



Cowley festival of Christmas trees

St James Church
Beauchamp Lane OX4 3LF
12 – 20 December 2020

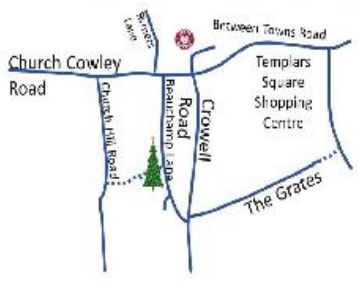
live music – trails
FREE entry - donations encouraged

fundraising for : ROSY & SeeSaw
www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

Cowley festival of Christmas trees 'Joy to the World'

festival open

Saturday 12 & 19 **10:00 – 4:00**
Wednesday 16 **2:00 – 4:00**
& by arrangement 07982 439 828



and also

times to be confirmed

Sunday 20 5:00

**live music in the church
& churchyard
carols by torchlight
in the churchyard**



From the Editors

Sally Hemsworth and Nicki Stevens

Christmas is almost with us – and the preparations for the Christmas Tree Festival are in full swing. Decorations are going up all over the place – have you done yours yet or do you wait until nearer Christmas? It appears that this year people are getting prepared for Christmas sooner (TV news reports!) – certainly the decorations do cheer us up at this dark time of year.

A lot of work has been taking place on the Archives during the two lockdowns and we now have a very full record of Chronicles back to 2000. We are still missing a few of the earlier ones – October, November and December 2001 and December 2003. Are you a hoarder – are you likely to have them deep in one of your cupboards and could donate or let us have a copy? It would be lovely if we could achieve a full record.

You will see from some articles the way groups such as the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides have kept things going for our young people since March. The Ministers have also been very active – zoom and facebook allow a lot of people to attend services, there have been coffee mornings, keep-fit exercises, quizzes, committee meetings, etc and Mary's article shows how things have been working for on ReFresh, Seashells and Little Stars. Very inspiring and means that youngsters and, indeed people of all ages, need not be cut off – modern technology and social media have certainly played an important role over the last few months.

The arrival of vaccine for the COVID virus is really great news. We were hoping for an article by people who had participated in the trials for the Oxford Vaccine – no such luck as they were told not to write anything about it. But a big thank-you to all of them for taking part in such an important study

We must just repeat – look out for up-to-date information on church activities. Ever hopeful of being back to

“normal”, we have not done a major change of the back page so a lot of it is pre-lockdown!

We do hope you enjoy this edition of the Chronicle and have an enjoyable Christmas and New Year. Needless to say, any articles for the February edition will be gratefully received.

Sally and Nicki



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A word from the Rectory

Joy to the world the Lord has come. That is the reason for the season. Of all the years I have been in ministry, this one shouts out loudest about our need for Jesus, the 'Light of the World', to come and bring back Joy. We so much need God to step in and return us to wholeness.

Have you heard these phrases recently? "I am looking forward to things getting back to normal", or "I do hope we can get back to normal soon". God in Jesus calls us to a normal that is unlike so much of the expectation of 21st century England.

In Dec 1966 Tom Jones once sang a song 'The green, green grass of home'. It looked back to the early days of a man's life. It recognised an innocence, often associate with youth. Jesus tells us that we can look at children and see a model of such innocence. We can see how we might be. Jesus calls us back to a normal that goes far beyond the beginning of this year and is so much more 'Christ Like'.

Christmas this year will have many of the elaborate trimmings removed. Each of us is needing to carefully consider those things that we value most. How will that effect our: opportunities to gather as Church; the numbers



gathering; our finances. All of this will remove some of the trimmings that distract from the central message of Christmas: 'GOD LOVES YOU AND IS WILLING TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY TO HELP YOU FIND YOUR

WAY HOME'. When we are Christ like we step up and do that for others!

This Christmas

know that you are loved.

Spread that love out to others!

Welcoming the LIGHT OF THE WORLD



The reason for the Season

God bless you,

each and every one!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. Stephen".



Benson Cottage

**Carol Singing
Yes we all can!
St James Church Yard:
Sunday Dec 20th 5pm
'A carol service with
readings'**

Join us to SING some carols and hear the Christmas story.

We hope to stream it to zoom and Facebook. Look out for the links!

