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**Items for inclusion in the
January 2014 issue are to
be submitted by: Friday
6th December 2013**

Welcome...

The season of Advent
is upon us.

Throughout this
edition of the
magazine, we have
news of events during



December to help both young and not
so young prepare for Christmas. Details
of all the Christmas Services are on
page 8, starting with the Toy Service on
8th December. There is a Nativity play
to go to, not to mention two Farmers'
Markets and the shop in Saint Nicolas
Place if you are looking for gifts.

Regular readers will know that we have
featured the setting up of the B30
Foodbank recently. Well, it is up and
running and we have an update for you
on page 30. Please remember the
foodbank when you are doing your
Christmas shopping and buy some
extras that you can donate to help
those that use this valuable service.

Thank you for reading the magazine
during 2013. I hope you have a very
happy Christmas!

Alan Haynes, Editor

From The Rector

It had to start with a baby, didn't it?



Thank you to everyone who responded so warmly to my thoughts on being a proud adopted Brummie in last month's magazine. I'm very grateful that so many were not just stirred by the OFSTED Chief Inspector's affront to our city, but by deep understanding and passion about all the good things done here to protect and nurture children. As we approach Christmas, with a child at its heart, we also need more than strong feeling. We need the same deep understanding and passion for what God is doing in and for all creation.

Church moaning about the commercialisation of Christmas is now a tired cliché – and it will go on, whatever we say. But it feels to me that it's the sentimentalisation of Christmas that most weakens our grasp that here really is God's Good News for all. Christmas brings so much to touch and move the heart, but if it is only feelings and memories to bring out of a box

once a year, why does it matter so much?

When we think of Jesus, we may well have one of three pictures; the infant King in a stable; the 'good man' who preached, taught, prayed, healed and delighted in shared meals; the one who died on the Cross and rose again. All three draw out deep feelings today as they did then. People are drawn to one or the other as a 'way in' to believing. But they need to be drawn together, because Jesus is all three – and more.

The child in the manger becomes the one whose words and actions shows us the Good News of God's redeeming love. The child and the 'good man' are the one who is nailed to the Cross and breaks the power of death and sin. And then he does more! He promises his friends and followers that through the gift of the Holy Spirit, they will do 'the works that I do' and be Christ to the world in our own time and place. What is decisive is not any one picture of Jesus. They

198th News



Last month, it was good to see so many of all the uniformed organisations taking part in the Remembrance Day Church Parade at St Nicolas. Laying poppies on the war graves after the service was carried out enthusiastically. Some Cubs even laid their own poppies when the others had run out.

This month, the Scouts are camping again at an aptly named event called IceScout 2013. If the weather forecasts are accurate, it could indeed be icy this year - it's a good job there are plenty of activities to keep them warm!

Alan Haynes, Cub Scout Leader



Mike Baker

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are each wonderful ways into believing and life, but it is when people see them all lived out in the life of God's people that lives change, God's Kingdom breaks through and God's peace, justice and hope are real.

And it has to start with a baby in whom all the fullness of God dwells and who in life, death, rising and Spirit-sending makes all the difference. That's how every human life starts, but we grow – in feeling, capacity, passion, understanding and love. Should our life in Christ be any different? May this Christmas be a beginning of new growth for us all.

With my prayers and hopes for a richly peaceful Christmas,

Rob Morris.

Thoughts on Sunday 17th Nov 2013 - 2 Before Advent

Signs of the times—or not?

As we approach Advent and Christmas, the temperature rises. The heat of seasonal marketing and planning gets more intense. So does

that of our Sunday Bible Readings. They do not have many precious intimate stories of Jesus gathering outsiders and the harshly judged. They do have much more about the last things, about cosmic change and second coming. Stand by for action!

These are 'big' passages from the Gospels of Luke and Matthew, with the strong prophecies and teachings that accompany them from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Malachi, Romans, Colossians and James. They are, alas, a happy hunting ground for any who are taken with their own vision of what is happening in the world, the signs of the times and of what all must do. Confused?

The true answer is simple and clear. It is there in the last verses of today's tough reading from Luke (21.5-19). Yes, many will come with false interpretations of the signs of the times. You are to stand firm, trusting in the wisdom, strength and endurance which God will give and has indeed already given in the wisdom, strength, endurance of Jesus in the Cross. There is hope!

Rob Morris

Two Archbishops – who next?
In Rowan Williams and Justin Welby, we have been much blessed in our Archbishops. Two very different men, but equally loving, prayerful, courageous and wise. And this week, as this magazine is printed, we pray that General Synod will make it possible for us to be blessed in future with these qualities in a woman Archbishop. Whatever happens in Synod, please keep praying for those who are steering this process, for patient determination that change comes - and don't give up.



