



KINGS NORTON  
TEAM PARISH

THE MAGAZINE  
FOR CHURCH & COMMUNITY

February 2018

£1



**Kings Norton's Only  
What's On Guide**

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## Editor & Advertising Manager

David Ash  
editor@kingsnorton.org.uk

## Subscriptions

Alison Blumer  
subs@kingsnorton.org.uk

Kings Norton Parish Office  
Saint Nicolas Place  
81 The Green, Kings Norton  
Birmingham B38 8RU  
0121 458 3289

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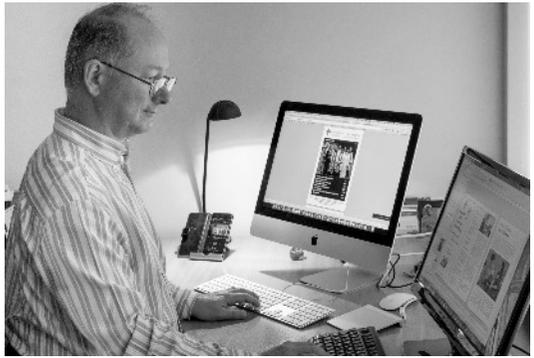
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## Submission Deadlines

Items for inclusion in the March  
2018 edition must reach the  
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February.**

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2018 edition must reach the  
Editor by midnight on **Friday 16<sup>th</sup>  
March.**



They say that we have shorter attention spans these days and that the media, social and otherwise, are largely to blame. If that's true, thank goodness that there are still people who, refined by years of reflection and prayer, wide reading and lives dedicated to the service of others, retain the gift of distilling into just a few words deep and life-giving truths which feed our spirits. Real wisdom, it seems, is often to be found on the lips of those who roll up their sleeves and give their lives away.

Jean Vanier (pages 42-45) is one such. The interview which it is our privilege to publish this month is full of liberating insights learned from the handicapped people he serves. Vanier understands how a deep, lasting commitment can set us free to welcome, without judgement, those of whom we might otherwise be afraid: "My feet are rooted in my faith but my arms are wide open". Larry Wright picks up a similar idea: "the root of all intolerance is fear", he writes, but one of the best antidotes to fear is "to be certain of one's own beliefs". Philip Mounstephen (pages 38-40) explores the idea of belonging and challenges the popular view that loyalty to one position ("us") requires the condemnation of all others ("them").

The American Jesuit priest Greg Boyle, who works among the "homies" of California's gang culture, is a great forger of wise soundbites. With typical generosity of spirit, he writes, "There is no 'them' and 'us'. There is only us".

The Editor

# FROM THE RECTOR

## The Limits of Tolerance

“We need to promote greater tolerance and understanding among the peoples of the world. Nothing can be more dangerous to our efforts to build peace and development than a world divided along religious, ethnic or cultural lines. In each nation, and among all nations, we must work to promote unity based on our shared humanity.”

Kofi Annan (*former Secretary General of the United Nations*)

Do we think of "tolerance" as a positive or negative attribute? Is it a general good which all should develop and practise, or a conditional good depending upon circumstances? What are the limits of tolerance and when does intolerance become necessary?

We regularly hear calls from leaders and commentators to regard tolerance as a fundamental value in our society. Tolerance and respect are two of the core "British values" being taught in our schools and they also underpin our Human Rights and Equal Opportunities legislation. We should therefore infer from this that both tolerance and respect are highly-valued aspects of our common life. They foster understanding and acknowledgement of difference, they help us to live with diversity and mutual



acceptance, and thus promote social harmony.

Nations or societies which organise their legal, social and political life with a high degree of intolerance about throughout history and into the present day. Those who will only accept certain ethnicities, religions and lifestyles as legitimate will categorise and denounce those who differ as deviant and dangerous. This frequently leads to the oppression of minorities, to

persecution, violence and the expulsion of those regarded as intolerable. One recent example is the treatment of the Rohingya people of Myanmar.

Religions have their histories of intolerance, Christianity as much as any other. As 90% of the world's population have some religious adherence, it will continue to be a cause of prejudice and division, along with colour and ethnicity. Yet, in the foundational documents and teachings of the major world religions there is undeniable evidence of undercurrents of compassion towards those who are different, "Love your neighbour... love your enemies...pray for those who persecute you", from the Christian tradition, for example. The cruel history of religious bigotry and violence arose from fear, the fear of being tainted by foreign religions or practices, the fear of being defeated by foreign armies who would impose another religion upon the vanquished, or the fear that their god would be displeased if they did not adhere to the strictest codes of worship and practice. Such fears led to an increasing exclusivity.

A prerequisite for establishing tolerance is the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of those we are called to recognise and respect. This requires a proactive reaching out to those who are "other". This sounds worthy and gracious; but how do we apply it to a group like ISIS or to similar extremists? Their cruelty, exclusivity and intolerance are widely condemned by their own co-religionists and by the world in general.

Therefore, we cannot, in good conscience, either tolerate or respect this form of religious extremism. But should we at least try to understand it?

This is where the limits of toleration can become blurred. Does seeking to know more about a morally abhorrent ideology, like that of extremist ISIS, implicate us in their world view? Or are we asked to know our enemies better in order to defeat them militarily and/or ideologically? Morally speaking, the ISIS example is better defined than many other issues. Most reasonable people would see them as beyond any degree of understanding, let alone tolerance or respect.

But what about those who are "other" to us and who are closer to home? Are there people living among us whose background, ethnicity, lifestyle choices or behaviour test our levels of tolerance? Is tolerance for us, as individuals, really defined not by law but by what we have been conditioned to accept through our own upbringing, background, beliefs and values?

Beliefs and values change in response to new understandings, and the laws promoting tolerance are a means of codifying shifting social standards. Legislating for tolerance will not work for everyone in every situation. We all have sub-conscious biases and prejudices. The rule of law under which we live limits what we can legally do to act upon our prejudices in public places, at work or when learning. However, in

private, we can be as bigoted and intolerant as we choose. The advent of social media has caught out many who expressed what they should have kept private to their social media followers.

The root of all intolerance is fear. Fear is one of the most powerful and destructive emotions we experience. It can harden hearts and constrain empathy. Fear can disable us emotionally and intellectually and ruin relationships. While we will always be prey to feelings of intolerance towards others, we should examine what aspect of their behaviour is triggering fear within us and ask if this fear is justified. Could it be an irrational reaction to something or someone which we are

unable to understand or to accept as sharing our humanity?

One of the best antidotes to fear is to be certain of one's own beliefs and values and to live by them in public and in private. If they are based on the best of what religion can offer by way of compassion, tolerance and a vision of our shared humanity, we need not fear those who would challenge, mock or deride us.

John F Kennedy once said, "Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one's own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others."

*Revd Larry Wright*



*Harry L Marks*



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# Suffragettes Spare The Old Grammar School

*The article in our January issue about the 2015 film "Suffragette" has prompted the emergence of some interesting information about the movement at local level. Kings Norton was not spared from some of the violent actions that were taken to support the "votes for women" message, but one of our most treasured and historic sites had a dramatic escape.*

There were two significant incidents. On the night of 15th March 1914, a number of railway coaches which had been left on a railway siding close to Kings Norton were set

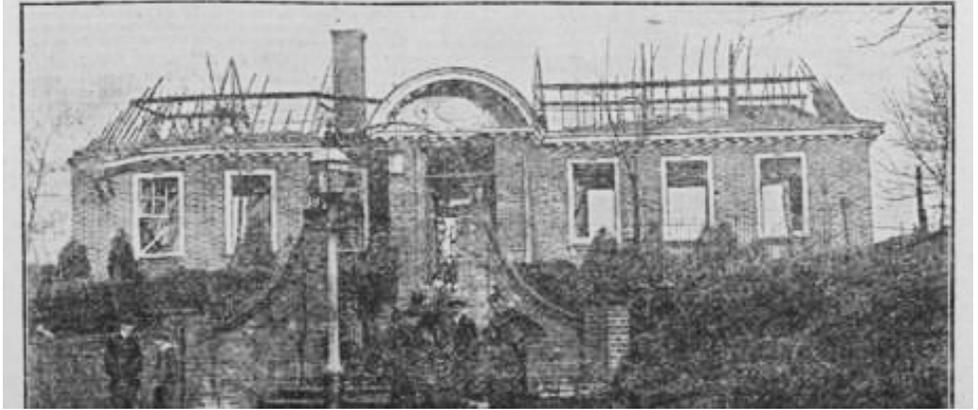
alight. As there was difficulty in obtaining sufficient water to fight the fire, the damage caused totalled £1,000, a massive amount at the time. A copy of "The Suffragist" newspaper was found nearby.



That vandalism was the second time that significant action took place within the parish. The first occasion, which occurred a few weeks earlier, could have had even more dramatic and disastrous consequences, but fortunately it did not.

A small group of women, possibly only two or three, broke into the historic Old Grammar School by St Nicolas' Church, apparently with the intention of burning it down. Though not in as good a state of repair as it now is, the Tudor building was nevertheless still in regular use as a Sunday School. Clearly, it would have been an irreversible tragedy if it had

## NORTHFIELD SUFFRAGETTE OUTRAGE.



been destroyed, for the local community and for Kings Norton's heritage.

However, it seems that the activists quickly realised that they really couldn't inflict damage on such a historic and unique building. They nevertheless wanted local people to know that they had been there.

So, on the blackboard in the school's upstairs room, they wrote "*Suffragists entered here intent on destruction, but being charmed by this old world room they have refrained from their intent.*" (It's interesting that they called themselves "suffragists", which is the term used for those who simply espoused the "votes for women" cause. They clearly didn't feel that they wanted to call themselves "suffragettes", which carried more militant connotations!)

