

February 2021

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THE PARISH OF
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

HOLY TRINITY • ALL SAINTS' LUDDINGTON • ST. HELEN'S CLIFFORD CHAMBERS



TRINITY TIMES



Lives changed through God's love

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND



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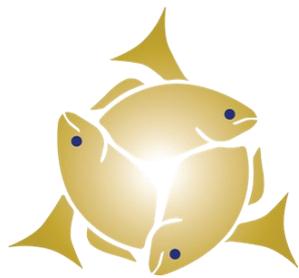


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David Ellis feels that now is the time to bring his series *Finding Faith* to an end. The team at Trinity Times extend a huge *thank you* to him for all his hard work over the years. Hopefully we will see some articles from him in the future.

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Remember we love to receive articles and photographs for the magazine which can be sent to the e-mail address below. However, we reserve the right to edit anything that is sent to us and the editor's decision is final. Please note that views expressed in Trinity Times are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Parochial Church Council.

The next magazine will be the **March 2021** edition

The copy date is 12 February

If any item is left until the very last minute, or received after the copy date, there is no guarantee that it will be able to be included in the magazine.

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#HolyTrinityonsocialmedia   

Front cover :- *Holy Trinity Church taken at 5pm on New Year's Day, January 2021*
by Sue Green

Holy Trinity Team



Revd. Patrick Taylor
Vicar



Revd. Steve Jarvis
Associate Vicar



Revd. Kay Dyer
Associate Priest



Phil Harper
Children & Families Minister

NEW SIGNS OF HOPE

Whilst looking for some bright and encouraging events to look forward to in February, I found the Dark Skies festival in North Yorkshire. It seems the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Parks, remain some of the darkest places in England, and with increasing light pollution, people are seeking out places where they can still see the true wonder of the stars. The South Downs might also be the venue for a greater appreciation of the night skies this year.



Of course, as Christians we do not worship nature as some other belief systems do, but we do worship the creator of the universe. I am reminded of Abraham who was promised by God that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars, and in the desert places the sky can seem even more full of stars than elsewhere. So, he must have been overwhelmed by that promise at the time and would be even more amazed if he knew how many descendants he has by now!

In Spring last year, for the first time in many years, many people out for the daily walk they were allowed during lockdown, re-discovered the wonder of nature, as plants, trees and flowers began to come to life before their very eyes. The birds' song seemed louder and the air fresher than ever before. Sometimes we do not realise what we have gradually been losing, as we have more and more power to shape the world to suit the lives of human beings and forget about the balance of nature.

I was grateful last December to see the Royal Institute Christmas Lectures on BBC 4, covering the subject of our world, in a wonderfully visual and practical way that enthralled the young people in the virtual audience. They were truly excited to learn about the ocean currents, the geology of our planet and the effect of volcanoes on our atmosphere. The demonstration of the practical use of hydrogen as a pollution free energy source was so encouraging, as the scientist predicted that one day some of the young people watching would be able to fly to see their friends on other continents in hydrogen powered aeroplanes.

But what can we do nearer to home, perhaps in our own backyards? One idea is to sign up to "backyardnature.org" where they say "There's a nature crisis in the UK. Plants and animals in our own backyards are under serious threat – a massive 40% of species are in steep decline."



Okay, it is aimed mainly at children, but many a young person has been encouraged to learn more about nature and gardening from their parents, grandparents, or Godparents! So, when we can get out and about again, especially in the open air, you might like to look at the free resources available on that website and help them with the fun missions that can be found there, as they become "Backyard

Nature Guardians."

If you do not have any children you can encourage, then even a window box of your own flowers might help to give the bees a treat.



Kay Dyer

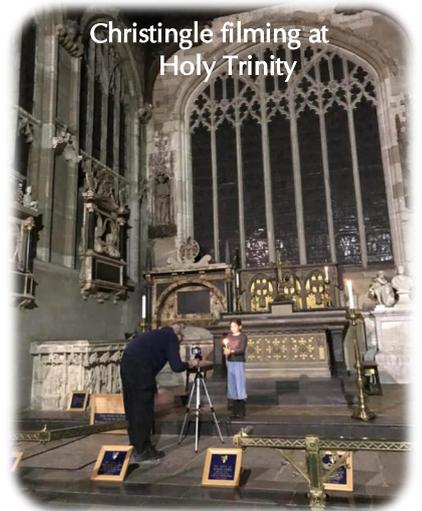


CHRISTMAS, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

We may not have been able to do Christmas in the “usual” way, but that didn’t stop us from still reaching out and engaging with a variety of people, possibly further afield than normal. It was a busy time for me working on both in person and online services, but worth the effort I think.

The Christingle service moved online and became a combined service for all three Churches in the parish. It was a real privilege to go to each

Church and film children holding their lit Christingles, to be merged together to form one video, which played as those at home lit their Christingles. Instead of making Christingles, I put together bags for people to make their own Christingles at home. It was encouraging the number of bags delivered to families who don’t usually attend one of our Churches but attend Holy Trinity Primary School.



Christingle filming at Holy Trinity



Christingle filming at St. Helen's



Christingle filming at Luddington



Christingle kit



Making Christingles at home



Christingle at home

Cont.....

Christmas, but not as we know it cont.....

