

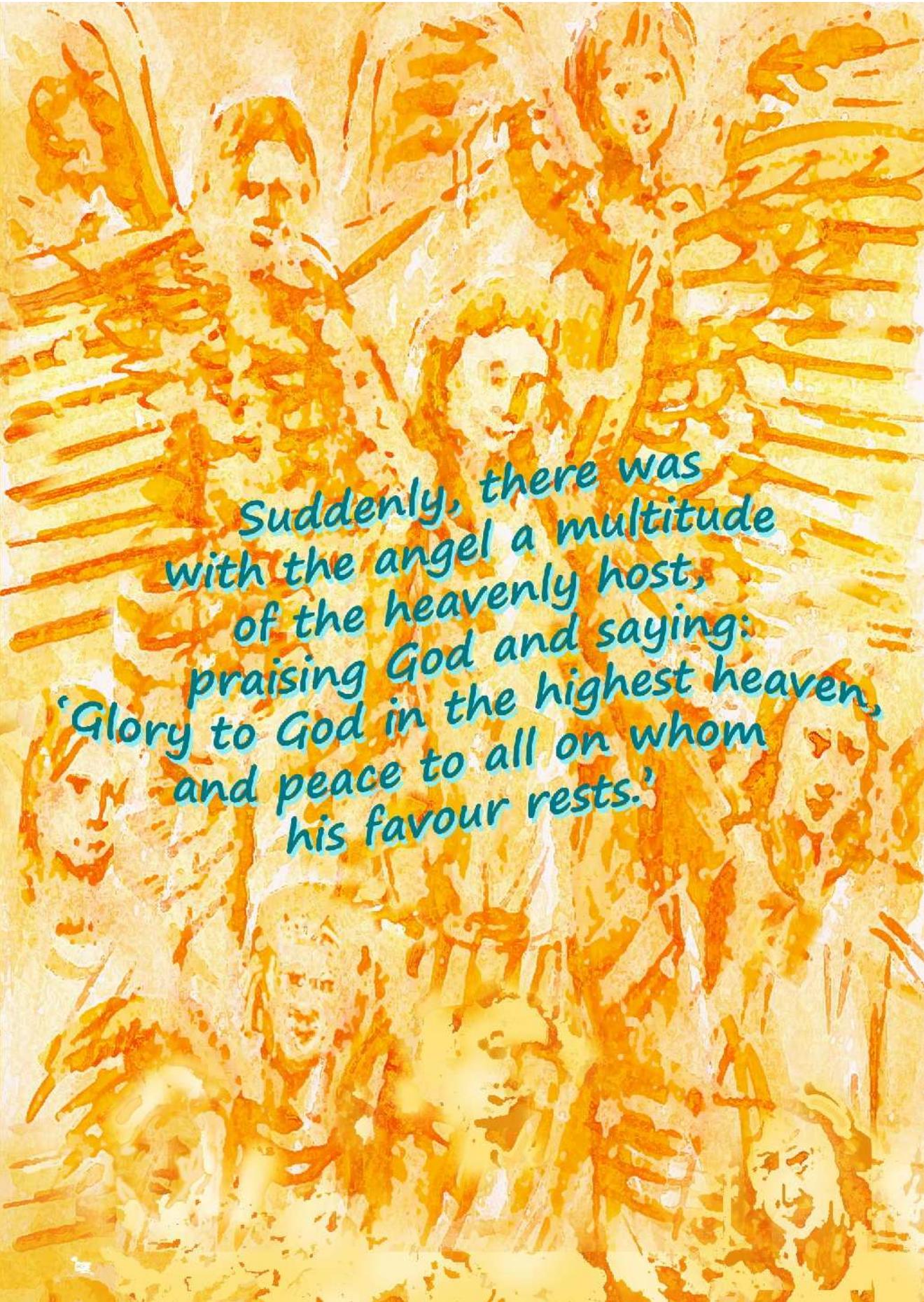
FORUM

December 2021

*O Come let us
adore Him*



Serving Highley, Billingsley, Chelmarsh, Glazeley with Deuxhill

A painting depicting a multitude of angels in a golden, ethereal light. The angels are shown in various poses, some with their arms raised, and their faces are illuminated by the surrounding light. The overall style is expressive and somewhat abstract, with visible brushstrokes and a warm, golden color palette. The text is overlaid on the central part of the painting.

Suddenly, there was
with the angel a multitude
of the heavenly host,
praising God and saying:
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and peace to all on whom
his favour rests.'

Submission of Articles and photos.