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Aren't we lucky? Don't you think so? Well what do you think would be different 100 years ago? While Mummy or Daddy will only be able to tell you about it from books or letters, you might have a Grandma or Grandpa who can tell you what it was like in their family and you will certainly learn about it in history at school or be able to read about it. It is true that when you had learned to read and write, and could do 'your sums', you were ready to earn some money for the family. Yes, at twelve years old.

Imagine. No phones, radio or television, no electric cookers, refrigerators or washing machines and no central heating that we know. If you were lucky, there would be a large fire grate with an oven on one side and a boiler on the other to heat the water for washing, and you would probably live in the same room as the fire for meals and any family gathering. (And families were usually larger than today). If clothes were to be washed, that would mean stoking another fire beneath a large copper pan like a round bath, at six o'clock in the morning to allow the water to heat enough to do the washing and scrubbing the clothes later in the morning. That boiler would be in the corner of the kitchen, if you had one! My grandmother was lucky. She had another room, called 'the parlour' or sitting room, but it was only for guests and visitors to use and that had a gas fire. Luxury, except it was never lit, unless a special guest, like the minister or school teacher came to discuss

something private. It even had a piano because one of my aunts 'was musical', meaning she liked to sing songs and was taught to read music so could use a piano. Perhaps the family would gather in the 'parlour' on Sundays, when you had your best clothes on. You weren't allowed in there normally.

Yes, we have a lot to be thankful for, even though we hear a lot these days of difficulties. But we are beginning to find that there are so many people that we depend on so that we may be healthy or have enough food and I like to think that we understand we all have to learn how important everyone is to be able to live happier and more enjoyable lives. We have learned to say 'THANK YOU' to special sections of the community, who don't shout about how important they are, and also found how important it is to help older people with their shopping, or even to be more careful when we have a cold. Perhaps the most important change is to sit down for a moment and find out how lucky we are and say 'thank you' for our many blessings where we had thought 'it' would happen without any help before. Those two words, thank you, mean a lot more now.

I always remember that one day when after we got off the coach travelling to London, my son said to the driver, 'thank you driver for a lovely smooth ride. Much better than my dad could do.' The driver was quite surprised at the comment and smiled. Perhaps he had

never had that comment before, but some passengers, even on local buses seem to appreciate things more these days and thank the driver. So simple to give thanks, and so much appreciated, especially if the task has been difficult.

When I attended the primary school, a long time ago now, I remember that there was a song that we sang sometimes as a grace before meals. It seems to sum up all that

matters, as we give thanks for being here, at the end of the year, and thank God for the opportunity of a New Year to come with all its opportunities.

Thank you for the world so sweet, thank you for the food we eat,

Thank you for the birds that sing, thank you God for everything.....and don't forget to smile.

Uncle Ben

Hello from Joseph

Hello it's me, Joseph again!

Why are Christmas trees up and people Christmas shopping? Because it's Christmas!!!

Why do we have Christmas? Well I'll tell you. About 2000 years ago in Bethlehem Jesus Christ was born in a stable in the back garden of an inn. His mother was Mary and his stepfather was Joseph. He was stepfather because his real Daddy was God! We celebrate Christmas because it is when Jesus was born. His Birthday.

Why do we have presents? When Jesus was born there were three kings who came a long way all the way to Bethlehem with gifts and presents for the baby. A shining star from God was shining in the sky all the way to Bethlehem where Jesus was. When they got there they gave him presents. So that's why we give our family and friends presents.

Now in Lapland a long time ago Father Christmas was born and he came and found some elves to help make presents. He made a sleigh and wanted everybody to have presents and then on 24th December he would come to each house and eat all the mince pies in exchange for presents!

At school around Christmas children act out the Christmas story in a nativity for all the Mummies and Daddies. Sadly this year it won't be the same, but nearly because there will be lots of Christmas lights everywhere and it will feel like Christmas. We will still have church services!

Well that big man with the tummy full of mince pies and the sack full of presents will be coming to you soon!

I'm guessing you haven't had a very good 2020 so let's just think that 2021 will be better!

Happy Christmas everybody and Happy New year!

Love from Joseph, Cuddles, Snuggles and The Vivian Family xxx

From the Archives

December 2000

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

When most people hear "The 12 Days of Christmas" they think of the song. This song had its origins as a teaching tool to instruct young people in the meaning and content of the Christian Faith. From 1558 to 1829 Roman Catholics in England were not able to practice their faith openly, so they had to find other ways to pass on their beliefs. The song of "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is one example of how they did it.