The Big Nativity service also became a video online, with people encouraged to build up their own Crib scenes at home, using whatever they had available. In the service each year the problem I have is that the Church Nativity set doesn't include an angel, so I've improvised over the years, using decorations, cardboard cut outs and children. But this year I could use some digital magic to have an animated angel. The Big Nativity selfie wasn't as impressive this year as last year, but I thought it important to still record the moment.



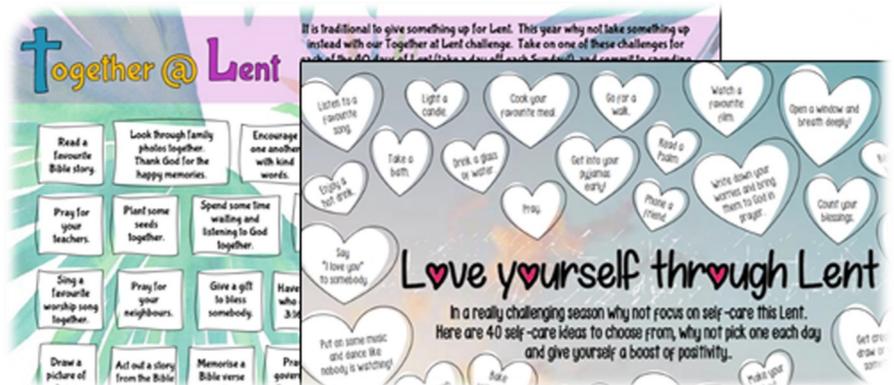
Digital Angel

Big Nativity selfie



Big Nativity selfie 2020

As you're aware we soon move from the Christmas season to Lent. I'm exploring different ways for families to spend this Lent, but one idea I would certainly recommend is from **Together@Home**. On their website they have two sheets to choose from and download with different things to do each day over Lent. One is called "**Together@Lent**" and has on it forty activities and challenges to take on during Lent. The other is called "**Love Yourself in Lent**" with forty self-care activities to show yourself some love this Lent. Ideas range from "pause and listen to God's voice" to "watch a funny video". This one is aimed at adults and I think is especially relevant this year. Lent can become either an opportunity for a spiritual based diet or a time to deny and punish ourselves, but with the additional stresses people are under, perhaps showing some care and love to ourselves is what God wants. After all, the stronger we are, the better we can serve and share God's love with others. Both the sheets can be downloaded from www.tath.co.uk/easter-resources.



Phil Harper

WORSHIP NOTES



At the time of writing, when public worship is suspended in the parish, it's difficult to tell what form our worship will take in February. However, we will find a way to mark the following two key dates in the month:

Candlemas (2 February but celebrated on Sunday 31st January)



We recall the occasion when Jesus was taken as a child to the Temple and he was welcomed as "a light to lighten the Gentiles". Traditionally this was the day when the church's candles for the coming year were blessed, hence the nickname "Candlemas", which is much less of a mouthful than the proper title of "The Presentation of Christ in the Temple"! This is the day when the Christmas tree lights are finally turned off, and we prepare for our journey following the Way of Jesus, which leads us to the cross.

Ash Wednesday (17 February)

Today we begin our forty day journey to Easter, which this year falls on 4 April. The sign of the cross in ash is a reminder of our dependence on God's grace and need for forgiveness and reconciliation. Lent is the equivalent for Christians of pushing the "restart" button on a computer: we go back to the essentials of who we are and what it means to follow Jesus and live as part of the Kingdom of God.



Patrick

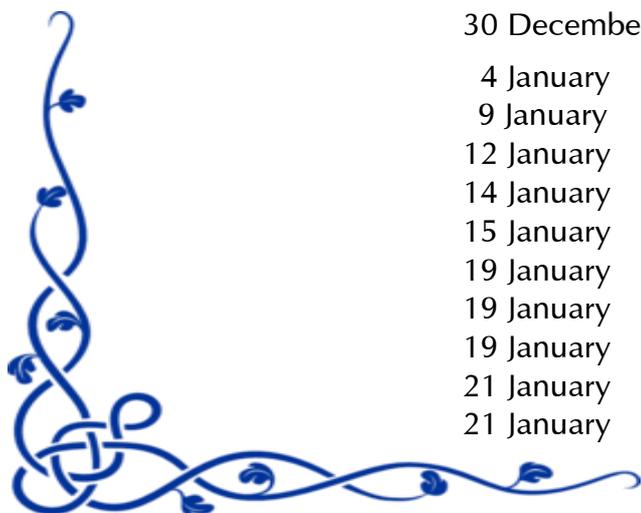
FROM THE REGISTERS - DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021

Christenings

6 December	Bianca Cranmer
6 December	Tracey Morris
13 December	Suzie Violet Rose
10 January	Kitty Camille Cunningham Warren

Funerals

7 December	Leslie Sydney Windsor
18 December	Danny John Henry O'Boyle
30 December	Keith Michael Randle Price
4 January	Robin Arthur Thrift
9 January	Maureen Wright
12 January	Derek Robert Lawrance
14 January	Jean Mary Savage
15 January	Charles Edward Clifford (Ted)
19 January	John Fletcher
19 January	Avis May Goucher
19 January	Mark Richard Batsford
21 January	Donald John Cotterill
21 January	Neville Charles Shannon





Parish Lent Course 2021 -on Zoom

This Lent comes as we (hopefully) start to move out of what has been one of the most challenging times for our society in at least a generation. It's a season when we are invited to journey with Jesus through the desert and we shall be offering a Lent course to complement our Sunday worship, as we make this journey together, but in very different circumstances this year.

