

# KINGS NORTON

## Parish Magazine

### Kings Norton's Persian Links

Larry Wright explores our connections with Iran

### The Madness of Crowds

Why do we follow the herd?

### 400 Years of Solitude

A body is missing from one of our tombs



<b>Larry Wright</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Thelma Mitchell</b>	<b>18</b>
Kings Norton's Persian Links		The Madness of Crowds	
<i>What do you know about Iran?</i>		<i>Why do we follow the herd?</i>	
<b>Pauline Weaver</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Michael Kennedy</b>	<b>24</b>
Role Models		400 Years of Solitude in St Nicolas'	
<i>The influence of those we admire.</i>		<i>The history of the Littelton tomb.</i>	
<b>Adam the Gardener</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Claire Lindow</b>	<b>30</b>
...recommends a double flower		Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome	
<i>In spite of himself!</i>		<i>One family's story.</i>	
<b>Larry Wright</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Thelma Mitchell</b>	<b>34</b>
Easter, Art & Soul		Lazarica	
<i>Why does Easter inspire artists?</i>		<i>A Bournville pilgrimage.</i>	
<b>Cary Cooper</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Eddie Matthews</b>	<b>38</b>
7 Tips for Happiness at Work		Limitations	
<i>How to enjoy the daily grind.</i>		<i>No-one can go on for ever.</i>	

## **Editor & Advertising Manager**

David Ash

editor@kingsnorton.org.uk

## **Subscriptions**

Alison Blumer

subs@kingsnorton.org.uk

## **Registered Address**

Kings Norton Parish Office

Saint Nicolas' Place

81 The Green, Kings Norton

Birmingham B38 8RU

0121 458 3289

## **Copy for Publication**

copy@kingsnorton.org.uk

Text & images for publication should be emailed as file attachments or entrusted to the Parish Office, sealed and marked for the attention of the Editor.

## **Submission Deadlines**

Items for inclusion in the May 2023 edition must reach the Editor by midnight on **Friday 7th April**.

Items for inclusion in the June 2023 edition must reach the Editor by midnight on **Friday 12th May**.

# Welcome

**EDITORIAL**

I recently attended the morning communion service at a beautiful, old church which sits just outside the perimeter fence of Southend Airport in Essex. As we sat waiting for the service to begin, I fell into conversation with a lady in the pew in front of me. She told me that she had been born within sight of the church, had attended it all her life, and that parts of the building were 1,000 years old. She then said something which I have heard others say about St Nicolas', Kings Norton. "You can tell from the atmosphere in here that this is a building which has been prayed in for hundreds of years."

How does God make Himself known and felt to us, who are so often blind and deaf to His presence? Through the deep stillness and tranquility of a building where He is worshipped? Certainly, whether it be somewhat austere, like St Nicolas', or extravagantly decorated, like the Serbian Orthodox church in Bournville (p.34). Through the words spoken, the prayers prayed and the poetry sung in such consecrated places? No doubt. But He communicates with us in other ways too. Through art and music (pp.12 & 28), through scripture (p.18), through natural beauty (p.9), through the example of the people He puts on our path to inspire us (p.7) or to challenge our comfortable assumptions (p.4).

At this time of year, in particular, He reminds us of His extravagant love for us through the retelling of that story which we gather to hear during Holy Week (3-9 April). A story of darkness conquered, death defeated, failure forgiven, and hope restored. Do join us on Easter

Sunday as we proclaim together "Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"



*David Ash*

# Kings Norton's Persian Links

*What do you know about Persia?*

You may know that Persia is the historic name of Iran. You may not know that Britain has long, historic links with Iran and that, until the 1980s, many Iranians living in the south of their country spoke English. You may have heard of a certain grape used for making red wine called Shiraz. Shiraz is a city in south-eastern Iran which has a history of wine making going back 2,500 years. You may not know that Iran is one of the three largest producers of pistachio nuts in the world, Turkey and the USA being the others.

Does Kings Norton have connections with Iran? Yes. There are a number of Iranians who regularly attend St Nicolas' Church, one of whom is a trained minister. In fact, Britain has a large Iranian population many of whom gather and live in our larger cities. The history

behind this movement of Iranians is interesting.

Iran is the only Middle Eastern country which follows the type of Islam known as Shia. The other main branch of Islam is Sunni. Iran was not always a Muslim country. It has its own ancient religion known by the name of its founding prophet, Zoroaster, also known as Zarathustra. You may know the tone poem "Also sprach Zarathustra" by composer Richard Strauss (1864-1949). It is the main theme of the score of the classic sci-fi film "2001 A Space Odyssey".

For centuries, Iran had friendly relationships with British and European culture and many Iranians came to Britain either to complete their education at our universities or to create business opportunities with British companies. You will know the BP oil company, but



**The Revd Larry Wright is the Rector of Kings Norton Parish**



PHOTO BY HOSEIN CHARBAGHI

did you know that they were originally the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC)? From 1909, Britain invested heavily in Iranian oil and petrol production and this continued into the 1950s.

If you were to look at photographs from Tehran, the capital of Iran, in the 1960s and 70s you would see men and women dressed in similar clothes to those of their European counterparts. The Anglican church in Iran was flourishing alongside other Christian churches. The most historic Christian church in Iran was and remains the Armenian church. This recognition of each other's culture and style came to an abrupt end in 1979 with the Islamic revolution. Since the revolution, hard line clerics and politicians have created an

▲ THE  
SKYLINE OF  
TEHRAN,  
CAPITAL OF  
IRAN

Islamic dictatorship which has soured relations with the West.

After 1979, many Iranians with good associations with the West and especially the USA and Britain began to be regarded with suspicion by the new Islamic state and either escaped or were arrested. The Anglican Bishop of Iran and his family were due to be detained and executed as foreign agents. While trying to escape, the bishop was shot in the arm. He survived and he, his English wife and their daughter made it to England. Unfortunately, their son didn't and, after being captured, he was executed. The bishop and his remaining family settled in England. Their young daughter, Guli, eventually followed her father's vocation and became a priest in the Church of England. In 2021, she

was made Bishop of Chelmsford.

Many educated and aspirational Iranians could not agree with the new Islamic Republic and left Iran. There are millions now living in Europe, the USA and Canada.

Iranians continue to try to escape the harsh regime at home. Recent protests have shown the level of dissatisfaction there with the regime, especially among young people. Young women have been at the forefront of recent protests and have paid with their lives. Iranians in Birmingham are watching events in their country of birth with shock and horror at the brutality inflicted on unarmed protestors. They have family and friends in Iran and do what they can to support the protests from the West.

Though Iranians in Birmingham have left their country for political reasons, they still regard it as home. They miss the culture, food and

celebrations they enjoyed there and, though they disagree with the way in which Islam is practiced in Iran, they have not given up on God. Iranians are spiritual people with a rich tradition of poetry and spirituality dedicated to a gentler form of religious worship and practice. Iran is the centre for the scholarly study of Shia Islam. It is also the centre for a particular form of mystical Islam called Sufism which emphasises union with God through prayer and meditation.

Many of those who left Iran in the past decades have been attracted to Christianity while remaining culturally Persian. They bring a depth and experience to their new faith which is enriching our churches and communities. They are also working in key sectors of our society such as education, scientific research, IT, health and social care. Most are very willing to speak about their lives and experience; so, if you get a chance, do ask them.

▼ SOME OF THE IRANIANS WHO ATTEND ST NICOLAS' CHURCH



# Role Models



PAULINE IS THE  
LAY MINISTER AT  
ST NICOLAS'  
CHURCH, KINGS  
NORTON

**D**o you remember someone in your life who has been a role model for you? Not necessarily someone who has taught you or a family member but someone who has shown you a way of living through their example? I'm not thinking of a celebrity; in fact, just the opposite. Someone unseen, possibly even unnoticed who has had an impact on your life in a quiet and unassuming way.

As we approach Easter and we remember the death of Jesus on the cross, as we reflect on the impact which those events have on us today, I have been reflecting on two people who have influenced me and on the impact of their deaths.

I recently attended the funeral of a former work colleague who had died well into his 90s. I had worked with him some years ago and he had taught me much about buildings and projects, knowledge he shared which I still use today. When he retired, I took on the care of his plan chest. He'd been very particular about how it was used and how drawings were stored. There is still something I love about looking at a paper drawing rather than just a computer image. I am told the plan chest is still in use today.

Tom was a true gentleman. I never heard him raise his voice, he was always considered and thoughtful in his response to any given situation. He would go for a walk every day and play the piano for an hour. He always wrote things out in long hand in this very detailed and precise way, having pondered on a solution before putting pen to paper.