They did, however, move on to inflict damage not too far away. They went to Northfield and burned down the library! It was a disaster at the time, though, in the end, Northfield benefited, when a brand new library, the one that still stands today, was built in the Carnegie style. A paper banner was found on the railings at the back of the library proclaiming "*Give women the vote!*" together with a brown paper parcel containing a book by Suffragette leader Cristabel Pankhurst and a note saying "*To start your new library!*"

Though criminal damage is always hard to justify, it's easy to empathise with the frustrations that underpinned the Suffragette movement. Britain, the most advanced and powerful country in the world for most of the Victorian

and Edwardian era, lagged behind in its refusal to give women the right to vote. In America, a number of states had given white women the vote from as early as 1869. Back in 1893, New Zealand had become the first self-governing country to grant women over the age of 21 the right to vote in parliamentary elections. Women in South Australia had even obtained the right to stand for parliament in 1895. But by 1903, the year when Suffragette action began, women in Britain had still not been enfranchised in any way, and the movement's leaders, headed by Emmeline Pankhurst, decided that it would have to become radical and militant if it was going to be effective.

Of course, the vast majority of the women who joined the movement relied on peaceful and usually legal forms of protest, such as strike action in their workplace, chaining themselves to railings and going on hunger strikes when they were imprisoned for their obstructive actions, as happened when they committed minor public order offences. In many of those situations, the authorities infamously decided that they should be force-fed, often through the nose.

Almost inevitably, the cause also attracted people who wanted to express their protest more dramatically through violent actions.



These usually took the form of arson attacks on public buildings and even the planting of bombs. In the West Midlands, around the time of the local incidents described earlier, a bomb was planted at Moor Hall in Sutton Coldfield, a tennis pavilion was destroyed in Olton and there were several other incidents.

The names of the women who broke into the Old Grammar School were never established. In fact, all the incidents described took place towards the end of the militant period of Suffragette activity. The start of the First World War in 1914 saw the movement deciding to abandon its disruptive actions in favour of demonstrating how effectively women could support the war effort.

Opinion amongst historians today is divided as to whether the militant tactics of the Suffragettes helped or hindered their cause. In the event, the British establishment did respond, but very slowly. Women in Britain over the age of 30, as long as they met certain property qualifications, were given the right to vote in 1918, but it was not until 1928 that suffrage was extended to all women over the age of 21.

Though she was never associated with any violence, one of the principal figures within the Suffragette movement, Julia Varley (pictured opposite), lived locally in

Hay Green Lane in Bournville. A Yorkshire mill worker from the age of 12, she moved to Birmingham in 1909 to work at the Cadbury factory in Bournville, where she created a branch of the National Federation of Women Workers. She was also involved in the Cradley Heath women chainmakers strike in 1910 and the Black Country strike of 1913. In later life, she was awarded an OBE and in May 2013 she was commemorated by the installation of a blue plaque at her former home in Hay Green Lane, Bournville, by the Birmingham Civic Society.

*Michael Kennedy*

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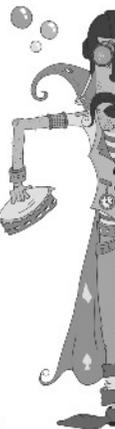
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# Good Question

## *The Thoughts of a Lay Minister*



One of my friends has a selection of those sorts of questions that are very useful to get conversations started, or to use in that awkward moment when the conversation dries up altogether. Things like "What is your favourite film?" or "Where would you like to live?" are good ones.

A question I have been asking people recently is about memorable first lines from novels. It is surprising how many we can remember, often going back to books that we read many years ago.

One you may have heard me quote before is the beginning of *Little Women* ("*Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents*") which I have used many times to explain our Christmas Challenge to people. Here are some others you might remember:

*"It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."*

*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."*

*"Last night I dreamt I went to*

*Manderley again."*

*"Marley was dead."*

And of course, *"In the beginning..."*

I wonder if, when the authors wrote those words, they realised how memorable they would become? I think it is interesting as well that I can remember more first lines than I can last lines (and that includes the last line of the Bible, which I had to go and look up: "*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen*").

On the radio over the New Year I heard someone talking about being at a dinner party on New Year's Eve and being asked a similar sort of conversational question. "What was the most significant conversation you had this year?". Well, that struck me, because I couldn't think of an answer and as most of you know I'm rarely lost for words.

But what did strike me was a conversation about questions. It was at our Wednesday morning Open Bible session and we were using

Handel's Messiah to look afresh at the Christmas story. The book we were following took the example of a story by Jewish Nobel Prize winner, Elie Weisel. Every day, when the young Elie would return home from school, his mother would ask him "Did you have a good question today?"

It is a question that we have come back to many times at Open Bible and I am often reminded of it, particularly

by children, who always ask really good questions, frequently ones that we find hard to answer!

So, perhaps I cannot remember a significant conversation from last year, but I can remember the importance of continuing to ask good questions and, hopefully, of coming up with some good answers.

*Pauline Weaver*

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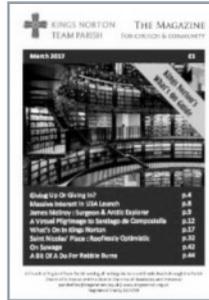
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Planned visits include St Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum, the Sistine Chapel, the Coliseum, the Church of San Clemente, the Forum, the Basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore and St John Lateran, St Paul Without the Walls, the Pantheon, the Anglican Centre, Sunday worship and lunch at All Saints Anglican Church. **If you have any questions, speak to the Reverend Larry Wright or to Thelma Mitchell.**

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# THE KINGS NORTON

## *Lent Conversations*

During Lent this year a series of “conversations” will be taking place at St Nicolas’ Place, Kings Norton on Wednesday evenings. Each evening will be led by a visiting speaker on a key contemporary topic. The evenings begin at 7.00 pm with bread, soup and a fruit, and will finish about 9.00 pm.

**If you would like to attend one or more of these events, please register your interest by requesting a free ticket on the Events page of the parish website or let the Parish Office know that you will be coming.**

### **21<sup>st</sup> February: Conflict and War.**

*Speakers: Dr William and Mrs Veronica Morris of the Next Century (Peace) Foundation*

### **28<sup>th</sup> February: Education and its Challenges.**

*Speaker to be confirmed*

### **7<sup>th</sup> March: Living well in a Multi-Faith City.**

*Speaker: Dr Andrew Smith, Bishop of Birmingham’s Inter-faith advisor*

### **14<sup>th</sup> March: What next for our Environment?**

*Speaker: Dr Terry Miller of Lincoln University and Lincoln School of Theology*

### **21<sup>st</sup> March: The Bible and the World Today.**

*Speaker: Dr Paula Gooder, theologian, author and broadcaster*

These events are free of charge but there will be an opportunity to make a donation towards the work of Christian Aid at the end of each evening.

# Understanding Lent

Lent is the 40-day period of preparation for Easter which has been observed by the Christian church since its earliest beginnings. We can trace its origins almost back to the first disciples. The bishop and theologian Irenaeus, who died in about 202 AD, wrote to the Pope of his day about an early disagreement over the length of Lent: *“The dispute is not only about the day, but also about the actual character of the fast. Some think that they ought to fast for one day, some for two, others for still more; some make their ‘day’ last 40 hours on end. Such variation in the observance did not originate in our own day, but very much earlier, in the time of our forefathers”.*

Interestingly, Irenaeus seems to be telling us that the earliest Christians fasted for only 40 hours and some scholars have suggested that the 40-day fast which had become traditional by the 4th century was in fact due to a punctuation error when the book containing the reference to this letter was translated from Greek into Latin. So don't let anyone tell you that punctuation doesn't matter!

Be that as it may, we know that, by the 300's AD, a 40-day fast was widely practised. The day on which Lent should begin, however, was debated for centuries. Today, most Western Christians (Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Protestants) begin Lent on Ash Wednesday. Eastern Christians meanwhile, including the Orthodox and Eastern Catholic churches, take Clean Monday as the starting point, a day which usually falls two days before Ash Wednesday. Ashes are an ancient sign of

penitence; from the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross, a practice which we still observe in Kings Norton today and in which you can share if you join us for one of our **Ash Wednesday services at either 12.00 midday or 7.30 p.m. on 14th February 2018 in St Nicolas' Church.**

Lent has long been seen as a period of self-denial, a way of entering into and reflecting upon the cosmic self-denial undertaken by Jesus Christ in order to save mankind. It is also a reminder of His 40 days of temptation in the desert before embarking on His earthly ministry.

Traditionally, the church has seen Lent as the principal time of year for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from its fellowship for serious faults. *Common Worship*, the Church of England's prayer book since the year 2000, tells us how this historical background explains *“the characteristic notes of Lent: self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which almsgiving has traditionally been added.”*

**This Lent, as part of a new initiative, you can join others on a Wednesday evening to reflect on some of the more challenging issues facing our society (see opposite page).** We hope that these evenings will offer a way of stepping back from the daily whirl and of taking time to gain a fresh perspective as we approach Easter together. If you're free, do join us!

# Fundraising Effort Drives Ahead

The effort to raise more than £90,000 to repair part of the roof of St Nicolas' Church developed a strong momentum over the Christmas and New Year period.

The performances which we reported on last month by the Wolverhampton Brass Band and the Bournville Young Singers were followed by a successful "Sponsor a Carol" event on Friday 5 January, when more than 20 carols were sung, covering 17 centuries of writing. Each event made an important contribution to the Roof Fund.

One of the most popular and successful events took place last September, when substantial numbers of local people took the opportunity to share in the charm of a **Traditional Afternoon Tea** in the Church. They, and the many other local people who would have liked to attend, will be delighted to know that the event is being repeated, on **Saturday 10 February from 2 pm to 5 pm** (close to St Valentine's Day!). As before, there will be music, good companionship and of course delicious things to eat. Tickets cost £4 per person, and there is a special "Three people for £10" offer.

You can book your tickets through

the Parish Office in St Nicolas' Place or buy and download them online by visiting the **Events** page on our website ([www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk)).