We will be touching on subjects such as simplicity, silence, sorrow, truth-speaking and being led by the Spirit. The course will take place by Zoom and be led by our clergy team.

The sessions will run on Wednesday evenings, 7.30pm-9pm on the following dates:

24 February
3 March
10 March
17 March
24 March

More details of the course and instructions on how to sign up will be published in our weekly email bulletins, and then a link to the Zoom sessions will be sent to all participants in time for the first session.

We hope you will join us as we continue this challenging journey together.





WALK-THROUGH CAROL SERVICE

by Paul Lageu



Every Christmas, Holy Trinity welcomes hundreds of people through its doors. This year we can only fit in a socially distanced congregation of fifty-sixty. What on earth are we going to do? 'Hang on a minute lads, I've got a cunning plan' says Rev Patrick (mixing up some famous lines). 'Let's hold a simple walk-through Carol Service' (Note to Vicar: Next time you have a bright idea, feel free to keep it to yourself!). 'I just need a couple of Churchwardens to help organise it'. Step forward Helen Warrillow and Paul Lageu (Note to self: You were told at school not to put your hand up, why didn't you listen?).

This all sounds fairly straightforward, despite the government Covid guidance, and planning starts. Hang on a minute, here comes Lockdown 2! No problem, it will end well before Christmas. What's this? It's well into November and we start to hear about Tier Time - Son of Lockdown. We know that civil servants in London think that north of Watford 'There Be Dragons', but even they know that Coventry and Solihull are not in Warwickshire. Oh no, we're in Tier 3. It will be reviewed in mid-December. Will we be moved into Tier 6 (that's where you are shackled to your bed and the RAF drops meals through your window from a helicopter – that might not be so funny by the time the February Trinity Times is published!)?

Route Planning – Entry by North or West Door? West, of course, the most spectacular entry into Holy Trinity. Exit via the Priest Door or South Door? Priest Door isn't suitable as it leads out to an unlit path with tricky steps one way. However, South Door involves people doubling back through church, with pinch points (where people can't pass both ways at the same time) between the Choir Stalls and through the Rood Screen. Easy, recruit a couple of men from a road gang with Stop & Go lollipops. That's a plan then!

Queue length – A problem – the police and Council tell us that the queue can't extend outside the church grounds. How many people can we fit on the North path? How many people will attend? How do we avoid everyone arriving at the same time? Helen measures the path by strides and concludes it's one hundred metres from the North gate to West Door (Paul thought it was two hundred metres but he has only got little legs). Lots of complicated calculations later (the length of the path divided by (number of people per bubble [guess] x how much room they'll take up [guess] x how long it will take them to walk through church [guess] multiplied by the number you first thought of) we had a remarkably accurate answer ... we've no idea! OK, we better play it safe and have a booking system for Christmas Eve. Working on an assumption that the average booking will be three people (which later proves to be the case) we reckon on twenty bookings per twenty-minute period. The booking system goes live and within days we're getting close to being fully booked.

Volunteers – Will we get enough people to volunteer as Stewards to make this work, particularly as so many people are still understandably shielding? Why worry, those of our wonderful congregation who can, step forward and we have an embarrassment of riches. Those who haven't got a specific job can 'float', welcoming people and standing-in for stewards who need a break to warm up. As the Avon rises, 'float' might be exactly what they will be doing.

One hundred and one other things to sort but, in the end, we're almost there. Then, the week-end before, it's announced that the number of coronavirus cases is increasing and a new Tier 4 is being introduced. Cue summit meeting to discuss if we can still go ahead (unfortunately, unlike politicians, our summit was in wet and cold Stratford rather than the Caribbean or some other equally hot, exotic place). Yes, we can still go ahead but let's re-visit using the Priest's Door as an exit. Cue Helen and Mike extensively searching Amazon for outside lights (at least that's what Mike told Helen he was doing!). Result! We can order reasonably priced rechargeable lights which, in conjunction with additional lighting from Tony Guy, will light the riverside path. Go for it!

Cont.....

Walk-through Carol Service cont.....

Government announces that Christmas, apart from Christmas Day, has been cancelled. Will people start to understand that Christmas is more than a drunken, overeating, gift-fest?

Volunteer briefing 23 December in church – The weather has been awful all day. The river is rising. Despite the dreadful weather, everyone is there. Briefing notes and rotas handed out. Rev Patrick says a prayer and thanks everyone.

Christmas Eve – The rain has stopped. The sun is trying to force its way through the clouds. Although doors don't open until 3pm, our brilliant volunteers start to arrive at 2pm. We're lighting the North Path with LED candles in paper bags – prayers of thanks that it's not raining.

3pm – doors open – the church looks amazing thanks to the work of the flower teams, Steve's displays relating the story of the nativity and Tony Guy's lighting. The choir are singing as Patrick leads the Mayor & Mayoress through the church. Carol singers are entertaining people in the churchyard and the bells ring out. People start to walk-through the church. The vast majority of people who have booked have turned up, but because of new guidelines, the numbers in a booking are lower than expected, so passers-by are allowed in.



