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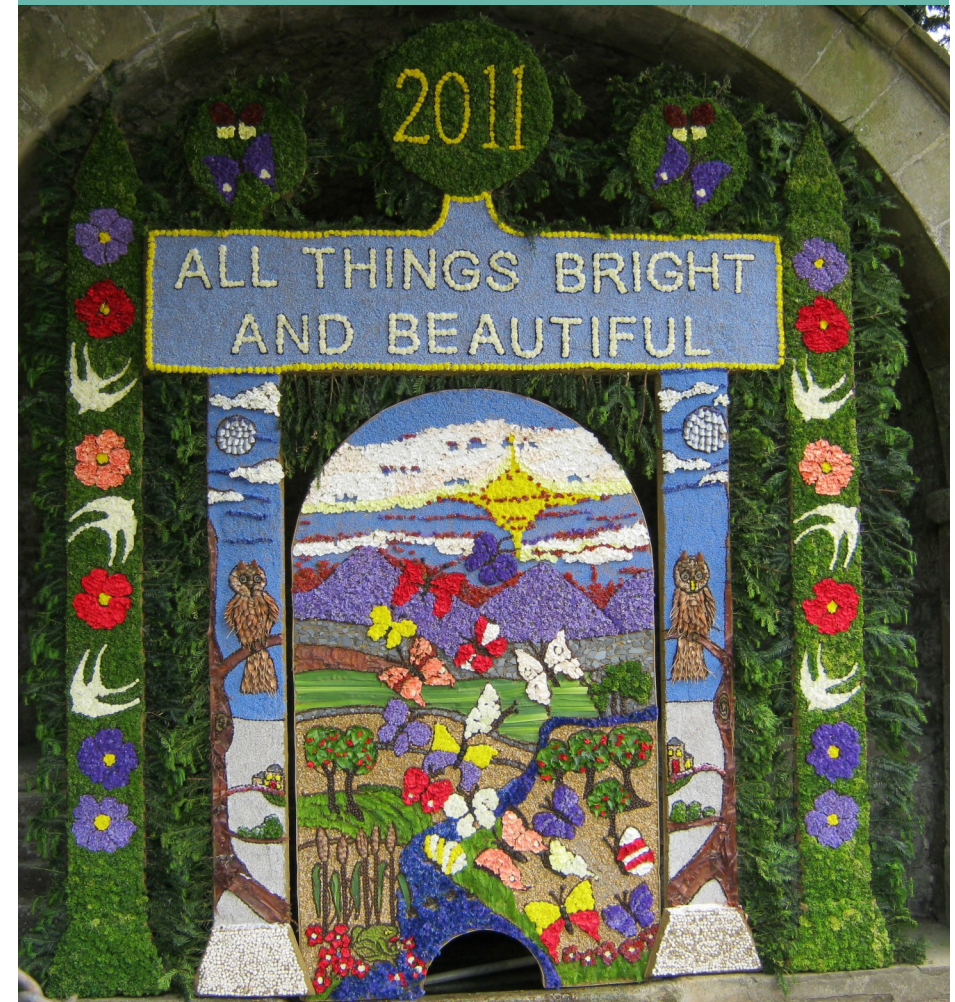


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Kings Norton Parish Magazine |

August 2011 |

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The Kings Norton Festival
July 2011



The Kings Norton Festival July 2011



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**Items for inclusion in
the September 2011
issue are to be
submitted by:- Friday
12th August 2011**

Welcome.....

The summer holidays are here, although as I write this we could be forgiven for thinking that we had bypassed summer and gone straight to Autumn with all the rain that's been falling.



Our Parish Person this month is one of our Parish Wardens, Anne Hughes, who has fond memories of family holidays in Tenby. Rev John shares some suggestions for holiday reading in his Ranting and Raving column and Rob gives us a biblical case for taking holidays in his message to us.

David Ash has once again captured the successful Kings Norton Festival with his camera. You can see the full collection of photos on the parish website, but we have printed a selection for you too on our inside covers.

Talking of photographs, Women's Fellowship took a trip to Tissington to see the Blessing of the Wells and one of them features on our front cover this month.