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

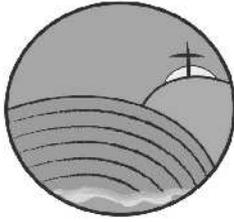
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Severn Valley Benefice

The Severn Valley Churches:

St. Mary, Highley

and at the Severn Centre

St. Mary, Billingsley

St. Peter, Chelmarsh

St. Bartholomew, Glazeley with Deuxhill

Let's Celebrate!

Do you like celebrations? What about surprises? A couple of weeks ago, Keith and I were on our way to what we thought was our grand-daughter's birthday tea, only to discover that it was a surprise celebration for our 40th Wedding Anniversary! It was such a surprise that it took us several minutes to take it all in. ... the balloons, (we thought they said 'Happy Birthday!') the flowers, chocolates and champagne on the table, (rather unusual for an 8 year old's party!) the detailed planning and thoughtfulness that had gone into making it a real surprise.

Afterwards, I thought, 'Well, if we were stunned into silence by our surprise, what must the shepherds have thought as they huddled on the hillside and were greeted by an angel telling them that the long-awaited Saviour had been born in the town just below them; followed by a choir of angels singing at the tops of their voices?'

How true the saying is, '*the unexpected is just around the corner!*'

We've all got our favourite aspects of the season. Is it the coming together of friends and family? Is it the socialising and parties or the presents? Amid all the bustle and excitement, sometimes it's all too easy to forget what we are actually celebrating - the birth of Jesus Christ. (The clue is in the name!) Sadly it seems that modern society and culture has moved beyond what it is meant to be, making it into just a very convenient break in Winter; time to relax and have a bit of a holiday.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy a celebration as much as the next person. The sense of build up and anticipation can be as much a part of the celebration as the event itself. Of course, sometimes the event doesn't meet our expectations and so there is always the possibility of disappointment or tragedy; a longed for event doesn't happen in the way we hope, or disagreements break out amongst family or friends, often fuelled by too much alcohol. For many this will be a difficult time; maybe the first Christmas without a particular loved one. Let's not forget those who struggle at this time.



As we look towards Christmas, the Christian faith has built in a period of anticipation. **Advent** is a time of looking forward to something. The word '*advent*' is derived from the Latin word meaning '*coming towards*'. It has a dual meaning. During the season of Advent, which runs from the last Sunday in November to the Sunday before Christmas, Christians take time out to re-calibrate; to think about the enormity of God coming as a human being to the earth He created. There was a reason for that. People had lost their way. They'd become selfish and self-centred. They put themselves first and ignored those who tried to put them back on the right path. (Does this sound familiar as we watch or read the news?)

Cont'd on page 5 ...

...cont'd from page 4

So, as the carols tell us, God came down to earth and was born into this world, grew up through childhood and adolescence and became a man, who in adulthood demonstrated and taught a better way to live – the way God originally meant it to be. When we sing those carols, we're re-telling the story of *Emmanuel* - which means 'God with us'.

The other level of understanding about Advent looks towards that time in the future when Christians believe that Jesus will return to this world and everything will be made perfect again; a new creation, as it were. The end of the book of Revelation in the Bible talks about that time, when God will live amongst His people again, just as He did at the beginning.

'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things will have passed away.'



Decorations are often a part of our party celebrations. So during Advent, we have an Advent wreath and each week for 4 weeks we light a candle. Although various thoughts are attached to each candle, the popular sequence is Hope, Peace, Joy and love. On Christmas morning we light the centre candle to represent Jesus, being born into our world to bring all those things together.

Here in Highley and the surrounding villages we'll be doing our best to bring to you as many of the seasonal activities as possible, bearing in mind that we are a man down, as it were, since Mike Harris retired. Our first 'event' has already taken place, at the Christmas Light Switch-On at the Severn Centre on 27th November. We shall be having our usual carol services in all the villages, so look out for the Christmas card detailing the events, which will be delivered in early December. If you can help to deliver the cards around the 2000 houses in Highley, do give me a call. We are also offering a delivery service of a free Christmas lunch, for those who are on their own this year. (See below for details).



Whatever your plans this year, can I encourage you to spend a few moments remembering the reason for the season. When you sing the carols, along with all the other well-known Christmassy songs, which are played in the shops *ad infinitum*, find time to let God into your celebrations and you will be amazed, just as the shepherds were on that first Christmas night.

Wouldn't that be the best gift of all? Happy Christmas to you all!

Val Smith



All contributors please note that the cut-off date for items destined for the January issue will be 10th December 2021, due to the holiday break.



