

December 2021/January 2022

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# TRINITY TIMES



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 THE CHURCH  
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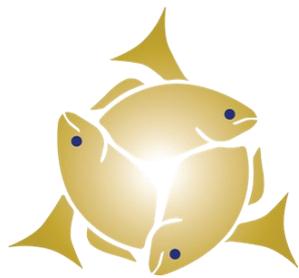
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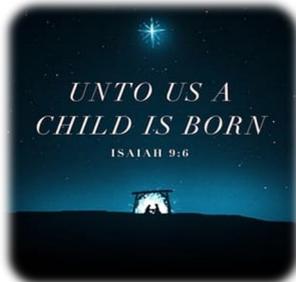
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**HAPPY CHRISTMAS EVERYBODY**



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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 **February 2022** edition  
**The copy date is 14 January**

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.

Please send any contributions of articles or pictures as attachments to:  
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#HolyTrinityonsocialmedia



Front cover :- Gaga Yarn-bombing keeping trees warm

## Holy Trinity Team



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Revd. Kay Dyer  
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Phil Harper  
Children & Families Minister

## CHRISTMAS REFUGEES



When the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod.

Matthew 2: 13-15

*The Flight Into Egypt, Paper Cutout, Phillip Schwartz*

We all likely consider ourselves very familiar with the Christmas story... however, there are a couple of key episodes to Jesus' infancy narratives that often remain overlooked as we become distracted by the "cuddly" bits. These episodes contain uncomfortable accounts of state sanctioned genocide, and a couple with a new-born child having to escape from their home country and seek political asylum within a neighbouring state. As they often fall in between Sundays, the accounts of Herod's decision to murder every child under a year old, and the Holy Family having to flee, become refugees and seek asylum in Egypt until the threat Herod posed to Jesus had passed away with the despot himself, are easy to miss within the excitement of the presents, the food and the round of family visits. However, we should never ever forget that such stories will be the lived reality for many families this Christmas season.

Sadly, within human history, for as long as there has been civilization there have been refugees. They flee their homes for many reasons, but in the end it is about survival. Today we are witness to a huge refugee crisis within various parts of the globe. Thousands upon thousands of men, women, and children are fleeing for their lives. Many of them die en route and many, once they have reached safety, will be deported or detained in camps.



Those seeking refuge need our help and our compassion, not scorn or resentment for asking to be accommodated safely in our country. Foremost, it must be remembered that whilst the hate may be loud against those seeking refuge in the UK, it comes from the usual very vocal minority. Most appeals end up overrun with donations pretty quickly, and that is a far greater reflection of the British public than those choosing to hold bigoted views. I would hope as Christians, we would be prepared to extend an empathetic and sympathetic unconditional to all who find themselves fleeing persecution and threats upon their lives, or those of their children. Should we not be treating all as though they were the Holy Family themselves? The words of adult Jesus should always remind us that what we do for the least of these, we do for him!

*Cont...*

Welcome Here  
Stratford-upon-Avon



JustGiving

A positive example of this locally in Stratford-upon-Avon is the excellent support provided by “Welcome Here” to Syrian and Afghan refugees. Welcome Here is a charitable organisation involving many from the faith community, including from our own parish. They are part of the vital support within host areas within the UK in helping refugees to rebuild their lives and achieve their full potential in safety and dignity. They also work to raise local awareness and promote positive attitudes towards those who have been forced to flee their homes as a result of war, conflict or persecution.

Fortunately, in the UK, we will never likely experience the trauma of having to flee our home or country for our own safety and survival. This Christmas, let us make point of paying full attention to the less glamorous parts of the full Christmas story, and let us be mindful of all those for whom, as with the Holy Family, such circumstances will be their traumatic reality.

With every blessing for the Christmas Season

*The Revd Steve Jarvis*

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## INTER-FAITH SERVICE ON REMEMBRANCE DAY - 11 November



Below is the sermon preached by the Rev'd Steve Jarvis on this year's Bible Sunday. It has been requested by those who were in the congregation to be printed within Trinity Times. So, here it is...



Christians need Jesus and God, but do we really need the Bible?

Before you label me as a heretic, here's why I think there may be good reasons to answer both yes and no, to this question.

Most Christians didn't have access to their own copy of the Bible until long after the invention of the Gutenberg printing press in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. For most of the past 2,000 years people would gather in small groups to hear a community Bible being read.

The books and letters that make up the Bible as we know it were only agreed in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century (393 Synod of Hippo). Early churches only possessed a few sections, and they'd trade with other churches to gain a more complete understanding. With or without the entire Bible, these people were often extremely committed Christians...often even willing to die for their faith.

They knew that it was important to read as much as they could because it was an incredibly useful tool they could use to learn more about God and Jesus. As it says in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is *useful* for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

But somewhere along the line some Christians began treating the Bible as some kind of mystical talisman with magical qualities. It became idolised - the words started to become confused with "the Word" (or the Logos), which is Jesus himself, and not a book. As it says in the opening of the Gospel of John "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*"

The entire Bible may be inspired by God, and be inerrant, meaning that not *one jot or tittle* can be changed, but as with any document our interpretations may vary greatly regardless of whether or not we change anything. There are currently thousands of churches interpreting the Bible in their own way, resulting in many different meanings being derived from the same text.

Much of the Bible was passed down through oral tradition for long periods before being written down – translated from spoken Aramaic into written Greek before going through subsequent translations into other languages. We can claim that every word should be taken literally but that often wasn't the way the writers intended the Bible to be read. Some biblical concepts that made perfect sense to readers immersed in the culture at the time of writing are completely lost on readers today. The same goes for words that have subtle variations of meaning in the original Hebrew/Greek, but don't translate well into languages like modern English.

To put it into perspective, here are a few examples of expressions we use today that can't be taken literally. Most people know what they mean, but only because they're part of our cultural understanding. For instance, if I say *the sun is setting* we all understand what's happening, but we also know that the sun really isn't doing anything. Factually, the earth is rotating, making the sun appear to drop below the horizon, but we don't take it literally.