Only a handful of us gathered to say farewell. He had little family, none in the UK, and I was saddened that the passing of this gentle man should pass by almost unnoticed. What struck me was when the celebrant commented that we wouldn't find another person like him, not just because he



PHOTO BY ANDREA PIACQUADIO

was unique, but because possibly these character traits are dying out.

Tom's death reminded me of another person who slipped away quietly in her 90s, almost unnoticed, during Covid. The lovely Sheila had no family to speak of and was also gentle and kind. She was rarely cross and still had a spirit of adventure well into her 80s, when she would come on Brownie holiday with us. Her Girl Guiding family had become her family and, as I stood alone with her reading the funeral service, I was aware that, at the same time, members of the Guiding movement would be saying the words of two of the songs which are used to end their meetings (Taps and Brownie Bells) in quiet remembrance of her. It seemed so appropriate.

There are always people in life who influence us in different ways, but I think that these two have stood out for me recently because they were unique. They did have characteristics that

perhaps we don't see very often. Perhaps our values have changed, or we need a different type of role model in a different age. But I know I will always be grateful that I met Tom and Sheila.



# Adam the Gardener recommends a double flower in spite of himself

Yes I recommend you try a new *Osteospermum* (right), a double, very pretty and pest-proof and now available as plug plants for growing on before planting out. Oh, and it's drought resistant but if we have a drought like last year then occasional watering may be necessary in the first year. I usually do not like double flowers as, for one thing, they do not do the bees and butterflies any favours. All of this month's recommendations can be found as plug plants in those colourful catalogues or on the internet. Seek and ye shall find!

Dwarf Happy Days Dahlias are available to give you a head start for the summer as plug plants or if you are able to grow seedlings then Dahlia Coltness Hybrids improved seeds grow quickly and are less expensive for the propagator. Both are single.

While we are on about Dahlias, the dark leaved Bishops are medium sized and floriferous and ideal for the bigger border. Bishop of Llandaff was the original one but they can now be



had in many colours, even in seed mixes.

Growing from seed is easy and with a little heaping-up of leaf litter in the autumn the tubers will be protected for next year.

Here is a stately plant which can be bought ready grown or grown from seed. *Liatris spicata* (below) is a hardy perennial with spikes of white,



◀ LIATRIS  
SPICATA

pink or purple flowers and is drought resistant. *Liatris* is not commonly seen but is worth the effort of growing.

Wildlife groups are encouraging churches to make their grounds more attractive to small creatures and a variety of trees and plants can only help. Yew trees have been planted in many churchyards and their pink fruits are taken by a wide variety of birds; but please don't try them yourself as they are poisonous. The ground under these and other trees can be a bit of a desert for ornamental plants so prune out the low level branches to let the light in, fork over the ground to let the air in and remove any pernicious weeds.

You are now free to plant some bulbiferous subjects such as Snowdrops, wild-type crocus and *Eranthis hyemalis* or Winter Aconite which can form great drifts flowering in the early spring. Wild-type Cyclamen can be either Spring or Autumn flowering and their corms can grow to an impressive size. *Colchicum* or Naked Ladies can survive dry conditions under trees and their flowers, like giant Crocus, are very attractive. Don't forget *Bergenia*s and the Hellebores.

Soon you will be clearing the spring flowers from your containers and replanting for the summer. The *Surfinia*

► SUFINIA  
PETUNIAS



petunias are the finest container plants I know and are available from your garden centre. They are probably grown from tissue culture stock. They are vigorous and dead head themselves. What more could you ask for?

PS. Ivy Broomrape, mentioned in our last edition, is rare indeed and the graveyard is a great place to grow it, so have a go. I have seen a public footpath diverted around a clump of it so you are bound to get Brownie points from the local conservationists! (J. Parker's supply many of the above plants at reasonable prices. Other suppliers are available!)



# Easter, Art & Soul

*Art stirs our feelings. Great art stirs our very being. Great spiritual art stirs the soul. Since the beginning of human history, we have found ways of creating art. From the first cave paintings or rudimentary artefacts to the classic works of art and music seen around the world, we humans are endlessly creative.*

Religious themes permeate much of the classical art of the Western world. Not only Christianity but the pre-Christian cultures of the ancient world inspired artists. Modern art broke from traditional ideas of what art is to explore new concepts of sight, sound and form that can be disturbing and sublime.

Easter is a rich subject for artists classical and modern. Why? It's a story and a subject foundational to our culture and history. A man comes to spread a new message about a concept he calls the Kingdom of God. In this kingdom the lowliest and the repentant sinner will have a special place. His message so disturbs the religious and political authorities of the day that they plot his downfall. To do so, they bribe one of his own friends to betray him. He is arrested, tortured and crucified. On the third day after his execution, he is seen alive by certain followers. He finally leaves them for ever but only after commanding them to continue spreading his message until it reaches the ends of the earth. From this humble beginning the Christian church arose and, 2,000 years later, has indeed spread to most of the known world.

One of the first artistic traditions in the Christian church was a reference to St Luke as a painter of icons. According to tradition, St. Luke was a talented young man. He not only wrote a Gospel account and the Acts of the Apostles, he was also a physician and an artist. The Eastern Church regards him as the original "iconographer," responsible for the first icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary. His art was an aid to worship. This distinguishes religious art from the secular. Painting, sculptures, music

► ICON OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, RED SQUARE, MOSCOW

ВСКРЕСЕНІЕ ГІДА НАШГО ІС-ХІ





PHOTO BY SHELAGH MURPHY

expressing Christian themes and stories are an aid to devotion. They may indeed stir our soul.

Being a professional artist is a precarious vocation. Artists choose subjects for their works which resonate with audiences and appeal to patrons. During the high points of the Christian centuries in Europe, Christian art was dominant. Wealthy patrons commissioned music and painting to embellish their reputation and status. They also believed such patronage bought them God's favour. Whatever their motives, there are millions of works of art dedicated to the Christian story and biblical themes.

As Easter is the climax of the Christian story it holds a special attraction for artists. In their attempts to capture Jesus' human suffering and triumphal resurrection they also convey universal

themes of betrayal and vindication which we may all feel in our lives. Suffering is all around us, as is the hope of better things to come. Pain and death are inevitable; eternal life, where they are no more, is a matter of faith.

While many artists interpret the Easter story in traditional forms, others have sought to express the contradictions of its claims and credibility. Musicians have composed melancholic and climactic music to convey the suffering and final triumph. How many millions have been stirred by the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's *Messiah*? Whether you are a believer or not, the power of the piece is irresistible. And what of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's rock opera, "Jesus Christ Superstar"? It is claimed that this modern musical has been performed somewhere in the world every week since its first Broadway performance on 12th October 1971.

Tragedy and triumph are at the centre of the Easter story. They are also present wherever human beings are living and longing for a better world. Empires come and go. Governments fall and rise. Human history moves onwards. While we are prey to powerful forces which can crush us as individuals, we are also intent on finding better ways of living together. Powerful stories of triumph over tragedy are fundamental to our progress. The artists, composers, writers and film makers who bring powerful stories alive for us are serving a greater purpose than their own achievements. They remind us of our essential dignity and nobility as people made in the image of God.

# Seven Tips

*for finding happiness at work*

Work. It's something most of us do though it isn't always enjoyable. Whether it's long hours, gruelling tasks or just the repetitive nature of a day-to-day routine, work can sometimes be something we have to do rather than something we want to do.

But given that the average person will spend 90,000 hours at work over a lifetime it makes sense to try and enjoy it if you can. So what can you do to be happier at work and reduce stress?

I was the lead scientist in a government project that looked at how our wellbeing and emotional resilience can change over a lifetime.

As part of this project, the team, with help from think-tank the New Economics Foundation, identified several things that can reduce stress and enhance wellbeing and

happiness, all of which can be applied to the workplace. So what helps?

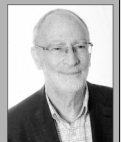
## **1. Be active**

Exercise and other physical activities won't make your problems or stress disappear, but they will reduce their emotional intensity and give you mental space to sort out problems, as well as keep you physically fit.

Research shows time and time again the positive benefits of exercise, so why not bookend your working day with some physical activity?

Walking to and from work is a great way to create separation from the working day. If that's not possible you could get off the bus a stop early, make your lunchtimes active or

SIR CARY COOPER CBE IS  
PROFESSOR OF  
ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
AND HEALTH AT THE UNIVERSITY  
OF MANCHESTER





maybe find an exercise class to do before you start work for the day.