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

St Mary's Highley



As always, Highley folk turned out in their numbers for our Remembrance Service on 14th November. Thank you to all who made it possible. It was good to see such a broad spectrum of our community represented. young and old and several in between! It was particularly poignant to hear George Poyner read out the names of the fallen, many of whom he had known personally, and also for his son David, who took the service. David's re-telling of his Dad's stories about some of the men brought the occasion alive for the younger ones present.

December will be a busy month, as always. Look out for the Church Christmas Card coming through your door in the next few days. It will have details of all the services in and around Highley, including the Carol Services and Christmas Events. All are very welcome, whether you are a regular in the congregation or not. We are also hoping to provide a 'take-away Christmas Lunch' again this year for those who will be alone or families who are struggling in some way and would otherwise not have a traditional lunch on Christmas Day. Contact Gay or Jim Lilley tel. 861722.

On 12th December we'll be welcoming our Archdeacon, Fiona Gibson to our service, which will be a Group Service for the whole Benefice. There will be no other services that day. After Christmas she will be guiding us through the process of seeking a new Rector to replace Rev'd Mike Harris.

Thank you to all who packed a Shoebox or contributed items or donations towards the transport costs. We sent 41 boxes on their way to bring joy to children across the world.

If you'd like to take some time out to reflect on the season of Advent before the Christmas festivities begin, we have 2 groups meeting. - Wednesday 11am-1pm in St Mary's Church and an evening meeting via Zoom at 7pm. Please see the back page for more details.

From our registers last month

Baptism: 14.11.21 Dylan Davies
 Funeral: 22.11.21 Edward Frederick Hutchings
 Interment of Ashes:
 12.11.21 Carolynn Luck;
 22.11.21 Richard Allan Howells;
 Wedding: 27.11.21 Shaun Davies & Natasha Walker

St Peter's, Chelmarsh

With the month of December and the start of Advent, comes one of the busiest times of the church's year. Here are the arranged services for this year in Chelmarsh .

Advent Sunday 5th December : No service in Chelmarsh.

Sunday 12th December: No service in Chelmarsh (see below for reason)

Crib Service: Saturday 18th December at 4pm

This will be a short (approx. half an hour, 40 mins,) interactive service with singing, story reading and carrying figures of people and animals up to the altar. Do bring your children / grandchildren to church to hear and see the Christmas story brought to life and with their help, to dress the crib and to finish the preparation of the church for Christmas. All welcome!

Carol Service: Sunday 19th December at 7pm

This year we are able to sing without masks as long as we stay 3ft apart for social distancing and we will praise and thank God for His greatest gift of His son Jesus, who brought love into the world. See you all there to share a mince pie and a drink afterwards.

Christmas Morning: Saturday 25th December at 10am

A service of Holy Communion in celebration of Christ's birth.

No service on Boxing Day 26th December

In addition to these services, there will be a:

Group Service on Sunday 12th December at 10am in Highley to which all are invited.

The service has been arranged at the request of the new Archdeacon of Ludlow, **Rev. Fiona Gibson**, who is keen to familiarise herself with services at all the churches in the Ludlow area. It will be an informal service of Holy Communion and will be a good opportunity to meet Fiona and hear her vision for our area.

Church Decorating for Christmas: Wednesday 15th December at 10.30 approx.

Church Cleaning: Thursday 6th January 2022



St Mary's, Billingsley

At Billingsley, Amanda and Dave Prescott led a short act of Remembrance for the fallen of our parish. A video of this is available at our facebook site; [facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch](https://www.facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch).

Our carol service will take place on Monday 20th December; as last year, we will hold it outdoors in Lincoln Fields, beneath a convenient lamp post, starting at 7pm. Bring a torch and wrap up well...

On Christmas Day we will have a service of words and music for Christmas, starting at 10am. And in January our 8am service of Holy Communion is scheduled for 23rd January 2022.

The book exchange scheme based in church seems to be working well; at least we have a lot of books available for people to take! Please come along and see if there is anything there you would like to read over the winter evenings.

And a reminder that we continue to hold draws for the 100 Club every month; we anticipate we may soon need to spend money on the repair and upkeep of the church, so the funds we raise from this are really important for us.



St Bartholomew's, Glazeley



At Glazeley, our Remembrance Sunday service was taken by the Rev'd Richard Law. Richard was formerly a Lay Reader in the Benefice before becoming ordained; he has now retired and come back to live in Highley, where he helps out with services.

Apologies to all who expected a service in church, rather than just the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial; this was an oversight on my part and nothing to do with Richard. (DP)

We would like to welcome our new neighbours, Andrew and Laura Jones and their daughter, who have just moved into The Old Rectory next to the church. It was lovely to introduce them to some of the congregation at the Remembrance Service at the Memorial which was very well attended. The names of the men who died in WW1 & WW2 were read out by Eileen Reynolds and we also remembered the five men who sadly died, when their aircraft crashed at Eudon Mill.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM....