Other expressions like *laughing your head off* or *having egg on your face* may make perfect sense to us as 21<sup>st</sup> citizens where English is our first language, but to someone learning the English language, or reading this 2,000 years from now, the meanings may not be quite so obvious.

Another thing some Christians say that needs to be challenged is *"I read the WHOLE Bible"* as if giving the First Testament and the New Testament equal weighting somehow makes them better Christians.

Jesus made it clear that the First Testament is important when he said in Matthew 5:17 *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* However, he also said several times *"You have heard it said, but I tell you..."* whenever he's about to teach something that's different from what's found in the First Testament. The law said *"An eye for eye, and a tooth for a tooth"* but Jesus said *"Do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also."*

I don't want to accuse anyone of intentionally ignoring Jesus, but it's sometimes tempting to do a run around him to find a sound bite in the First Testament that will support our agenda. This kind of thinking is often encountered when talking to people about Jesus' political teachings and non-violence. Reading the First Testament to learn about how God interacted with people prior to Jesus coming on the scene is a good thing. Using it as an optional guide for how to live when we don't like what Jesus has to say to us in the Gospels is...not Christian!

Jesus understood the First Testament Jewish Scriptures better than anyone who ever did or ever will walk the face of the earth, and his teaching takes the entirety of First Testament Scripture, as it was, into account. If we're constantly flipping back into the First Testament, or to Paul's epistles, instead of paying attention to Jesus, it's as if we're saying *"I don't think you really know what you're talking about Jesus, so I'll just ignore what you're teaching, and follow what's elsewhere instead."*

So, do Christians really need the Bible?

If we're going to use it the way it was intended to be used...yes we do. But if we're using it in a way that pulls us away from the teachings of Jesus, it may actually be doing more harm than good.

So, what were the ways in which Jesus read, used and applied the Bible – for shockingly, his was a hermeneutic that many Christians are taught over and over again not to use.

**1. Jesus didn't stick to what "the Bible says," but read it with a creative flair that had little if any connection to what the biblical writer actually meant to say.**

We may have been told to respect the Bible by "sticking to the text" and not go beyond it. Jesus did the opposite.

For example, in the book of Exodus (chapter 3), God speaks to Moses from a burning bush. This being the first encounter, God introduces himself (verse 6): "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." In other words, "The one speaking to you, Moses, is none other than the God of your ancestors, and I've got a very big job for you: go down to Egypt and bring my people out of slavery."

Enter Jesus. We find him in Luke's Gospel (chapter 20) debating a religious party known as the Sadducees. One of their beliefs is that after you die, you're worm food. Other Jews, including Jesus, were of the Pharisee party. They believed that God will one day raise the dead. So, to prove his point - that the Sadducees were wrong and God does indeed raise the dead - Jesus recites the verse from Exodus above, where God introduces himself to Moses.

There isn't a "deeper meaning" to Exodus 3:6. God is just introducing himself to Moses. It's not code for "I will raise the dead." But what Jesus does here in Luke's Gospel, however strange it seems to us, was par for the course in early Judaism. Luke tells us some of the scribes were very impressed with Jesus's ability to handle the Scripture so well!

For Jesus, as for his fellow Jews, the Hebrew Scripture was ready and willing to be handled in creative ways to yield new and unexpected meanings, that go far beyond what those words mean when they were first written.

*Cont...*

## 2. Jesus felt he could "pick and choose" what parts of the First Testament were valid and which weren't.

When attending an Evangelical church in the 1990's, I was taught in no uncertain terms that the Bible is a package deal. Believing what the Bible says isn't like being at an all-you-can-eat buffet where you "pick and choose" what you like. Yet, that's what Jesus did.

For example, we have the famous Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus on a mountain speaking to those gathered around him. Several times he quotes something from the Law of Moses and then contrasts what the Law says ("you have heard it said") with a teaching of his own ("*but* I say to you").

We shouldn't lose sight of the larger idea here: Jesus is acting like Moses. He is on a *mountain* declaring to the people what God *commands* of them. The "Sermon on the Mount" isn't really a sermon at all. For one thing no one was bored listening to it. Jesus's words were a public declaration that, now that he was here, there were going to be a few changes made.

At some points in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus simply *expands* what Jewish Scripture said--like murder being more than not just physical, but also emotional (anger) and verbal (insults). But Jesus also claims that some parts of those scriptures are over and done, and it's time to head in a new direction. Moses may have allowed for divorce for all sorts of reasons, but Jesus said divorce was only allowed in the case of unfaithfulness.

God told Moses that Israelites were to make solemn oaths to one another (sort of a binding contract), but Jesus said the true people of God shouldn't make any oaths. "Let your word be 'Yes, Yes or 'No, no'; anything more than this comes from the evil one." God told Moses that crimes were punished an "eye for an eye" (to insure the punishment fit the crime) but Jesus said to turn the other cheek rather than seek restitution. In doing so, they would be truly following the will of God.

Jesus taught that some of what was attributed to God having said in the First Testament was inadequate, and real obedience to *God* means it was time to move on.

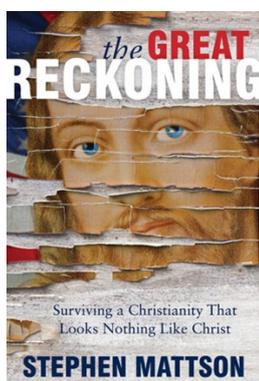
## 3. Jesus read his Bible as a Jew, not as a Christian.

As much as this might not need to be said, it does. When we watch Jesus read and use the Jewish scriptures, we are watching a Jewish man reading his sacred text. His creative flair and even his "debating" with his own Bible, and going in a different direction, were part of what it meant to read the holy scripture in Jesus's Jewish world.

That doesn't mean Jesus didn't revere the Jewish Scriptures. He did. But he revered it in Jewish ways, not Christian ways, and certainly not in the evangelical ways, as many of us may have grown up with.

And that may be the hardest lesson for many Christians to learn, particularly for those of us who grew up and came from Evangelical backgrounds - that Jesus did not agree with things about the Bible that we were asked to take for granted and consider non-negotiable--like "stick to the text" and, "God's word is eternal and never changes."