## 2. Connect with people

If you examine most of the happiness scales, relationships with others come near the top of these lists.

During the pandemic, many people found their wellbeing suffered due to a lack of social contact. Indeed, a good support network of friends and family can minimise your work troubles and help you see things differently.

It's also worth getting to know your colleagues. The more you invest in

your relationships at work, the more enjoyable you may find your day.

Helping work colleagues and others in your life, can also enhance your self-esteem and give you a sense of purpose, which is essential to your wellbeing and contentment.

## 3. Learn new skills

Keeping "cognitively active" is critical to your psychological and mental wellbeing and can provide you with new opportunities in terms of your career development. So try to keep learning. Take a course, develop some



new skills or learn a new hobby. It all adds up.

Having things going on in your life outside of work is also important for your emotional and mental wellbeing. In the UK we work some of the longest hours in Europe, meaning we often don't spend enough time doing the things we really enjoy. Don't work excessive hours. And ensure you make time for socialising, exercise, along with activities you find fun.

#### **4. Stay present**

This is all about "being in the moment" rather than in the past or looking too far forward. Enjoy the present and you will appreciate it more. Indeed, there is plenty of research on the positive aspects of mindfulness and how it can help with mental health.

You don't have to sit down for hours meditating either. Being in the moment is more about bringing your brain back to the now. A more mindful approach to life is something you can practise at any time of the day, it's just about being aware, noticing your surroundings, the sights, sounds, smells. You can do this while you're walking, in a meeting or making a cup of tea.

#### **5. Recognise the positives**

Staying present also helps you to recognise the positives in your life,

allowing you to be a glass-half-full rather than a glass-half-empty person.

Accept there are things at work or in life you can't change and concentrate on the things you have control over. Remind yourself to feel grateful for the positives in your life.

#### **6. Avoid unhealthy habits**

Given what we know about their long-term consequences, using excessive alcohol or coffee consumption or smoking as a coping strategy for work stress is ultimately likely to have a negative impact on your happiness, even if they seem to provide a quick pick-me-up.

#### **7. Work smarter, not longer**

Prioritise your workload during working hours and you will have more disposable time to do the things you enjoy. Accept that your in-tray will always be full, so concentrate on the important things first.

The more you take control of your work life and get the balance you need, the more likely you are to be happier at work. Indeed, given that, in the UK, stress-related illness accounts for nearly 60% of all long-term sickness you must prioritise your wellbeing and try to reduce work stress where possible.

*This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license.*

# The Madness of Crowds



**THELMA MITCHELL IS  
LEAD CHAPLAIN AT  
BOURNVILLE COLLEGE**

Recently, I read "The Madness of Crowds" by the Canadian author Louise Penny, one of my favourite writers. Her detective series, featuring Chief Inspector Gamache of the Quebec Surété, are set in and around the semi-mythical village of Three Pines, near Montreal in the eastern province of Quebec. Three Pines is described as not being on any map. You only find this delightful, idyllic place (if you ignore the body count) when you need it!

This is the seventeenth in the Chief Inspector Gamache series, none of which have faltered in their entirety. Penny also explores in her novels themes of spirituality, morality and ethics and the role of faith in life and work. I would suggest reading them in the correct order from book one, if possible, as there is a strong narrative thread which drives on into each new story, though each one is complete in itself.

"The Hundredth Monkey Theory", reflecting the power and influence of crowds, is based on some sociological experiments conducted in 1952. These followed the behaviour of a hungry female primate and her companions living on a remote Japanese island inhabited mainly by monkeys. Sweet potatoes were dropped from the air into the sand. The monkeys ate the gritty vegetables as they were, until a female monkey tried rinsing one in a stream.

Another attempted it. Then another. One by one the monkeys followed suit. When the hundredth monkey washed the potato, the group's behaviour changed radically. Suddenly, every monkey took this approach as the new norm. The critical mass had been reached, the tipping point for all the other monkeys to follow suit.

This theory has been much debated. Nonetheless it was used to explain how smoking almost anywhere, or drink driving, unexpectedly became totally unacceptable. It was known that both were bad for our health and welfare for many years before the sudden conversion, which was driven by health experts and governments, with the important factors of a now compelling vision and an influential narrative.

"Extraordinary Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds", a work of non-fiction, was written in 1841 by the Scottish journalist Charles Mackay in his apparently typically sensational style. He begins by looking at the reasons why societies are so characterised by conflict and why sane people believe the nuttiest things. These are entities which in normal times they would readily dismiss, like Tulipmania, the South Sea Bubble, alchemy, stories of hauntings and witches. We could add, more recently, G5 masts as the cause of the spread of Covid or the suggestion that a small pizzeria in Los Angeles is a front for a Democrat paedophile ring, not to mention the absolute plague of other dark conspiracy theories. As Mackay said all those years ago, "In public and in

private, people are behaving in ways that are increasingly irrational, feverish, herd-like and simply unpleasant. The daily news cycle is filled with the consequences."

Perception drives on these wacky theories, rather than reality. How perception can shape reality is part of the "madness of crowds." It is deception by smoke and mirrors which then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

We are leaving Lent and entering the Christian Holy Week on Palm Sunday, the 2nd April. It is a solemn time of devotion as we reflect on the Passion of Jesus and will culminate in the joy of Resurrection Day, Easter Sunday.

The events of Palm Sunday and Good Friday would seem to illustrate perfectly the madness of crowds, the tipping point. Palm Sunday marks the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, riding a donkey. Palm leaves were strewn in his path. From ancient times, palm branches symbolised goodness and victory. King Solomon had them carved into the walls and doors of the temple in Jerusalem. In the annual Jewish festival of Sukkot, when thanks are given for the harvest, as well as the commemoration of the flight from slavery in Egypt and their time in the wilderness, huts are built of palm leaves and branches. Jewish families will eat and sleep in them for a few days, which younger children think is great fun! These huts represent the temporary shelters where the Hebrews lived as they travelled, until they reached the Promised Land. Today, amongst the Jewish

worldwide diaspora, when palm branches are not available other foliage is used.

The crowd had created the idea that Jesus was the political Messiah, the one who would liberate Israel from the Roman occupation. This Messiah was prophesied by Zechariah. John's gospel account, which is by far the most comprehensive of the passion narratives, tells us in chapter 12 that, as the crowd threw the palms, they cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" (Zechariah 9, verse 9) They accompanied him into the city, to be met with more cheering supporters.

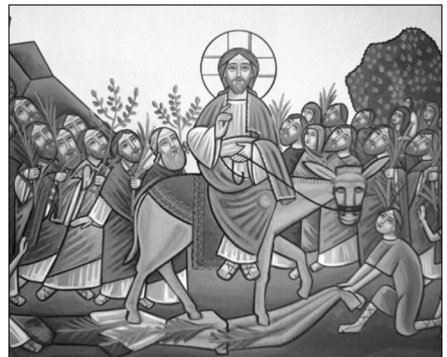
What turned this crowd around on Good Friday? What changed them from an adoring, praising throng into a hostile mob who now shouted "Away with him! Crucify him! Crucify him!"? They claimed the law, but was it disappointment that he was not the new Moses, who had liberated the Hebrews from Egypt? It certainly suited the Romans to hand him over to the temple authorities to crucify him, to suppress an uprising.