5pm – Doors close – The volunteers get stuck-in preparing the church for Christmas Day. Patrick swaps the nativity displays for new ones appropriate for tomorrow's walk-through Holy Communion service.



Christmas Day – It's a beautiful sunny, clear blue sky, day, even if the river is still rising. The volunteers arrive. Having been on duty on Christmas Eve, they know what to do and immediately move into action. Although the doors are due to open at 9.30am, the first person arrives at 9.20am, to beat the queue. They don't want to take communion, just have a blessing and to be in church on Christmas Day. A steady flow of people passes through church, including some who were just out for a walk and didn't realise that the church was open. Someone takes a photo, not of Shakespeare's grave, but of one of Patrick's displays about prayer, so they can remember it and use it in future.

11am – We close the doors. Our brilliant volunteers move into action and in short time have prepared the church ready for the 10am service on Sunday (just forty one hours away). Home in time to make sure that the turkey doesn't overcook and the roasties go in on time.

Was it all worthwhile – As I said at the very beginning, we can only fit in fifty-sixty people in a socially distanced service. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we welcomed nearly six hundred people into our church. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, some of it emotionally moving as people, coming into church for the first time in months, realised how much they had missed the spirituality and fellowship of being part of Christ's community.

Additionally, if only one of the people who came through our church, who doesn't normally come to church, is inspired to come back and investigate our faith further then it has all been worth the work.

Finally, a very special Thank You to Helen Warrillow for her untiring work throughout. It couldn't have happened without her.

God Bless to all our readers.

Photographs by Elizabeth Dixon

GETTING READY FOR CHRISTMAS 2020



Briefing the Walkthrough Volunteers.



Preparing the Chandelier.



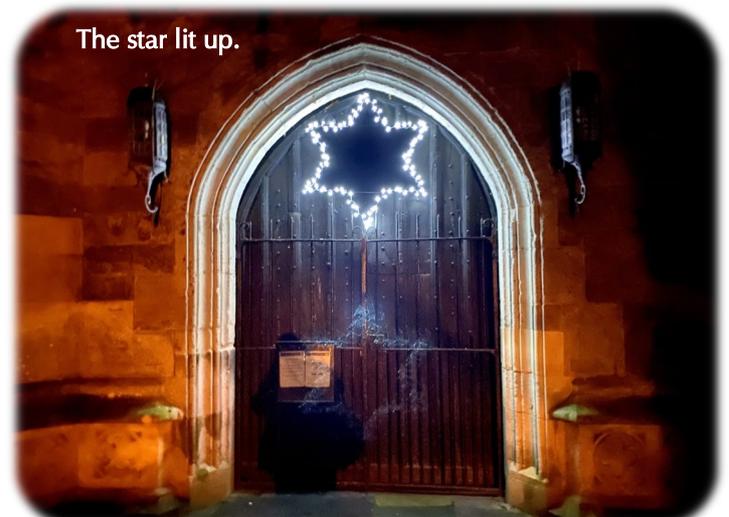
Hilary creating one of the flower displays.



Steve putting up a display for the Christmas Eve walk through.



Patrick putting up the star.



The star lit up.



Holy Trinity with its Christmas star.



*Tom and Verity Clare
With news from Uganda.*

Dear friends,

“Christmas again! Wow, I feel like we just had Christmas. This year feels like it’s been Christmas, March, bleurp and then Christmas again!”

I don’t know if this resonates with you at all but for us, Ezra’s response to a local friend’s mention of Christmas summarised neatly our thoughts about how this particular year has gone.



Four happy boys out for lunch for Eli’s birthday, top to bottom: Joel, Simeon, Eli and Ezra.

For us, the significance of March came not just in the dramatic spread of coronavirus but also in our long-anticipated move to Uganda. In some ways it feels like we’ve been here a lot longer than eight months and our arrival feels like a distant memory. So much has changed, not just in our lives but across the globe.

Our overwhelming feeling, when looking back over the last year, is that of gratitude. We are so thankful to God for bringing us not just to Uganda, but to this specific city, neighbourhood and home, at just the right time. We are beginning to feel properly settled here and are so thankful that we get to call this wonderful place home.

Out for a walk above Kuluva hospital on a typically sunny day.



Tom is grateful for God’s great blessing in the early days of his working role here and particularly for the wonderful Heather Sharland with whom he is working in the health department. He currently spends one or two days a week visiting the six rural health centres which the diocese supervises, training staff and running doctor’s clinics. The rest of the week he spends in the office on a wide range of work such as enacting externally-funded health projects and considering schemes such as health insurance and blood pressure screening to improve care.

COVID cases have not exploded exponentially as they might have done here, praise God (a total of 150 deaths now registered), but it is very much in the community just as people are starting to tire of following the appropriate precautions. Do pray for ongoing motivation for people to take COVID seriously and for God’s protection at this time.

For me (Verity), so much of my life revolves around our four boys. One of the biggest joys over the last couple of months has been to see them interacting most afternoons with a group of neighbourhood boys who come to our compound to play. It feels so good to be able to share our space and resources and to see how happily the boys now play alongside each other.