The song goes: "On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me..."

The "true love" represents God and the "me" who receives these presents is the Christian.

The "partridge in a pear tree" was Jesus Christ who died on a tree as a gift from God.

The "two turtle doves" were the old and new testaments – another gift from God.

The "three French hens" were faith, hope and love – three gifts of the Spirit that abide. (1 Corinthians 13).

The "four calling birds" were the four gospels, which sing the song of salvation through Jesus Christ.

The "five gold rings" were the first books of the Bible, also called "Book of Moses".

The "six geese a-laying" were the six days of creation.

The "seven swans a-swimming" were "seven gifts of the Holy Spirit". (1 Corinthians 12:9-11, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4:10-11).

The "eight maids a-milking" were the eight beatitudes.

The "nine ladies dancing" were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23).

The "ten lords a-leaping" were the Ten Commandments.

The "eleven pipers piping" were the eleven faithful disciples.

The "twelve drummers drumming" were the twelve points of the Apostles' Creed.

So the next time you hear "The twelve days of Christmas", consider how this otherwise non-religious sounding song had its origins in the Christian Faith.

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS

Not found in England earlier than 1854. The practise came from Germany, but not exclusively; for in certain French and Italian convents, the nuns had long been hanging stockings on

the abbess' door, with notes inside asking for St. Nicholas' protection; and next morning they would be found to be full of sweets and trinkets.

December 2002

Those Christmas Traditions

Why does it begin at midnight with Holy Communion?

The hour was first chosen in Rome in the 5th century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight – a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the hour of His birth. Certainly in recent times, Holy Communion at midnight on Christmas morning has proved popular with modern families.

What was in Christmas stockings?

Traditionally children woke up at dawn, with these weighing down their toes. A lighted candle was brought in, and if the family were "Traditional", the stocking contained at the toe, an orange, followed by many objects done up in foil or coloured paper, including a new silver six-pence. This was all topped off with an apple.

What was the Christmas log?

These huge logs burned in the open fireplace all Christmas day. Traditionally they were of ash: ash that burned green, and therefore sacred to the sun on whose birthday nature was reborn. One Devon-based tradition had it that burning ash had warmed the water for the Christ Child's first bath. The Scandinavians believed that ash was the wood of the world-tree, Yggdrasil, with its roots knotted in Hell and its boughs supporting Heaven.

In the late 19th century, a time of smaller fireplaces, the ashen faggot became popular in many homes. Sometimes it would be sprinkled with corn and cider, and sometimes it would be dragged in with a girl enthroned upon it, and then glasses would be raised to her health.

In any event, the log (once the girl was removed!) would be kindled with the last fragment of the previous Christmas log kept throughout the year for this purpose.

What about the Christmas Dinner menu?

In England rank has divided people down the centuries, but on Christmas day master and servant sat down in the great hall to banquet together in genuine, though brief, equality. The Romans at the Saturnalia had done the same, and the Scandinavians at Yule.

St. Francis of Assisi had urged that even the animals ought to share in our joy, thus introducing the custom to give extra food to the cattle and dogs on Christmas morning, and even fixing a sheaf of corn to the roof for the hungry birds.

In great houses of the past, the main dish was the boar's head, garnished with rosemary and bay for the summer returning, and still with its mouth propped open on a solar apple or orange.

At Hampton Court, Christmas dinner consisted of roasted swans, peacocks and bustards. But the dinner proved "too gross and too splendid for the century of the kitchenette" and eventually they went the way of the plum pudding and frumenty and Christmas pie.

Traditionally it was the goose that appeared on most English tables. But the turkey, imported into England about 1542 from Mexico, gained steadily in popularity. By the end of the 18th century, Norwich alone was sending to London nearly 1,000 Christmas turkeys in a single day.

Mince pies were already popular by the time of Shakespeare's England – popular and varied. There were pies of minced chicken, neat's tongues, and of eggs, in addition to the pies full of spiced raisins.