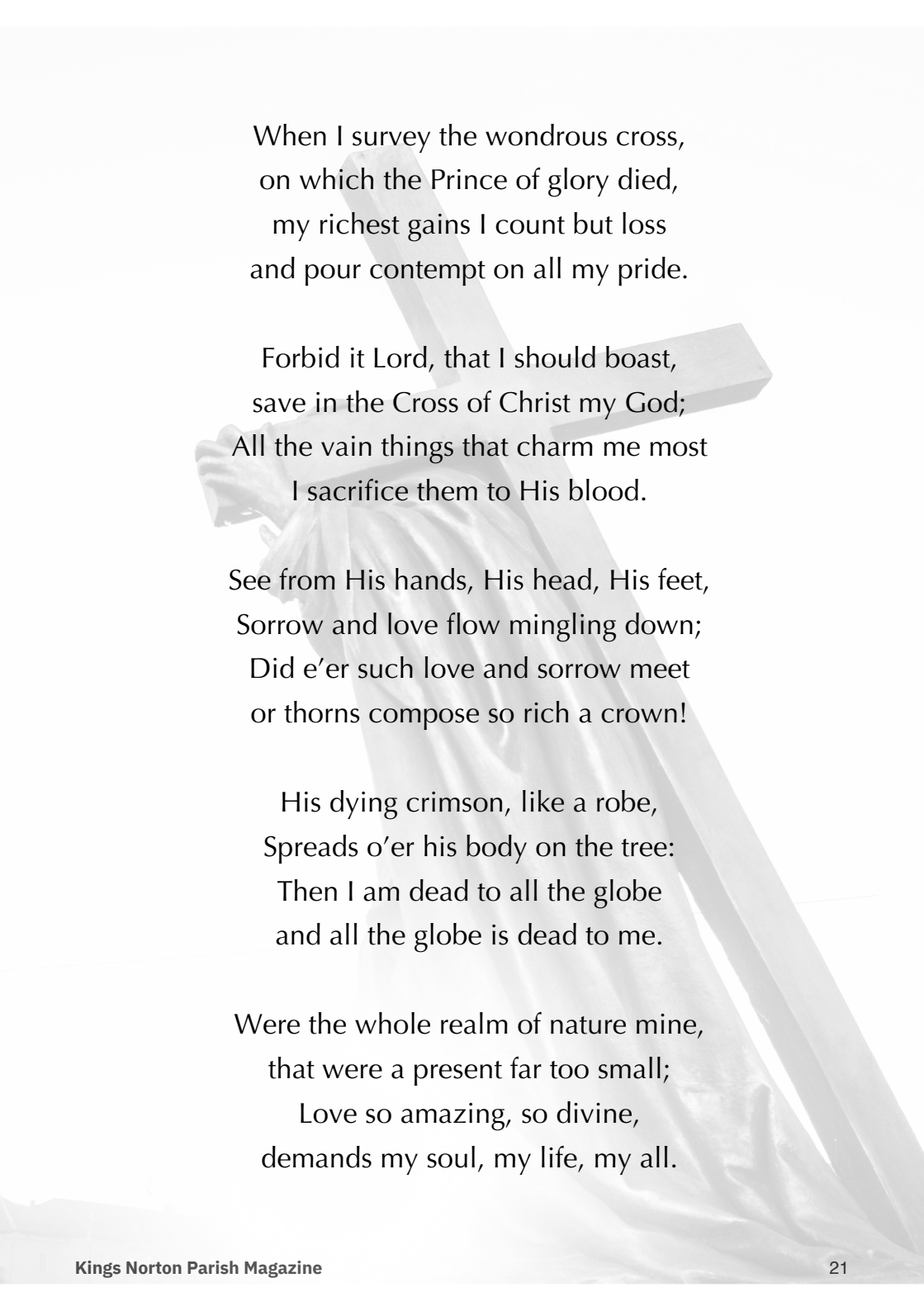
Never underestimate the power or the madness of the crowd. Tell a lie which people want to believe and they become the irrational, charging herd. We saw this two years ago when a crowd tried to charge into Alder Hey Hospital in Liverpool, a building full of very sick children who may well have died, because of a false narrative about the staff there and their treatment of a dying baby. Recently, there were nasty, perilously threatening scenes based on deceit,

outside a hotel housing asylum seekers, human beings already severely traumatised by their previous perilous lives and hazardous journeys. And who can forget the terrifying charge on the Capitol, Washington, the seat of the government of the USA, by rioting hordes, in January 2021?

If you are able, read through John's account of the Passion of Jesus during the week before Easter, from chapter 12 to chapter 21, which includes the glorious account of the Resurrection, our hope in the trials of today and the promise of being raised with Him for all time.

In closing, I make no apology for returning to the words of Isaac Watts for us to meditate on during Holy Week. It is to that finest of all hymns, certainly of the Passiontide hymns, written in 1707: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross". Despite being written over 300 years ago, it remains as fresh and easy to relate to as ever. It reminds us, in a world of war, suffering, sorrow and mad, dangerous, destructive theories, that there is an amazing, divine love which sustains us, now and in eternity.





When I survey the wondrous cross,  
on which the Prince of glory died,  
my richest gains I count but loss  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it Lord, that I should boast,  
save in the Cross of Christ my God;  
All the vain things that charm me most  
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His hands, His head, His feet,  
Sorrow and love flow mingling down;  
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet  
or thorns compose so rich a crown!

His dying crimson, like a robe,  
Spreads o'er his body on the tree:  
Then I am dead to all the globe  
and all the globe is dead to me.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.

## **YOUR PARISH CHURCH**

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 the Parish Office, which is open between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

**81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU • [parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk](mailto:parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk)  
0121 458 3289 • [www.facebook.com/kingsnortonteam](http://www.facebook.com/kingsnortonteam)**

### **THE MINISTRY TEAM**

Rector .....	The Revd Larry Wright
Assistant Rector .....	The Revd Eliakim Ikechukwu
Parish Lay Minister .....	Pauline Weaver
Curate .....	The Revd David Booker
Honorary Assistant Priest .....	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Methodist Minister.....	The Revd Nick Jones
Lay Readers .....	David Ash, Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman, Parisa Pordelkhaki Cate Bennett, Chisom Ikechukwu
Lay Preacher .....	Steve Wright
Music Minister.....	Sylvia Fox
Pastoral Care Team Coordinator.....	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Pastoral Care Advisor .....	Susan Farrell
Learning & Discipleship Coordinator.....	The Revd Mark Bennett

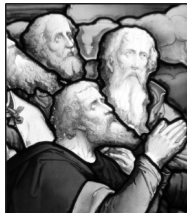
### **THE CHURCH WARDENS**

St. Nicolas' Church.....	Peter Hay & Julie Hill
Hawkesley Church .....	Jim Clarke
Immanuel Church .....	Sue Hartley

### **OTHER CONTACTS**

Parish Administrator.....	Susan Farrell
Acting Finance Officer .....	Simon Hill
Verger and Groundskeeper .....	Shane Williams
Safeguarding Coordinator .....	Annette Dickers
Regular Giving .....	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Flower Arranging (0121 486 2837).....	Alison Blumer

**W**e are a Church of England Parish serving all in Kings Norton through St Nicolas' Parish Church, and, in partnership with the Methodist Church, through Hawkesley Church, meeting in the Primary Academy.



*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 and to be equipped for work in God's world*

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month**

9.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 am	Holy Communion (Children's activity : Muddy Church)
12.30 pm	Baptisms
6.00 pm	Taizé Prayer

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Month**

9.00 am	Sung Matins (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 am	Morning Praise for All Ages (Child-friendly)
6.00 pm	Holy Communion with Anointing & Prayer for Healing

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month**

9.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 am	Holy Communion (Children's activity : Godly Play)
12.30 pm	Baptisms
6.00 pm	Evening Worship

### **4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month**

9.00 am	Holy Communion with Choir (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 am	Outdoor Service in St Nicolas' Churchyard (Child-friendly)
6.00 pm	Compline (Night Prayer)

### **5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Month**

9.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.30 am	United Service

*All services are held at St Nicolas' Church. For further details, see the weekly newsletter on the Parish Website at [www.kingsnorton.org.uk](http://www.kingsnorton.org.uk)*

# 400

## Years of Solitude in St Nicolas' Church

In a recent issue, we told the story of the Greves family, prompted by the dramatic tomb that is situated in the space under the church tower, which carries effigies of Sir Richard and Lady Anne Greves.

This is the story of St Nicolas' other striking tomb, the one that is located opposite the Greves monument (though both were originally situated in other parts of the church). For different reasons, it is another significant monument, in terms both of its design and its story.