Further fund-raising events are being actively considered, including an evening "bat walk" and further concerts in St Nicolas' Church, which offers musicians and their audiences outstanding acoustics. Please keep an eye on our website and on noticeboards in and around the church and St Nicolas' Place.

If you'd like to donate to the Appeal directly, specific Pledge Cards are available from the Church Roof Appeal display that is located immediately inside the church. There are also collection buckets.

Donations can also be made through our page on the "Just Giving" website ([justgiving.com/knpcc](http://justgiving.com/knpcc)). The page is also accessible through the **Give** page on the parish website, which explains that you can also donate using your mobile phone by texting STNR17 £10 to 70070.

If you'd like to play a more active role in the fundraising effort or have any ideas for events, please don't hesitate to contact Julie Hill at the Parish Office on 0121 458 3289.



# FOODBANK NEWS

At the beginning December, I was privileged to go to the Foodbank on behalf of a client who was being supported by a local agency. The client has mobility issues, the walk from home to Cotteridge is out of the question and there is no bus fare or bus pass.

I insisted on waiting my turn in the queue as it was extremely busy. I watched as each new arrival was made welcome, was reassured they were in the right place and were told that they would be seen as fast of the team could manage.

One client had no voucher. One of the Core Team sat with him and explained how a Trussell Foodbank worked, why a voucher was needed and how they might be able to help him.

The only give-away that I wasn't a client was when the volunteer came with the bags, took one look and said "You can't have it!", much to the consternation of the next person in the queue; until I burst out laughing and said "No way. It's for my client". My neighbour smiled too, seeing that we were normal team-mates and had our clients at the top of our priorities.

As I walked back to my vehicle with the bags, I thought hard about what it would feel like if these were my only rations for the next 3-4 days. I was very glad to be able to hand them over to our client, though wished deeply that they didn't have the indignity of relying on a Foodbank for food.

*Sylvia Fox*

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# THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOX COLLECTION

Once again on behalf of The Children's Society I wish to thank all contributors for their generosity, help and continued support.

The amount raised this year is a very creditable **£481.81**, which brings our running total to £19,628.81. Well done everyone!

Pat Dovey



## FAIRTRADE WINE

Our communion wine is Fairtrade. "So what?", I hear you think.

All three of our churches in Kings Norton use the same provider and we chose them precisely because they produced Fairtrade communion wines. Communion wines are a little different from ordinary wines in that they are fortified. This means they will last once the bottle is opened. Our wine comes from Stellar Organic Winery in South Africa, which lives up to its name.

The Stellar workforce benefits directly from the sales of the wines and grapes through income and various projects to improve the quality of the workers' lives: e.g. medical provision, improving living conditions and also small but vital things like paying for a child's replacement spectacles just before some important examinations.

On the organic side, the credentials stack up too. The grapes are grown organically and much of their pest control is managed by a small web-footed army. Indian Runner Ducks are great at eating snails and other pests.

Many other companies now produce ordinary wines that are Fairtrade. So, when you are shopping for wines, please look for the Fairtrade symbol.

Sylvia Fox

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# WHAT'S ON IN KINGS NORTON?

Our guide to the best of Kings Norton's lively community life starts here. In this section of the magazine, you will find:

- A list of **Societies, Clubs and Venues** active in and around Kings Norton
- A summary of the **regular services and activities** organised by the church in this parish
- A detailed **Diary of Events** organised over the coming month by the organisations listed and others.

We divide the publicity which we offer to the local community into **advertising and listings**. We charge for **advertisements** placed by local businesses who are seeking to attract paying customers. Meanwhile, in *Societies, Clubs and Venues* and the *Events Diary* we print, free of charge, **listings** of events organised by local social or charitable groups, together with their contact details and a brief description of their aims.

**To add your organisation's events to our *What's On* guide for next month, contact Michael Kennedy ([michaelkennedy@talk21.com](mailto:michaelkennedy@talk21.com)) by the submission deadline shown on page 3. To advertise in the pages of this magazine, contact The Editor, David Ash ([editor@kingsnorton.org.uk](mailto:editor@kingsnorton.org.uk)). Details of advertising charges are available on request or can be viewed on the magazine page of the parish website at [www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk).**

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## Societies, Clubs & Venues

*Contact information for Kings Norton organisations and locations that offer opportunities to get together for events and/or to meet people who have similar interests.*

### LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS

**Kings Norton History Society** [www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk), [knhs@lagonda.org.uk](mailto:knhs@lagonda.org.uk)

The Society's meetings take the form of talks covering a wide variety of subjects of historic interest, concentrating on the West Midlands region. We also run day visits to places of historical interest. Meetings are normally held in St Nicolas' Place on the last Monday of the month, unless otherwise specified, from September to May. Membership is £12.50 per annum. Talks are free of charge to members. Visitors are always welcome but a charge of £3 per talk is made.

**Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve** [www.fknnr.org.uk](http://www.fknnr.org.uk), Amanda Cadman on 0121 624 3865 or 07 887 512 382

An informal pressure group to lobby for environmental improvements in and about the reserve. We organise a weekly working party on site (the Tuesday Workout from 10.30 to 1.00 pm, open to all) to manage the Reserve, to increase biodiversity and habitats and to enhance its value for both people and wildlife. We also organise a monthly walk. Dates and meeting locations are on our website.

**Friends of Historic Kings Norton** [www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk), [fhkn@btinternet.com](mailto:fhkn@btinternet.com), St Nicolas' Place 0121 458 1223

We raise funds for the restoration of the historic buildings that are known collectively as Saint Nicolas' Place (SNP), through membership subscription and events organised by the group. Members receive regular newsletters containing updates about SNP and listings of Birmingham-wide heritage events. Membership is £7.50 per annum or £5.00 for those not in full-time work. We also arrange guided tours of the Saint Nicolas' Place Heritage Buildings.

**Friends of Kings Norton Park** [friendsofkingsnortonpark.blogspot.com](http://friendsofkingsnortonpark.blogspot.com), [info.foknp@gmail.com](mailto:info.foknp@gmail.com)

The Friends of Kings Norton Park and Playing Fields are a group of local volunteers who come together regularly to improve and protect the Kings Norton Park and its neighbouring playing fields. We plan activities and events which aim to make a positive difference to the recreational experience of the people who use these spaces, and we liaise with organisations, including the City Council, which organise events in the parks.

**The Fields Millennium Green Trust** [www.fieldsmillenniumgreen.btck.co.uk](http://www.fieldsmillenniumgreen.btck.co.uk), Maggie Sweet 0121 628 1247, [sweetc5@sky.com](mailto:sweetc5@sky.com)

The Trust and its volunteers meet regularly to maintain and improve the Millennium Green for the benefit of the community. We work closely with the National Trust who, with their young Urban Rangers and others, organise a programme of training and conservation activities. We usually work on Saturdays fortnightly from 10.30 am to 3.00 pm, and sometimes during school holidays.

## SOCIAL CLUBS & SOCIETIES

**Kings Norton Society** John Bowen (Chairman) 0121 458 3747

Our origins go back to Kings Norton Youth Fellowship. We still have a few who remember those days but most are much younger. We normally meet at Kings Norton Tennis Club on the fourth Friday of the month for a bite to eat, a chat and general socialising. We have the occasional walk, quiz or speaker or best of all, we organise our own entertainment. If you know a member tell them you would like to come, or call the number above.

**Kings Norton Seniors' Club** *St Nicolas' Parish Office, 0121 458 3289*

The Seniors' Club is for men and women aged 65 and over. We meet at Saint Nicolas' Place every Wednesday from 1 – 3 pm and have a varied programme of events.

**Kings Norton Women's Fellowship** *Carol Devic 0121 458 7667, St Nicolas' Parish Office 0121 458 3289*

A group for women of all ages. We meet on the first Thursday of every month from 2-3 pm at Saint Nicolas' Place and offer a variety of activities.

### **Kings Norton Women's Institute**

The WI is now the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK. It plays a unique role in enabling women to take part in a wide variety of activities and to campaign on issues that matter to them and their communities. To accommodate the preferences of members, the Kings Norton WI activity is divided into afternoon and evening groups, each of which meets once a month at the Friends' Meeting House, Watford Road, Cotteridge.

**Women's Institute** (afternoon group) *Sally Saunders 0121 458 6019*. Meets every third Tuesday of the month from 2pm till 4pm.

**Women's Institute** (evening group) *Marion Atkin 0121 441 5817*. Meets every third Monday of the month 7 pm for 7.30 pm.

**Kings Norton Rotary Club** *Colin Guy 0121 444 2020, colinguy1930@yahoo.co.uk*

Rotary is an international network of clubs for business and professional men and women, both active and retired. Clubs are committed to helping local and overseas communities. The local branch meets most Tuesdays for lunch and fellowship at the Kings Heath Cricket Club, 247 Alcester Road South, Birmingham B14 6DT. Visitors are welcome at most meetings, but should contact Colin Guy in advance.

**Bournville Townswomen's Guild** *Sue Davis 0121 608 0646*

South Birmingham only has two local Townswomen's Guilds and the appropriate one for ladies in Kings Norton is the one based in Bournville, established 65 years ago. A flourishing Guild, it covers parishes within a five mile radius and several current members come from Kings Norton. The group meets every fourth Monday of the month at the Friends' Meeting House in Bournville from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

**Kings Norton 41 Club** *Michael Bunn 07 831 775 473*

We are a group of former Round Tablers which meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the KN Tennis Club for dinner and a themed talk. Any former members, or former Round Tablers, interested in joining us please make contact beforehand.

**Kings Norton Supper Club** *Annette Dickers, ardickers@outlook.com*

We meet every month at Kings Norton Golf Club for a two-course evening meal with coffee followed by a speaker. Membership is £12 per annum plus payment for the supper.