If we pay attention to Jesus, we learn a vital lesson: our own Bible as it is now, shows us that getting the Bible right isn't the centre of the Christian faith. Getting Jesus right is. Stephen Mattson author of "*The*



*Great Reckoning: Surviving a Christianity that looks nothing like Christ*", puts it this way.

*"Many Christians fail to grasp the basic point of the Bible: that is to follow Jesus. Unfortunately, many Christians love the Bible more than Jesus. They say things like "a biblical worldview" and "we're a bible-believing church" and "we believe in the bible." But in reality, we should be having a "Christ-like worldview" where we "act like Jesus" and "believe in the words and actions of Jesus." For let us not forget, even Satan quoted the Bible in an effort to tempt Jesus.*

*People sometimes say that the Bible is like a love letter to humanity. But imagine if someone gave you a love letter and instead of loving that person you actually just*

*obsessed over the letter.*

*How to Read the Bible cont...*

*Can you picture someone becoming so obsessed with the love letter yet ignoring the person who sent it. This is what Christians are doing with Jesus. They're using the bible to avoid Jesus.*

*You should love Jesus more than you love the Bible, and it's more important to be Christ-like than it is to be "biblical."*

So, do we need the Bible – yes, we most certainly do!

However, the Bible is only our compass to help keep our faith fixed on Jesus, God's chosen one, the living word made flesh, as our north - the Bible itself is not the goal! Amen.

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## NEWSLETTER FROM TOM AND VERITY - our CMS partners

We wanted to send a quick update to keep you updated and inform your prayers...



*Simeon and Joel enjoying story time with their cousin Abi and Auntie Hannah*

We managed to get away with just the one period of self-isolation after Simeon's positive COVID test and we went ahead with our plans to visit family in the Peak District, Bucks and Bournemouth during half term. It was such a blessing to spend some quality time with them all, having had to delay due to Sim's positive test and the boys all had a really special time with their cousins and aunts/uncles.

We've now booked flights to return to Uganda on **Friday 12 November!** It is exciting to imagine ourselves returning, but also impossibly hard as we face the reality of leaving family and friends for the second time. Our flight leaves Heathrow at 06:30am and gets in at around 11:15pm Uganda time (8:15pm UK time).

We'd appreciate prayer for Ezra (8) and Eli (7) particularly, who have both been struggling emotionally with the goodbyes so far (thus far it has been uncles, aunts and cousins, with some more aunts, school friends and grandparents still to come this next week).

They are finding it hard to get their head around the idea that we could be called somewhere else when all our family is here. We'd really appreciate prayer for them to know their identity fixed in God and for us to guide them wisely.

Pray also for Verity and Tom as they bid farewell to Chris, Verity's Dad, and Tom's parents until they will hopefully be able to visit Uganda next year.

Thank you so much for all your prayers, we'll send another update email to let you know we've arrived safely in Arua (some time shortly after 15 November when we expect to have arrived there).

Blessings,

Tom, Verity and the boys

## Christmas for the young and young at heart

Anybody who knows me, will know that I love Christmas and I'm very excited about celebrating Christmas as a church family this year. We are planning to have a **Christingle Service** in church on **Sunday 12 December at 5pm**. As well as giving out Christingles we'll be raising money for the Children's Society and the work they do supporting vulnerable children. On Saturday 11 December at 11am in the Parish Centre we'll be making the Christingles for the service. I'd really appreciate any help with making them, and helping me taste test the sweets! For those not feeling comfortable in a church service, last year's recorded Christingle will still be available for people to watch on our YouTube channel.



All Saints', Luddington are having their Christingle on Sunday 12 December at 4pm and St Helen's, Clifford Chambers have a Christingle and Nativity on Christmas Eve at 5pm.



As you may have seen elsewhere in the magazine, we haven't got a Big Nativity Service this year in church. Instead, on Christmas Eve we are having a **Walkthrough Carol Service 3:30-6pm**, like last year, but making it bigger!! Children (and adults) are invited to come to the walkthrough dressed as a favourite nativity character. As you walk through the nativity story you can take photos of yourself amongst large figures of the nativity characters. Last year's recording of a Big Nativity is still available on our YouTube channel, if you'd like to watch it as

you build up your own crib scene at home. I'm putting together a team of people to help build the large figures, if you would like to be involved drop me an email [phil@stratford-upon-avon.org](mailto:phil@stratford-upon-avon.org) This is for people of any ages, you don't have to be an amazing artist, just happy to join in. There is also an element of construction to the figures and making them, so if that's more your thing please also get in touch.

Claire, the Children's Worker from St James' Alveston, and myself, have recorded a **Christmas Bible Adventure Box Service** for December. In January one will be available continuing the Christmas Story as we prepare for visitors to the new born baby. The services have stories, a thought, songs and craft. If you know a child who would like a free box with everything needed for the service, they can be collected from me on a Sunday morning, or I can deliver them to you if you contact me at the above email. The services will be available on the church Facebook page and YouTube channel.



However, you celebrate Christmas this year, I hope it is peaceful and enjoyable and I wish you all a very merry Christmas. I'd like to thank all those who have helped with our work with children and families this year and I look forward to us all working together in the coming year.