As you enjoy the holiday period, you may like to take part in some of the activities going on at Saint Nicolas Place. There are full details on page 34.

Thank you for reading.

Alan Haynes, Editor.

From The Rector

“Come to me, all who are burdened,
and I will give you rest.”



Jesus' words (Matthew 11.28) will mean many things to many people. They tell us that in a life of world and church so weighed down with things we ought to do, there is a promise from God.

Life, its purpose and our place within it is God's idea, so we should not be surprised. Our wise and loving God knows that for us to do even a little of all we ought to do, we need times and places of rest, refreshment and re-creation. Life can be costly. It is not a treadmill.

So, holidays are great – and very biblical! I'm so often struck at funerals by how precious is the recounting of holiday stories and shared travel. They might be to a caravan at Stourport or Brean. They might be to places even more exotic. Wherever they are, they matter.

Those who can, holiday outside school terms, but for most, the time is now. The usual round slows or stops. Other things take their place. Those who can, get away. Those who cannot, find playschemes, holiday courses or,

I hope, just time to do things differently.

And within church and Saint Nicolas Place, we're doing just that. The **Saint Nicolas Place holiday programme** is ready – and already being filled. Details are in this edition of the magazine. Why not visit or ask on 458 1223 to find out more?

On Fridays in August, we're inviting everyone to **Music For All**, 8-9pm – mostly in the Old Grammar School. Throughout the ages and across the world, people have sung God's praises. We shall discover - and sing - together treasures old and new from our own rich tradition (yes, we shall find and sing your favourite hymns and songs.) and from those less familiar but equally singable. We shall try out plainsong, chants, psalms, songs and hymns, ancient and modern. And it is for all – from those who think they can't sing at all to those who can read and hold a harmony line. By September, I know that many will have moved from the first to the second – but even those who don't will have had a lovely time growing in confidence.

Top of my list is **The Long Song** by Andrea Levy. It is a story set on a sugar plantation in Jamaica and tells of the final years of slavery in the West Indies and the first years of freedom following abolition. More than that, I wait to find out – but having thoroughly enjoyed Andrea Levy's previous novel, **Small Island**, I am waiting with high hopes. There was a BBC dramatisation of *Small Island* not long ago, which some of you may have seen; that was good, but I think the book was even better.

As a book for dipping in to, I'm taking Mark Radcliffe's **Reelin' in the Years**. He is one of the most knowledgeable, witty and engaging music broadcasters in the country and I have long enjoyed the *Radcliffe and Maconie Show*, which used to be on in the evenings on Radio 2 and now, regrettably, has been shunted to afternoons on 6 Music. He is also no mean writer; a few years back, he wrote a wonderful, slightly Nick Hornby-ish, novel called **Northern Sky**, set against the back drop of a small folk club. His new book is more of a biography, but with a difference. For each year of his life, Radcliffe has chosen a record released in that year and has written about that song, merging it with personal reminiscences. I read the first few pages over lunch in town straight after buying it and I think I rather embarrassed Priscilla, my wife,

by continually bursting into inappropriately loud laughter.

I've taken the risk there of raving about books that I've not yet read. I'm avoiding that danger with my final recommendation for holiday reading: **One Day** by David Nicholls. I claim no prizes for originality on this one; *One Day* is a book that seems to have been raved about by practically everybody who has ever read it. It traces the relationship between two young people who meet as students and who... But no, I'm not going to spoil it by revealing any more, other than to say that *One Day* is funny, moving, clever and very, very readable. There is only one problem with it as a beach read. You are likely to get so engrossed that you won't notice the tide coming in. Don't say I didn't warn you!

So, whether you are going away for a holiday or staying here in sunny Kings Norton, have a wonderful summer. And may God give you more to rave about than rant!



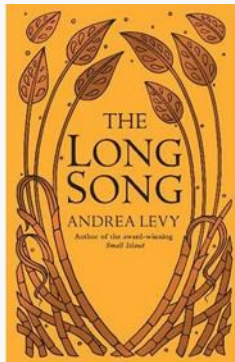
Rev John

Rev John Ranting and Raving



I began my first 'Ranting and Raving' article with a familiar disclaimer: the views expressed in this column are the personal opinions of its author, and do not represent the views of any other body. I repeat that warning this month, because it is very pertinent to the subject of my rant.