### **SPECIALIST INTEREST GROUPS**

**U3A (University of the Third Age)** *www.u3a.org.uk, knu3a.membership@gmail.com, John Taylor 0121 458 6397*

Kings Norton's local U3A was successfully established in the first few months of this year. The U3A is a nationwide organisation based on local groups providing opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to come together and develop their interests. Run on a voluntary basis, it sees members sharing their knowledge and experience with others in interest groups through informal activity sessions covering a wide range of subjects and activities.

**Spoken Trend** *tom\_mccann@hotmail.co.uk and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @spokentrend, Tom McCann*

Spoken Trend is King's Norton's first regular venture into 'open-mic' spoken word and performance poetry. Launched in January, it is already attracting a significant audience. It gives participants of all ages, many completely new to the activity, the opportunity to perform their own works in front of like-minded people. It takes place on the first floor of the Bull's Head pub on the last Wednesday of every month. Those wanting to perform should check in from 7.00 pm. The event is free for performers while spectators pay a £3 entry fee.

**Kings Norton Photography Society** *www.kingsnortonphotographicsociety.com*

Membership is open to men and women of all ages, from beginners to advanced. We meet at Kings Norton Tennis Club most Wednesday evenings from 8.00 pm-10.00 pm throughout the season (October – April inclusive) with a varied programme of events and outings.

**Kings Norton Patchwork and Quilting Group** *Sally Barney 07778 025725 or Deirdre Barker 07980 284416.*

We welcome people of all levels of ability. The group meets every Tuesday in term time at the Friends' Meeting House in Bournville from 10.00 am till 3.00 pm.

**Birmingham Philatelic Society** *www.birminghamphilatelic.co.uk, Robert Shaw, 0121 415 5226*

We are a group of stamp and postcard collectors, sharing our hobby through displays, buying and selling material, auctions and visits. Everyone with an interest is welcome including beginners. Our daytime meetings start at 2.00 pm at the Friends' Meeting House in Cotteridge.

**Greenlands Chess Club** [www.chess.com/club/greenlands](http://www.chess.com/club/greenlands), Richard Collett 0121 458 7617 or 07874 216935

We are a small, friendly chess club, meeting most Tuesdays from 7.00 pm at the Greenlands Social Club in Longbridge Lane. We have members of all standards playing friendly or competitive league chess. New members are always welcome. There is a fee of £2 per night (the first two visits are free) or annual membership is £40.

**Kings Norton Fundraising Group for Birmingham St. Mary's Hospice**

[www.birminghamhospice.org.uk](http://www.birminghamhospice.org.uk), [suebarkerdavies@gmail.com](mailto:suebarkerdavies@gmail.com), Sue Davies 0121 608 0646

We are a local group of volunteers who raise money to care for people living with life-limiting illnesses, their families and carers in Birmingham and Sandwell. We organise fundraising activities such as regular charity quizzes and stalls at local festivals. We also aim to raise awareness of the wide range of services offered by the hospice. If you can spare a few hours to help, please contact us. We meet on the second Monday of each month at Kings Norton Bowling Club.

## SPORTS & EXERCISE CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

**Health Exchange** [www.healthexchange.org.uk](http://www.healthexchange.org.uk), 0800 1583535

Health Exchange creates an ongoing dialogue with the Birmingham community about health and wellbeing. It advises local volunteers who wish to offer relevant activities. A Health Exchange-supported walk, lasting for up to two hours with a break, takes place every Friday from 10.30 am, beginning in the car park of Kings Norton Park. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact walk leader Sally Saunders on 0121 458 6019.

**South Birmingham Ramblers** [www.sbramblers.co.uk](http://www.sbramblers.co.uk)

Every week we meet up in Kings Norton Playing Fields Car Park to car share to the start of our walks. These are between 5 and 11 miles on various days of the week. For our current programme, please see our website and contact the walk leader for further details. For those interested in gentler exercise, we also have fortnightly mini walks on Tuesdays of approximately 2 miles, starting at 10 am: please contact Jenny (0121 444 4094) for further information.

**Active Parks**, [www.beactivebirmingham.co.uk](http://www.beactivebirmingham.co.uk), 0121 464 2012

Active Parks, part of the City Council's Birmingham Wellbeing initiative, works in partnership with various organisations in order to offer a wide variety of free physical activities across Birmingham parks. With the Friends of Kings Norton Park group, depending on the season, it offers a range of local events, from jogging to Tai Chi, normally meeting in the Westhill Road car park at Kings Norton Park.

**Kings Norton Bowling Club**, 129 Wychall Lane, Birmingham B38 8AH, 0121 458 1570

We are long-established sports and social club, providing members with friendly company, a bowling green and a range of indoor activities.

**Kings Norton Tennis Club**, Grange Hill Road B38 8RE [www.kingsnortontennis.co.uk](http://www.kingsnortontennis.co.uk), 0121 458 2351

Our members benefit from all-year round use of tennis courts (except on rare occasions when club matches or coaching take priority) and access to members' club nights. Membership fees are lower than many clubs in the area, with discounts for couples as well as families.

**Kings Norton Motorcycle Club** [www.evoice.org.uk/knmcc](http://www.evoice.org.uk/knmcc), Gordon Green 07504 676766

Formed in Kings Norton in 1944, we are a family-friendly motorcycle club with interests ranging across all types of motorcycles, from classic to modern. Some members take part in trials, scrambles, and hill climbs. We meet weekly on Thursdays at the Woodbourne Sports and Social Club in Rumbush Lane, Earlswood from 8-00 pm onwards. There is a thriving programme of social activities.

**Multi-Sports Extra Gemma** 07 737 415 737

A locally-based company that develops and manages a range of sporting activities to help bring people together and enhance their quality of life. Following the completion of its free weekly Learn to Skate activity in Kings Norton Park, further events are being planned and will be announced in due course.

**Push Bikes** [www.pushbikes.org.uk/event/bournville-gentle-cycling](http://www.pushbikes.org.uk/event/bournville-gentle-cycling), John & Hilary Porter 0121 477 2156

Push Bikes is a Birmingham campaign group for better cycling, encouraging people who are not regular cyclists to get on their bikes for easy and sociable outings. Routes, normally of 10 to 12 miles, are mostly traffic-free, exploring local paths and parks and going at the pace of the slowest participant. New riders are always welcome. The nearest local group to Kings Norton meets at 10.00 on Saturdays at Rowheath Pavilion, Heath Road, B30 1HH.

**Black Adder Clog Morris**, [blackaddersecretary@gmail.com](mailto:blackaddersecretary@gmail.com) or find us on Facebook

Morris Dancing is an ideal way of having fun and keeping fit. Dancers and musicians, beginners or advanced, men and women are welcomed by Black Adder. We meet most Thursdays (except August) from 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. in Selly Oak Friends' Meeting House at 930 Bristol Rd South, Birmingham B29 6NB. If you want to come along, please email us to check we're meeting that week.

## COMMUNITY CENTRES & VENUES

**Saint Nicolas' Place**, 81 The Green B38 8RU, [www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk](http://www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk), [info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk](mailto:info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk), 0121 458 1223.

**Kings Norton Library**, Pershore Road South, Birmingham. B30 3EU  
[kings.norton.library@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:kings.norton.library@birmingham.gov.uk), 0121 464 1532

A wide range of books, CDs and materials for all ages including community information and local history. There is also a meeting room for hire and internet access. The Library organises a range of regular events including activities for children, reading and writing groups and our regular coffee mornings. A number of other organisations hold events at the Library.

**Bells Farm Community Centre**, Bells Farm Close B14 5QP, [www.bellsfarm.org.uk](http://www.bellsfarm.org.uk), 0121 433 3532

**Greaves Hall**, Greaves Square B38 9LX [www.opkn.co.uk/greaveshall](http://www.opkn.co.uk/greaveshall), 0121 448 8760

**Hawkesley Community Centre**, 51 Edgwood Road B38 9RN,  
[www.facebook.com/HawkesleyCommunityCentre](http://www.facebook.com/HawkesleyCommunityCentre), 0121 399 0122

The centre organises a number of regular activities. Each Monday, between 5.30 and 7.30 pm, we offer exciting free activities for young people aged 11-17: just turn up. We also have a weekly Wellbeing Wednesday lunch for those aged 50 and over, with a free activity, costing £5.50. Please book in advance. We also run a drop-in centre for young adults aged 18-25 for help with job applications, or just a cup of tea and a chat. You can bring children, but please ensure they are supervised.

**Manningford Hall**, Bells Lane B14 5RY, [www.manningfordhall.com](http://www.manningfordhall.com), 0121 430 6005.

## MUSIC VENUES

**Tower of Song** 107 Pershore Road South, B30 3JC, [www.towerofsong.co.uk](http://www.towerofsong.co.uk), 0121 486 1300

We are a thriving music venue, created by a team of local volunteers and featuring music to suit all tastes. Most shows start from 8:30-9pm. Every Wednesday we have Rea River Roots and every Thursday is our Crossroads Blues Club. Please check our website for information on all events.

**The Roadhouse** Wharfedale Leisure Complex, Lifford Lane, B30 3DZ,  
[www.theroadhousebirmingham.com](http://www.theroadhousebirmingham.com), 0121 246 2273

We are a successful live music venue, set up by local volunteers in 1999 after the closure of the Breedon Bar. With a capacity of 250 people and a relaxed and friendly environment, covering nearly every night of the week we host a wide range of musical genres, from acoustic to rock, from bluegrass to reggae. Please see our website for listings.

# The Church in the Parish

We are a Church of England Team Parish in partnership with the Methodist Church, serving all in Kings Norton through St Nicolas Parish Church and Hawkesley and Immanuel District Churches.