As for our Christmas pudding, it was originally a sort of plum porridge that finally hardened into a pudding about 1670. This was made of raisins and spices, together with breadcrumbs, wine, and fruit juice. Every member of the household took a hand in the stirring and secretly wished a wish. A silver coin (once a threepenny bit), a ring and a thimble were stirred in: the coin to bring fortune to the finder, the ring a wedding, and the thimble a life of single blessedness. On the Day, a sprig of the reddest holly was stuck in the top of the pudding, and the brandy heated above a candle, and poured over it in a ring of fire.

Researched by Les Hemsworth

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Are you looking for something meaningful to give as Christmas gifts?? If you order anything on-line or by phone from the Bible Society, please use the unique Parish reference number 12044 or select the 'Parish of Cowley' from the drop down menu when placing the order and we will benefit from the 'More than a book' cash back scheme. It's that easy! We have earned a little from our 'Open the Book' resources orders and from this year's 'It begins in Bethlehem' story books but some personal Christmas shopping would be useful.

Do look at the on-line shop for Bibles, prayer books, cards, stickers, courses, fiction, DVDs etc.

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/products/>

Prayer Space

Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a
harvest if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:9

Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven
touching earth:

accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you,
our Saviour and our eternal God.

Amen.

Jesus, Saviour, son of Mary,
you know us and love us,
you share our lives
and hear our prayer.

Glory to you for ever.

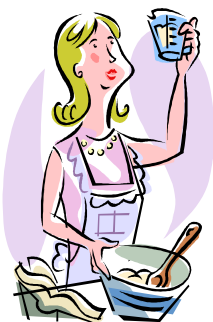
Amen.

RECIPES

WALNUT SHORTBREAD

(From Delia Smith's
"Christmas")

These light, crumbly little biscuits are just the thing to serve with home-made ice cream.



They could also be packed into boxes or jars for a home-made Christmas gift. Walnut Shortbread can also be made in advance and then frozen.

Ingredients (makes approximately 20)

2 oz (50 g) walnut pieces

4 oz (110 g) salted butter, at room temperature

2 oz (50 g) caster sugar

6 oz (175 g) plain flour, sifted, plus a little extra for dusting

2 oz (50 g) rice flour

a little icing sugar for dusting

Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to gas mark 2, 300°F (150°C).
2. Grind the walnuts
3. To make the shortbread, place the butter and sugar in a large mixing bowl and cream them together until pale and fluffy. Then mix the sifted flour and rice flour together and gradually work this into the creamed mixture, a tablespoonful at a time.
4. Add the ground walnuts and use your hands to form the mixture into a smooth dough. Leave the dough to rest in a plastic food bag in the fridge for 30 minutes, then roll it out on a lightly floured work surface to a round approximately 8 inches (20 cm) in diameter.

5. Using the 1¾ inch (4.5 cm) cutter, cut out approximately 20 rounds, re-rolling the trimmings. Place them on the lightly greased baking sheet and bake in the oven for 45 minutes. Cool them for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack. When completely cool, dust them with icing sugar and store in an airtight container.

COOKING TIP

Good substitute for breadcrumbs for coating fish or fishcakes.....crushed cornflakes....yummy.

Also Queen of Puddings, etc! – endless uses.

IF YOU LOOK FOR ME AT CHRISTMAS

If you look for me at Christmas,
You won't need a special star –
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
I'm right there where you are.
You may not be aware of Me
Amid the celebrations –
You'll have to look beyond the stores
And all the decorations.
But if you take a moment
From your list of things to do
And listen to your heart, you'll find
I'm waiting there for you.
You're the one I want to be with,
You're the reason that I came,
And you'll find Me in the stillness
As I'm whispering your name.
Love,
Jesus

FRIENDS OF LYE VALLEY

The Woman's Hour Power List 2020:

Our Planet has been revealed!

This year Woman's Hour celebrated 30 inspiring women whose work is making a significant positive contribution to the environment and the sustainability of our planet.

Woman's Hour says:

"The problems our planet is facing can feel overwhelming, but these women prove that everyone can make a difference in their own way through creativity, optimism and enthusiasm.

This year's list is designed to reflect the huge range of roles that are essential to environmental work. Rather than a classic definition of power, the list is made up of an eco-system of women who have power in lots of different ways, but who are all essential in looking after the planet.

Everyone on the list is based in the UK and falls into one of five categories: Decision-makers, Innovators, Communicators, Campaigners and Volunteers."

No 25 on the List was Judy Webb, a local conservationist and ecologist who has done so much to preserve Lye Valley and other areas in Oxfordshire.