Joel and Simeon playing the 2020 version of “mums and dads” including putting on their masks to go to work.

Eli in particular really struggled over the first few months to engage with the local community and it's so wonderful to see him joining in with games with the local boys. Ezra is in his element playing football most afternoons and loves having an abundance of friends to play with. Simeon seems very content being part of the community here and Joel continues to charm local shopkeepers and market sellers with his few words in Lugbara. His speech in general has taken off in the last few months, which we thank God for, as when we left the UK he had a hearing aid linked to his cleft palate and there was concern that his speech might be affected. We're also very thankful for the friends we've made in the sizeable expat community here.

Like anyone, we have hard days and easier days. After a particularly stressful week of home-schooling the boys, with little time for walks in the neighbourhood, I (Verity) was walking to the local market one evening. I had a few good chats with some of our shopkeeper friends along the way, and just had a feeling of affirmation from God saying “You belong here.” Not necessarily in a forever sense, but for now, we are legitimately part of this community that God has chosen for us to belong to. The constant shouts of “Mundu!” (“foreigner”) remind us that we are different, and that won't change, but we can still belong. A few minutes later, in conversation in Lugbara with the market ladies, they told me they'd given me a Lugbara name – Ayikoru, meaning “joy” because I'm apparently always happy when I buy from them. I was hugely humbled but also laughed a little inside as my behaviour over the week at home had been quite the opposite of joyful. God has his timings though and it was another affirmation of our belonging here.

In John 1:14 we read how “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us”. We'll often re-read this chapter at this time of year and the combination of God's majesty and humility always blows me away. It leaves me both humbled and challenged. Humbled that the God who made the whole world has given us “the right to become children of God” (1:12). At the same time, I'm challenged that just as Jesus came to bring God's love and light to a world in darkness, as his children, we are called to do the same. For us this means sharing his love with the people of Arua that they would “receive him and believe in his name” (1:12).

The view towards the end of the long drive north from Kampala that tells us we're nearly home.



We feel very privileged to be a part of God's mission in this corner of Uganda and we know that we couldn't do it without the prayers of everyone back in the UK. Thank you so much for your support over this last year, we are so thankful for every one of you.

Blessings,

Tom, Verity, Ezra, Eli, Simeon and Joel

WALK-THROUGH CAROL SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS EVE

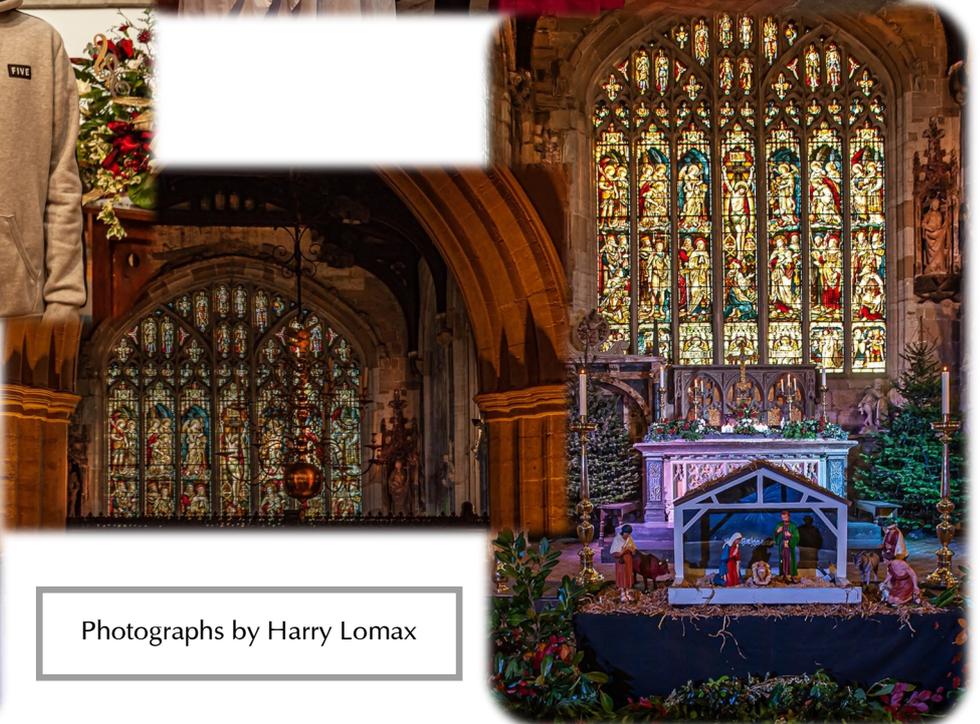
24 DECEMBER 2020



Photographs
by
Harry Lomax

WALK-THROUGH SERVICE CHRISTMAS DAY

25 DECEMBER 2020



Photographs by Harry Lomax

LET'S MAKE MORE MUSIC

Our Director of Music, Douglas Keilitz talks to Judith Dorricott
about his plans for

A CHOIR SCHOOL AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

If flying in from the United States and being separated from his wife Nancy for five months wasn't hard enough, Douglas Keilitz has had to put his exciting vision for music at Holy Trinity Church on hold for a year, because of the coronavirus pandemic!