**We believe that the church in Kings Norton exists  
To be a worshipping transforming partnership in Christ  
To live out God's radical hospitality for all  
To be equipped for work in God's world**

## St Nicolas' Parish Church

*on The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU*

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>9.00 am</b>	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	<b>10.30 am</b>	Holy Communion (with "Oasis" for 7's-11's)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday</b>	<b>10.30 am</b>	Parade Service or Morning Worship for all ages
	<b>4 pm</b>	Holy Baptism (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month)
	<b>6 pm</b>	Evening Worship (see below)

Every Sunday evening we offer prayer, music and quiet. 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Taizé Prayer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: Holy Communion with Prayer for Healing, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Night Prayer (Compline) and Reflection, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Sundays: Evening Prayer or Creative Worship.

<b>Mon &amp; Weds</b>	<b>9 am</b>	Morning Prayer
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## Hawkesley Church (Anglican & Methodist)

*at Hawkesley Academy on the corner of Shannon Road and Old Partway, Kings Norton, B38 9TR*

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	Worship and Children's Activities (5-11's)
		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays          Morning Worship
		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays          Holy Communion
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>10am</b>	Hawkesley Coffee Morning (every two weeks)

## Immanuel Church

*at Saint Nicolas' Place, 81 The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU*

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10.30am</b>	Worship (with "Oasis" for those at Primary School)
1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays		Holy Communion;
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday		Joint service with either St Nicolas or Hawkesley
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday		All-Age Worship

## Open Church

*Visit, pray, light a candle or share conversation over coffee.*

We open St Nicolas' Church as much as we can so that all may share God's peace and promise in a space where they have been found and trusted for centuries. There is a place for you within its story. Please pray that more will know it as a safe place for prayer and healing, where sorrow and joy are held in God's love. We welcome volunteers to share in our offering of welcome, refreshment and care through St Nicolas,' Hawkesley and Immanuel, to steward at St Nicolas' during Open Church and to care for our churchyard, flowers and brasses.

<b>Wednesday</b>	10.00 am – 12.00 noon, 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm : <b>Candlelit Church</b> with informal learning together at 8.00 pm. Quiet spaces, candles, conversation, creativity & music. Come and go as you like.
<b>Thursday</b>	6.30 pm – 8.00 pm for all <b>Marriage and Baptism</b> enquiries
<b>Saturday</b>	10.00 am – 12 noon for coffee, "Knit & Natter" & prayer.

## For Young Children

**Bumps & Babies:** for new and expectant parents, in St Nicolas' Church every Monday from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm. **Tiny Tots:** for 0-5's and their parents or carers every Thursday at 9.00 am in St Nicolas' Church

## Growing in Faith

We are exploring fresh ways for all to grow in faith, those making their very first step, those who have made many and those who are rediscovering God's love after times of change. Please ask in each church or see our website for details.

## Help us to keep our Parish Church open

It costs more than £800 each week to keep St Nicolas' Church open. We welcome all financial support through donations and especially through regular Planned Giving. Do ask for details and, if a taxpayer, ask how you can Gift Aid your offering.

## Baptisms and Marriages

Please visit St Nicolas' on Thursdays between 6.30 pm and 8.00 pm to ask any questions and arrange bookings with our clerks. One of the clergy is also present to help if there is a question over whether your service can be held in this parish.

**More details at [www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk)**

# Events Diary February 2018

## Thursday 1 February

- Kings Norton Women's Fellowship, Saint Nicolas' Place 2.00-3.00 pm: armchair exercise with Susan Weaver
- Black Adder Clog Morris, Selly Oak Friends Meeting House, 930 Bristol Road South, 8.00-10.00pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

## Friday 2 February

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am
- Storytime for under-5s, Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45 pm

## Saturday 3 February

- Friends of Kings Norton Park Beginners' Running (for absolute beginners up to 5km ability) and Social Group Running (for those who run regularly). Both groups 9.30-10.30 am, meet in car park at Kings Norton Park
- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Saturday Book Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-11.30 am

## Tuesday 6 February

- Kings Norton Patchwork and Quilting Group, Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 10.00 am-3.00 pm
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 1.00 - 3.30 pm
- U3A (University of the Third Age) Monthly General Meeting, St Joseph's & St Helen's Church Hall, Station Road, Cotteridge, doors open 2.10 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm
- Kings Norton Supper Club, Kings Norton Golf Club, 7.30 pm: Councillor Debbie Clancy

## Wednesday 7 February

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Singalong with Kevin Miles
- Kings Norton Local History Group, Kings Norton Library, 2.00-4.00 pm
- Kings Norton Photographic Society, Kings Norton Tennis Club, 8.00 pm-10.00 pm: Altered images
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Thursday 8 February**

- Black Adder Clog Morris, Selly Oak Friends' Meeting House, 930 Bristol Road South, 8.00-10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Friday 9 February**

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am
- Storytime for under-5s, Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45 pm

### **Saturday 10 February**

- Farmers' Market, The Green, 9.00 am-2.00 pm
- Friends of Kings Norton Park Beginners' Running (for absolute beginners up to 5km ability) and Social Group Running (for those who run regularly). Both groups 9.30 10.30 am, meet in car park at Kings Norton Park
- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Friends of Historic Kings Norton charity book sale, St Nicolas' Place, 10.00 am-1.00 pm
- Fields Millennium Green Trust volunteer working party, Fields Millennium Green, 10.30 am
- **Afternoon Tea for Roof Fund**, St Nicolas' Church, 2pm-5pm (tickets from the Events page at [kingsnorton.org.uk](http://kingsnorton.org.uk) or from Parish Office, St Nicolas' Place)

### **Monday 12 February**

- Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice, Kings Norton Bowling Club, 6.30 pm-7.30 pm

### **Tuesday 13 February**

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Kings Norton Patchwork and Quilting Group, Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 10.00 am-3.00 pm
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 1.00 -3.30 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

### **Wednesday 14 February**

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Beetle Drive
- King Norton 41 Club, Kings Norton Tennis Club, 7 pm for 7.30pm
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Thursday 15 February**

- Black Adder Clog Morris, Selly Oak Friends Meeting House, 930 Bristol Road South, 8.00-10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Friday 16 February**

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am
- Storytime for under-5s, Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45 pm

### **Saturday 17 February**

- Friends of Kings Norton Park Beginners' Running (for absolute beginners up to 5km ability) and Social Group Running (for those who run regularly). Both groups 9.30-10.30 am, meet in car park at Kings Norton Park
- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Friends of Historic Kings Norton Quiz Night, St Nicolas' Place, 7.00 pm for 7.30pm (£3 per person, teams of 6 people maximum, raffle, bring your own drinks).

### **Monday 19 February**

- Kings Norton Women's Institute (evening group), Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 7.00 pm: Bob Broadfield 'My life as an acrobat'

### **Tuesday 20 February**

- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 1.00 -3.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women's Institute (afternoon group), Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 2.00-4.00pm: Max Keen 'Richard III'
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

### **Wednesday 21 February**

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club outing: Lunch and Music at Stourport Manor
- Kings Norton Photographic Society, Kings Norton Tennis Club, 8.00 pm-10.00 pm
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Thursday 22 February**

- Birmingham Philatelic Society, Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 2.00 pm (first meeting of new season): 'New acquisitions'
- Councillors' Surgery, Kings Norton Library, 4.30 pm
- Black Adder Clog Morris, Selly Oak Friends Meeting House, 930 Bristol Road South, 8.00-10.00pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

### **Friday 23 February**

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am
- Storytime for under-5s, Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45 pm

### **Saturday 24 February**

- Friends of Kings Norton Park Beginners' Running (for absolute beginners up to 5km ability) and Social Group Running (for those who run regularly). Both groups 9.30-10.30 am, meet in car park at Kings Norton Park
- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Fields Millennium Green Trust volunteer working party, Fields Millennium Green, 10.30 am

### **Sunday 25 February**

- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve Community Litter Pick (see website)

### **Monday 26 February**

- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Bournville Townswomen's Guild, Friends' Meeting House, Bournville, 2.00-4.00 pm
- King Norton History Society, St. Nicolas' Place, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm: Ian Pick 'The Great Birmingham Squabble'.
- Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice Quiz Night, Kings Norton Bowling Club, 8 pm-10 pm (delayed Christmas Quiz, outfits not obligatory!); £3 per person, teams of 6 maximum. Contact Sue Davis on 0121 608 0646

### **Tuesday 27 February**

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Kings Norton Patchwork and Quilting Group, Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 10.00 am-3.00 pm
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 1.00 - 3.30 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

### **Wednesday 28 February**

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Music with Geoff Abbotts
- Spoken Trend 'open mic' spoken word and poetry event, Bulls Head, The Green: performers report 7.00 pm, event begins at 7.30 pm
- Kings Norton Photographic Society, Kings Norton Tennis Club, 8.00pm-10pm: Club competition
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

# Saint Nicolas' Place Weekly Diary

## Monday

Rainbows 5.30 pm

Guides 7.00 pm

Zumba 7.00 pm (Verity 07 966 690 476)

Cantare Community Choir 7.30-9.00 pm (Rebecca 07 803 900 154)

Kings Norton History Society 7.30 pm (last Monday of the month)

## Tuesday

Slimming World 9.30 am-11.00 am & 5.00 pm – 7.00 pm (Nicola 07 875 555 958)

Rhythm Time 9.30 am – 12.30 pm (Vicky 0121 447 7632)

Circle Dancing 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm (Jan Davies 0121 476 1301)

Brownies 6.00 pm- 7.30 pm

## Wednesday

Extend Exercise Class 9.30 – 11.00 am

Kings Norton Seniors' Club 1.00 pm-3.00 pm (contact Saint Nicolas' Place Office)

FSK Karate 4.30 pm – 6.00 pm (07 703 754 900)

Deeley's Dragon Martial Arts 6.30-7.30 pm (enquiries@beechees martialarts.co.uk)

## Thursday

Kings Norton Women's Fellowship (first Thursday of month) 2.00 -3.00 pm

Brownies 6.30 pm-8.30 pm

Total Pilates 6.30 pm-7.30 pm (Pauline Austin 07 773 782 463)

## Friday

Illumination Youth Theatre 4.00 pm – 5.30 pm (ages 5-10); 5.30 pm- 7.00 pm (ages 11-18) (Melanie 07 766 724 834)

## Saturday

Feel the Rhythm Dance School for children and young people 10.00 am-1.00 pm (Donna 07 788 528 504)

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# Hawkesley Pancakes!