Former biology teacher Dr Judy Webb has tirelessly dedicated her free time to local conservation around Oxfordshire for 25 years. Having become the unofficial ecologist of her school, she later campaigned to protect the same grounds after the school was closed down and has protected the area ever since. She is also passionate about conserv-

ing the Oxford Fens and monitoring rare species of flies, fungi and mosses. In fact, according to Thames Valley Environment Records Centre, she has contributed well over 37,000 records of local species and habitats, and she can identify what pollen a bee makes by looking at its back legs!

Congratulations Judy on this award. Parish Walkers have walked along Lye Valley a number of times – well worth a walk at different seasons – and it is very evident that it is a cared for area, so thanks for your help in preserving this beautiful area, and for the work of the Friends of Lye Valley.

Christmas @ St Francis Holloway

www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

**Sunday 20th
Dec**

11 am
Communion
with
Christingles

**Christmas
Eve**

6 pm – Carol
singing and
readings in
the Church
Carpark

Christmas Day

9:30
Christmas Family
Communion
service
Family

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up:

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Christmas @ St James Beauchamp lane OX4 3LF

www.cowleyteamministry.co.uk

**Sunday 20th
Dec**

5 pm **Carols in the
Churchyard**
Carols and
readings
Weather permitting,
we will be
streaming from the
Churchyard. And
yes, outside, you
can come along
and sing with us!

Christmas Day

8 am
Traditional
language
Christmas
Communion
Service

Christmas Eve

4 pm – Crib
Service with
Christingles
crafts and the
Christmas Story

Christmas Day

9:30
Christmas
Family
Communion
service
Family

Christmas Eve

11:30 pm
Midnight Mass
as close to a
normal
Christmas
midnight service
as we can make
it!

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Come, Now is the Time to Worship!



This month Geoff and I have been running some sessions for people exploring leading worship. The title of the course is *Come, Now is the Time to Worship*. I love sessions like these because they give us all opportunities to ask questions and learn from others' ideas. I asked the participants, "I wonder, what is worship?" The answers were awesome, so I thought I'd share them with you. But before you read them, take a moment to ponder yourself, to wonder about worship, and what it means to you.....

2020 has been an odd year for worship. You may feel as if you haven't had enough worship in your lives, or maybe it's something you've tried for the first time. Perhaps you love the online church which has grown and the choice it offers. Perhaps being in front of a screen really doesn't do it for you. Take some time to notice: what is your desire when you worship? What is God's desire when you worship? When and why does worship 'work' for you? And when and why does it not? Could you do anything to change to make it better?

Here are the group's thoughts on worship...

- Thanksgiving and praise
- in your own private space at home. Or it can be corporate involving others, and a building/space.
- Praising God
- Growing God's Kingdom
- Putting God in the centre, focussing on God. How does this inform the rest of the week? Sunday worship can filter out into the rest of our lives.
- It is possible (and sometimes easy!) to worship things that aren't God. How we orientate our lives affects every aspect of our lives and decisions.
- Worship grows our understanding of what God wants for us.
- Worship grows and changes us. That can also have the effect of changing others.
- Worship gives perspective - it keeps us right and balanced.

I wonder if you agree or disagree with these thoughts. Do any surprise you? What would you add? I'd love to hear your thoughts, do get in touch and share them with me.

Here is what has come into my mind as I have been pondering about worship:

Worship is a permanent stance of the heart based upon Jesus' own intercession into whose

likeness we are being formed. So our worship must be modelled on Christ's own worship and 'Abba relationship' with the Father in the Spirit. Jesus told the woman at the well: John 4:23-24

'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.'

Therefore our worship must be fundamentally rooted in a truth of the incarnation, that God meets us where we are in our context but redemptively draws us beyond it to the Kingdom. Peace be with you all.

Gemma Beesley

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December 1964

COWLEY FESTIVAL OF CHRISTMAS TREES 2020

Joy to the World!

Friday 11 – Sunday 20 December

The church will be open Saturdays 12 and 19 December, 10:00-4:00; Wednesday 16 December, 2:00-4:00 and by arrangement for anyone who books with Lesley Williams on 07982 439 828.



The theme covers both living with COVID-19 and creation/climate change/sustainability – and any other interpretation! JUST JOY! The central diorama will be around the figure of an angel and we hope there will be hosts of angels inside and outside the church.