Nona and Barbara

It is hard for all of us who know Nona Johnson and Barbara Shipton to grasp that they are now in the full company of God's heaven. They both had such a sturdy, resourceful and life-embracing spirit. In both, deep faith was tested in struggle – and grew in love, service and faithful friendship. We have been so enriched in their walking with us in so many different parts of our life together, in Kings Norton and much more widely. They rest in peace and we must go on in prayer and comforting for their close family and friends. Here is some help!

Among Nona's papers, her family found this hand-written prayer. It seems to be one that she prayed often – and lived.

*Dear Lord
Help me to live this day, quietly,
easily;
To lean on thy great strength,
trustfully, restfully;
To await the unfolding of thy will,
patiently, serenely;
To meet others, peacefully,
joyfully;
To face tomorrow, confidently,
courageously.*

radically new always springs from a situation that feels like chaos, and dark desolation, but that a creating, life-generating spirit is at work in just these situations. The interplay of the presence of chaos and the ordering dynamic of creation are constant and intimate partners in the unfolding story of life.

It is always difficult, if not impossible, to envisage anything beyond where we are. Life beyond the horizon feels like it would lead to a terrible crash. But the story of the universe tells us something different, something much more hope-filled. There is always MORE, but the MORE is discovered only when the layers of the LESS have been shed, or forcibly ripped away.

Does this truth shed any light on your own transitions and dislocations?

What does your own story reveal in the way of disasters, and has there been any blessing in the curse? When do you feel your personal growth has accelerated? What was the cause of the shift?

We can feel as though we are looking at a mess of broken eggshells, where Humpty Dumpty has fallen off the wall with a resounding crash. It looks like breakdown on a grand scale. But what if it were something else altogether? What if the egg were not just breaking, but actually *hatching*? In that situation, it would be more important to help the chick come to birth than to focus our attention on examining the broken pieces and trying to put them together again.

Take a few minutes to reflect on the "field" of your own life and circumstances. How does it look and feel to you? Are there well-trodden paths? Or has the plough of God's action appeared to overturn your familiar ways?

Remember any times especially when you have been aware of the "plough" of God's action churning up your soil. With hindsight, did you find fresh food in that disturbing process?

If God has ploughed up your life, it was to plant new seeds. Can you see now any signs of growth from those seeds? How do you feel about the possibility that the crop God is growing in the field of your life is not just for you, but for the good of all creation? Can you see any ways of actively co-operating with this process?

When you reflect on some of the apparently disastrous breakdowns through which we and the world are moving, can you see a new possibility trying to hatch? How might you help this new thing to come to birth?

When we embark upon a spiritual journey, seeking to walk our own personal pathway in God's presence, it can feel a bit like this. The old pathways we had become so used to seem to disappear. We are living in the same old field, but the terrain has changed. God is preparing it for a new harvest - the harvest that only our lives can bring to life - the grain that will be given for others if we allow God to walk our pathways along with us. But already, long before the harvest, there is fresh food. Jesus upturns our certainties and challenges our fixed positions, but he feeds us more abundantly than we could have dared to dream of. With him, it *will* be possible to turn this field of our living into a place of fruitfulness.

Living through Change

The changes that we face in our own times, in our personal lives, in our faith systems and in our global situations are profound and accelerating. In some cases they feel more like meltdown than transition. How do we meet them creatively, allowing God to turn breakdown into breakthrough?

There is no question that our earth depends on periods of apparent breakdown in order to regenerate itself: for example, volcanic eruptions, while causing destruction in the short term, in the longer term bring new layers of minerals to the surface of the earth, creating new fruitfulness for crops, and even, occasionally, whole new landscapes; massive storms in the Southern Ocean create almost impossible conditions for those at sea, including the many sea creatures who get caught up in the destructive turmoil, and yet they also stir up new sources of life from the ocean depths and ultimately provide new nutrients for the very life they have threatened.

Chaos theory tells us that periodic breakdown into disequilibrium is inevitable in all systems, including ourselves, but that out of that breakdown, a new order springs forth, activated by the mystery scientists call 'the strange attractor'. If our earth, and our lives, were not punctuated by these upheavals, it, and we, would be inert and lifeless. Chaos, it seems, is the price of life. The Genesis writer says the same kind of thing, when he describes how the Spirit first hovers over the formless void, bringing forth creation. So, can we - dare we - let the Spirit hover over our own chaos?