That unmissable annual event, the Hawkesley Church Pancake Party, takes place this year on Shrove Tuesday (of course), 13<sup>th</sup> February 2018. The doors open at 7.00 p.m, the evening will include a quiz and a charity collection will be taken.

## DECEMBER 2017 FUNERALS

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." *(John ch.3 v.16)*

12th December	Adam Byk	95	SN.Bu.CY
18th December	Annie Lowe		In.CY
19th December	John Ernest Harbourne	78	SN.Bu.KN

**SN** : Service at St Nicolas' Church, **Cr** : Cremation, **Bu** : Burial,  
**In** : Ashes interred, **CY** : Churchyard, **KN** : Kings Norton Cemetery

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ALL

# HOSTILES

Dir. Scott  
Cooper

This current film has been chosen as one of the more intelligent of its genre; the brooding Western, where morality is compromised by conflict and its aftermath.

It is set in 1892, when the Indian Wars were coming to an end and when those soldiers who had fought them were being retired. It is an American period Western written and directed by Scott Cooper, based on an original story by Donald E. Stewart. It stars Christian Bale as Captain Joseph Blocker, a taciturn, solitary cavalry officer with a “war bag of reasons to hate all Indians”. Blocker’s last command before being retired is to escort an imprisoned, dying Cheyenne chief (played by Wes Studi) and his family from his place of imprisonment to Montana where he can die in his place of birth.

Blocker and the chief have been enemies in the past and the order to carry out this escort is abhorrent to him, but for reasons we are left to surmise he agrees to this last duty. As the journey begins we are treated to the awesome landscape of America where this small party with their tense relationships appear lost in the immensity. They come across Rosalie



Quaid (played by Rosamund Pike) a suicidal widow, the only survivor of her family after a savage attack by rogue Comanches.

During the incidents which blight the journey, perceptions begin to shift among the soldiers and their Indian prisoners, relationships alter and new perspectives on the causes and conduct of the Indian Wars begin to arise. Christianity is explicit in the film. Rosalie asks Blocker if he believes in the Lord and he does. She explains that faith is the only thing that has carried her through the “rough edges of God”.

This is a film which draws you effortlessly into its moral dilemmas and, one senses, with the death of one of the last great war Chiefs, an age is passing away and the soldiers who fought him and his kind are becoming history. Is any reconciliation possible? You must watch the film and decide for yourself.

The relationship between Captain Blocker and Rosalie is deftly handled.

Despite his hardened veteran exterior and her grief, they help each other to emerge from their unique sorrow and pain into a plausible relationship, of a kind. The closing scene takes place at a railway station with a train, that symbol of modernity, bound for Chicago. The Iron Horse carries those who survived this odyssey into...what? A new future or an escape from their past?

M.G.M.

DECEMBER 2017

## BAPTISMS

3<sup>rd</sup> December

Evelyn Rose Cotton  
Isaac William John Sawtell  
Harry Ray Miller  
Jake Edward Allen

22<sup>nd</sup> December

Kourosh Zolghaor Mazlaghani  
Joobin Hariri  
Moojan Pordelkhaki

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# Doing The Splits

*The Rev Canon Philip Mounstephen is the Executive Leader of CMS (Church Mission Society), an international Anglican mission community with which Kings Norton Team Parish has had links for many years. Prior to taking up his post, Philip was the Chaplain of St Michael's, Paris, a large multicultural church in the centre of the French capital. Here he gained a reputation as a passionate and visionary leader who encourages and enables others to grow.*

*He is deeply committed to the church around the world. At St Michael's he saw significant success in building up a church community including French-, English- and Tamil-speaking congregations made up of over 40 nationalities. He developed the church's international connections in Africa and Asia and acted as consultant and companion to a Turkish-language church in Istanbul.*

*Philip's past experience also includes a variety of positions at CPAS (Church Pastoral Aid Society) and leading a multicultural church in Streatham, south London. This article, which appeared in the Winter 2018 edition of "The Call", is reprinted here with permission.*

The question of belonging is a hot topic at the moment. Although it's not often explicitly stated, it's central to the current Brexit debate in the UK. A couple of months ago the British Foreign Secretary expressed his concern about the "split allegiances" of many young people who feel themselves to be both European and British. And this "loyalty" question has been raised by others too, as I expect it will continue to be over the coming months and years.

Boris Johnson's use of the word "split" is significant of course, because it implies that it is not possible to have

multiple allegiances. That's one reason why EU citizens in the UK (and UK citizens in the EU) feel so uneasy: the implication is that they can only belong in one place, and they don't perhaps belong where they are.

This is not an exclusively British phenomenon of course. Similar issues are being aired in many places: in Russia, in France and certainly in the USA, where the issue of what it means to be truly American is thoroughly contested.

These are sharp issues because they touch not just on where we feel at home, important though that is. In



truth it goes much deeper. It's about identity; it's about who we are and who we feel ourselves to be.

In my case, I feel both English (though I'm a quarter Scots) and British and, yes, I feel myself to be European too. Yet I don't feel "split" in my allegiances. In truth we all have multiple allegiances. I am not merely those things: I am also a husband, a father, a son, a brother and a Newcastle United fan with all the various allegiances those roles entail – allegiances which have to be balanced in order to be maintained.

And I am also a Christian. And that too is fundamentally a matter of allegiance and identity. As a Christian my commitment to Jesus Christ trumps all other allegiances. It is primary – though it also helps me be a better husband, father, son, brother – and indeed a

better citizen too. Each of us who claims to follow Christ has to say that first and foremost our citizenship is in heaven. Above all, we belong to the Kingdom of God.

And maintaining that sense of primary loyalty has not always been easy for Christians. Indeed it has often led to persecution. The ancient Christian cry, "Jesus is Lord" was not only a claim of his sovereignty; it was also a challenge to Caesar. The history of persecution, whether in Rome, or El Salvador or Uganda, has always been the story of Christians choosing Jesus over "Caesar", in whatever clothes he may have been dressed.

But we must also recognise that while much religiously motivated violence in recent years has been directed against Christians this is not an exclusively Christian issue. The Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar are being persecuted because to be a follower of Islam is not to be a "proper" citizen of that country. Their religious adherence is held to call their national allegiance into question. And there are many other examples one could cite of minorities similarly persecuted around the world.

Christians have been guilty of it too. Thus for many years the loyalty of Catholics in Britain to the State was felt to be questionable because they had a "split allegiance": to Rome as well as to the Crown.

This loyalty to Christ raises a particular

issue for those of us committed to global mission. For many of us in Church Mission Society it has led us to cross cultures and continents, to make our homes in the places to which we have been called and to identify as closely as we can with those who live there. This is not always easy but it is essential to the gospel, because we follow one who came and “pitched his tent amongst us” (as a literal translation of John 1:14 has it) and identified with us.

Following Jesus’ example we are in the business of “pitching our tents” wherever we are called to be. And if ever we were told to “go home” we

would take that as an offence not only against ourselves (an offence to which we might have to submit) but as an offence against our Lord who called us there in the first place.

In the end, identity is not simply a question of “Where do I belong?” but “To whom do I belong?” And where that question is concerned there can be no compromise. The answer is the source, not only of our primary identity, but of our greatest joy. We are children of our heavenly Father, belonging to him for eternity, and nothing and no-one can ever take that away from us.

---

## The Women’s World Day of Prayer

On the first Friday of each March, women from all around the world gather together and pray using words, reading, prayers and songs chosen by the women of one selected country. This year, the women of **Surinam** have designed the service. Through it, they tell us more about their islands, and enable us to study, pray and worship together and to share in fellowship. Please join us at **St Joseph's**

**and St Helen’s Roman Catholic Church, Cotteridge at 1.30pm on Friday 2nd March, or at 8pm at St Nicolas’ Church.** Women from all the churches

represented by *Churches Together in B30* will be leading the service along with colleagues from West Heath and Longbridge too.



The times of these services have been changed to suit those who are collecting young children from school, or who have to ensure that they are fed and put to bed in the evening.

If you have never come before, do try it this year. It is a lovely time to spend with local Christian neighbours, as well as finding out about, and praying with and for, a new country.

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# SURPRISED BY JOY

*When he invited two men with handicaps to share his life, it transformed the former naval officer, as he explains to his long-time disciple, Maggie Ferguson.*

The Scots have a word for those places where the veil between heaven and Earth seems almost transparent. They call them "thin" places; and there can be few "thinner" places than the village of Trosly-Breuil, less than 40 miles north of Paris, on the edge of the forest of Compiègne.

Many readers will be familiar with the story. In 1964, a tall, handsome, ex-naval officer, Jean Vanier, was invited to Trosly to visit an asylum for men with mental handicaps. "It was a horrific place," he says, "full of screaming and violence; and yet it filled me with a sense of wonderment. I sensed in these men a great cry - 'Do you love me?', 'Will you come back?'" He visited other asylums, equally dismal, and then decided to act.

"What I love about the Good Samaritan," Vanier says, "is that he didn't waste time weighing up the pros and cons, he just did something." He himself was similarly bold.

Having bought a tumbledown cottage in Trosly, he invited two men with handicaps, Raphael Simi and Philippe Seux, to leave their asylum and live with him. He called their home L'Arche, "the Ark".

"There was no huge idea," he says, "no intention to change the world." He

simply wanted to ease the suffering of two men. But, as he shared his life with Raphael and Philippe, he gradually discovered that he was being transformed by them. "God has chosen the weak and the foolish," he says, rephrasing St Paul, "to confound those caught up in their heads." Raphael and Philippe were enabling him to live from his heart, to escape "the tyranny of normality", to laugh like a child. They were, he says, "teachers of tenderness." Others came to join him, the community grew.