Much will happen outdoors in the churchyard, with a crib scene, the carol service and hopefully – planning still in hand – a concert. The opening reception Friday 11 December, 5:30 pm and a pop up singing workshop will be virtual – there will be Zoom links on the website!

It is not too late to get involved! We would still love to engage with some new groups, businesses, and lots of families. If you have never contributed before and would like to, either as an individual, a family or part of a group with a tree or decorations or angels – please contact us and ask for details right now!

ctf@cowleyteamministry.co.uk

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Do you shop on-line with Amazon? If you do you may be able to help us raise a bit of money towards the toilet in St James Church.

Smile.amazon.co.uk is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on Smile.amazon.co.uk, the Smile.amazon.co.uk Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

We are listed as the charity: The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Cowley, Oxford or you can search by our charity number: 1153602





CAMINO DE SANTIAGO PILGRIMAGE TREK

Postponed until 2-9 October 2021 so

Fundraising for the Traidcraft Exchange

My next challenge has been deferred until October 2021 in order to guarantee we can be sure to be safe and not be required to quarantine at either end. With Global Adventure Challenges, I will fulfil a long-held wish to make a Camino pilgrimage visit to Santiago de Compostela. This means committing to raising at least £1330 for Fairtrade Exchange, on top of a considerable amount to cover flight and accommodation expenses which I am paying myself.

The trek is the final 116km/72 miles, 5 days of the full pilgrimage route, starting from Sarria, with a grading of tough and challenging! I have walked further than the daily average 15 miles during and since lockdown but not on consecutive days so will have to continue training!

Some interim training planning: during April 2021, the 20 members of the group will be undertaking a virtual Camino, challenged to walk &/or run 100km (= 62.13 miles = only 2 miles each day or 16 miles a week!) in our own localities, with matched funding available for any sponsorship or donations received during that month - and with the suggestion that we form our own teams; any sponsorship earned by team members to count against my target. I will be enrolling you in the new year!

Traidcraft Exchange exists to do two things:

To support people to harness the benefits of trade

To fight against injustice in global trade

It's a simple mission, but it is changing lives all over the world.

Lesley Williams

Ride & Stride 2020

God is good! On 12th September the annual Ride and Stride went ahead with major restrictions in the participating churches. John Booty, Lesley Williams and Jane Coutanche have raised approximately £963 including Gift Aid and the parish will receive half of the final total - what an astounding amount of money! A big thank you to them and for all their generous sponsors.

Thank you also to the welcomers who made it possible for the 13 visitors to visit our churches, even though we couldn't sign their sponsor forms and offer them a drink, we still managed to have a chat.

Stay safe and well!

June Smith

SAFEGUARDING IN COWLEY PARISH

As a Parish, we are committed to the Christian care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and all adults but particularly those who are vulnerable in any way.

So we ensure that our policies and practice on the selection and training of all those staff and volunteers with any responsibility within the Church are in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records checks where applicable.

We intend that St James and St Francis churches will be safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse, including domestic violence and bullying.

We will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust in our churches

We follow statute, guidance and recognised good practice in all our safeguarding procedures and check that all users of our premises agree to do so too.

Our 'Promoting a safer church' action plan has helped to clarify our procedures and systems. There is the danger that we *think everyone knows what they should do* but we haven't fully checked on that; it's of course not possible during this hiatus.

And also during the period of lockdown and social distancing, it is also very difficult to check on the wellbeing of our families but we hope any in need of help will contact us. The schools are doing an amazing job and managing to support their vulnerable families.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – *please be sure to report anything you observe whilst at church or one of our events that causes you concern for someone's safety or wellbeing.*

It is just as important during this strange time when life is still not back to what we think of as normal; the situation throws up its own safeguarding and welfare issues. Please remain aware.

Lesley Williams 01865 779 562
07982 439 828 safeguarding@cowleyteamministry.co.uk



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LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS (LTNS)

If you live in Church Cowley, Temple Cowley or Florence Park, you will have received a letter from the County Council about the consultation, at last, on the 6 month trial of an LTN in each of these local areas, to be introduced in February/March 2021. Through traffic will be restricted on many of the local streets – including Beauchamp Lane and Crowell Road, using ‘traffic filters’.

We will all be able to access everywhere by car – but we may need to go a much longer way round to get there.