I get really annoyed by those pressure groups, whose name makes it sound as if they are the official spokespeople for a wide community, but who actually speak for nobody but themselves. I first got riled by this trend when living in a Devon village at the time of the rise of the 'Countryside Alliance'. There are many legitimate and pressing concerns facing those living in rural areas; but it soon became clear that the Countryside Alliance was highly selective in its choice of which issues to highlight. They were extremely vocal about the right of landowners to torture foxes and shoot teenage burglars. I never heard them say a word about the right of farmers to be able to sell their produce to the major supermarkets at a decent price, or for rural communities to be able to hold on to their local shops, post offices,



buses and schools.

And then the other night I heard someone on *Newsnight* speaking on behalf of what he called the 'Taxpayers Alliance'. Well, excuse me, I thought. I'm a taxpayer, and you didn't ask me for my views – and, as soon as he opened his mouth, I knew he didn't represent my views. As it happens, I rather like paying tax. Over the course of my life I've benefitted hugely from the things that government money makes possible and I count myself fortunate now to be in a position where I can also make a contribution. Maybe there should be a 'Glad to be Taxpayers Alliance'. I might be prepared to join that one.

But from ranting, let me now turn to raving. As I'm writing this article, my thoughts are turning very happily to our forthcoming family holiday in Cornwall. There is one bit of holiday packing that I love; and that is choosing the books that I'll be taking away to read on the beach. I thought I'd share some of my choices with you, in case anyone's stuck for ideas for their own holiday reading.

We start on Friday 5th August in St Nicolas – and then the Old Grammar School.

We will also be offering a series of sessions on something many may take for granted; **What it means to be in the C of E.**

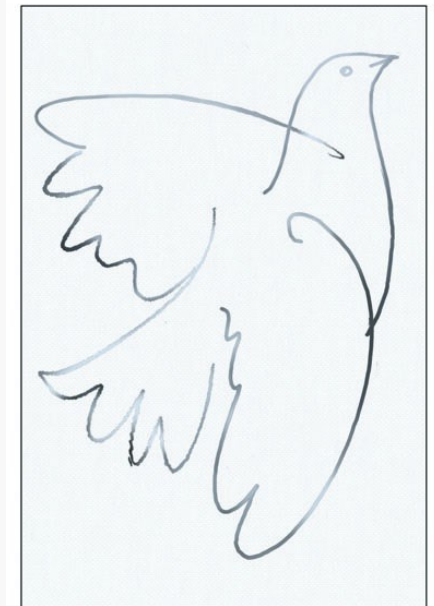
An old story is of a bishop being asked, "Do you believe in the Church of England?" He replied, "Madam, the Church of England is not an article of faith. It's just where God has put me." Just like us! Being C of E brings the gift of a rich tradition, shaped over centuries. Being a parish church, in partnership with Methodist colleagues, brings the discovery of how this gift is made new today in the people and communities here where God has put us to worship, pray and serve.

Final details of times and places will soon be available. We shall spend time reflecting on the special character and calling of a Church of England parish church like ours – and then discover how much we have in common with all Christians. And on the way, we shall find answers to some Frequently Asked Questions about church, Bible, prayer, worship and service. You will find out the difference between a dean and canon

(not essential for salvation) and ways to get inside the Bible and prayer (much more useful).

We shall be using a simple but really helpful guide "Confirmation Prayer Book" by Stephen Lake. It's not a course – just a straightforward, basic handbook which we can dip into and out of as we need or want. Whether you were confirmed years ago, last year or not at all, this is for you – and for us all. Please leap in!

Rob Morris



Happy Birthday W.V.Awdry – and Awdry Court opens

Our former Curate, the Revd W.V. Awdry was born on 15th June 1911. His family has been very busy marking the centenary in many different places - and we hope that Kings Norton can be included before too long.

On 30th June, Awdry Court, named (obviously) after him, was (perhaps less obviously) formally opened by our Rector. This is what he said:

“Kings Norton and its history, including this site, have two strong features. They are very deep-rooted, going back centuries. And they are also always about embracing change in changing times.