*Phil Harper*

## SERVICES IN DECEMBER

### Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon



#### 5 December - Advent 2

10am - Parish Eucharist - *Signs of Hope 2*  
5pm - Holy Communion

#### 12 December - Advent 3

10am - Parish Eucharist - *Signs of Hope 3*  
5pm - Christingle

#### 19 December - Advent 4

10am - Parish Eucharist - *Signs of Hope 4*  
5pm - BCP

#### 23 December

7.00pm - Service of Lessons and Carols

#### 24 December - Christmas Eve

3.30-6pm - Walkthrough Carol service  
11.30pm - Midnight Mass

#### 25 December - Christmas Day

8am - Holy Communion (with carols)  
10am - All Age Eucharist

#### 26 December - St Stephen

10am - Parish Eucharist - Said Service

### St Helen's Church, Clifford Chambers

#### 5 December - Advent 2

9.30 - Holy Communion

#### 19 December - Advent 4

6.00pm - Service of Lessons and Carols

#### 24 December - Christmas Eve

5pm - Christingle Service

#### 25 December - Christmas Day

9.30 - Holy Communion



### All Saints' Church, Luddington

#### 12 December - Advent 3

9.30 - Holy Communion  
3.30pm - Christingle

#### 19 December - Advent 4

3.00pm - Service of Lessons and Carols

#### 25 December - Christmas Day

9.30 - Holy Communion

# Christmas Services 2021



## Sunday 12 December

3.30pm	Christingle Service	All Saints'
5pm	Christingle Service	Holy Trinity

## Sunday 19 December

3pm	A Service of Lessons and Carols	All Saints'
6pm	A Service of Lessons and Carols	St Helen's

*There will not be a 9.30am service in either of the villages on this day*

## Thursday 23 December

7pm	A Service of Lessons and Carols*	Holy Trinity
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## Friday 24 December -Christmas Eve

3.30-6pm	Walkthrough Carol service	Holy Trinity
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*No booking required -just turn up at any time and enjoy the wonderful atmosphere of carols, candles, Christmas decorations and the crib. Suitable for all ages.*

5pm	Christingle Service	St Helen's
11.30pm	Midnight Mass*	Holy Trinity

## Saturday 25 December -Christmas Day

8am	Holy Communion (with carols)	Holy Trinity
9.30am	Holy Communion	St. Helen's
9.30am	Holy Communion	All Saints'
10am	All Age Eucharist*	Holy Trinity

## Sunday 26 December -St. Stephen

10am	Said Holy Communion	Holy Trinity
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\*Indicates service will be live streamed via Facebook and then a recording later available on Youtube.



## SUNDAY SERVICES IN JANUARY



### Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon

#### 2 January - Epiphany

10am - Parish Eucharist - *The Epiphany*  
5pm - Holy Communion

#### 9 January - The Baptism of Christ

10am - Parish Eucharist - *A Celebration of Baptism*  
5pm - Choral Evensong

#### 16 January - Epiphany 2

10am - Parish Eucharist - *The Gifts of the Spirit*  
5pm - BCP

#### 23 January - Epiphany 3

10am - Parish Eucharist - *One Body, Many Parts*  
5pm - Evensong with Healing

#### 30 January - Candlemas

10am - Parish Eucharist - *Prepared for God's Service*  
5pm - Special Service

### St Helen's Church, Clifford Chambers

#### 2 January - Epiphany

9.30 - Holy Communion

#### 16 January - Epiphany 2

9.30 - Holy Communion



### All Saints' Church, Luddington

#### 9 January - The Baptism of Christ

9.30 - Holy Communion

#### 23 January - Epiphany 3

9.30 - Holy Communion

#### 30 January - Candlemas

9.30 - Holy Communion



## Trinity Times Subscriptions for 2022



The Trinity Times Editorial Team are pleased to announce that from February 2022 (the first issue of the year) we will once again be offering readers the option of a printed copy of Trinity Times. The cost of a subscription for the year will be £10 for 10 issues. A small number of individual copies will be made available for purchase in the Church Shop at £1.50 each. Electronic copies will continue to be available, via the Newsletter and Church website, free of charge.

For subscribers living within the Stratford town boundary, we are intending to deliver magazines to their home. Those living outside the town can either collect their copies in church, after a Sunday service, or from the shop, when open. Alternatively, they can have them posted to their home address (there is an additional annual charge of £10 for this service, to cover the cost of package and posting).

If you would like to subscribe for a printed copy of the magazine:

- ◆ If you are reading this online, you can click on the link at the bottom of this article, which will take you to the online form and payment. This form can also be accessed via the Trinity Times section on the church website.
- ◆ If you do not have online access, you can send a cheque (made payable to 'Stratford-upon-Avon PCC') or cash addressed to Trinity Times Subscriptions, Holy Trinity Parish Office, Old Town, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 6BG. Please include details of your name, address and phone number.
- ◆ If you are happy to continue reading the magazine online but would like to make a donation, in appreciation for receiving a free copy, this can also be done using the form accessed via the link below. All donations will go towards helping to fund the work of the Parish of Stratford-upon-Avon.

[Please click here](#) to subscribe to Trinity Times for 2022 or to make a donation.

Paul Lageu

Trinity Times Editorial Team

## Take a Tour from your Armchair!



As part of their new website, the Friends have commissioned a “virtual tour” of Holy Trinity, allowing you to take a trip around the church from the comfort of home. The aim is, having tried it out, people will be keen to see the real thing.

Try it yourself! [www.shakespeareschurch.co.uk/explore/#VirtualTour](http://www.shakespeareschurch.co.uk/explore/#VirtualTour)

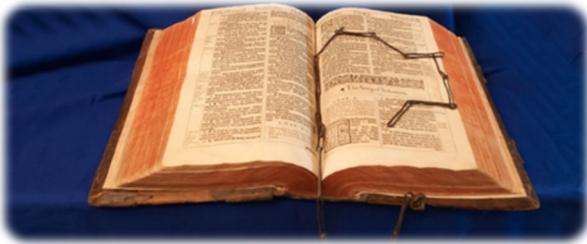
# Conserving the Church for Future Generations



The Friends of Shakespeare's Church have undertaken three projects to ensure that the church we all love is enjoyed for many years to come.

## Restoration of King James Bible: Cost £15,000

Chained to the lectern in church this is the Bible from which Shakespeare heard the scriptures read, and probably read from himself.



The Bible now needs light conservation and repair which will be conducted up until February 2022. When it returns, the Bible will be housed in a new museum grade case to improve the security and display environment.

The Friends are also planning an outreach event for younger supporters in February half term, together with a presentation on the work that has taken place.

## Conservation of Medieval Doors - Cost £2,000

Holy Trinity is fortunate to have medieval doors dating from the 15th century.