It is really important that we respond, especially to say where we think the traffic filters are best placed. That can be done easily on line – although there is a lot to read – <https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>.

If you want a paper copy, e-mail (that’s not very helpful if you are not online but no phone number is given) naomi.barnes@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Deadline for responses is midnight on Friday 18 December 2020.

THE CHRISTMAS STAR

“Mummy, I’m the star,” she told me,
In the playground, one cold winter day.
Of course, the Christmas production!
(They’d been told of the parts they would play).

A star? Oh would she play Gabriel,
The narrator, her voice clear and true,
Or p’rhaps she’s be playing the Virgin
In a veil of beautiful blue.

“What should she wear?” I’d asked teacher.
“Something simple and plain,” she had said,
So I made her a gown of white sheeting
With a circlet of stars for her head.

“We’ll rock you,” they all sang with gusto.
The shepherds brought toy, woolly sheep.
Three straight-back small kings brought presents
While Mary rocked Jesus to sleep.

My husband took shots with his camera
To send to aunts, grannies and such
But we didn’t need digital pictures
We were smiling with pride far too much.

At the back of the scene in the stable
A foil star hung catching the light
And a dearly-loved six-year-old held it
Quite still, in her gown of pure white

Not a single movement we noticed
As she gazed at the new baby King.
Her eyes met mine with love and with pride.
Our star made her parents’ hearts sing.

Rosanne Butler

CHRONICLE

Editorial Team- Sally Hemsworth, Nicki Stevens

Deadline for the next edition: Monday 25 January 2021

If possible, please send entries by email to Sally at chronicle@cowleyteamministry.co.uk.

Paper contributions should be left at Parish Office for the attention of Sally.

The Editorial Committee in no way accepts responsibility for goods or services supplied by our advertisers, errors and omissions excepted.

Cups and Saucers and leeks and puddings.....

Today I am staying close by the kitchen watching two steamers on the hob, ready to top up the water. Inside are my Christmas Puddings! Yesterday was the Sunday before Advent also known as Stir-up Sunday because the traditional prayer that day starts "Stir up we beseech thee, O Lord...."

This was always a tradition as I was growing up, to put together our puddings on the Sunday, leave the mixture to mature overnight and then steam the following day. After the eight hours steaming, the greaseproof paper and foil covering them are replaced and the puddings in their basins are left to continue maturing before the actual day when they would get another couple of hours steaming. For many years I have used a Delia Smith recipe but I add whole glace cherries, too.

I must admit that I rarely make steamed puddings any more, having no starving youngsters at home any longer, but I was surprised that the contestants on the Bake Off this year didn't know about putting a pleat in the greaseproof paper covering to allow for expansion!

We have just had another frost today. One of the few we have had so far this winter. Dahlias have been touched but not all of the plants vulnerable to cold temperatures have suffered. One success of the year has been the Cup and Saucer vines (*Cobea sandens*). They have rampaged everywhere clinging with their sticky tendrils to produce gorgeous trumpet bell flowers about two and a half inches across. They start off cream and change their colour to purple as the day goes on, for they only last a day or so. They have a pale green frill at the base making a sort-of cup and saucer. As the

days have got colder the production of the flowers has slowed but I have four in my posy vase in the kitchen window now. Picked before fully open, you can see the purple colour gradually coming in along the veins over a few hours.

I had some plants of *Cobea* at the plant sale and only a couple of days ago a local, pushing her buggy past the house, stopped and said what a show she had with hers this summer. I shall be growing them again.

We continue to have problems on the allotment with our leeks, caused by the allium leaf mining fly. It was first detected in Britain in 2002, since when it has become a problem for growers in much of the country. The larvae bore into the stems and bulbs of leeks, onions, chives and garlic. We have only had it in leeks so far and the affected plants show brown trails where the larvae have been. This helps the development of secondary infections and they rot and keel over. Do we continue to grow leeks? There is no control unless we cover our crop with insect-proof netting.

We had great success with green manure this autumn. We sowed *Phacelia* on a cleared patch. It quickly and thickly grew to be 2-3 feet high with curved spikes of purple flowers much loved by bees. The Other Half was worried it would seed all over the place so he has dug it already!

It is all up in the air about meeting family at Christmas this year. I hope that it is not just the two of us eating the puddings!

Joan Colemar