900 years or so ago, this part of Kings Norton belonged to Cistercian monks living at their grange in what is now Kingshill Drive. For over 300 years, this site was farmed by men sworn to poverty, chastity, obedience – and silence. (For today’s residents, at least one of those is not true.) The monks went at the Reformation. Their land was taken over by all sorts of people, including the parish church.

The new Awdry Court, therefore, stands on two 16th and 17th century

landholdings: Most had become parish land which became the Vicar's back garden and orchard in the 19th century. (The Vicar had a large staff!)

This part of the site was cleared to build St Nicolas Hall in the late 1950s. And then, with the completion of Restoration in 2008, the Hall and its land became available for the development whose formal opening we celebrate today.

The other piece of land, perhaps appropriately, was the site of the Avenant almshouses, founded over three hundred years ago by the D’Avenant family. They, like Awdry Court, provided homes for older citizens, though possibly less comfortably, but were demolished to make way for St Nicolas Gardens in 1970. Proceeds of sale were joined to the capital of the Kings Norton United Charities, who still support individuals in need in the ancient parish of Kings Norton. (Enquiries to the Secretary at our Parish Office!)

And now - a new beginning. Maybe it is fitting that the present incumbent of our ancient parish church should be here. It would after all have been in his back garden for over a century.

But there is an even better reason, which many may not know. My

What are your best memories?

Some of my best memories are family holidays in Tenby. Many times we would visit the Fisherman’s Chapel at St Govan’s Head, which is now a shell, but beyond it is a cove where I always found God’s peace and marvelled at the beauty and majesty of the waves crashing over the rocks. I shared this with Chris and Crystal when we visited again last month. We also love visiting Castles and Churches, which is wonderful as I used to ‘collect’ them with my Dad. It really is special that I can share the things I love so much with them and find that they love them too.

What is your favourite holiday destination?

Tenby has to be my favourite, partly because of the memories it holds and partly the fact that it really is an idyllic holiday town and the surrounding countryside and coast is breathtaking. I hope one day to take Chris and Crystal to Caldey Island off the coast of Tenby.

If you went on Desert Island Disks, what would be your luxury and book?

I would like limitless supplies of pencils, paints and paper. For my book, I would like to take a book my father gave me years ago, ‘Freckles’ by Gene Stratton-Porter and the complete works of Dickens.

What are your hopes for the Church in Kings Norton?

That it continues to be the warm, caring place that it is and carries on bringing God’s kingdom to earth through all the many good people here. May it grow and flourish.

Do you know anyone who would make an interesting ‘Parish Person’? Are you willing to be interviewed? If so, please contact Alan, the Editor, on 07801 551274 or by email - editor@kingsnorton.org.uk Thank you.



Parish Warden, Anne Hughes



Where were you born?

I was born in Dudley Road Hospital and moved to Northfield when I was 5.

What is your occupation?

For the last 6 years, I have been a full-time carer to my son. Before I married, I was a credit control clerk at Cadbury's, Bournville.



Why Kings Norton?

We were allocated a house on the 3 Estates in 2005 at a very low point in our lives.

Why is your Christian faith important to you?

Although I was raised to be a Christian, my faith had not been a major part of my life. When I arrived at St Nicolas, I received a great deal of Christian love and support. Slowly, I learned to let God into my life and to trust him. I would not be where I am today without my friends at St Nicolas. Now I feel strong enough to give something back.

What are your hobbies and interests?

I love fishing and spending time in the countryside and on the coast. I adore watching wildlife, wild flowers, and trees and am fascinated with the beauty of outer space. My favourite hobby is to share all this with Crystal and Christian. I also love painting, books and music.

predecessor, Canon Thomas Dunn, played a major, though unsung, part in the creation of Thomas the Tank Engine. (Was Thomas named after him in tribute perhaps)? When World War II broke out, W.V.Awdry declared himself a conscientious objector and was forced his leave the parish where he was curate.

Canon Dunn not only gave him a job and a home in Kings Norton - but also much encouragement to write. Mr Awdry had long been fascinated by railways and the story is often told of how his books grew from stories told to his son Christopher as he recovered from measles in Westhill Road, inspired by our local station. Thomas's junction is of course Kings Norton, only thinly

disguised. And one of the earliest reviews of his first book, The Three Railway Engines, was naturally in our Parish Magazine. It was very favourable!