The Big Story is also littered with the debris of catastrophes and extinctions. However, there are important patterns we might observe in this long litany of destruction:

First, a new surge of creativity invariably emerges out of a period of instability, and life unfolds in greater diversity than before whenever it takes a shock wave in its stride. The Genesis story of Noah, which is paralleled in most of the creation myths of humankind, is a beautifully poetic way of expressing the intuition that the

2013 Christmas Services

St Nicolas

Sunday 8th Dec : 10.30am

Parade and Toy Service for St Nicolastide

Bring and Share lunch after: 2-4 pm packing and sorting
Christmas Challenge gifts

Sun 22nd Dec: 4.00pm: Carol Service (No 6pm service)

Christmas Eve: 5.00pm: Crib Service

11.30pm: Midnight Mass

Christmas Day: 9.00am: Holy Communion

10.30am: Christmas Communion

Boxing Day: St Stephen: 11.00 am Holy Communion

Sat 28th Dec : Carols after Christmas

2 - 4pm : a fun afternoon singing your favourite carols with stories,
activities & refreshments : suitable for all ages and free

New Year's Day: 10.30am Holy Communion

Sun 12th Jan: 10.30am: Christingle Service

*

Hawkesley at Hawkesley Primary Academy

Sun 15th Dec: 10.30am: Christingle Service

Sun 22nd Dec: 10.30am: Carol Service

Christmas Eve: 11.30pm: Midnight Communion

*

Immanuel at Fairway Day Centre

Sun 22nd Dec: 6pm: Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Day: 10.30 am Christmas Family Communion



Revd Jayne shares some thoughts from her recent retreat day.

I recently spent a day in the company of one of my favourite Christian authors, Margaret Silf. Her books are a wonderful mixture of story and theological reflection. The theme for the day revolved around her soon to be published book, entitled 'The Other Side of Chaos'. It is a book about negotiating those times in our lives, and in the life of the world around us, when it seems as if all is disintegrating. Times of crisis or 'meltdown' as Margaret calls them. She produced some handouts for us and kindly gave me permission to share them with you in our magazine. So here is one of the handouts.

When the plough goes through © Roy Lovatt, 2001



Imagine a scene in the autumn, somewhere in the countryside. The picture shows a freshly ploughed field. In the foreground you can see the stile that marks the spot where the footpath once went through. People got used to walking along this footpath, perhaps taking their dogs for a morning walk. We are creatures of habit, and we very quickly settle into fixed certainties and expectations.

But the farmer has overturned those expectations. He has gone through his field with the plough and what used to be a grassy path has turned overnight into furrows of earth, awaiting a new harvest. Someone is pleased about this change, however. The birds are flocking in, discovering food from the upturned earth that they had never dared to dream of. Perhaps this is also a picture of what happened when Jesus first challenged the fixed positions of his times, and opened up quite new possibilities of growth and change.



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In Remembrance and Hope

*A sermon preached by Revd John at the Kings Norton
Royal British Legion Remembrance Day Service*

On Thursday morning of this week, I was speaking about remembrance at the school assembly in Hawkesley. The older children, in Year 6, already had a very good grasp of what it was all about. But I was very conscious that for the younger ones, who were only 4 or 5, the very idea of war, and of thinking about those who have died in war, was something that they neither could, nor really should, understand. And it prompted me to think as to when it was that I, as a child, first became aware of war as a reality.

I was fortunate enough to have been growing up at a time and in a country that was, to all intents and purposes, at peace. Probably the first ways in which anything about war impinged on my life was in the form of toy soldiers and then Airfix kits of WWII tanks and aircraft. But toys aren't real. Then there were the stories my parents told me of their own childhood; both my mother and father were nine when that war broke out; my mother spoke of being evacuated from her home in Huddersfield to the safety of Scotland; my father lived through the war in Bristol, and spoke of the games he played in the air raid shelter that had been built in his garden. But that was them, and then, and it didn't really connect with the world in which I was growing up.

And I've an idea that the first thing that did connect was something really quite trivial. It came as the answer to a question that I asked my mum as she walked me to school. Each day we passed a row of terraced houses. They had the tiniest of front gardens with no hedge, or fence, but just really low walls, about six inches high. And embedded in those walls were quite a number of metal stumps, coming just about an inch or so above the level of the wall. What are those? I asked.

And she explained. There had been iron railings, all along the front of that row of houses; but during the war, all surplus metal, including those railings, was cut down and collected up, so that it could be melted down and turned

into those tanks and fighter planes of which I had been making my Airfix plastic models. It may not sound much - it isn't much - but for the first time I could see for myself how war had impacted upon the world in which I lived. Metal railings from people's gardens, cut down, melted down, and turned into weapons of war.

There is an Old Testament prophet whose name was Joel. We know very little else about Joel, except his name, but he left behind a short book of his prophecies, mostly forecasts of doom and gloom. In this book, he urges his people to prepare for the war that is coming upon them, telling them, "*Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears*". In the crisis of war, even the necessary tools of agriculture, the means by which the people might be fed, are to be turned over to another use, worked on by the blacksmiths and changed into weapons of war. Farming equipment, tools of life, become tools of death. War does this. It consumes what is good, and twists it into the machinery of destruction.

But the process of smelting, of the transformation of metal, does not always have to be one way. Today we have heard a reading from another Old Testament prophet, whose name was Micah. We know a little bit more about Micah than about Joel. He was prophesying about 800 years before Christ. His themes are the themes of justice, and of mercy, and of promise.

And Micah speaks of a coming time of peace - a time in which the preparations for war will be put into reverse. He picks up Joel's image of ploughshares and swords, but this time it's the other way round: "*They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more*".