Today, there are 143 L'Arche communities in 35 countries, from Zimbabwe to Palestine, Uganda to the UK. In each one, "normal" people live as assistants to people with handicaps. While Vanier is a devout Roman Catholic, L'Arche welcomes people of all religions and none: "My feet are rooted in my faith, but my arms are wide open," Vanier says. "What is important is not necessarily a belief in God, but a capacity to love people as they are. You can not believe in God, but still believe in relationship."

Vanier still lives in Trosly. Now 88, he is white-haired and slightly stooped, but his mind is crystal clear. "People who are old," he has written, "and offer themselves to God, can become lightning



Vanier has been listening to people's difficulties for 53 years now. Aren't there times, I wonder, when he feels he simply cannot absorb any more pain? "I don't think I do absorb pain," he says. "If you absorb pain too much you can lose something of your identity. But often, when I meet people, it's a healing experience for me. I'm not a healer or a curer; all I can be is a good listener. And that seems to be the healing part for people - that somebody appreciates them.

conductors of grace." He did not write this as a description of himself, but it is a good one. To visit him in his little sitting room is to feel oneself in the presence of almost palpable holiness. Around him on the floor are books and correspondence; to his left, on a pinboard, pictures of men and women who have inspired him: Aung San Suu Kyi, ETTY HILLESUM, Sophie Scholl, Gandhi.

There is no computer, no iPad, no mobile. "We've become experts in communication," Vanier says, "but we're not so good at presence." Undistracted by technology, he gives every visitor his full, steady attention, and you come away from seeing him with an uncanny feeling that he knows you better than you know yourself. Meetings needn't be long. Sometimes it takes just 10 minutes' conversation to shift some logjam of confusion or sadness.

"Most people are caught up in guilt - there's a whole element of anger against self, broken self-image, the guilt of existence. So, in listening to people you're going through a barrier of self-disgust. My life in L'Arche has taught me that everybody is beautiful. Everybody. So to love people is to reveal to them that they are more beautiful than they dare believe." Is anybody beyond this love? "People say, 'How can we love terrorists?' But most terrorists have been deeply wounded, or humiliated, living in lands where people reject their cultures. We must pray for them."

I first came to Trosly as an assistant more than 20 years ago, and I have visited once or twice a year since then. Last month, I fulfilled a long-held wish to join a week-long retreat on the Gospel of St John, led in English by Vanier. There were 40 of us, from all over the English-speaking world, and on the first evening, tired and tetchy from London, I found myself making harsh, involuntary judgements about my fellow retreatants. This man seemed pleased with himself; that woman talked too much. Then, as the week unfolded -

two talks a day from Vanier, plenty of rest, hours of silence - I began to see them in a new light.

"Most men live lives of quiet desperation," Henry Thoreau wrote. But I wonder whether it's truer to say that most men, most people, live lives of quiet heroism. Almost everyone on the retreat, from the woman abused as a child to the man bringing up twin teenage boys with Down's syndrome and ADHD, told a story of extraordinary courage. And all of us felt, as the week went on, a great letting-down of barriers and lightening of the spirit. How, I asked Vanier, could we hang on to this back in the "real" world?

"We all have a need, very fundamental, to prove that we are someone. But gradually, we have to let the ego descend and the spirit rise up. It's a long road. Buddha says that the man who conquers 1 million men in battle is less of a conqueror than the man who conquers his ego. And we need, through prayer, to be attentive to the 'little voice' that Newman speaks about - the voice with which God speaks to every human heart. Can we hear the voice, or are we too busy, addicted to doing things? We need to be disciplined."

Vanier grew up with an extraordinary model of discipline.: His father, Georges Vanier, who was Governor General of Canada, and whom Lord Mountbatten described as "the greatest Canadian of his time", set aside half an hour each day for silent prayer, and attended daily Mass. And Jean himself, for all his gentleness and good humour, is formidably tidy with his time. In all the years I've known him, he's never once

been late for a meeting. During the retreat, he arrived a little early for each talk, and at the end of every day, after darkness had fallen, he slipped into the small candlelit chapel next to his house to end his day in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

But prayer is best twinned with action. As we settled into our retreat, Jean invited us gently to reflect on three questions: Where are the poor in my life? Who are the poor to me? And how am I a consoler for the weak and the suffering? Each one of us, he urged, can make a difference, "even if only in the way we look at people. When you pass someone begging in the street for example, it's not a question of 'Do you give him euros?' so much as 'Do you really look at him as a human being?' When you begin to let people who are 'no good' into your life, you are transformed."

By opening ourselves to others' pain, Jean suggested, we would be drawn into the mystery that suffering and joy are symbiotic. "Visitors are often surprised at the joy they sense in L'Arche," he has written. "It surprises me too because I know how much suffering some people in our communities are carrying. I wonder then if all joy doesn't somehow spring from suffering and sacrifice."

None of us on the retreat was conventionally poor. But there are regular retreats in Trosly for which Jean welcomes 40-odd homeless people from Paris, and - most moving of all, according to Rick Harem, one of the assistants - retreats for gay couples. I wonder whether Jean's thinking about homosexuality has altered over the

years. Not on laws, he answers, but on individuals. "I've listened to people, deeply wonderful people, and to hear them talking of their pain: rejected by the family, laughed at at school! I went into a prison recently where there were a lot of tough guys, you can imagine; and then one guy whom you saw immediately was fragile and closer to the feminine. And you just know what he has suffered. So what we can do is to listen to people, and hear what they've lived, and then begin to understand. And not to judge. Never judge?"

Jean will turn 90 next year. He reckons he's "OK 'til I'm 94/95". Though the day must come when he can no longer visit prisons or give retreats, he is not afraid of it: "I know that every loss brings a gain." But what about old people who do not share his equanimity? During the retreat, the BBC carried a news item about a man with motor neurone disease, Noel Conway, challenging the UK ban on assisted dying. What would Jean say to people in great pain who want help in ending their lives? "I don't know what I'd say. But perhaps somewhere they haven't really been helped. All I know is that in my experience in L'Arche - and I can only talk from experience - people who are terribly depressed and in great pain are transformed when they know they are really loved."

And what about people - like my mother, who died in April - who grow frightened towards the end? What happens to us when we die? Jean is wonderfully clear. "When you die, you fall asleep. And you wake up, and there's a very gentle peace. You feel well. And then you discover the

face of God coming through that 'wellness'. Of course, we are outside time, so it's not sequential. Seeing Jesus' face, we suddenly have a feeling of having hurt him - we realise we could have done much better, we've done wrong. We are not being judged, we judge ourselves. But then comes the realisation that we are loved just as we are, in our darkness. So there's a meeting with God, who loves us in our poverty, and this we can hardly believe. That meeting brings an immense desire to be closer. That desire becomes a place of desire [...] and it's painful. When you have desire and not the object of desire, it's very painful. But then the desire augments, and consequently the pain augments, until there is a moment of explosion, and then we're in communion with God."

And hell? "I can't speak about hell, but wasn't it Pope John Paul II who said that, even if hell exists, it may be empty?"

The retreat flashed by. Over the final lunch, we chatted about the wisdom and insights we hoped to carry home. Looking across the room at Jean, listening and laughing, I thought of something he had said earlier in the week: "When we die, it's not a question of what we've done, but of how we've loved."

*Maggie Ferguson is the literary director of the Royal Society of Literature.*

*This article first appeared in The Tablet on 19/26 August 2017 and is reprinted here by kind permission of the Editor. To learn more about L'Arche, visit [larche.org.uk](http://larche.org.uk).*

# Fairway Day Centre Update

The Chair of the *Save The Fairway Day Centre From Closure* campaign has published on the campaigners' Facebook page a letter to Ms Mais-Rose of Birmingham City Council which includes the following:

*“Over the past three months since Birmingham City Council (BCC) announced its intention to close Fairway Day Centre [...] at least 4 members of staff have left [the] centre. None of these vital members of staff have been replaced and at the end of the year the catering staff are being transferred to another day centre.*

*“The reduction of staff is having a [...] negative impact on the level of service provided to the service users [whom] you have previously professed to care so much about [...].*

*“Why are the staff at the centre not being replaced? Is this another of BCC's foul tactics to ensure Fairway Day Centre is closed in the shortest possible time frame? Reducing the quality of care given to the service users of the centre is truly despicable and heartless.*

*“As you are no doubt aware, solicitors acting on behalf of a service user have received a legal response from BCC stating that no decision has been made to close [the] centre. If that rather bizarre statement is true then why are you allowing such a rapid reduction of staff?”*

Councillor Randal Brew OBE, JP, is the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group on the Council and represents the Northfield Ward ([randal.brew@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:randal.brew@birmingham.gov.uk)). The text of an email from Cllr Brew to Council Officer Graeme Betts and Cllr Paulette Hamilton (see our January edition p.20) appears on the same Facebook page. In it, he mentions that he has received numerous letters, emails and phone calls on this issue and that his “first prize is the retention of the Centre for the benefit of the people who use it.” He adds, “A very loud complaint in all the contacts has been the quality or lack of meaningful consultation and the running down of staff numbers before the consultation is complete. This gives the very firm and unfortunate impression that consultation is just going through the motions and that decisions have already been made.” Campaigners were heartened to read this statement in his final paragraph: “I will be fighting to support the users”.

Finally and most recently (22 Dec), the campaigners allege that BCC is in breach of the Freedom of Information Act for failing to release information about the decision-making process concerning the future of the centre within the statutory 20 working days following a Freedom of Information request.

The Editor



**[www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk](http://www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk)**

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Marriage and baptism enquiries are welcomed at St Nicolas' Church on Thursdays from 6.30pm to 8pm.