It is possible that without Canon Dunn, my notable predecessor, we might well have a world without Thomas! So, as one Kings Norton incumbent was significant in the birth of Awdry's creation, it's probably right – and certainly a privilege - that Canon Dunn's successor should formally open this new development named after his curate. An ancient history, made new in changing times. Typical Kings Norton!"

Rob Morris

Giving Renewal

During July, we have sent over 250 invitations to members and friends of the church to consider their contributions to the life and work of the church across the parish. After two weeks, over 50 people have already responded very faithfully. Some, after careful thought, have not been able to consider an increase in their giving. Others have willingly done so and others still have begun faithful pledged giving for the first time.

May I firstly thank all who have responded so far, encourage all who have received invitation to make their own faithful response – and ask any who may have been missed to ask clergy or at Parish Office for their own letter. It does make a real difference to all that we pray and plan for in the growth of God's church in Kings Norton – and we all have a part to play.

Rob Morris

Thank you to all who shared in Kings Norton Festival 2011

Numbers were up and we gathered many learning points(!) Some lovely pictures are on the Parish Website and the inside covers of this magazine. We are now beginning to plan for 14th/15th July 2012 to ensure that the weekend really is a growing partnership in celebration of God's life and purpose in the communities of Kings Norton, gathered around Saint Nicolas Place—and of course its parish church.

The United Service on the Sunday morning was just that. Lovely warm singing, firm prayer by young and old, friendships in God new and old discovered and renewed – and the joy of welcoming Jo (now the Rev Josephine Houghton) back to preach with Hugh and their lovely new baby Polly. And then came a really lovely Parish Lunch – with large thanks to Judy, Emma and Sylvia. They're really happy for more to join them next year – and on many occasions in between.

Our lives need the daily round – but Big Days like Kings Norton Festival, Back to Church Sunday (25th September) and St Nicolas Festival (3rd/4th December this year) remind us that God's life and love bring us into friendship and work with many more than we might first think of. Thank you again to all who took part. Please start dreaming up lovely good ideas for next year.

Rob Morris

Hawkesley School

We come to the end of the school year in very good heart – with inspectors delighted to report good progress throughout. It's been tough, but thanks to our astonishing children and dedicated staff, now led by Mr Gill as Acting Head, school is growing even more as a rich place of learning, friendship, encouragement and vigorous life and prayer for all. It is such a privilege to share in its lively service to children and families on the Three Estates. Please pray for good things to keep growing in Hawkesley and in all the many schools in our parish.

Rob Morris

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Church Council met on 14th July

We reviewed finances for the first six months of the year. These are on course – but we still need to work on deficit. We reviewed progress on upgraded heating and lighting in St Nicolas, ready for work over the next six months. We agreed to prepare proposals for re-ordering/ conservation for wider consultation and faculty application in September, especially around Nave platform, Lady Chapel and south door. We will also look at Vestry re-ordering and toilets.

We also reviewed and worked on the new Hawkesley Hub, the Hawkesley School and Pastoral Centre upgrade, our new Parish Learning Group, Kings Norton Restoration Trust and Saint Nicolas Place developments and the Longbridge Development Chaplaincy. A busy and fruitful night indeed.

Rob Morris

A prayer in preparation for the London 2012 Olympic Games

Eternal God,
Giver of joy and source of all strength,
we pray for those who prepare for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

For the competitors training for the Games and their loved ones,
for the many thousands who will support them,
for the Churches and others who are organising special events and who will welcome many people from many nations.

In a world where many are rejected and abused,
we pray for a spirit of tolerance and acceptance, of humility and respect
and for the health and safety of all.

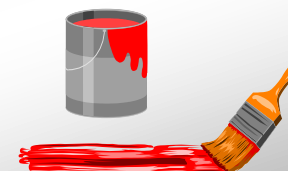
May we at the last be led towards the love of who is more than gold,
today and forever.

Amen

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The new piano in St Nicolas

Several people have asked me about the new piano since it arrived – and has stayed, unlike the hire one that came to stay for three weeks last July.