Time and weather have not been kind to these and all need urgent attention to remove the layers of dirt that accumulate over decades of exposure to the weather and to seal and protect them. This work is planned to be completed by year end.

## Restoration of the North Transept: Cost £150,000

The transepts were built in 1210 and are the oldest parts of the church. The North transept is the last part of the church to undergo major restoration.

The first phase is to stabilise the exterior structure of the North transept itself. Our latest architectural survey of the building in 2015 recommended conducting a programme of masonry repairs to replace eroded stonework and a repair is recommended before serious irreversible damage occurs. The project will stabilize the outer walls, replacing crumbling stones and ensure there is no risk of collapse. The cost to complete this vital conservation work is £150,000 and is scheduled to be complete by year end.



If you would like to join the Friends or make a donation towards this work, please visit the Friends website on [www.shakespeareschurch.co.uk](http://www.shakespeareschurch.co.uk)

Mike Warrillow

## Welcome Here

by Roger Matthews, Stratford Quakers

It is five years since the first Syrian refugees arrived in Stratford-upon-Avon as part of the Government's official Resettlement Scheme. The first family came from a refugee camp in Lebanon at the end of November 2016, the second a week later from a refugee camp in Egypt.

There are now eleven Syrian families in the town – over fifty people, including twenty children. They have settled into our local community: the children go to school, some have jobs, and two older men have a joint allotment. Two of the younger ones have started university courses, while others are studying to enable them to take up educational opportunities.

Back in 2016, a number of local churches, including Holy Trinity, were active in preparing to welcome these refugees to the town. This initiative led to the establishment of *Welcome Here*, a voluntary organisation that aims to welcome and support refugees in Stratford. *Welcome Here* has organised welcome parties as new families arrive, arranged informal help with English from qualified teachers, provided lifts to hospitals and doctors, and helped with various challenges – mostly arising from the benefits system!



This summer, as the UK and US left Afghanistan, saw new challenges. Nearly one hundred refugees from Afghanistan arrived at a local hotel in August. Many had no more than the clothes they stood up in, and Warwickshire County Council asked *Welcome Here* if it could find clothes and other necessities, such as prams for babies and toys for children. *Welcome Here* volunteers collected and sorted a large number of donated clothes, and the organisation also ran a fundraising appeal to enable it to buy things, like underwear, that could not be obtained second-hand. Through the work of *Welcome*

*Here* and other local supporters, the refugees at the hotel have been supported through their early weeks in Britain.

Now Afghan refugee families are being rehoused in Stratford. The first to arrive came not from the local hotel but from a hotel elsewhere in the country, where there had clearly been less volunteer support. Help with clothes and other items, which had already been provided to the local refugees, was necessary, as well as more general assistance with moving in and settling down. More families are expected to be resettled in the town over the coming months.

The number of refugees in Stratford is tiny when seen in the context of refugees worldwide. But so many people in Stratford have been willing to help through gifts, donations and – most importantly – friendship. Local people continue to strive to make refugees welcome here.

## SOUNDBITES

### For November and December

17 Nov. Eloise Yates and Alastair Moseley  
(Trumpet and Piano)

24 Nov. KES Young Musicians

01 Dec. Fosseyway Café Orchestra (U3A)

The next concerts will start again in February 2022.

We have had some splendid recitals this autumn, soloists and duos, young musicians and more mature performers. The audiences have been gratifyingly large, and often splendidly appreciative. We look forward to starting again in February and are grateful to Rebecca Mills for all her work in arranging the concerts and booking the players.

Josephine Walker Chair: Friends of the Music



## Social Events Relunched in 2021

As restrictions eased in April of this year, the Social Team appealed for more help in planning and organising events which would help the church family emerge from lockdown and enjoy fellowship together again. We are very grateful to four volunteers who are now playing an active role on the team:

Fiona Wilkinson, Beckey Barton, Marie MacDougal and Faith Piper.

Beckey Barton

Hi. I'm Beckey. I joined the social team at the beginning of this Summer. Having been a Youth Minister for fifteen years, I have gained a lot of experience in putting on myriad events, and I wanted to be able to put that experience to use. I felt prompted to get involved a few times when the need for more people was announced in church, but I held back because I know that my health will not allow me to do much of the physical work that is involved. However, I couldn't shake off the voice inside pushing me to volunteer. Although I can't help much physically, I have been developing my skills in graphic design for the last few years, so am able to help the team out with the publicity and anything needed for print. I am very much enjoying being part of the team.



Marie MacDougal

Hi. My name is Marie and my boys are in the choir. I joined the social team after attending a few bring and share lunches and a fun treasure hunt. I enjoyed the experience so much I wanted to become part of the team, so I approached them and asked if I could help. I have been welcomed with open arms, and it's a great team to be a part of. I feel it is really important, at the moment, not to lose touch with our community and the social team are working hard to keep things moving with plenty of ideas for upcoming events.

Faith Piper

Faith: I believe that God is with us in all aspects of our life and that includes in relaxation and fun. When, on behalf of the Social Team, Chris appealed for people with ideas to join them, I offered to give it a go despite physical limitations. But as someone who was introduced to computers on the BBC Micro (if you've never heard of it, you understand some of my problems), I would appeal for further helpers who enjoy admin or can provide some physical muscle to redress my imbalance - thank you.

Along with existing members, Hazel Tattersall, Richard Hartley, Julie Renfrew and guided by Phil Harper, we have put together a varied programme of events for 2022. We hope there will be something to suit all ages and tastes and look forward to having fun together next year.

I would like to thank Cathy Atkinson and Richard Hartley, who have had to withdraw from the team, for their valuable contribution.

Christine Cottrell



## THE BELLS OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

We were delighted to see that **The Ringing World**, the national monthly magazine for bell-ringers in Great Britain, featured a beautiful photograph of Holy Trinity Church on its front cover in October. There was also an excellent article inside the magazine about the church and all its features, as well as details of the bells and their history.