I am delighted that we have resumed the monthly breakfasts at The Down in aid of church funds; these had to be put aside due to Covid. Many thanks to Marion Corfield for organising them again. In December, our Carol Service will be on Sunday 19th December at 10am and there will also be Holy Communion for those who wish to take it, but all our welcome, whether communicants or not. The service will be taken by Val and Keith Smith.

We wish everyone a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

James the Least of All

The Rectory
St James the Least of All



My dear Nephew Darren

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

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

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

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

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

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

Your loving uncle,

Eustace



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Letter from Westminster



Christmas 2021

Reflecting back to this time last year, it is striking how far we have come.

Last year, just before people began to move around the country for the Christmas break, it was with the bitterest regret that the government had to impose restrictions on gatherings over the festive period. This change, which we all wished to avoid, meant last minute disappointment for so many after a tough year, and I know it was particularly difficult for those with children, as well as for grandparents.

But of course, the first doses of the covid vaccine had only just been administered in the lead up to Christmas 2020, meaning very few people were protected against the worst of the virus. In contrast, the rollout this year means almost 90% of the adult population have received at least one dose of the covid vaccine, with many now having received a booster jab or third dose.

We also now have effective drugs to combat the worst cases of covid, such as the recently approved Molnupiravir, which was found to reduce the risk of hospitalisation or death for COVID-19 patients most at risk by 50 per cent.

I write well before Christmas, and I have no wish to tempt fate, since we all know how resilient covid has proved. But local clinicians are working flat out to get more jabs into arms, to do all we can to avoid any reimposition of restrictions. So I am hopeful that this year, unlike last, it will be easy for friends and family to come together and celebrate Christmas as we all normally would.

This year will also see the resumption of Christmas services in the many churches in South Shropshire, which I know will bring great comfort to those with faith. The very nature of collective worship meant that congregations and choirs were particularly restricted when covid restrictions were in place, so I am grateful these services have resumed.

While enjoying the Christmas and New Year bank holidays, please spare a thought for those who cannot be with their families – including all those who work in our NHS and emergency services, and those serving in our Armed Forces, who have continued their vital work while still adapting to the challenges of covid this year.

Once again this year, as the long lasting impact of covid remains, the work of volunteers has been critical to the health and wellbeing of our communities. So I would like to thank all those who have given up time, in whatever capacity, to help others in need this year.

I wish everyone in South Shropshire a very Happy Christmas, with best wishes for the year ahead.

Rt Hon Philip Dunne

Word for Today

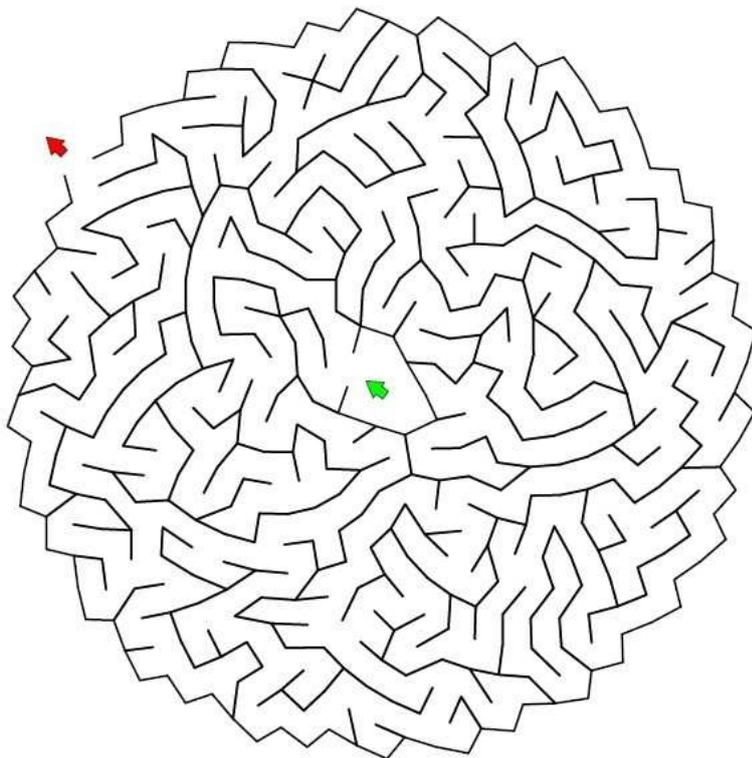
To be godly is to be good

‘The LORD detests the thoughts of the wicked, but gracious words are pure in his sight.’ Proverbs 15:26