The piano is a 1910 Broadwood baby grand (so is almost certainly “Made in England”) and has been with its previous owner since the mid 1950’s. We are guessing it only had one other owner. It is privately owned and is on long-term loan to St Nicolas. The former owner is a distant relation of the Mynors family, whose memorial plaques and hatchment are in the chancel and tower respectively.

We are using it in many services, including weddings, and it will also be available for concerts.

I am having an absolute ball playing it, and am fascinated to know that our two main instruments are only 4 years apart in age and so were created with the same music and sounds in mind.

Sylvia Fox

Some dates for your diary

Sept 24th – Harvest Supper at St Nicolas – with a Malawian theme again.

We are hoping the drummers can return and, if they can, we will start at 6.00 pm for them, eat at 7.00 pm and have chance to see the Diocesan presentation about Malawi after the meal.

Sept 25th – Back to Church Sunday – events at all three churches, combined with Harvest Festival at St Nicolas and a Baptism at Immanuel.

October 15th – we are hoping Eroica Camerata will be returning to St Nicolas with a classical music concert.

November 12th – Craft Fair at Saint Nicolas Place.

November 19th – a choral concert at Birmingham Cathedral – show-casing a specially commissioned work to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the King James Bible. (Visit www.birminghamcathedral.com for more information, via the “music” page and click on the newsletter or ask Sylvia.)

November 14th – Remembrance Service at St Nicolas at 10.30am with chance to visit our War Graves.

November 26th – Hawkesley Christmas Fayre.

December 3rd and 4th – St Nicolas Weekend – a whole weekend of activities, events, meals, possible concerts and our Parish Service at 10.30am on the Sunday.

Wednesday 24th August The sound of Music

10.30am-12.30 pm

Make your own musical instruments.

2.00 – 4.00 pm

Learn a tune with bells.

Friday 26th August

“Queen Henrietta Day”

10.30am – 12.30pm

Bonjour! Learn some French while having fun.

2.00 – 4.00 pm

Make a crown box to keep your special goodies in.

Wednesday 31st August “You shall go to the Ball”

10.30am – 12.30pm

Puppet making and mask making

2.00 – 4.00 pm

Tudor Masquerade Ball and fun disco!

Heritage Open Day

“Got to go back to School” – Family Free Event Day

Friday 9th September and Saturday 10th September 2011.

Each Session (morning or afternoon) is just £2.00. If you book 5 in advance, you will get a 6th Free! Everybody who comes along can take part in the free colouring competition and have their work displayed in our new Creswell Gallery. The winner will receive some crafty goodies.

Kings Norton Farmers Market

The Green Kings Norton Birmingham
2nd Saturday each Month

Get
FRESH

**Next Market is 13th
August 2011
9.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.**



We are all invited to Messy Church on Farmers’ Market Saturdays from 10am to 12 noon in St Nicolas Church.

The next one will be on Saturday 13th August. These are craft sessions on a Biblical theme for all ages - a great opportunity to have fun and get to know each other. We look forward to seeing you there!



Summer Activities Programme

- Wednesday 3rd August** “Decorate your room in style”
10.30am – 12.30pm Paper stained glass window making.
2.00 – 4.00 pm Make a beautiful butterfly mobile.
- Friday 5th August** “The pen is mightier than the sword”
10.30am – 12.30pm Quill making and writing.
2.00 – 4.00 pm Make a pencil pot and script holder.
- Wednesday 10th August** “Enjoy the Caribbean”
10.30am – 12.30pm Exotic fruit tasting, popcorn making and
crispy treats. Watch a film and eat your treats.
2.00 – 4.00 pm Treasure Hunt. Be a pirate and find the buried
treasure!
- Friday 12th August** “The Croft Day”
10.30am-12.30pm Paper mosaic making.
2.00-4.00 pm Try your hand at being an archaeologist.
- Saturday 13th August** “Family Fun Day – Free Event Day”
10.00 – 3.00pm Flea Market and Craft Fayre and Farmers’ Market.
Teddy Bears’ Picnic on The Green - a prize for the best
Teddy Bear. Free Face painting, Rag Rugging and
Quill writing to try. Ceroc Demonstration.
- Wednesday 17th August** “Have a Flurry of Fibre”
10.30am-12.30pm Bracelet making.
2.00-4.00 pm Learn how to knit - make fingerless mittens ready for
winter, brrr!
- Friday 19th August** “Ain’t nobody here but us Chickens!”
10.30am – 12.30pm Make paper sculptured birds and paper moving
chickens.
2.00 – 4.00 pm Learn how to hold a real chicken, meet Ginger, Mac,
Lady and Blue Belle! And feed them their favourite
treats.