MICHAEL  
WRITES  
REGULARLY  
ON LOCAL  
HISTORY

It was created to be the burial place of Humfrie Littelton and his wife Martha, who originally lived locally in a place that was more significant than it is now, Grovely. Martha died in 1588, towards the end of the Tudor period, and Humfrie died in 1624 in the reign of the Stuart King James I. It is a beautifully decorated tomb, clearly created so that the couple could spend eternity there together. To reinforce that intention, the words



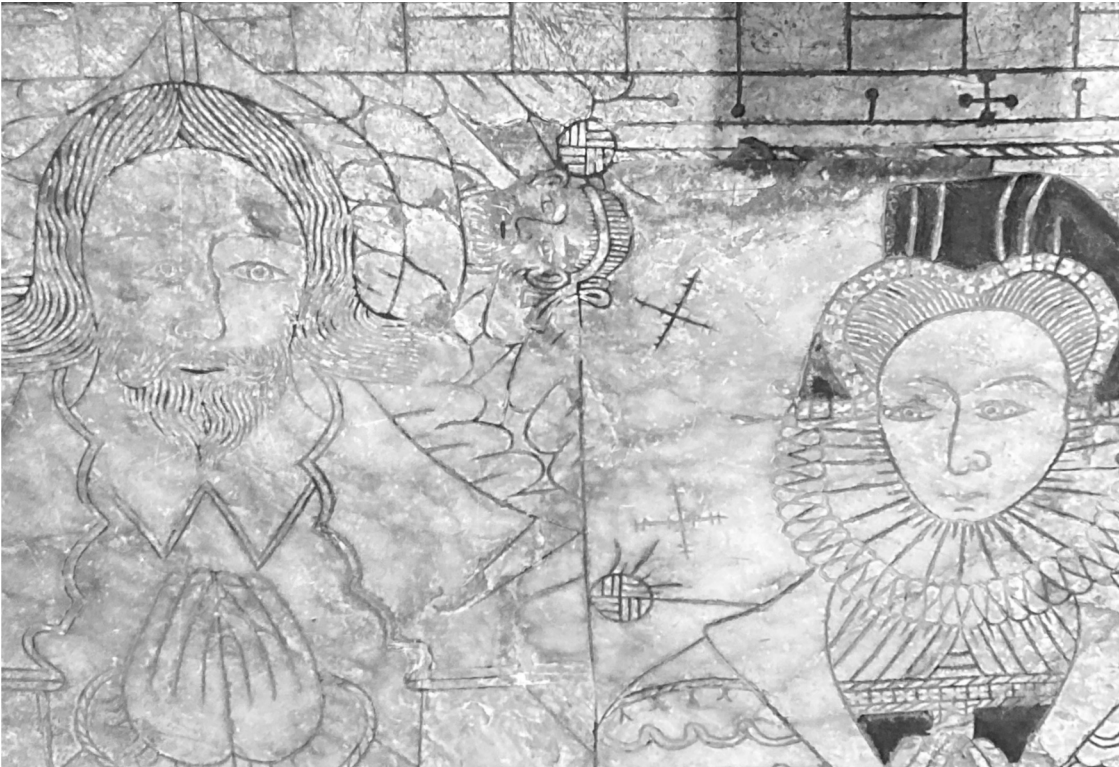
that are inscribed along the upper edge read "Here lieth the bodies of Humfrie Littelton of Grovely and Martha his wyfe"

The plan never came to pass. Martha has lain there for well over 400 years in complete isolation. When Humfrie passed away some 35 years after his wife, far longer than he would have been expecting in 1588, he had moved his home from Grovely towards the middle of Worcestershire and he was buried in or near the church of Naunton Beauchamp. Whether it was ever considered that he should fulfil his original commitment and spend his eternal rest side

by side with Martha is not clear.

Martha's unfortunate situation was the result of a marriage which would, to her, have seemed a triumphant match, because the Littelton family, as some readers will know, was perhaps the most important family in the whole of North Worcestershire at the time, and had been for at least a century. It is still significant now, in that the current generation of the family continues to live in the ancestral home, Hagley Hall, in the form of Viscount Cobham and his family. Cobham is the baronial title of the Litteltons, who have lived

▼THE TOMB OF MARTHA LITTELTON IN ST NICOLAS' CHURCH



at Hagley Hall since it was built by George, the first Lord Littelton, in the decade between 1750 and 1760.

The Litteltons (often spelled Lyttelton) often played significant parts on the national as well as the Worcestershire scene. Most notoriously, Stephen Littelton, (circa 1575-1606), was executed for his involvement in the 1605 Gunpowder Plot. Though he was not one of the leading conspirators, by a series of unfortunate judgments and circumstances, he fled with them after Guy Fawkes was discovered and arrested in the Houses of Parliament and was captured a few weeks later. Though Humfrie and Martha were from a different branch of the Littelton family, they almost certainly would have known Stephen and even met him regularly.

Humfrie was a personal friend of the celebrated poet Thomas Habington of Hindlip, who wrote of him as a "gentleman of nobel and worthy descent". After Martha died, he benefited from the fact that his family was routinely involved in the acquisition of new estates throughout the area of the county that they dominated. One of these was the village of Naunton Beauchamp, about four miles from Pershore and nine miles from

Worcester. The family acquired the village around 1532 through John Littelton of Frankley, then the main base for the Litteltons. By a series of developments and legacies within the family, in 1608 Naunton Beauchamp was settled on Humfrie, still living in Grovely, who, it seems, chose to move there. So, by the time he died in July 1624, he had been the most significant local figure there for more than 15 years, and it would have been very difficult for his family to arrange for him to be buried back in the vacant space created for him in St Nicolas'. If you walk past the half-empty tomb, say a little prayer for Martha in her loneliness.

As I said earlier, the Littelton tomb is significant in other respects. Even if you're a regular visitor to St Nicolas', you may well have walked past it on several occasions without observing its most significant feature. That's because, ideally, you need to be some 8 feet tall to do so, because that would be the only way you could easily see and appreciate the full impact of the truly striking image that is on the upper surface of the monument.

It is an impressive, full-length and fully detailed engraving of two people, obviously the recently deceased Martha and

the still living Humfrie, in flowing Elizabethan dress. A truly evocative work of art, it is a historic example of a technique which, at the time it was done, was beginning to go out of favour, but had been used since the days of the Ancient Egyptians. The technique is called "incised alabaster"

For thousands of years, alabaster was a popular alternative to marble as a material for church monuments, for two main reasons: it was always cheaper than marble and far easier to sculpt and engrave, because it is much softer. Its primary drawback was that its resistance to the weather, particularly rain, is much less than that of marble: any alabaster monument exposed to weather will show signs of wear within months.

Nevertheless, alabaster rivalled marble as a material for interior use, not only because it is so much easier to work into three-dimensional figures but because it is a material which readily accepts the carving of letters, figures and images.

England was the most significant source in the whole of Europe of the skills needed for sculpting, carving and engraving alabaster. The material used for Midlands applications was usually

quarried from large deposits in South Derbyshire. Nottingham was a particular centre for these skills, so much so that the English product was generically known across the continent as Nottingham alabaster. "Nottingham" images were hugely popular and were exported in large quantities, including to such relatively obscure and remote countries as Croatia, Iceland and Poland. But by far the greatest export market for these images was France, where even today it is possible to see alabaster altarpieces that originated from England. Unfortunately, in their home country, very few examples have survived. So the Lyttelton tomb in St Nicolas' is a relatively rare example of the art form in this country.

The alabaster images, be they sculptures or surface engravings, were normally brightly coloured, but much of the paint has inevitably faded over the centuries, or was deliberately removed during the Reformation period, when exotic decorations within churches were frowned on as legacies of Catholicism, and either obliterated or significantly toned down. But if you look closely at the incised alabaster image of Martha and her husband, you can still see faint evidence of once vibrant colour.

# Reading an Icon

One of the most distinctive features of any Orthodox church, such as the Serbian Lazarica in Bournville (see p.34) is the icons which decorate almost every inch of the walls. Icons are a form of visual storytelling whose origins date from a time when few people were literate. They also have a mystical aspect. Orthodox Christians see them as a window into a reality which is usually invisible to our eyes, a glimpse of heaven which demands our careful, prayerful attention if we are to understand what it is saying to us.

The icon on the right is a fairly typical depiction of the Resurrection. Every detail is full of symbolism, not all of which can be grasped at first glance. Here are a few pointers to help you find your way in.

Notice that Christ's robe is flowing upwards, an artistic choice which symbolises His descent into Hell between His death and resurrection to save those who have died. The bars by his feet are the gates of Hell, which He has broken and torn apart. Keys are floating in the abyss below. They tell us that Jesus has entered and conquered both death and Hell.

You may also have spotted the skeletal figure who is chained up beneath His feet. That is Death or Satan. Christ has bound and killed him.

The two figures whom Christ has grasped and is pulling from tombs are Adam and Eve. This gesture tells us that His victory redeems all mankind, right back to the beginning of history. It also foreshadows

the general resurrection of the body before the Final Judgment.

To the left, we see David and Solomon, two of Christ's earthly ancestors. We also see, closest to Him, John the Baptist, His forerunner in both life and death.

The figures on the right vary from icon to icon but usually represent Old Testament prophets and saints such as Moses, Abel and the three youths who were thrown into the fiery furnace in the book of Daniel.