Douglas's ambitious plan is to create a **Choir School** at church which will provide a musical education for the children of the Stratford community who want to join. This programme will particularly benefit children from disadvantaged backgrounds, those with little access to musical education, and those whose families are not involved in church activities at all. The children will learn to read music, have voice lessons, sing in the choir, receive after-school tutelage and homework help, and perhaps play an instrument in one of the bands or ensembles. Douglas is aiming for a Choir School of about thirty participants meeting in small groups after school on different afternoons. Exposing children to choral music, Douglas knows from professional experience, is not only a training ground for future musicians, but also an introduction to lifelong church participation.



Douglas is already talking about these plans in the local community and, through contacts with local schools, hopes to encourage children from the age of eight upwards to be involved. A website and brochures, along with media publicity and active recruitment, will spread the message and he hopes this venture will be up and running by the autumn.

Of course the composition of any choir changes constantly as boys and girls move through their school years and often leave home for further education. The top-liners (younger members of our choir) have been meeting for choir practice once or twice a week but when pandemic stopped rehearsals, some youngsters drifted away. Trinity Voices, run by Rebecca Mills, the Assistant Director of Music, trains younger children but, once again, they have not been able to meet for months. Douglas hopes all this will change soon and is determined that the children will find the programme fulfilling and fun!

Douglas and Rebecca are particularly busy as they are lacking an organist at the moment, but they are sure that with an organ scholar, some adult volunteers and help from the clergy, this exciting programme is feasible.

One of the main problems is finding a suitable dedicated learning space. Acoustics and the physical layout of the church make it difficult to rehearse there, and the Parish Hall is not always available. Douglas needs to set up any rehearsal space rather like a classroom with a range of visual images and progress charts to teach, challenge and encourage young choristers, but, with no dedicated venue this extra work is very time-consuming. An example is the wonderful music library belonging to the church, which is valued at over £60,000 but which is stored in diverse locations. Douglas tells me that it is like trying to cook a meal in your kitchen, only to find every day that all the ingredients are kept in different rooms, or even different houses!



Of course there are financial considerations too. Our Music Directors are planning to encourage sponsors and donations to back the ambitious plans, as well as organising fund-raising and applications to charitable bodies.



As well as the proposed Choir School, Douglas has other concerns, one of which being the present condition of the organ. It is probably the most important pipe organ in Warwickshire and will need some attention in the near future. One of its issues is the persistent "wind-noise" emanating from the organ while it is not being played, so that the organist must turn the organ off during sermons, prayers and other quiet moments in worship services. Douglas is busy with his plans: as well as the Choir School and repairing the organ, he is keen to re-start Soundbites with Friends of the Music as soon as possible,

establish a Stratford-upon-Avon Early Music Festival, and produce choral, organ and YouTube recordings (some of which are already available). The spring and summer sound busy!

I suggested that Douglas may have regretted accepting this post considering the present circumstances. However he disagrees, pointing out that wherever he may have been working this past year, the pandemic would have curtailed his activities - churches in the United States of America are struggling with exactly the same problems. Douglas emanates an air of positivism and optimism for his plans for the future and no doubt this "can-do" American attitude will bring some wonderful choral and instrumental music, in many styles and genres, to our church very soon.

Judith Dorricott



PCC report: Tuesday 19 January 2021 by Ruth Poulten

Three exciting 'capital projects' were the focus of discussion at Holy Trinity's first PCC of 2021.

There are plans to develop the North Transept, Parish Centre and Bier House which are all in early stages, with many ideas and challenges to consider.

Treasurer Mike Warrillow asked members to feedback their thoughts before any further progress is made. "We've got a great opportunity to really think about how we'd like to use some of our spaces in the short term and also far into the future. We have a pressing need for sixty choristers to rehearse, robe and store various items, we'd like to create a 'Song School' and increase our outreach work with disadvantaged pupils from local primary schools and we'd also like to broaden our offering to the general public.

"The Bier House requires the most urgent attention and is a little more complex as it's a listed building. The Parish Centre also needs refurbishing to bring it up to modern standards and potentially a change of layout to meet community needs. We've got some research to do on that - to establish exactly what those community needs are and how Holy Trinity can support them."

Mike also reminded PCC that Holy Trinity's year end financial position was around £125K in deficit.

PCC also listened to presentations from the village churches of All Saints' Luddington and St. Helen's Clifford Chambers, with a review of their current challenges and opportunities for the future. It was agreed that the PCC would seek to foster greater mutual support between the three churches that make up the parish.



PCC report cont.....

News in brief

PCC approved a number of recommendations:

- Holy Trinity to join the Diocese and the church nationally in becoming carbon-net zero by 2030. Our electricity is now from 100% renewable sources.
- To progress an 85K bid to the Heritage Lottery Grant's Cultural Recovery Fund.
- To refurbish a number of church doors and appoint an expert furniture restorer to do so.
- To adopt new PCC 'Terms of Reference'.

The next PCC meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7.30pm.



The World Day of Prayer, held every year on the first Friday in March has, inevitably, fallen victim to Coronavirus this year.

The service has been prepared by Christian women of Vanuatu, an archipelago of eighty islands in the South Pacific, two thousand miles east of Australia. A place most of us have probably never heard of.