In one sense, of course, we are still waiting for Micah's prophecy to be fulfilled. The world is still at war - and we continue to pray for those who suffer, and for those who are caught up in conflict, especially now in Afghanistan. We long for peace. We long for a world in which the things of war can be dismantled, in which the resources consumed by war can be put to productive use. And in longing for that world, we work for that world and we wait for that world, looking forward to it with eager anticipation.

Looking forward. Much of the focus on Remembrance Sunday is on looking



From: Miss Rebecca Deacon,
Private Secretary to HRH The Duchess of Cambridge

Private and Confidential

7th November, 2013

Dear Reverend Canon,

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have asked me to write and thank you so much for the beautiful prayer blanket, which you so kindly sent on the occasion of the baptism of their son, Prince George.

Their Royal Highnesses have been overwhelmed by all the wonderful messages and gifts they have received and the Royal couple, their parents and families are so thrilled at this special time.

The Duke and Duchess would have me send their warmest thanks and best wishes to everyone in Kings Norton Team Parish.

Yours sincerely,
Rebecca Deacon

The Reverend Canon Robert Morris,
Team Rector of Kings Norton

Congratulations to our Knitters and Natterers who have received this letter after they sent one of the prayer blankets that they had made to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

B30 Foodbank

133 people fed since we opened!

Well - we've done it! After almost a year of planning, the B30 Foodbank opened its doors on Tuesday 17th September at 2.30p.m. ,, and then we waited. We had over two tonnes of food and 10 volunteers ready to distribute, but no real idea what was going to happen.

That afternoon, 5 people walked through our doors with vouchers from local schools and the Neighbourhood Centres and we were able to welcome them and put all our systems and planning into operation. Every week since then, the number of people coming to the foodbank has increased, so that now, after six weeks of opening, we have fed 133 people (86 adults and 47 children).

What have we learned? Firstly, the people coming to foodbanks don't really want to be there. Most people who arrive are tentative at best and sometimes very upset at worst. In one case, a volunteer had to go outside the Church to persuade a client with a legitimate voucher to come in.

Secondly, the clients are there for reasons outside their own direct control. They are people who are often finding life difficult anyway, living without any flexibility in their finances, where every penny counts and with no personal or family reserves to call on. When there are any changes to their circumstances in terms of health or home or income, even finding food to put on the table often becomes impossible. The foodbank is their last resort. Of the people coming through our doors, over 60% are there because of benefit changes or delays.

Lastly, we have been humbled and uplifted by the thanks we have received. Everyone, with no exceptions, has said thank you to the B30 Foodbank team as they left our building.

Helen Gale, B30 Foodbank Steering Committee

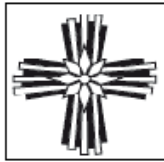
back, and that is how it should be. We are here to remember. But without also looking forward, without hope for what is to come, this day would offer us nothing but sorrow and despair. We are here to remember and we are here to hope.

In a few weeks time, the Church begins its great season of hope - the season of Advent. It is more than just opening the windows on the Advent Calendars and eating the chocolates we find inside. It is more even than just getting ready for Christmas. It is a time of promise, as we hear again the assurance that the God who made the world loves it so much that he came to it, born as a child in the stable in Bethlehem. We receive again the assurance that God is not just the God of Christmas but also of Easter, a God who from the grave brings life, from death brings resurrection. And we receive the assurance that God will not leave this work unfinished, but will bring his loving purposes to their ultimate fulfilment. In all this, God is a God of transformation who turns swords into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, the things of war into the things of peace.

To finish with, some further words from that prophet Micah, as he looks forward to the era of peace, and is given an insight into the one through whom this peace will come:

"But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little ones of the clans of Judah, from you will come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace".



KNOCK, KNOCK!



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**A nativity play for the young
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Pray with us for those affected by Cyclone Haiyan in the Philippines. Millions of people have been affected, and thousands have lost their lives.

Creator God,

This is an awe inspiring planet,
wonderfully but fearfully made.
In Typhoon Haiyan we see again
the vulnerability of humanity
to the full force of nature's energy.

We pray for all those affected:

Those who have lost loved ones,
Those who have had to witness mass burials,
Those who make up the faceless millions affected,
Those who need shelter, water, food, sanitation and medicine.

We pray for the emergency response teams:

For safety and strength as they assess the damage,
For communication lines to be restored,
For a quick and effective response to their findings,
For the resources required to be made available.

We pray for the long term recovery and resilience work:

That the growing intensity of typhoons would not be ignored,
That the erratic nature of recent monsoon rains would be noted,
That this vulnerable nation would not carry the challenge of climate
change alone,
That the international community would respond with generosity
and with justice.

Amen.

Philippines Typhoon Appeal - We need your help!