The shape around Christ is called the *mandorla* (Italian for almond). It represents the uncreated, eternal light of Christ. In the writings of the Eastern Orthodox mystics, God is often experienced in prayer as light, the same light which filled the apostles with wonder when they witnessed Christ's Transfiguration.

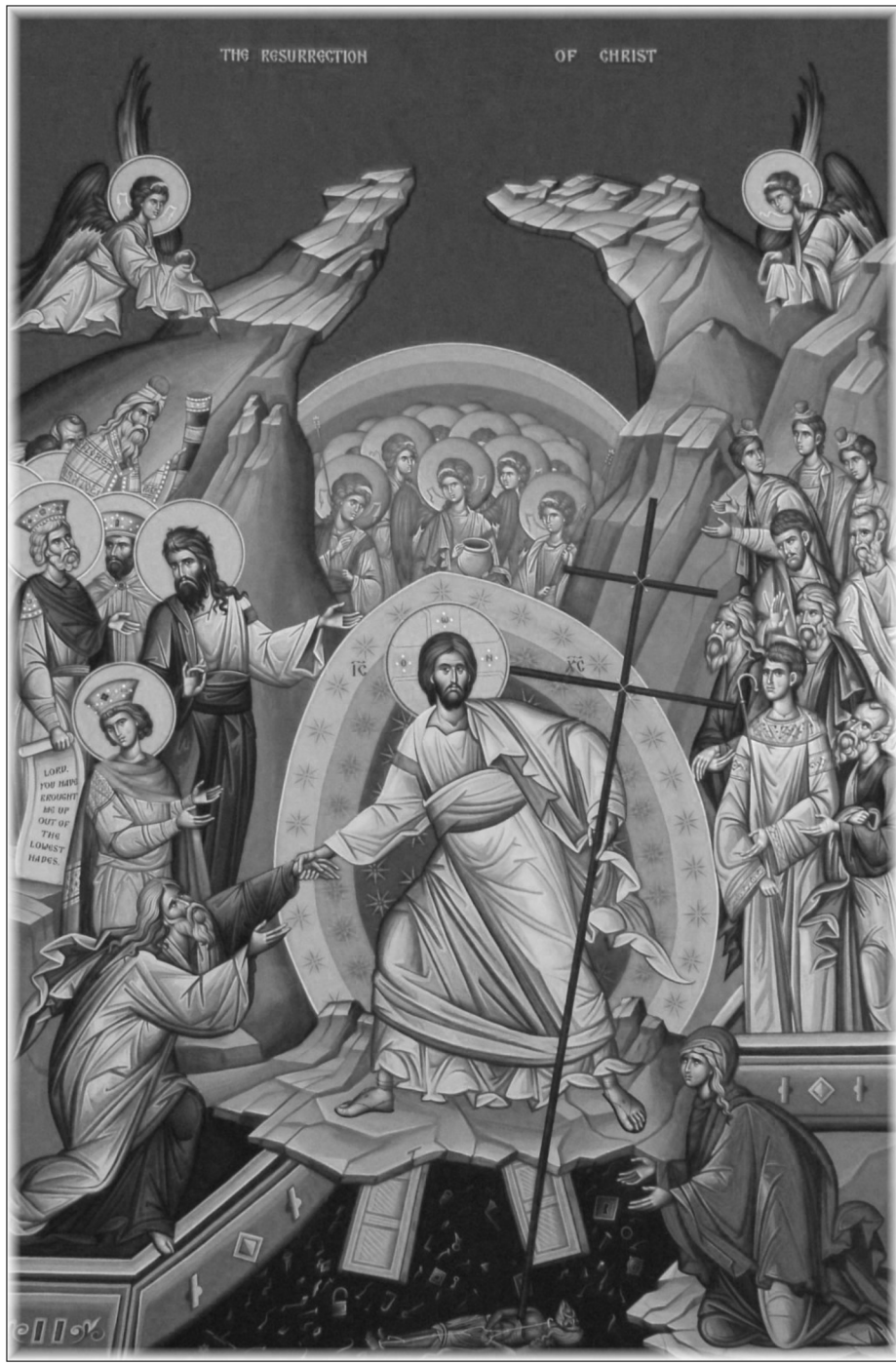
The mandorla gets progressively darker as it moves toward its centre, which is Christ. There is symbolism here too. Those who seek God will find that the more they know Him, the less they comprehend Him. To know God, to experience Him, is to walk in the darkness of His light, to enter into the mystery of His presence.

*"Icons are theology not only in words but in images."* (St John Damascene, 675-749 AD)

*"Icons are painted to lead us into the inner room of prayer and bring us close to the heart of God."* (Henri Nouwen, 1932-1996)

THE RESURRECTION

OF CHRIST



# THE HUNGRY GARDENER

## Our Family's Journey with Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome

I hope some of you noticed a building lit up in blue light on 5th March? If you did, that is because it was Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome Awareness Day. Have you heard of Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome? We hadn't, but now it is woven into our daily lives. If the answer is "no", you are not alone. It is a rare disease with only around 2% of the global population receiving a diagnosis. That equates to approximately 30 children in the UK diagnosed with CVS each year. There may be many more suffering with CVS without a diagnosis as identifying it is a process of eliminating all other possibilities.

Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome is a migraine variant but, instead of getting life-pausing headaches, the sufferer experiences life-pausing vomiting, the duration ranging between 1 hour to multiple days or, for some unfortunates, maybe weeks. If you would like to know more about the condition there is very detailed information on the Cyclical Vomiting Syndrome Association Website <https://cvsa.org.uk>. Somebody called Robin at the association was a godsend to our family. Charles Darwin suffered from CVS and refused to have a physician attend him prior to his setting sail on HMS Beagle in case he wasn't allowed to leave. We read his symptoms and it is exactly what our Charles suffers from.

Our beautiful boy has this condition. The first time we knew he suffered from an episode was when he was 7 months old.



Claire is a keen kitchen gardener, ably assisted by her 7-year-old son Charles.

He received his diagnosis when he was 6 years old. It has been quite a journey. He also has a hypothyroid condition which was diagnosed at 3 years old.

CVS takes its toll on all the family. We recently travelled to Bristol on a Saturday so Charles could soft-play with a lovely young boy who is also a sufferer of CVS. Unfortunately, Charles started suffering from sickness after an hour or so. The trip was certainly worth it for the two boys to meet someone else who suffers. It empowered him. Charles' pattern of sickness is to vomit every seven days between lunchtime and the evening. The pattern is so defined we can predict when it will happen and we plan for it every week. Matt changed his job because of CVS and I reduced my hours.

The length of Charles' intermittent vomiting can be anywhere between 30 minutes and 5 hours or, if he is feverish, several 4-hour episodes over a few days. For Charles, the episode ends when he is so exhausted he falls asleep. On occasions, he feels so rubbish that he cannot fall asleep. These are the longer, heartbreaking episodes. He describes these as "hurting all over". Now that he has a diagnosis of CVS, his condition has a name and he was prescribed medication a few weeks ago. We hold out hope that it may lengthen the days' space between episodes. It is early days and we are still praying to see an improvement. This is not a medication that is

prescribed to many children in the UK, due to its nature.

Late last year, Charles' weight dropped so significantly that he was seriously underweight. We had a dietician prescribe fortified milk drinks but they really weren't boosting him as much as the dieticians expected. They did not think it possible he could be losing so much weight; so, after a period of intense and extreme worry that seemed to last a life-time, which I know all parents experience at times, I decided to be pragmatic. I created a spreadsheet to analyse his weight and started weighing him every day to see how much he gained per day or per week and how much exactly his weight dropped with each vomiting episode. I discovered that he loses 600g per "normal" weekly vomiting episode and at least 1 kg with a feverish vomiting episode.

I also examined the calories for his diet and used the "myfitnesspal" app to track his diet. The NHS recommends a daily calorie intake for a child of 7 years of 1,700 calories so, as Charles loses a lot of weight per week, we decided to aim for 2,000 calories. Initially, he didn't really have much of an appetite (hardly surprising) so I fed him while he played Minecraft. I popped food in his mouth as he played and he didn't protest! This helped him to get used to the extra food and now he's happy with the volume of a 2,000 a day calorie diet.

He was also not a big fan of drinking the prescribed milk shakes. The dieticians don't have much to offer

other than fortified high calorie milk drinks so Matt had the idea of asking Charles' SENCO at school if he could have them at morning break time when he usually has a milk drink with his class. Bingo! This worked! His school, Fairway, are super supportive. They have been since he started in Reception Class. Charles has 92% attendance at school despite his medical challenges. He will often have a big sleep there for a few hours. The school are on his team.