# SOCIAL EVENTS PROGRAMME 2022

SAT 8TH JANUARY  
FISH & CHIP SUPPER  
WITH BINGO



TUES 1ST MARCH  
Pancake event

SUN 5TH JUNE  
PLATINUM JUBILEE STREET PARTY



SAT 9TH JULY  
WIMBLEDON LADIES' FINAL DAY  
& STRAWBERRY TEA



SAT 16TH JULY  
BUTTERFLY WALK, CLIFFORD CHAMBERS



SEPTEMBER DATE TBC  
SATURDAY WALK IN LUDDINGTON



SAT 8TH OCTOBER  
HARVEST CEILIDH

For more information about our social events please contact Chris on 01789 204 273



SOCIAL  
EVENTS

HOLY TRINITY  
CHURCH  
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON





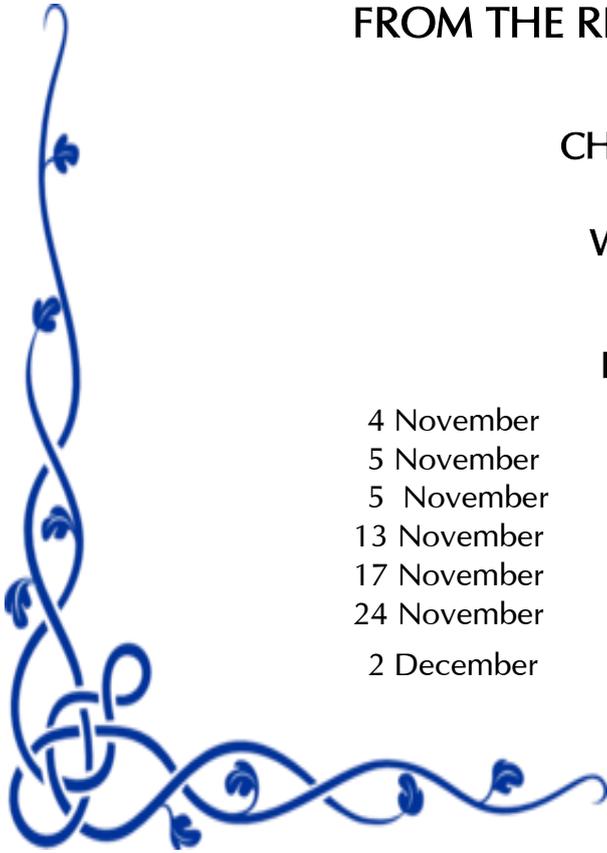
## FROM THE REGISTERS - NOVEMBER

### CHRISTENINGS

### WEDDINGS

### FUNERALS

4 November	Jane Farrington (aka Jean)
5 November	Ruth Foster
5 November	Avril Salmon
13 November	Freda Douthwaite
17 November	Pamela Hicks
24 November	Patricia Anne Ainsworth
2 December	John Victor Maybery



For unto us  
a child is  
born, unto us  
a Son is given, . . .  
And His name will  
be . . .  
Prince of  
Peace.

ISAIAH 9:6



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“Apocalypse (more or less) Now”. That was the message of the COP26 conference on climate change. A suitable thought for the beginning of Advent.

“Apocalypse” is an interesting word. We usually think of it as meaning “total disaster and destruction, the end of everything”. But it originates from the Greek word meaning “to reveal hidden secrets”. The nymph Calypso (same word), who appears in the *Odyssey*, is a Muse, someone who whispers secrets (and, in her case, sweet nothings) into the ears of artists, poets and others. West Indian calypsos are similarly to be seen as songs revealing deep truths, whether about politics, love, or like the anthem of the Windrush generation “London is the place for me”.

So, in Scripture, “apocalypse” is about revealing God’s purposes for creation at the end of time. We are told that this revelation may be accompanied by things like plague, fire and flood – disasters indeed - and we are seeing rather a lot of these right now! We are warned in the Gospels not to speculate whether these mean that the End is just around the corner, so I will not do so. But we are certainly encouraged to “lift up our heads” and be ready, and that is what Advent is all about.

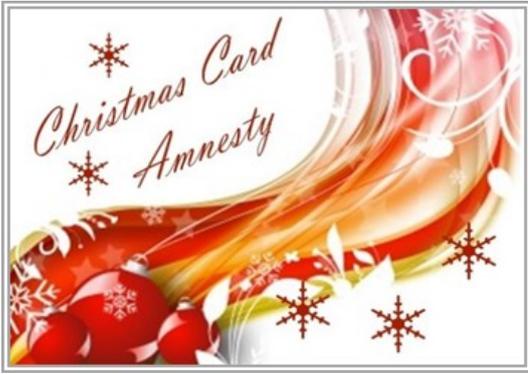
But there is more to it still. When Jesus was presented in the Temple, the event we remember at Candlemas, his mother was told that, with his coming, “the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed”. Maybe that is pretty frightening too! I suspect, though, that quite a few of us have found that events like Covid and the climate emergency have forced us to look into our own hearts and discover secrets there, and maybe even been more ready to share them with others. And all that can be painful – Mary was warned that “a sword shall pierce through your own heart also” – but eventually very healing.

That revelation can come at many times and in many forms. One side-effect of Covid has been the need to review our patterns of worship in this parish. The review of the new form of our Parish Eucharist is still ongoing – and more comments are welcome, even if you have commented already! Seemingly trivial, maybe, compared with the climate emergency. But if it makes people, individually and as a household of faith, ask what they believe about worship (and, equally importantly, just why they believe that), this too could be a time of revelation which may be painful for some but also deeply healing for the household as a whole.

Rather solemn thoughts as we approach the celebration of the world’s true hope and joy at Christmas. But the Christmas story itself is not without its solemnity and pain. We know, too, that Christmastide today is not a time of unalloyed joy for everyone, and there are many cases where it brings some uncomfortable household secrets out into the open.

And after all, as we were reminded by a rather memorable sermon on All Saints’ Day, the most fundamental message of our faith is that unexpected new life can arise out of tragedy, failure and hopelessness. As we look back on recent events in our world, not least COP26, that may be a truly vital message for ourselves and for all creation.





Notice of the Christmas Card Amnesty had unfortunately been omitted from the previous edition. This could not therefore proceed in its usual form. The Revd Steve Jarvis will write briefly in February about the charities chosen for our Christmas support this year.