More than 11 million people are affected across 39 provinces in the Philippines. The homes of hundreds of thousands of people have been destroyed or severely damaged. Countless people have died. Many roads are impassable and airports are out of action or overloaded.

The DEC agencies, including Christian Aid and their partners, are responding to the effects of Typhoon Haiyan and are helping those affected rebuild their lives.

We need the church to respond to this crisis by giving generously to the DEC appeal.

There are many ways
to donate to the DEC fund for the Philippines
visit www.dec.org.uk

Phone 0370 6060900
(available 24 hrs, national call rate, automated donations line)

Post (using a downloaded form from the web: some in St Nicolas by the charity boards). Send your cheques, postal orders or CAF vouchers, made payable to '**DEC Philippines Typhoon Appeal**', to: DEC Philippines Typhoon Appeal, PO Box 999, London, EC3A 3AA

Bank or Building Society (except Nationwide or Britannia); ask to pay into the '**DEC Philippines Typhoon Appeal**' account.

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Café and Gift shop: Tuesday to Saturday 10am-3pm
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St Nicolas Church is also open for visiting, services permitting:
Wednesdays 10am-1pm and 6.30pm-9pm; Saturdays 10am-12

Booking events and functions

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Just call 0121 458 1223 or Parish Office on 0121 458 3289.
Marriage and baptism enquiries for St Nicolas Church: Thursdays 6.30pm-8pm

Activities

Saint Nicolas Place is home to a wide range of activities every week alongside the full programme of activities of St Nicolas Church, including: Uniformed Groups, Seniors' Club, Community Choir, Social Support Groups, Zumba, Rhythm Time, Slimming World, Dance and Fitness Groups, Kings Norton History Society,

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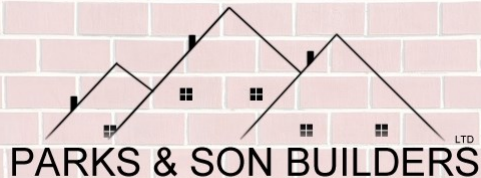
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Light appearing in darkness, and new life from death, is a recurring theme. Just as at Christmas we see the backdrop of despair and hopelessness, so it will be at Christ's second coming. All will seem lost. The world, plunged into deepening turmoil, reveals its complete inability to reform itself. When antagonism to the truth of God reaches new bounds and Godliness seems to be no more, then and only then, will Christ break into this world. "The Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming." The kingdom of light will prevail and all darkness will be banished. Those who have hoped in Christ and longed for his coming will be raised up to eternal life.

Now many can now speak of personal emptiness and despair swept away by the knowledge of Christ as they are born again into his kingdom of Light. The long winter speaks of deadness with no sign of life, yet amazingly, as if from nowhere, new life comes. As Christ said, "This is the Year of the Lord's favour and not yet the day of vengeance of our God." The un-named man lay long at the Bethesda before hope came (Bethesda means house of mercy). Now, at Christmas, despair can be replaced with hope.

Frank Williamson is a Missionary with Birmingham City Mission and Pastor at Kings Norton Baptist Church.

TINY TOTS

Leaf Clearing in the Churchyard



October 2013 Baptisms

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"

- 20th October Brogan James Arthur Harding
- 20th October Logan Thomas Alan Dove
- 20th October Evie Rose Hall
- 27th October Chloe Louise Seymour
- 27th October Alexander David Crooks

October 2013 Marriages

"Those whom God has joined together"

- 19th October David James Lucas and Patricia Myrna Warren
- 26th October James Philip Browett and Amanda Julie Hall

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society, have responsibility and seek employment - things he had never known. Relinquishing the familiar is not so easy. He thought, 'Yes I do want to change.' Over that obstacle, he replied to Jesus, "I have no-one to help me." Jesus could and would. "Get up, pick up your mat and walk." At once, the man was cured. Cured in every sense, Jesus found him later at the temple thanking God. That day, Hope had come, the author of life had visited him, yes him! Light had suddenly shone into his despairing life.

As we approach Christmas, John heralds: *the Word became flesh*, the long awaited, *the child born and the Son given*. The profundity of the creator entering his creation requires us to stop and ponder. There is nothing like it, God himself entering his world. The infinite, the holy, the one who flung the stars into space, the one who is love, is the one descending into this darkness. How can we add to that? If the event of the incarnation has its impact, the timing adds more. It came after over four hundred years of national despair. This was a time of turmoil and strife of the worst kind. There were uprisings, genocide, and unrepeatable atrocities. They had been asking the same kind of questions we hear today; where is God? Why are the heavens so silent? Doesn't he care?

All were thinking there will be nothing new, in the familiar, no surprises. Residing here twenty eight years means every nook and cranny of house and garden is familiar. Nothing new to discover here, I thought. Yet I lift up a step in the garden, one that I had trod a thousand times, and find with steps going down, a WWII Air Raid shelter.