Sometimes we say to people, half in jest, ‘Try to be good. And if you can’t be good, be careful!’ The idea being that if you decide *not* to be good, make sure you’re clever enough not to get caught. But in reality, our lack of goodness is no laughing matter. In the words of Robert Fitch: ‘Ours is an age where ethics has become obsolete. Morality is superseded by science, deleted by philosophy, and dismissed as emotive by psychology. It drowns in compassion, evaporates in aesthetics, and retreats before relativism. The usual moral distinctions between good and bad are simply bathed in a maudlin emotion in which we feel more sympathy for the murderer than the murdered, for the adulterer than for the betrayed, and in which we have actually begun to believe that the real guilty party – the one who somehow caused it all – is the victim and not the perpetrator of the crime.’ Those are sobering thoughts. Things that were once considered black or white are now categorised as grey. Goodness that used to meet a universal standard is now a matter of personal interpretation and preference. And an epidemic of public officials whose private conduct leaves us shocked hasn’t made things any better. Right about now you may be thinking, ‘I read this *Devotional* every day to get something that will help me feel good, and today isn’t doing it.’ That’s the whole point! In order to *feel* good, the Bible says you must practise *doing* good and *being* good, which makes you a ‘pleasure’ to God.

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If you would like a free copy of the daily UCB notes, pick up a copy from St Mary’s Church or contact Angie Forster



Life can sometimes feel like a maze.

Can you find your way out of this one?

County Councillor's Report

You know, for all it's solemnity, in its way Remembrance Day, November 11th, is a good day because we not only come together to remember those who gave their lives in conflicts in the cause of our own and other people's freedom, but to give personal thanks to those who survived and to those who are, on our behalf, still actively engaged in various theatres around the world.

I served in an active 'conflict zone' in Aden back in 1963 until 1965, as ground crew on a Hunter squadron, which meant I never actually saw 'active service' in the sense of being in imminent danger from direct enemy action, although terrorist activity was increasing towards the end of my tour out there, the most shocking of which was the death of a young girl when a grenade was thrown into a children's Christmas party.

It's thousands of miles from that married quarter in Aden to the war memorial at Highley church and yet it's the memory of that young schoolgirl that comes back when I'm standing there, not the Hunter fighter pilot who, having survived operating in the most hazardous conditions imaginable 'up country', suffered an airframe malfunction and flew into the ground during an aerobatics display in front of thousands of onlookers.

Those two personal memories fall into line with the names that George Poyner reads out each year, that unnamed young girl and that fighter pilot tag onto the end of that column of local men and march off until they return next year.

Implicit in that memorial service is the acknowledgement of what that loss of life meant beyond any named individual, to those of us left behind.

That was brought home to me when, as one of the guard of honour at the funeral of that Hunter pilot, lined up with others alongside the graveside in what must be the loneliest burial ground in the world – aptly named 'Silent Valley' – I watched the wife of that pilot gently push their daughter forward to throw a flower onto her father's coffin, and that's the image I have when I see the adults at our Remembrance Day parade gently encouraging their charges to step forward on behalf of our football club, or brownies or scouts and place their wreath on the war memorial.

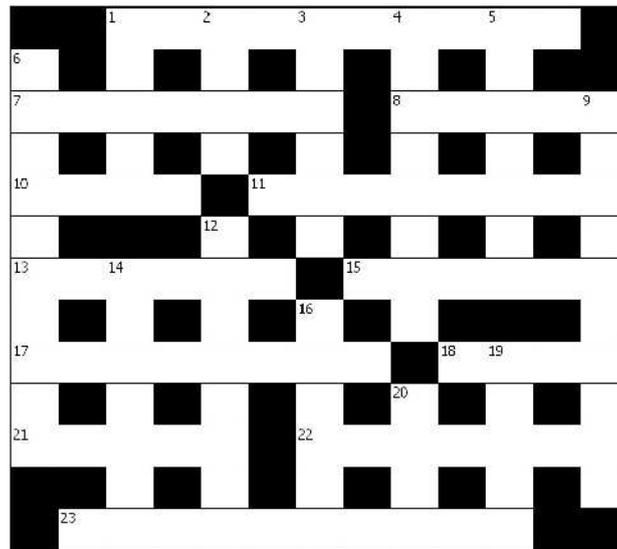
That's an image that cuts across not just a few thousand miles of the most barren (and now war-torn) landscape on the planet but 57 years of an incredibly full life. Back then, the last thing I imagined I'd be doing a lifetime later was carrying the responsibility for representing the interests of those fabulous wreath-laying kids and their parents who promoted such vivid memories of not just a very different landscape but a VERY different world.