Charles has a challenging diet, as many children of his age do. Does anyone have a picky eater? He will only eat solid food and isn't a big fan of mashed potato. It makes it really challenging to hide calorie supplements in his food. Things like bolognese, which many parents use to hide extra nutrition, are a complete no go for us. He loves chicken (the lowest fat meat). He is happy with a roast meal, pizza, fish fingers, sausages, pepperami, pasta, chips, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots, so he is a bit restricted, but not perhaps as much as some other young people.

He also loves a variety of fruit, grapes being his favourite and go to food after an episode. Pizza is a good hiding place for the powdered supplement he has been prescribed. I remove the pepperoni, scatter the powder and put the pizza in the oven for half the cooking time. By this time the powder is absorbed into the sauce (mostly) and I add the pepperoni, hiding any visible powder,

and put the pizza back in for the second half of the cooking time.

As Charles is on a high-calorie diet, we need to ensure that his breakfast starts him off with lots of calories. I make him pancakes with the prescribed vanilla milk shakes. These are made in the shape of cat faces. He is slightly obsessed with cats!

Here is the recipe for cat pancakes:

*200g brown self raising flour*

*3 x 125ml Nutricia high calorie vanilla milk shakes*

*50 ml liquid whey*

*5 eggs*

*Butter (big knob of butter for each pancake)*

*Mix the flour, milk drinks, whey and eggs together and heat your frying pan while you are doing this.*

*Put the mould in the pan, add a knob of butter inside the mould and pour a ladle of pancake mixture in the mould. When it looks like the liquid mixture has turned solid, remove the mould using a cloth or oven glove to protect your fingers from the heat and flip over the pancake to cook for about another 20 seconds.*

Charles has 2-4 of these pancakes for breakfast every day.

I also make him "mummy cookies", which are a regular chocolate chip cookie recipe, and I use brown self-raising flour (for nutritional content) and add egg white powder for extra protein. Egg white powder is easy to find as is whey in powder form, as



these are popular bodybuilding food supplements. Essentially, we are trying to build his body that little bit faster to give him enough weight gain to cope with the 600g weight loss per week while still gaining the weight he should for a child who is growing. Last year, he gained 200g over the course of the whole year.

In the Nutricia recipe book (Nutricia is the brand that makes the prescribed high-calorie vitamin drinks) there is also a recipe for Yorkshire puddings which I think he will like but we haven't tried them yet.

Now we are a few months into implementing Charles' new diet and it has worked. It has kept me sane and diverted me from worry. From January to March, he has gained 1.8kg. Now he is no longer classed as underweight. When he has his weekly vomit-induced weight drop of 600g he can deal with it. We do pray that his new medication works and that he gets some relief from the frequency of vomiting episodes but, in the meantime, at least we have found a strategy that works to keep his weight in the healthy range.

Our family can never repay the support that our church has given to us over the last few years. We are fortunate to be supported by Kings Norton Surgery, Browns Pharmacy and an amazing specialist in London at Queen Mary's Hospital. Closer to home, Pauline Weaver has always been there to support us as a family.

Cyclical vomiting syndrome (CVS) is a rare disorder that usually starts in childhood. It causes repeated episodes of being sick (vomiting) and feeling sick (nausea).

The cause of CVS is not fully understood. The vomiting episodes are not caused by an infection or another illness.

CVS may improve as a child gets older, but it can also affect adults. The condition can be frightening, but it's possible to manage it with lifestyle changes and medicines.

The cause of CVS is not yet known, but there may be a link with migraine. Many people with CVS develop migraines, and migraine medicines may help treat the syndrome.

Vomiting episodes may be triggered by:

- emotional stress, such as excitement, anxiety or panic attacks
- physical stress, such as an infection, exhaustion, or lack of sleep
- some foods and drinks, such as chocolate, cheese, and things that contain caffeine, alcohol or MSG (monosodium glutamate)
- very hot or very cold weather
- periods
- allergies
- motion sickness
- overeating, not eating for long periods (fasting), or eating just before going to bed

For some people, there is no obvious trigger.

(NHS website)

# LAZARICA

To journey together, to make a pilgrimage from a special sacred space to another special sacred space, is very precious. On a grey Saturday in mid-February, members and friends did indeed travel from St. Nicolas' Church in Kings Norton to the Serbian Orthodox church in Bournville, to encounter this hidden gem of Orthodox spirituality. "The Lazarica is evidence and a reminder of faith", as it says on their website.

The history of the Serbian Orthodox church in Bournville is captivating. The patron saint is the Holy Prince Lazar and is one of many Serbian churches dedicated to him. Here we know it better as the Lazarica. It is the first and only Serbian Orthodox church which was purpose built in the United Kingdom, and one of only three outside of Serbia in Europe. Unique and beautiful!

After the Second World War, 10,000 Serbs were recruited from displaced persons' camps in Germany to work in essential industries in the UK. There was already a core of Serbians in Bournville, as the second wife of

George Cadbury had nursed in Serbia during the First World War and had returned with thirteen Serbian orphan boys. After the shortage of workers eased here, the Serbian refugees were permitted to stay and gravitated toward Birmingham, partly because of the work available in and around the city, and also because of the small Serbian group already here. They were predominantly male as under the then Yugoslavian government women and children were not allowed to leave. They worshipped at a specially created chapel in a residential property in Cotteridge, on Middleton Hall Road, where their priest, Fr. Radovan Miljkvic also lived. He worked tirelessly to gather the Serbian Orthodox community together, travelling great distances to find them in camps and hostels.

As the congregation increased it was decided to buy a plot of land, encouraged by the Cadbury family because of their personal connection. They were encouraged and actively supported by the exiled Prince



PHOTO BY DAVID ASH

Tomislav and Princess Margarita of Yugoslavia. The foundation stone for the Lazarica was laid in Griffins Brook Lane, Bournville in 1965. It was to be built in the Serbo-Byzantine style of the fourteenth century, and would replicate typical Serbian Orthodox churches. Typically, and traditionally, it has no seating, although there are a few near the walls for the less able members, a feature which is thought to be the origin of the phrase "the weak go to the wall." The church was consecrated in front of 6,000 people in 1968.

We arrived early in high anticipation to find a service in progress. After some initial

▲ THE INTERIOR OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN BOURNVILLE, THE LAZARICA

panic, we realised that we had some rather more fluid arrangements than we had estimated when planning! Our first encounter was culturally already stretching us. But we were invited to sit in their rather splendid Grade 3 listed church hall, which gave us a chance to meet up with friends old and new and chat. We were invited to join with the congregation towards the end of their service on this special occasion, their annual, pre-Lent remembrance of the dead. This became an invaluable part of sharing with another denomination with



PHOTO BY DAVID ASH

even older roots in early Christianity.

Fr. Nenad introduced the church and architecture to us. As Sylvia Fox observed, what a rich feast for the eyes! Made traditionally of wood and stone, the church also has three bronze doors and an impressive candelabra from Serbia. The painting of the many wall freschi were done by one artist over many years from its opening in 1968. The dome has an image of Christ Pantocrator (Ruler of the Universe), and below, of the Virgin Mary. At the bottom of the walls are warrior saints, above them the patriarchs and priestly saints and above them the apostles and the major Christian festivals. In addition, there are a number of shrines. The one dedicated to the Virgin Mary and covered in silver, is known as the 'shrine of

the miracles' as many healings have been claimed there.

It was hard to drag ourselves away. There was so much to see and take in, and all in such a comparatively small space. Eventually, we moved back to the church hall, to share together over refreshments. On our pilgrimage, we prayed together and broke bread together, or at least enjoyed coffee and biscuits together! Exploring different aspects of our Christian faith and sharing in our rich diversities was truly both an inner spiritual journey as well as a blessing, and a pilgrimage on every level.

A big thank you to Sylvia who organised all the arrangements on the ground. And we do thank Fr. Nenad and the congregation of the Lazarica for their warm hospitality and open door. It would be wonderful to invite them to visit us here at St. Nicolas'.