# Called To Care

*It has been a year since we have addressed the topic of safeguarding in the pages of this magazine (Feb 2017 : “A Healthy Church is a Growing Church”). Yet churches have a duty and a calling to put the care of the vulnerable at the very top of their agendas and to keep it there. Mark Berry explains why and invites us to reflect on how far we have come.*

**Safeguarding (definition): denotes measures to protect the health, well-being and human rights of individuals, which allow people – especially children, young people and vulnerable adults – to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.**

The word ‘safeguarding’ has the power to send an involuntary shudder of fear rippling through any organisation. We have all watched horrific stories unfold on our television screens and seen agencies and individuals reeling from the impact of revealed abuse.

In the last few decades we have become increasingly aware that abuse of vulnerable people happens far too often in places where they should be the most safe, in the places set up to care for them.

Today, we are expected to take safeguarding extremely seriously; indeed the law demands it. The *1999 Protection of Children Act* made organisations responsible and accountable for anyone who might put children at risk within their work.

However, the law is not the reason why we make safeguarding a priority. We believe that it is central to the mission of the church.

God’s love for the vulnerable and our calling to be good news to all people

shapes everything we do, including our ever-increasing focus on safeguarding.

Bishop Christopher Coxworth, Bishop of Coventry, wrote in the introduction to *The Gospel, Sexual Abuse and the Church*:

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**The Answer's Yes!**

“Safeguarding from abuse and responding well to it need to be grounded in the fundamental themes of Christian theology and thereby woven into the church’s regular ministry of preaching and teaching.”

The focus on safeguarding should enable the Church to be:

- a repenting and learning church that recognises past and present failures and the harm they have caused, and seeks forgiveness from those we have failed and from God.

- a church where those who have been hurt by abuse find compassion, and people ready to travel patiently alongside them.

- a church where those who commit abuse are called to face human justice, hear God’s word of judgement and repent and believe the good news.

- a church where all people are welcomed into open and secure communities that make known Christ’s reconciling peace.

Bishop Christopher understands well that the Church has a particular calling to be a peacemaker and to work always for reconciliation, forgiveness, hospitality and justice for the most vulnerable. This calling is central to mission of God.

In Psalm 82 the psalmist instructs the people of Israel:

“Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

Jesus was clear that we, his disciples, share this responsibility to care for the vulnerable. In Matthew 18, He tells his

Jesus went out of his way to embrace and share life with the vulnerable and the marginalised. He loved them and he called us to do likewise. This is, and always has been our calling.

followers that it would be better for a person to have a millstone tied around their neck and to be cast into the sea than to cause damage to a child. Jesus’ own actions – his love and care for those who were broken, wounded and abused and those pushed out of society and denied a voice (be they young, disabled, impoverished, etc) – should be enough for

us to realise that this should be a priority for us too.

Too often people see safeguarding as something merely required of us by the law, even a nuisance or a threat to our work. Jesus went out of his way to embrace and share life with the vulnerable and the marginalised. He loved them and he called us to do likewise. This is, and always has been our calling.

Mark Berry

*Community Mission Mobiliser for Church Mission Society.*

*Adapted from an article published in the Winter 2018 edition of The Call and reprinted with permission.*

# CONTACTS

If you cannot find what you are looking for here, you will probably find it on the parish website ([www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk)). Alternatively, please ask questions at services, during Open Church or at the Parish Office.

**81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU**  
**parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk      0121 458 3289**

## THE MINISTRY TEAM

Team Rector	The Revd Larry Wright
Assistant Rector	The Revd Eliakim Ikechukwu
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jane Platt
Methodist Minister	The Revd Caz Hague
Parish Lay Minister	Pauline Weaver
Readers	David Ash, Mandy Butler, Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman, Parisa Pordelkhaki
Music Ministry	Sylvia Fox
Pastoral Care Team Coordinator	Chris Gadd

## THE CHURCH WARDENS

<b>St. Nicolas' Church</b>	Phil Burton & Julie Hill
<b>Hawkesley Church</b>	Jim Clarke      0121 550 3455 or 07 939 838 086
<b>Immanuel Church</b>	Sue Hartley

## OTHER CONTACTS

Parish Administrator & P.C.C. Secretary	Judy Ash
Finance Officer	Catherine Dehghani
Safeguarding Coordinator (0121 459 6185)	Clare Dean
Regular Giving	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Church Facilities Manager	Sylvia Fox
Flower Arranging (0121 486 2837)	Alison Blumer
Oasis (Sunday School) Tiny Tots & GPS	Pauline Weaver
Oasis (Sunday School) Immanuel	Nicky Moorcroft

## MUSIC

Church music, choir training and handbells are overseen by Sylvia Fox (07 778 449 170). Choir practices : Fridays (tuition 4.45 - 6.30 pm, juniors 6.30 - 7.45 pm, adults 8 - 9 pm). Handbell practices : Mondays 3.30-4.30 pm (number notation & sheet music) and 7.00 - 8.00 pm (number notation only). Please phone first to check we are meeting.

## BELL RINGING

Catherine Taylor c.r.taylor@bham.ac.uk

Practices are held on Tuesdays from 7.45 to 9.00 pm in the church tower. Ringers of all abilities are welcome. Newcomers are particularly encouraged. If you are interested in finding out what bell ringing is all about, please contact us in advance so that we can arrange your welcome.

## UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

### Scouts and Cubs

*198th Birmingham St Nicolas'*

*Tuesdays at Oddingley Hall,  
Oddingley Road, B31 3BS  
www.myscouts.co.uk*

### Guides and Brownies

### Guides and Brownies

*at Hawkesley Church Centre*

Alan Haynes (Group Scout Leader) 07 534 615 489  
onenineeight@btinternet.com

Beavers (6-8yrs): 5-6 pm  
Cubs (8-10½): 6.15-7.45pm  
Scouts (10½-15½): 8 pm

Rainbows: Mondays 5.30 - 6.30 pm  
Brownies (188th Birmingham): Tuesdays 6.00-7.30 pm  
Brownies: Thursdays 6.30 - 8.00 pm  
Guides (247th Birmingham): Mondays 7.15-9.00 pm

Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm  
Brownies (259th Birmingham): Wednesdays 6.30 pm  
Guides (141st Birmingham): Thursdays 7.00 pm

## Hawkesley Church Primary Academy

*Shannon Road, Hawkesley, Kings Norton, B38 9TR 0121 459 6467*

**Headteacher:** Mr Derek Higgins

# A Bit of a Bump

*Never take your 40,000 ton vessel out for a spin when the tugs are on strike! Eddie Matthews explains the risks.*

The container ship *M.V.Jervis Bay* was berthed in Sydney, Australia. It was hard work in the galley for it was early January, high summer and temperatures were in the 30° - 40° range. I was working as the Chief Cook at the time and the departure of our ship had been delayed because of a tug strike.

One quiet, Sunday afternoon, I was preparing the evening meal when I heard a loud bang and felt the ship jerk. "What the heck was that?" I said to my Second Cook. Before he could answer, we both caught sight, through the galley windows, of something that shouldn't have been there. The looming bulk of another large hull was no more than a few feet away, much too close for comfort.



At that very moment, the Chief Officer ran into the galley and said that he was looking for hands to secure a runaway vessel to our ship. Most of our crew



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were ashore, enjoying a well-earned day off. Some had gone to Bondi Beach and others were at the local pub. Only a skeleton crew was left aboard. It was up to us.

So, within minutes, we found ourselves up on deck hauling mooring ropes and hawsers. What seemed to have happened was that the Captain of the other ship had attempted to sail out of the harbour without the help of tugs. He had lost control and the wind had blown his vessel into ours. It took a while, but, eventually, we secured the renegade ship to our own. It was a large container transporter of some 40,000 tons!

While I was on deck, a heard a voice above me shout, "Is that you? Eddie Matthews from the Canberra?"

I recognised the voice immediately. "Crikey," says I, "It's Primrose!"

I looked up to see the familiar face of a former colleague on the other ship. Primrose was quite a character, you might even say infamous. "Yes, it is me,"

I replied, and I then just had to smile at his next few words. "We were just passing and thought we would pop in for a cup of tea."

Shortly afterwards, the Captain of the runaway vessel was seen glowering down from his bridge at his cheery Steward, who was summarily told off. I heard later that the Captain was not popular with his crew and had not been at all amused by the disastrous situation he found himself in.

The "visitor" was alongside us for three days until the tugs went back to work. Luckily, not much harm had been done. There were some dents and scrapes to our ship and slightly more damage to the other driver's vehicle!

Our own Captain, "Tug Wilson", had more of a sense of humour. He laughed about it all and said that the "silly ass" should not have sailed without tugs.

Heigh ho, another day at the office.

*Eddie Matthews*



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## JARS OF CHANGE

Lent begins in mid-February (Ash Wednesday is 14th Feb) and our Lent collection will, once again, take the form of change jars (or whatever container you choose) collecting for Ifakara Bakery and their Free Bread Fund. This is a true grass-roots project based here in Kings Norton. It began as an attempt to help a local convent and Mothers' Union to set up a bakery in Ifakara, Tanzania. The project now supplies free bread to many hospital wards, orphanages, kindergartens and schools. The nutritious daily bread is the difference between health and starvation in many cases, and between going to school or not.

Each loaf cost 25-30p. How many can we fund?

## LEPROSY MISSION

With thanks to the 247 Guides, we had a Giant Card in St Nicolas' Church during Advent and Christmas. Many people used it to send their Christmas greetings to other members of our congregations, donating to the Leprosy Mission the money they would have spent on cards. We raised enough to buy two donkeys. These animals are used to support those who live with the effects of leprosy. Their new, four-legged friends will become their transport and also the provider of organic fertiliser for their crops.

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Many people, either because they are getting older or because they have some kind of disability, prefer to retain their independence and remain in their own home. "Homecare" refers to a range of services provided to a person in their own home, to enable them to continue living as actively and independently as possible.

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