We're lucky living in Highley.

Dave Tremellen

Puzzles for December



Crossword Clues

Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14ñ15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith ____ (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Solutions on page 33.

Down

- 1 '____ and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as __ as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19ñ20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 'Offer your bodies as living _____, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ____ his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Wordsearch



Solutions on page 23

Highley Gardening Club



The Annual General Meeting of the Gardening Club will be held on 12th January 2022 in the Wilkins Close Meeting Room.

Please contact Donna Pont tel 862227 for further details

All are Welcome!

WI Update

*Jack frost was in the garden, I saw him there at dawn .
Dancing round the bushes and prancing on the lawn
He wore a cloak of silver , a hat all shimmering white
A wand of glittering stardust and shoes of moonbeam light.*

By John Smeeton

Welcome December, a month of lights , snow and feasts; A time to make amends and tie up loose ends; to finish what you started and hope that wishes do come true. Time to rock a red lipstick, listen to cheesy old tunes, and wonder if you can still find the decorations in the attic.

Indulgence being the theme every year, let's make a change and make it all about kindness. Take a mince pie to a neighbour; wave or say hello to all you meet; deliver cards by hand, and add a couple extra for folks you've yet to meet in your street. Try random acts of kindness everywhere you go. I promise it makes you feel all tingly.

We celebrate our Christmas WI with a meal at The Down Inn, Bridgnorth - a time to share a giggle and a glass of fizzy before we part till January.

We look forward to 2022, with a full programme. New members are always welcome, to start a new year with new friendships and fun activities .

Any enquiries to our secretary, **Mrs Eunice Williams 01746 861613.**

Recipe of the Month

Our members' Recipe of the Month is for the coming busy days when time is of the essence - just 25 minutes from start to finish!

Mincemeat Pinwheel

Ingredients

- Frozen puff pastry
- Jar mincemeat
- 1 egg beaten

Method

1. Preheat oven to a high temperature.
2. Unwrap the pastry and spread the mincemeat across the pastry.
3. Roll the pastry into a log and cut 2-3cm slices.
4. Place them flat onto a baking tray and glaze with an egg.
5. Cook in the oven for 10 minutes.
6. Enjoy warm or cold.





Have a go at Sudoku

answers on page 23

Easy

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

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Medium

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

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Christmas Lunch

Due to ongoing COVID we will not be holding our annual Christmas Lunch in the Parish Hall this year, but if you are alone or a struggling family this Christmas, we'd be happy to hear from you. You are invited to order a super traditional Christmas Lunch delivered to your door on Christmas Day! We'll also need to know of any special dietary needs.

There is no charge for this. Please fill in and return the form to 26 Witley Gardens or ring 01746 861722 and speak to Gay or Jim as soon as possible.

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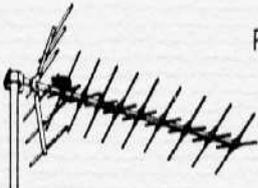
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Alan Honeybourne writes

Christmas Crackers

Ellen, the Vicar's daughter was looking rather worried when she met Nipper, Sam and Mick the Masher returning from the pub.

"I am glad I met you", she remarked. "I wonder if you can help. You know we usually hire a clown for the children's Christmas party. He tells jokes and performs little tricks. Well, he is ill and we really need someone to tell jokes and perhaps a comedy routine". She looked hopefully at Nipper.

"We three will do it", volunteered Sam immediately.

"I am so grateful", she smiled.

Masher, however seemed startled. "Hardly my line", he muttered, but Nipper was looking thoughtful.

"I'll try and think of something " he offered.

Nipper had a rather restless night. "Neither Sam nor the Masher are really cut out for comedy, but I could do some conjuring tricks and do my King Arthur joke".

The next day Sam said, "I shall read a comic poem and Masher and I will rehearse a dance". Nipper who had intended to keep the pair in the background as much as possible groaned. "I think perhaps time's too short for that", he commented. "You can be Santa and hand out toys and the Masher will be the Christmas elf". Since the Vicar's daughter had already promised to dress as a fairy, at least they had the characters for the main part.

All went well, with Nipper doing his conjuring tricks and producing eggs out of one of the twins ears which was greeted with enthusiastic applause. "Now I'll tell you a little story", began Nipper. "You have all heard of King Arthur and Merlin his court magician". They agreed they had. "Well, one day they were having a party near the water slide at Alton Towers. They were waited on by a fairy who did the job very well.