# Funerals February 2023

2nd February	David Hampson	88	SN.Cr.WH
6th February	Shirley Ann Glew	89	SN.Bu.KN
8th February	Joan Ann Armstrong	81	SN.Bu.CY
9th February	Josephine Yvonne Sandford	88	In.CY
17th February	Lionel Leonardis Ellis	84	SN.Bu.KN
23rd February	Sybil Jean Bowker	101	SN.Bu.BE
28th February	Margaret Mary White	98	Cr.LH
28th February	David Widdowes	82	SN.Bu.KN

Bu : Burial, Cr : Cremation, CY : Churchyard, In : Interment of Ashes,  
 SN : Service at St Nicolas' Church  
 Cemeteries & Crematoria

BE : Brandwood End, KN : Kings Norton, LH : Lodge Hill,  
 WH : Waseley Hills Crematorium

## ONLINE SERVICES

THINGS THAT CAN GO TERRIBLY WRONG



PROBLEMS WITH THE SOUND



ACCIDENTAL SCREEN-SHARING OF PASTORALLY-SENSITIVE INFORMATION



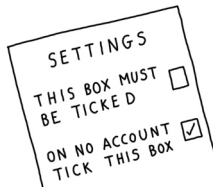
INTERNET BREAKS AT CRUCIAL MOMENT



FAILING TO MUTE THE CONGREGATION



ANIMALS RUNNING AMOK



THE APP HASN'T BEEN CONFIGURED



LIVE ARREST OWING TO IGNORING COPYRIGHT



INVASION BY ROWDY GROUP OF METHODISTS

CartoonChurch.com

# Limitations

Some time ago, I wrote an article about "Great Expectations". Well, now we turn to a somewhat contrasting theme of "limitations". As I get older, I find myself getting long in the tooth. As the years slip by far too fast, I have to recognise more of my limitations. This gradual change reminds me of an incident at sea.

Some years ago, in 1963, the P&O liner "Canberra" had a severe engine room fire at sea. Luckily, there was no loss of life or serious injury but, for a time, before the fire was extinguished, we all had to go to boat stations and the lifeboats were made ready to launch. Suddenly, we were faced with limitations. What personal possessions could we take with us if the order to abandon ship was given? I grabbed my passport, a few bank notes, a family photograph, a packet of cigarettes and my seaman's discharge book. My mind was racing with the limitations of what I would not be able to take. As I stood on the deck by my lifeboat, I realised that I had forgotten to bring my pocket Bible. I still have the little book at home to this day. I didn't have to abandon it in the end.



**Eddie laments the passing of time.**

I have a sister who lives on the Algarve in Portugal. She has resided there with her husband and child for over 40 years. I have visited her many times in the past and enjoyed the beautiful beaches of that part of the world. These days, Susan is not too well and we talk regularly by smartphone. Some two months

ago, I told her I would pop over for a few days but, alas, I have come up against a limitation. I can no longer cope with a lot of walking, but I would need to board an aircraft to go and see her. The thought of going through security and then a flight lasting two or more hours feels quite daunting. I recall, too, that the airport at the other end (Faro) involves a long walk. I almost feel guilty and certainly feel sad about not being able to go, but I can't deny my limits.

I'll give you one final example of a limitation which I had to accept, this time in regard to keeping a dog. My little Patterdale Terrier, Milo, lived for over 17 years. He was a real character. Passers-by would notice him sitting in the window when I went out of the house. After he died, I had to make a decision about whether or not to have another one. Since leaving my life at sea, I had always kept a dog at home, not to mention the cats and guinea pigs! Well, I've had to accept my limitations, because it is only fair to take a dog out once a day for a good walk. I now live on my own. What would happen if I became ill? None of my family are dog lovers, so there would be a problem, I am sure. So there we are. It's a limitation I do not like, but it has to be. No more dogs, no more of the good company which they provide.

I hope you, dear readers, do not have to face too many limitations, even if a few are unavoidable. At least there is no limit on our prayers.



# S. GASCOIGNE & SONS LTD

INDEPENDENT FAMILY OWNED FUNERAL DIRECTORS



*Independent  
Funeral Directors  
& Monumental  
Masons*

**A well established  
family business built  
on reputation**

**Christopher Gascoigne** is a fourth generation funeral director offering a sympathetic and caring service at all times

- PRIVATE CHAPEL
- PRE-PAYMENT PLANS

277-279 Pershore Road South  
(next to St. Nicolas Church on the Green)  
Kings Norton,  
Birmingham B30 3EX



**24hr Personal Service**

ALL AREAS OF BIRMINGHAM & DISTRICT



**0121 458 5859**





*Harry L Marks*



**MONUMENTAL MASONS**

**Quality Manufacturing Since 1898**

**To Deliver Your Requirements**

**Kings Norton's Nearest Manufacturing Mason**

Unique Materials- Individual Designs- Extensive Displays

Additional Inscriptions & Renovations

“See Our Craftsmen At Work”

**0121 444 1840**

**“The Sculptor”**

Visit Our Showroom & Workshop at

Cemetery Works, Woodthorpe Road, Brandwood End, Kings Heath,

Birmingham, B14 6EH

hlmarksmemorials.co.uk

J & D Mason  
**Opticians**  
Opticians

WIDE  
RANGE  
OF FRAMES  
INCLUDING  
DESIGNER

2 The Green  
Kings Norton  
B38 8SD  
0121 451 3485

Providing quality eye care  
for 40 years

Friendly, professional service  
Free NHS sight tests when applicable

To find out more about the software used to produce this magazine, scan the code shown here or visit [affinity.serif.com](http://affinity.serif.com). Affinity Publisher is reasonably priced, available for Mac and Windows and made in Nottingham.



The Kings Norton Parish Magazine is edited on an Apple Mac using Affinity Publisher. It is printed by L.G.Davis (Stationers) Ltd, 46 Warstock Rd, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 4TS.  
Tel: 0121 430 9000

[www.lgdsolutions.com](http://www.lgdsolutions.com)  
[sales@lgdsolutions.com](mailto:sales@lgdsolutions.com)



Probate & Wills  
 Divorce & Family  
 Litigation & Bankruptcy  
 Business Interruption Insurance  
 Conveyancing & Commercial Property

A Complete Service For All Legal Requirements

knenquiries@rlksolicitors.com  
 0121 451 1661  
 www.rlksolicitors.com

1 Redditch Road  
 Kings Norton  
 Birmingham B38 8RN

### COPYRIGHT NOTICE

The contents of this magazine are copyright © Kings Norton Parish 2023 and may not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the Editor. The views, opinions and comments expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the editorial team of the Kings Norton Parish Magazine, the Kings Norton Parish Ministry Team or its staff. Material submitted for publication must be accompanied by the name and contact details of the provider including an email address if available. When possible, submissions will be produced in full, but the Editor reserves the right to make changes. If content submitted for publication contains quotations from other sources, the written permission of the copyright holder to reprint it must be supplied.



**Design and Print • Office Supplies  
 Workwear • Promotional Products**  
 • Stock and Distribution  
 • Facilities Management



Contact:  
**Call:** 0121 430 9000  
**Web:** www.lgdsolutions.com

**E-mail:** sales@lgdsolutions.com  
**Address:** 46 Warstock Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham B14 4TS

**REAL SOLUTIONS BY REAL PEOPLE**

**THE BOYS'**  
**BRIGADE**  
> the adventure begins here



**7th**  
Birmingham

presents

**THE ANNUAL  
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**

**QUIZ**

**FOR**



The  
Cotteridge Church



**BIRMINGHAM  
ST MARY'S  
HOSPICE**

£3 per  
person  
6 people per team

Bring your own drinks and  
nibbles!  
Quiz interval refreshments  
(NO ALCOHOL PERMITTED)

Friday 14th April  
7:30 for 7:45 start  
@ The Cotteridge Church



[www.facebook.com/7thbhambb](http://www.facebook.com/7thbhambb)

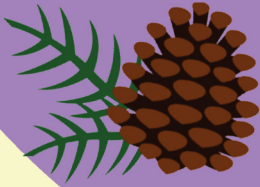
[cotteridgeboysbrigade@hotmail.com](mailto:cotteridgeboysbrigade@hotmail.com)



@7thbhambb

[www.7thbhambb.co.uk](http://www.7thbhambb.co.uk)

7th Birmingham Boys' Brigade meet every Friday during School term time at The Cotteridge Church 24 Pershore Road B30 3EJ



# WESTHILL HOUSE DAY NURSERY

2014|2015

**Ofsted**  
Outstanding  
Early years provider

Open 07.30 – 18.00  
Monday – Friday



All year round spaces available from birth to 5 years



Free funded places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds



Before and after school club



Holiday club for over 5s during school holidays



Fresh and healthy food cooked on site



Qualified, dedicated and experienced staff



Large garden and playground

📞 0121 458 2308

✉ info@westhillhousedaynursery.co.uk

@ Westhillhousedaynursery.co.uk

📍 36 Rednal Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8DR