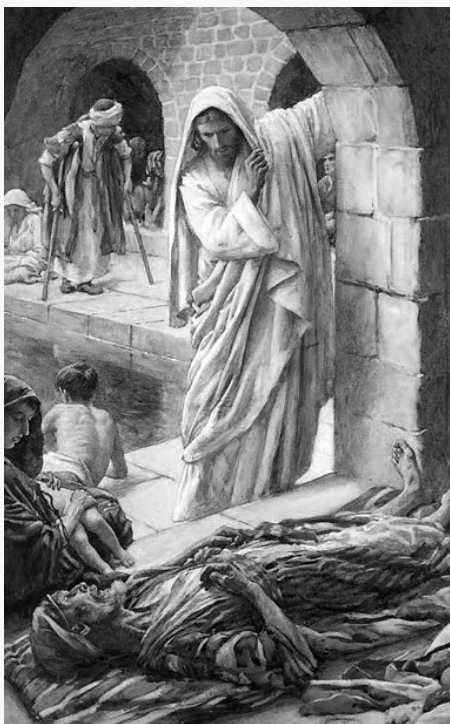
One night comes the burst of angelic activity, light banishes the shepherds' night heralding a day of hope for all. "*The light shone in the darkness.*" As he walks onto the dark stage, all the spotlight switches are thrown at once. Christ's appearance brings in himself the chance of life and hope for all. As the nation then despaired, hope came. So in a world devoid of true hope, Hope is now here.

God writes the wonders of his gospel in history and in the world we live in.

For all the Saints

A Bible Character or a Christian from the pages of history, retold by Frank Williamson.

The day Hope came



Amongst the blind and lame at the pool of Bethesda lay a paralysed man. (John 5) We do not know his name; it may have been despair, for there are many with that name. Wherever he looked, outside and in, darkness reigned. It was a considered opinion, for he had had plenty of time to think. With many paralysed and lame together, you might expect some camaraderie, but there was none of it. As soon as there was any prospect of help, others pushed in front. This misery added to his gloom. Painful hours rolled into days which rolled into despondent weeks and months. It was now thirty eight years, but who wanted to count? It seemed like an eternal punishment.

Then the day came that changed everything. Jesus, entering Jerusalem, left the throng heading for the festivities and made a detour. Oft bypassed, off the main track and hidden away, were the least, the last, the lost. No-one went there. Yet Jesus went and enquired about this man. Jesus often among the crowds singled out the individual.

“Do you want to get well?” sounds a strange question, but did he? Did he really want change after all this time? He would now have to take a place in

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October 2013 Funerals

"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord

- 7th October Ronald James Gee, 92. Cremation at Redditch.
- 10th October Graham Wilkes, 66. Burial at Yardley Cemetery.
- 10th October Brian Robert Jones, 46. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 14th October Mavis Ann Sly, 74. Service at St Nicolas Church, burial in St Nicolas Churchyard.
- 14th October Anthony James Booth, 39. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 15th October Samuel David Stanford, 10 days. Service at St Nicolas Church, burial in St Nicolas Churchyard.
- 16th October Martha McLauchlan, 73. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 22nd October Margaret Ada Revill, 96. Cremation at Robin Hood.
- 24th October Anthony Gilday, 93. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 24th October Alan Roy Greenhill, 93. Service at St Nicolas Church, cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 25th October Leslie Thomas Brookes, 81. Cremation at Robin Hood.
- 28th October Olive Young, 96. Cremation at Lodge Hill.

not isn't the issue here. What is interesting is a belief that our dreams have a message to tell us, that they mean something in our lives. This how Matthew uses these dreams in his gospel.

Matthew uses dreams in a way which reveals a pattern that is important for understanding our own relationship with God. He does this in two ways.

Firstly, Matthew uses the dreams to show that Jesus is the awaited Messiah. He does this by quoting scripture from the Old Testament prophets, which are directly linked to the situation the dreams are warning about.

| | |
|---------|--|
| 1:20-21 | Dream is interpreted at 1:23 quoting and showing the fulfilment of Isaiah 7:14. |
| 2:12 | This dream is linked to the wise men's meeting with Herod where they have informed Herod of whom Jesus is at 2:6, quoting and showing the fulfilment of Micah 5:1-3. |
| 2:13-14 | This dream fulfils the quotation at 2:15 which is from Hosea 11:1. |
| 2:19-20 | This is the first of a two part dream which is needed to show fulfilment of 2:22-23. |
| 2:22-23 | Not a direction quotation but can be linked to Judges 13:5 and Isaiah 11:12. |

Secondly, Matthew uses dreams as way of showing how important we are in participating in God's plans for the world. Each dream has a command which calls for human response. In Joseph's dreams he is told to marry Mary and name the baby Jesus; he is told to flee for safety; he is told to leave Egypt; and then he is told where to live. Likewise, the Wise Men are told not to return to Herod.

What do you think would have happened if Joseph and the Wise Men had ignored what was told them in their dreams?