We apologise for the omission of the Christmas Card Amnesty and an invitation to donate direct will be issued.

Keep watching the weekly, on-line, bulletin.

#### CHRISTMAS CARD AMNESTY.

Donations can be made via internet banking. The information you will need is:

To:- Stratford-upon-Avon PCC

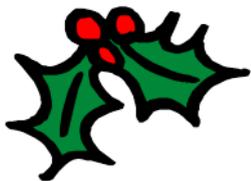
Sort code:- 40-52-40

Account number:- 00015844

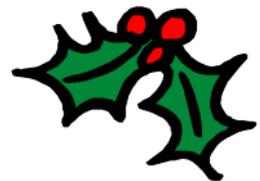
Reference:- CCA and your name

Alternatively make out a cheque to Stratford-upon-Avon PCC and send to the Parish Office. Please write on the back of the cheque that it is for the Christmas Card Amnesty.

The names of those participating in the amnesty will appear on the screens on Sundays in Advent.



## STRATFORD-UPON-AVON CHORAL SOCIETY PRELUDE TO CHRISTMAS



Stratford-upon-Avon Choral Society presents its Christmas concert on Saturday 18 December 2021 at Holy Trinity Church, Old Town, Stratford at 7.30pm. This will be a celebration, heralding the real start of Christmas week, with a programme containing some well-loved Christmas carols as well as some new music, with organ accompaniment by Douglas Keilitz. Readings will be given by our well-known thespian bass Tim Raistrick. The conductor is Oliver Neal Parker.

Tickets for 18 December Concert (£15 adults, £8 students) are available from choir members, on line at [www.stratfordchoral.org.uk](http://www.stratfordchoral.org.uk) or at the door on concert night. Two children up to 16 are admitted free if accompanied by a paying adult – a marvellous opportunity to introduce youngsters to music.

For further press information, phone Carol Jackson on 01386 841440.

Website: [www.stratfordchoral.org.uk](http://www.stratfordchoral.org.uk)

## An Advent Meditation by Lori Shanebeck

A group is sitting around a meager fire in the fields overlooking a city. They are shepherds, but they do not look like the sanitized version on Christmas cards. These are rough men, laborers, and near the bottom of the social pyramid. It is late and they are probably both cold and tired. They just want to make sure that they survive the night with none of the sheep lost, stolen, or eaten by a predator.

The soft bleating of sheep and the low voices of the men are the only sounds to be heard in the stillness of the night. One could imagine one or two dozing as the night grows later, some talking about the cares of life, maybe even one set apart and keeping to himself. No matter what they were doing, they had no idea what was about to happen.

Suddenly there is light, a voice, singing and.....ANGELS!!! The darkness recedes, the good news is announced, they are told their Saviour has been born in the city of David, and they run like the wind to Bethlehem – to fall before a baby in worship.

I adore this story. It is probably my favorite of all the stories told about that night so long ago. A bunch of ordinary working men become the first to hear the extraordinary news of a saviour and their lives are never the same again. I imagine them racing to Bethlehem, picture them stopping anyone and everyone in the streets to ask where they can find this baby, and see the incredulous looks they must have received. I often wonder what did they really think when they finally found the child called Jesus, the saviour of the world.....in a stable?

My imagination creates a scene where they burst into the stable, speak with a worried Joseph who has no idea who these people are or what they want, and are beckoned forward by Mary. But most of all I love thinking about how they must have felt as they gingerly stepped closer, saw the baby's face, and then fell to their knees in worship and adoration. As they gazed on that baby, did they see hope and love? Did it change how they lived, worked, loved, and believed when they got to their feet, left, and went back to everyday life?



The details of the story never grow old, no matter how many times I read it. There is the fact that the announcement was made to a group of scruffy men on the bottom of the social pyramid tending sheep in the fields. Then a challenge to find a baby in the city while they are still getting over being scared to death because they had just seen not one, but a host of angels. And when they found him in that stable, he was lying in a feeding trough attended by a young man and woman who were just as ordinary as they were.

So simple, so beautiful, and as I think about those details I understand once again that I too am just an ordinary person who like those shepherds, is searching for God, and often at a run. It has taken many years of walking with God, but I have come to

understand that God not only wants to be found, but promises that he brings light, love, and hope to all who seek him, even me. So then, this Christmas, the challenge as I fall down and worship the gift of that baby is to then rise up and live a different life. To understand that God doesn't call me to stay there and just adore, but to stand up again and allow what I have experience to change how I work, love, live, and believe. I like to think it's what happened with those shepherds. I pray that it is also what happens to me – to us who hold the knowledge of the good news of a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

## TRINITY LADIES FOR DECEMBER

We will be holding our Carol Service on Wednesday 15 December. The Revd. Steve Jarvis will be presiding for us at this service. Please come and join us and get into the Christmas spirit. As well as a lovely informal carol service we will be having a bumper raffle followed by mince pies/cakes and of course a cup of tea. The meeting will start at 2pm in the Parish Centre as usual and finish about 3.30pm to 3.45pm. New members are very welcome so please come and join our Carol Service.



May I take this opportunity on behalf of myself and the committee to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

Gina Lodge

Chair

## TRINITY LADIES FOR JANUARY



A Happy New Year to all our members. I do hope that you had an enjoyable and blessed Christmas. For our first meeting of the New Year on Wednesday 19 January we will be welcoming Mr David Arnold (Win Smith's son) who is the forester at Alscot Park. He will be telling us about his work and about the history of Alscot. It should be very interesting. I expect, like me, you know where Alscot is but not a lot about it, its history or what they do there today. Our meeting will start at 2pm as usual and finish about 3.30pm to 3.45pm. New members are very welcome so

please come and join us..

Gina Lodge

Chair

## HOLY TRINITY BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP FOR DECEMBER

The next meeting of the Support Group will be on Wednesday 22 December. We realise that Christmas is a very difficult time for those of you who have lost a loved one, so if you feel that meeting other people who are in a similar position to yourself would help you at this difficult time please come and join us. Just come to the Parish Centre at 2.30pm. We usually finish at about 4pm. There is no need to make an appointment; we will be very pleased to see you.

