaw email revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com

Funerals: Contact your funeral director, who will liaise with clergy

Churchyard Memorials: Rev'd Kina Robertshaw: email revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com

Next Copy Date 10th December for January issue