"What should I give her as a reward?" asked Arthur.

"Well, give her a tip" suggested Merlin.

So the King seized the fairy and threw her down the water slide. The indignant fairy shook her wings dry and waved her magic wand. Poor Arthur immediately turned into a large frog. "What did I do wrong", he croaked.

Merlin began to sing, "It's the wrong way to tip a fairy. It's the wrong way you know". It was, of course, the tune to 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. Nipper encouraged them to sing and they all bawled lustily.

cont'd.....

Santa made his entrance accompanied by The Masher and fairy Ellen. Since he had tried to light a cigarette half his beard was burnt off. What's more, The Masher had emptied a fire bucket over him. Nipper rose to the occasion.

"Santa goes so quickly to get round the world that the friction sets his whiskers alight. Luckily he came down through a rain cloud which put them out".

"For heaven's sake" he whispered. "Start handing out the toys".

All went well until the last item.

"Now the Christmas elf will hand the fairy her Christmas gift".

The Masher handed Ellen a large bottle of whisky! Swiftly Nipper snatched it back. "Wrong pocket you fool", he hissed. The Masher fumbled and produced a box of chocolates.

"Who is the whisky for?" asked the twins who missed nothing.

"It's for Santa. "He needs warming up after his cold trip".

"Our mother says a hot water bottle is better", argued the terrible twins.

"I bet your father puts his money on the whisky", grinned The Masher.

Sharing the bottle afterwards with his pals Nipper chuckled. "I reckon we deserve this".

Ellen came across. "Father has opened his special old brandy and he has invited you three over to the vicarage for some refreshment".

"Perhaps you three would do the entertainment next year", suggested the old gentleman. "Maybe", hastily put in Nipper before Sam could speak. "Though of course we are pretty busy at that time of the year".

Alan Honeybourne

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January—December 2022.

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Highley Primary School's:

Frost Fayre 2021

Highley Primary School Fundraising Group would like to say a very big 'Thank You' to St Mary's Charity Shop for the **£403.00** donation to their funds. This gift is greatly appreciated and will benefit the children of Highley School.

The Group are busy organising this year's new "**Frost Fayre**". Unfortunately, last year we could not hold our annual Christmas event. This year we are going to hold a "Frost Fayre" on **Saturday 11th December 2021**. The event will be held at within the school grounds between 12pm to 3pm.

The people of Highley will be able to enjoy a variety of games and tombola's, whilst purchasing handmade gifts and beverages, including: hot dogs, crepes, teas/coffees, cakes and mulled wine. Santa will also be making an appearance on our special day!

Alongside the Fayre, we will be holding a raffle with some amazing prizes being donated by local businesses and individuals. Raffle tickets can be purchased at anytime before and on the day of the Fayre. If you require any tickets, please contact us on highleyschoolfundraising1@gmail.com. If you can help with any donations for the tombola's (we are looking for bottles of alcohol, chocolates/sweets, and women/men beauty products), please email to arrange a suitable collection time.

We are very much looking forward to seeing the Highley community at our first ever "Frost Fayre" on Saturday 11th December 2021, 12-3pm.

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Thought of the month - Chris

As you are well aware, the last few weeks have been dominated by the 26th Conference of the Parties (UN Climate Change Conference). There were some good outcomes; that science has finally become a key player in the decision making, and the results of the discussions were covered well in the media. Whilst it has demonstrated that our leaders can't always be relied upon to make sensible choices about the future of our planet, it has shown that there is a building momentum behind the positive, green changes that are taking place.



We simply cannot continue to treat our atmosphere as the dumping ground it currently is. Fossil fuels have had their day, and it's time to stop extracting them. I don't need a world leader to tell me that. I know that I can make massive changes in my own life to reduce or eliminate carbon (transport, diet, energy use, ethical consumption). Some of these will be uncomfortable to start with, maybe awkward to talk about with others. However, in the UK, these changes and sacrifices will be minimal compared with the hardships in store for others across the globe: droughts, wild-fires, devastating storms, mass migration and famine to name a few. It's not just humans either. The biodiversity crisis and climate change are inextricably linked. When my children look back on the next 40 years and ask me what I did to stop both, I want to have some pretty good explanations.

Christmas present ideas - Julian

Unless you have asked someone what they would like for Christmas, don't buy them something for the sake of it. Make something instead! There are a lot of ideas out there on the internet. Buying an ethically produced food product is a great idea too. Or if you are asked what you want, ask for a donation to a good cause. If you have to buy something, consider buying things second hand - it's much better for the environment and you can get some great bargains out there. Let's try to remove this country's stigma behind second hand items.