The theme from Vanuatu is to 'Build on a Strong Foundation'. The verses of the Bible reference conclude the Sermon on the Mount in the gospel of Matthew. When we build on the rock which is Christ, we know that we are on a strong foundation that will stand the tests of time and remain secure. This seems particularly appropriate in these difficult times.

At the time of writing, the committee here in Stratford are undecided about whether we can reschedule the service for later in the year. There is so much uncertainty, it is impossible to plan. However, we can join together in prayer on 5 March in the safety of our own homes and remember the people of Vanuatu.

If anyone would like to make a donation to World Day of Prayer, you can do so by visiting the website: www.wwdp.org.uk, text to 70085 using the phrase 2021WDP and then adding the amount of the donation, or by sending a cheque to WDP, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 2RR. The offertory from the Day of Prayer is their only source of income.



Anthony Woollard's

WINDOW ON THE WORLD



I had hoped to avoid writing about the pandemic this month – but can hardly ignore it, as the biggest immediate issue for our community and our world. Yet it is almost impossible to say anything new, when the situation changes from week to week. We now have the blessed hope of vaccinations, which some of us have already received. But we do not yet know when a clear end might be in sight. So I want to concentrate on two aspects which are likely to continue for a long time. Alongside the problems of **physical** health there are those of **financial** and **mental** health.

A lot of us have relatively secure jobs or (especially) pensions, and it is hard to put ourselves in the shoes of those who do not. But in a town like Stratford, so dependent on the hospitality and cultural industries, many people are unusually vulnerable – and that affects us all, if only because it feeds through to the health of the rest of the economy and our common life. I know an actor who found himself temporary work as a delivery driver, and more recently in a care home, but is now busking to pay his rent. He is one of the more fortunate ones – gifted and resilient. Others will have it worse. Our foodbank is more vital than ever. And we can help, too, by supporting those local businesses who have managed to keep going against the odds.

Even those who are financially secure can face mental health problems, and many people are fearing an epidemic of depression and so on. I have already seen signs (including, to a limited extent, in myself) of how easy it is to “lose it” – a bit, or a lot – in times of such unfamiliarity and uncertainty. What must it be like for a teenager, perhaps deprived of face-to-face teaching at school, and (maybe even more seriously for his or her wellbeing) unable to make, keep, and enjoy life with friends in all the usual ways? And the parents of such teenagers, and many other younger people also, must face stresses which some of us find hard to imagine. Then there is the isolation of many elderly people..... We cannot produce a magic route back to normal social interaction, which may be a long time coming. But everything that can be done, within the regulations, to draw us closer together in every sense, is worth doing, and desperately needed. The courage and ingenuity of those who have worked to keep church fellowship alive and purposeful, not just online but in person, have contributed not only to our own spiritual life, health and mission, but to the mental health of the community as a whole.

On the surface, Stratford is a blessed place. We seem, at the time of writing, to have avoided the worst of the pandemic new wave, and the many gifts displayed by our residents (including such things as a pretty good local newspaper) have carried us through. But there is a shadow side to this, the invisible costs both financial and mental, of which we are barely aware. And of course there are many parts of the country, let alone the wider world, where the situation is far graver.

As we rejoice at the signs of hope – especially the new vaccines – which so reinforced our Christmas joy and will add to that of Easter, we know that we still have a Lent to go through, and, for many, it may be longer and deeper than we can yet imagine.





Marvelling at the beauty and complexity of forests.

Forests cover just over 30% of the global land area and are part of our lives in more ways than we might realise. When we drink a glass of water, write on paper, take medicine for a fever or build a house, we do not always make the connection with forests but all these actions (and many others) are linked to forests in one way or another.

However, some of the benefits of forests are invisible: they work quietly in the background, secretly cleaning our water, filtering our air and protecting us from climate change. More than a billion people rely on them directly for food, medicine and fuel, and forests are home to many of the world's poorest people.

Forests vary hugely throughout the world, from the stunted conifers close to the arctic circle to the lush abundance of tropical rainforests, as well as the temperate forests that give so much pleasure with their autumn colours.

Of course it is not only the trees that make a forest, but the many different species of plants and animals that depend upon one another and live in the soil, understorey and canopy. Forests are home to more than three quarters of the world's terrestrial biodiversity (the species and genetic material that underpins life on earth) including: 75% of bird species, 68% of mammal species, 80% of amphibian species, millions of insects plus over 60,000 different types of tree. The conservation of the world's biodiversity is thus utterly dependent on the way in which we interact with and use the world's forests.

Unfortunately, forests and the biodiversity they contain continue to be under threat from agricultural expansion and other unsustainable levels of exploitation causing deforestation and the fragmentation of areas of forest.

The net loss of forest area has increased substantially since 1990 and scientists believe that the global forest area decreased by 178 million hectares between 1990 and 2020 - an area about the size of Libya. In addition, more than 100 million hectares of forests are adversely affected by forest fires, pests, diseases, invasive species, drought and adverse weather events.

Forests, their sustainable management and use of resources are key to sustaining life on earth and combating climate change. In our prayers let us remember the wonder and beauty of forests, and those that work to protect them.

Sarah Hill

"This is one of a number of articles in Stratford Methodist Church's "Green Corner" this year advocating the importance of planting trees and of protecting the forest in order to rewild our planet."