Gina Lodge

Bereavement Co-ordinator

## HOLY TRINITY BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP FOR JANUARY.

The next meeting of the Support Group will be on Wednesday 26 January. Starting a New Year if you have lost a loved one will be very difficult, so if you feel that meeting with other people who are in a similar position to yourself would help you please come and join us. Just come to the Parish Centre at 2.30pm. There is no need to make an appointment; we will be very pleased to see you. Our meeting usually finishes at about 4pm. but you can come and go as you please.

Gina Lodge

Bereavement Co-ordinator

*nh*  
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malcolm@m2tiles.co.uk




**YARN-BOMBED TREES**

The charity, GAGA (Goodwill and Growth for Africa), has once again wrapped the trees leading to Holy Trinity in knitted squares. (See front cover for picture).

The Remembering Tree celebrates the lives of loved ones and helps to transform the lives of others.

All funds raised by the Remembering Tree project will support vital work providing healthcare and education to orphaned and vulnerable children in rural communities in southern Africa. To read all about our work or for information about sponsorship go to: [info@gaga-uk.org](mailto:info@gaga-uk.org)



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# “LIGHTEN OUR DARKNESS”

CHORAL EVENSONG – a view from the choir benches.

This service is defined by The Choral Evensong Trust as follows: -

“Choral Evensong is a 45-min long peace-inducing church service in which the song of voices sounding together in harmony is heard at the even point between the active day and restful night, allowing listeners time for contemplation – church members, agnostics and atheists alike. It is both free of charge and free from requirement of religious commitment, and its 470-year-old choral music tradition – established around 1549 – is performed live and often to a very high standard, sometimes world class.”

## CHORAL EVENSONG IN MY LIFE

My love of Choral Evensong stems from a childhood in which this service was an integral part of my daily routine for the best part of ten years.

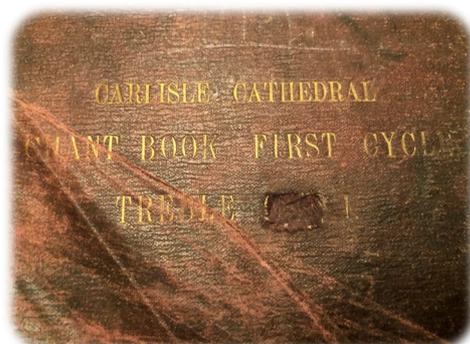
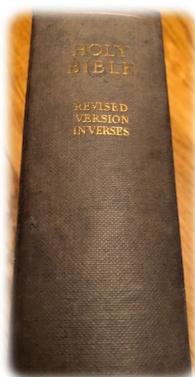
Each day at four o'clock, lessons would finish at Carlisle Grammar School and I would cycle across the city to arrive in the Cathedral Close for 4:15pm. After a drink and a bun, we choristers (all boys in those days) would dash over to the Song School in time for choir practice at 4:30pm, followed by Evensong at 5:30pm.

Looking back, it must have appeared to others to be a most unusual routine for a schoolboy. However, at the time, we choristers simply accepted it as part of our working week - we would then have to fit in everything else that we wanted (or needed) to do with our remaining available time.

This evening routine was followed every week day, with only Saturday off, then another Choral Evensong on Sunday afternoon (after Mattins and Sung Eucharist in the morning).

My toolbox contained The Holy Bible, The Book of Common Prayer, The Oxford Psalter and a Cathedral Chant Book, The English Hymnal and The Chorister's Handbook.

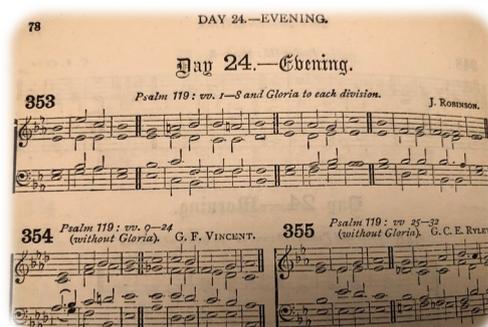
We learned about the cast of characters in The Lessons from Abraham to Zadok. We sang through the Psalms of David, tackling the weird and wonderful subject of Pointing. We learned umpteen versions of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. We sang our prayers to settings of the Versicles and Responses and listened to prayers sung to us in the Collects. Not least, we said our prayers each day.



During these early years, I realise now that I was exposed to - and became familiar with - some very important tools that, when used together, created a structure of music interwoven with Christian Faith that still holds strong in my life today.

Malcolm Robinson

Holy Trinity Choir



# PARISH CONTACTS

*The Parish Office, Old Town*

*Stratford upon Avon, CV37 6BG*

*Tel. 01789 266 316*

*Email: office@stratford-upon-avon.org*

## Clergy Team

Vicar	The Revd Patrick Taylor	01789 508 155	vicar@stratford-upon-avon.org
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

Operations Manager:	Andy Winter	01789 266 316	andy@stratford-upon-avon.org
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	Tim Raistrick	01789 509 885
Helen Warrillow	01789 298 928	Sherron Guise	07855 248 610

## 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
Friends of St Helen's Church	Angela Wylam	01789 268 156
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
Churchyard Maintenance		
Volunteer Team	Lindsay MacDonald	01789 293 110

## New Glass Panels

On celebrating All Saints Day it was very appropriate that we recalled two people who were faithful members of the congregation at Holy Trinity and who could be described as every-day saints. When Doreen Lees died in 2018, her husband, Geoffrey, made a donation to the church in her memory. It was decided that this should be used to replace the boards in the screen at the entrance to the North Transept with glass panels which included an etching of the Holy Trinity three fish emblem. Sadly Geoffrey died last year before the work could be completed, although he had seen the designs. Now the screen has been finished, and it was dedicated on Sunday 31 October at the 10am service in memory of both Doreen and Geoffrey. We remember them with affection and give thanks for all they contributed as saints of the Church.