Looking back to the list of names at the beginning of chapter one of Matthew's gospel, where we are given a list of some of the names of people who had waited upon the coming of the Messiah, if we were to look them up in our Bibles we would see that they were also people who responded to what God was doing in the world.

And so it is for us; this Advent, as we wait upon the birth of Jesus at Christmas time, let's try and follow the pattern of Matthew's usage of dreams and use advent as a time of waiting, listening and responding to what God has done and is still doing in our lives, our churches and in the world.

CHILDREN'S PAGE...

with Gail.



Hello everyone!

Together, let's take a look at the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel.

We are in a time of Advent in the church calendar. This is a time of waiting on God and reminds us of those before Jesus was born for whom waiting on the promised Messiah was a longed for hope. Matthew 1: 1-17 sets out this history of waiting by naming some of the important figures in the unfolding of God's plans.

Have a look through the list of names. What names are familiar? What names are not familiar? Does anything particularly stand out to you about this list of names? Do you have any questions?

Dreams can be funny, strange or scary; some we remember, some we don't, and others we only remember a specific part.



Can you remember a dream that you have had which you have told family or friends about the morning after because it was either exciting like an adventure or really strange and just made no sense at all?

Matthew tells of five dreams in these early chapters of his gospel.

Joseph is visited by an angel in his dream who informs him of Mary's pregnancy. In this dream, Joseph is told to marry Mary

and when the baby is born, they are to call him Jesus. 1:20-21

Three Wise Men are warned in a dream not tell Herod where the baby Jesus was so left for their journey home by an alternative route. 2:12

Joseph in a dream is told of Herod's plans to harm the baby Jesus and tells him to flee to Egypt for safety. 2:13-14

In a dream, Joseph was told to return as Herod was no longer a threat to them. 2:19-20

Joseph in a dream was told to go to Nazareth and live there. 2:22-23

Have you ever spent time thinking or talking to others about what your dreams might mean? This can be a fun activity, especially if your dream has been funny or strange.

Lots of work has been done to understand our dreams with many books offering dream interpretations. However, whether these interpretations are reliable or



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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 B38 8RU*

Sunday 8.00 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.30 am Holy Communion Oasis for 5-11's
2nd Sunday 10.30am Morning Worship/Parade for all ages
4pm Holy Baptism (*1st and 3rd Sundays*)
6 pm Evening Worship

Every Sunday evening we offer prayer, music and quiet for all to share in as you wish. Do come..

1st Sunday: Taizé Prayer 2nd Sunday: Holy Communion with Prayer for Healing

3rd Sunday: Night Prayer and reflection 4th/5th Sundays: Special services/Evensong (BCP)

Mon, and Wed, 9am Morning Prayer
Thursday 11am Holy Communion (BCP)

BCP is the Book of Common Prayer from 1662. Other services are a mix of ancient and modern words and music, mostly from the Common Worship Service Book 2000.

Hawkesley Church (Anglican/Methodist)

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

Sunday 10.30am Worship and Children's Activities (5-11's):

1st & 3rd Sundays Holy Communion;
2nd & 4th Sundays Morning Worship.

Tuesday 10am Hawkesley Coffee Morning (every two weeks)

Immanuel Church

at The Fairway Centre on the corner of Wychall Lane and The Fairway, Kings Norton, B38 8XJ

Sunday 10.30am Worship - and Oasis for children of primary school age.

1st & 3rd Sundays Holy Communion;
2nd Sunday Joining with St Nicolas/Hawkesley
4th Sunday All Age Worship

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Women's Fellowship

The December meeting takes place on Thursday 5th when we shall be enjoying our Christmas lunch at Saint Nicolas Place.

KINGS NORTON HISTORY SOCIETY

The Christmas meeting will be held on Monday 16th December when we will welcome GRAHAM DOWNIE once more to tell us about "THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAIRGROUND RIDES". Doors open at 7.00pm and the talk will start at 7.30. Visitors are always welcome at the Society's meetings.

Claire Simpson, Chairman

The Seniors' Club

We meet every Wednesday from 1pm until 3pm in the Ashford Room, Saint Nicolas Place.

All retired folk are very welcome to come along and join us to make new friends. Our activities include: entertainment from singers, choirs and musicians, speakers who give interesting talks on a variety of subjects, quizzes, outings, games and raffles. It's a great place for meeting people and tea and biscuits are always served. All this for only £1. We look forward to meeting you!

Please contact Marlene on 459 1636 or Kings Norton Parish Office on 459 3289 for more details.

Men's Monday Nights Out

We will be visiting Balti Hut in Stirchley on Monday 9th December, 8pm. For more details please contact Alan Haynes on 07534 615489. Thank you.

Open Church

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 St Nicolas in Open Church times and care for our churchyard, flowers and brasses. Do ask.