Christmas dinner - Roslyn

We normally have a whole turkey for Christmas dinner, however this year we are going for a vegetarian wellington as the centre piece, with all the trimmings. I worry that it will change the feel of Christmas, but my children don't give it a second thought. Changing your lifestyle or family tradition is difficult, but not impossible!

Highley Companions—the next chapter

Elaine Moore writes

It's been a little while since I wrote my last article about our lovely group but that doesn't mean that we've not been doing anything. In fact, its been busier than ever with one thing and another. since we started back in July.

Firstly may I say a big “thank you” to the ladies from one of the Church home groups who knitted some wonderful coloured blankets for our Companions to use and also for the £50 donation given to us. We have a couple of ideas where this money can be wisely spent to benefit our Companions Our new blankets had their “inaugural” use on our first boat trip as it was a bit chilly and they were much appreciated.

Secondly, because we recognised that our Companions had missed out on so much during lockdown and their carers needed an extra bit of “me” time, we slotted in some extra “adventures” on the weeks when we didn't meet for our regular sessions in the Parish Hall.

We went on a couple of boat trips aboard the “Ernest Thomas” on the Staffordshire/ Worcestershire Canal with some of our members and, as well as enjoying seeing the wildlife on the canal bank and having some lovely fish and chips, they enjoyed just being together and having a good old sing song and a chat! We are always made so welcome by the crew.

/ Cont'd on page 35

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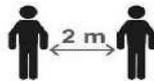
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Crossword Solution from page 15

		T	A	B	E	R	N	A	C	L	E	
S		A		O		A		B		U		
A	B	S	A	L	O	M		I	N	C	A	S
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I				T		H		H		N		D
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www.shropshire.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/

Highley Companions

.../cont'd from page 27



We celebrated our 4th anniversary at the beginning of October and had a lovely party and celebration cake, despite some of our members being absent. It was great to see everyone joining in and enjoying themselves, especially when they put on police helmets and joined me in singing The Laughing Policeman .

We ventured out at the end of October and had a beautiful two-course lunch at The Eagle and Serpent in Kinlet. We were made very welcome and it was a really enjoyable time together. They did laugh at me though when I was standing at the bar, as I could

hardly see over it! I think I'll have to take a child-step next time!

We have gradually seen a small number of new people join us at our fortnightly meetings in the Parish Hall over the last few months for one reason or another, but as always we are careful to integrate them carefully as to not overwhelm those with us already who are suffering from memory problems like dementia so keep our numbers at a reasonable level. We always encourage partners of members who have passed away or gone into nursing homes to still come to our meetings as we feel that they are still part of our "family" and they really enjoy coming.

Our trained volunteers who work tirelessly alongside me - and who, to be quite honest, I couldn't do without, -help to make sure that when our lovely Companions are with us they have a really enjoyable time joining in with our planned activities, singing, talking about the old days and having a lovely lunch together.

Our sessions are fun! It gives their carers a well earned break, which I know they need. Living with someone with dementia is hard going and it means such a lot to the carer to know that their loved one is safe, and happy whilst in our care.

We are looking forward to sharing the next chapter of our Companions journey with you in January with more photos. If anyone needs more information on Highley Companions then please contact myself by telephone on 861431 in the first instance so that I can take some details.



Elaine Moore

December 2021

Christmas Services

Virtual services available online www.stmaryshighley.co.uk

Sunday 5th December	10am Holy Communion	St Mary's Church, Highley
Sunday 12th December	11am Informal Group Service with Communion	St Mary's church, Highley
Wednesday 15th December	7pm Christmas Carol Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
Saturday 18th December	4pm Crib Service,	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
Sunday 19th December	10am Christmas Communion with Carols	St Bartholomew's Church, Glazeley
	7pm Carol Service	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
Monday 20th December	7pm Carols by Torchlight	Lincoln Fields, Billingsley
Friday 24th December	4pm Nativity and Crib Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
	11pm Midnight Service	St Mary's Church, Highley
Christmas Day	10am Family Service	St Mary's, Highley
	10 am Holy Communion	St Peter's Church, Chelmarsh
	10am Holy Communion	St Mary's Church, Billingsley

There will be NO services on Boxing Day—Sunday 26th December 2021

Happy Christmas Everyone

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		Prayer/Study Groups Ladies Prayer 11am –1pm St Mary's Church Contact Val Smith 861966 valandkeiths@aol.com	Zoom 7pm onwards Contact David Poyner d.r.poyner@aston.ac.uk	9pm Zoom Night prayer Contact David Poyner
			Next Copy Date: <u>10th December</u>	