"Sarah Hill, a long standing member of the church's Green Group, is a regular contributor to Green Corner and has been working on the conservation of the orchard in Anne Hathaway's Cottage as part of the Stratford Transition Town project."

Stratford Goes Wild WhatsApp Group



Stratford Town Council agreed a Climate Emergency Motion last year and set up a group to see what we could do to reduce our carbon footprint and enhance biodiversity of the town.

We are aware that there are many residents in the area who would like to grow wild flowers, and have environmental ideas. There are also community groups that may be a little more ambitious, but are unsure of where to start.

We therefore thought it would be helpful to set up a group, where people can share their ideas, experiences and offer advice. The group has been set up on WhatsApp and is called *Stratford Goes Wild*. We have already added a number of people and the group is growing steadily.

If you are interested in joining this group of people with shared interests and can chat, seek advice and share your ideas, plus benefit from others' experience, please contact Cohl Warren-Howles at Cohl.Warren-Howles@stratford-tc.gov.uk.

Many thanks

Cohl

Councillor Cohl Warren-Howles
Avenue Ward
Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council
Tel: 07947 841133
Web: www.stratford-tc.gov.uk



Christmas flowers in Holy Trinity Church.

PARISH CONTACTS

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Clergy Team

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Associate Vicar	The Revd Steve Jarvis	01789 296 590	steve@stratford-upon-avon.org
Associate Priest	The Revd Kay Dyer	07857 821 168	kay@stratford-upon-avon.org
Children & Families Minister	Phil Harper	07791 005 696	phil@stratford-upon-avon.org

Assistant Ministers (Hon)

The Revd John Hall-Matthews	01789 414 182
The Revd Diane Patterson	01789 266 453
The Revd Jenny Rowland	01789 415 548
The Venerable Brian Russell	01789 266 316
The Revd Roger Taylor	01789 778 471
The Revd Graham Wilcox	01789 551 759

Staff

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Parish Administrator:	Sarah Cushing	01789 266 316	
Director of Music:	Douglas Keilitz		douglas.keilitz@stratford-upon-avon.org

Church Wardens

Paul Lageu	01789 298 302
Rhod Mitchell	07983 985 474
Gill Price	07963 453 386
Helen Warrillow	01789 298 928

Village Contacts

All Saints', Luddington	Jane Beeley	01789 269 618
St. Helen's, Clifford Chambers	Pat Woolvin	01789 264 256

Other Contacts

Head Server	Chris Cornford	01789 295 066
Bell Ringers	Charles Wilson	01789 295 467
Bereavement Support Team	Gina Lodge	01789 204 850
Safeguarding Officer	Jane Armitage	01789 297 652
Trinity Ladies	Gina Lodge	01789 204 850
Electoral Roll Officer	Tim Raistrick	01789 509 885
Friends of Shakespeare's Church	Alan Haigh	01789 290 128
Holy Trinity in the Community	Steve Jarvis	01789 266 316
Lay Chaplains	Keith Payne	01789 266 316
PCC Secretary	Elizabeth Roome	01789 565 743 Mobile: 0790 531 4751
PCC Treasurer	Mike Warrillow	01789 298 928
Friends of the Music	Josephine Walker	01789 266 316
Home Communion	Steve Jarvis	01789 266 316
Stewardship Officer	Chris Kennedy	01789 299 785
Trinity Players	Ursula Russell	01789 204 923
Trinity Tots	Phil Harper	07791 005 696
Pastoral Contact Co-ordinator	Gillian Nunn	01789 415 830
Welcome Team	Helen Warrillow	01789 298 928
Sunday Coffee organisers	Tina Hillyard	01789 551 739
	Diane Edwards	01789 296 396

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2020's Christmas Card Amnesty raised, with Gift aid, a total of
£1,613.25.

A huge "Thank You" to all who contributed.

£1,000.00 has been sent to our Christian Mission Partners in Uganda and the remainder split between CAP (Christians Against Poverty) and Lifespace Trust.

2019 raised, with Gift Aid, a total of
£1,259.90

Can we make it even more in 2021?

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GOODBYE ANDREW AND MIRIAM

We said a fond farewell to Andrew and Miriam Dow on 10 January, who are moving to Moreton in Marsh. The move was due to happen in January, although it has now been delayed until February.

Andrew's ministry in this parish has greatly enriched us, especially his teaching which always took us deeper into the scriptures. He has a particular gift of nurturing discipleship and has done much to support our young families. As Secretary to the PCC, Miriam worked tirelessly to deal with all the administration required, especially in preparing reports for the Annual Meeting. Both of them have also been very active in the wider town during the ten years they have lived here. Andrew was Chaplain to two Mayors of Stratford-upon-Avon and was the official photographer for the town's Neighbourhood Plan. Miriam was Secretary to Stratford in Bloom and has worked part time in the Town Hall. Because of Covid restrictions we were not able to make a presentation in a service, as we would like to have done. However, a socially distanced visit to their front doorstep enabled Patrick to hand over some gifts to thank Andrew and Miriam for all they have given to us over the years. A video of the presentation was made and shown at the end of the online service on 10 January (this can still be viewed on our Holy Trinity You Tube Channel). Andrew and Miriam's departure means a large gap is left in our community, but we wish them every blessing for a safe move and for their future life, thankfully not too far away.