Open Church times

Do visit, pray, light a candle or share quiet conversation over coffee as you wish

Wednesday 10.00 am – 1.00 pm and 6.30 – 9pm (Candlelit Church)

Thursday 6.30 – 8pm for all Marriage and Baptism enquiries

Saturday 10.00 am – 12 noon for coffee, knit-and-natter, prayer

with **Messy Church** for all ages every 2nd Saturday (Market Day)

Candlelit Church

Every Wednesday, 6.30 – 9 pm with informal learning together at 8pm.

Quiet spaces, candles, conversation, creativity and music.

Arrive at any time; stay for any length of time - as you wish.

Tiny Tots Thursdays, 9.00-10.30am in St Nicolas Church for 0-5's and parents/carers.

Bumps and Babies for new and expectant parents, in St Nicolas Church every Monday, 1.00-2.30pm

Growing in Faith

We are growing fresh ways for all to grow in faith – those making their very first step, those who have made many and those who are discovering God's love afresh after times of change. Please ask in each church for details.

Helping to keep our parish church open for all

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

Baptisms and Marriages

Please visit St Nicolas on Thursdays between 6.30pm and 8pm 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.

KINGS NORTON TEAM PARISH

People, Places and Contacts

Please use our website www.kingsnorton.org.uk, ask at services or Open Church times or at Parish Office on 0121 458 3289 (Tue-Fri 10am – 1pm). The weekly newsletter and monthly events diary have the latest information. Churchyard enquiries to Parish Office

MINISTRY TEAM:

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Canon Rob Morris (Team Rector) | 458 3289/459 0560 |
| The Revd Dr John White (Team Vicar) | 458 3289/07854 412949 |
| The Revd Jayne Crooks (Team Vicar) | 458 3289/459 3733 |
| The Revd Donald Sampson (Methodist Minister) | 458 3289/476 7223 |
| Readers: Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman, David Ash and Mandy Butler | 458 3289 |
| Children's Work Development Worker: Pauline Weaver | 458 3289 |

WARDENS:

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| St. Nicolas | Anne Hughes/Phil Burton | 458 3289 |
| Hawkesley | Jim Clarke | 550 3455 / 07939 838086 |
| | Elaine Cooper | 624 0933 / 07951 325704 |
| Immanuel | Clare Dean | 459 6185 |

PCC (Church Council) Secretary: Judy Ash Finance: Catherine Dehghani

Parish Administrators: Judy Ash, Sylvia Fox, Christine Gadd

Christian Giving Officer Jean Brownsword 458 3289

Churchyard Care Team Richard Harper 458 3289

Bible Reading Fellowship Julie Caley 458 3289

Flower Co-ordinator Alison Blumer 486 2837

Organist and Music Director Sylvia Fox 07778 449170

Tuesday: Training and groups 6-9pm; Friday: Juniors 6.30-7.45pm; Seniors/Adults 8-9pm.

Handbell Ringers Mondays 3-4.30pm and some evenings (Please phone first to check we are meeting)

Immanuel Music Group Susan Haynes 459 4711

Oasis/ Sunday School

Immanuel Nicky Moorcroft (Oasis leader)

St. Nicolas and Hawkesley contact via Parish Office 458 3289

Parish Magazine: Editor Alan Haynes 459 4711

editor@kingsnorton.org.uk

Treasurer (Subscriptions) Alison Blumer 486 2837

Advertising Manager Lynne Hayes-James via Parish Office 458 3289

Parish Website David Ash e-mail: webmaster@kingsnorton.org.uk

Bell Ringers Practice Tuesdays at 7.30 to 9.15 pm in the Tower

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At Saint Nicolas Place

Seniors' Club (Over 65's) Every Wednesday 1pm – 3pm
Marlene Collyer, Anne Dent & Janice Boyett.

Women's Fellowship 2-3pm 1st Thursday;. Secretary: Carol Devic

Guides and Brownies 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

Guides and Brownies Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm
at *Hawkesley Church Centre* Brownies (259th Birmingham): Wednesdays 6.30 pm
Guides (141st Birmingham): Thursdays 7.00 pm

Scouts and Cubs (St Nicolas, 198th Birmingham)

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Oddingley Road, B31 3BS Cubs (8-10½yrs): 6.15-7.45pm Alan Haynes 07534 615489
www.myscouts.co.uk Scouts (10½-15½yrs): 8 pm

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Email: info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk Website: www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk

Bookings/Events: Andrew Driscoll

Kings Norton Parish Office

St Nicolas Place, 81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU. 0121 458 3289

e-mail:- parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk Open: 10 am - 1pm Tuesday - Friday

Parish website www.kingsnorton.org.uk

Please use Parish Office to contact clergy and lay officers, to place prayers and notices in our weekly newsletter and monthly Events Diary – and for all churchyard enquiries.

Hawkesley Anglican Methodist Church Primary School

Shannon Road, Hawkesley, Kings Norton, B38 9TR 459 6467 Fax: 459 6468

Headteacher: Mr Graeme Gill

School website: www.hawkesley.bham.sch.uk