Women’s Fellowship

Our day trip went well on Thursday 2nd June (Ascension Day). We were blessed with beautiful weather and had a very enjoyable coach ride up to Tissington in Derbyshire to see the Blessing of the Wells.

We made good time for the Church Service at St. Mary’s, but as the Church was full, our ladies and other people sat or stood in the churchyard and heard the service relayed over the speaker by the Revd. Andy Larkin and the Venerable Christine Wilson (Archdeacon of Chesterfield). After the service we followed the procession around the six wells for the blessings and more hymns. Some of the ladies strolled around the pretty village at their leisure, enjoying the cottages, gardens and wells.

On our way back to Birmingham, we called at Carsington Water, which is a wildlife and water sport reservoir and regulates the water running through the River Derwent. A good time was had by all.

Carol Devic – Secretary.

History of the Dressing of the Wells

The custom of Well Dressing began just after the Black Death 1348-9. Most of the population was ravaged by the plague, but in Tissington all escaped and this was put down to the purity of the water supply. It later became a custom to decorate the wells each year for Ascension Day.



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GREETINGS FROM IMMANUEL CHURCH!

Around 40 of us enjoyed an Immanuel Day Out in June at The Log Cabin, Earlswood. It was a lovely time together where we picnicked, chatted, walked, played rounders and football, had a drumming workshop and a barbecue. It's always good to be able to spend time together...and the sun shone!

Our numbers have increased in recent months and it has been good to welcome more people to share in our Sunday worship. The DCC has begun to reflect together on the first part of our Parish Mission Statement, "To be a worshipping, transforming partnership in Christ" and what that means in particular at Immanuel.

As I write this article, we are looking forward to a service on the beach at Weston (24th July), our Harvest service (18th Sept) and Back to Church Sunday (25th Sept) which will include a Baptism.

We hope you have a lovely summer.

Susan Haynes.



Katie leading the group in drumming and percussion, facilitated by Sarah.

Government's radar in a very worrying way. RE is as crucial as it's ever been in 2011 and vital to the future well-being of society."

Recently, the Government discussed the possibility of students being given the option of two-out-of-three subjects for the humanities component of the English Baccalaureate. However, Head Teachers say that this is an unworkable compromise. In fact one stated, 'The only real solution is a choice of studying one-out-of-three humanities subjects from a core list of History, Geography and Religious Education. Anything else will result in the subject's downgrading and increased marginalisation.'

Since the campaign's launch on 20th February 2011, the petition now qualifies under David Cameron's pre election promise, 'where any petition that collects 100,000 signatures will be eligible to be formally debated in the House of Commons.' If the Prime Minister, David Cameron, honours his promise, the RE.ACT campaign could be the first to have a formal debate in the House of Commons.



The RE.ACT campaign was organised by the UK's largest Christian Media organisation, Premier Christian Media. Peter Kerridge, its CEO, said: "This Campaign highlights the importance of Religious Education and its impact on understanding how to live in today's multi cultural, multi faith Britain. The public has clearly spoken out in support of this issue. It's our hope that the Government will now listen to the public and will reconsider its decision and include GCSE RE in the English Baccalaureate."

Source: birmingham.anglican.uk

Meet the Knit 'n Natter Group

Hello! We are a group whose ages range from 64 to 91 and we meet every Saturday morning in St Nicolas Church from 10 am to noon to do just what it says on the tin – knit and natter – and drink coffee or tea and munch delicious snacks of course!

What do we talk about? Anything and everything – family, health, church, community, current news – whatever seems good on the day.

What do we knit? It's probably easier to ask what we don't knit!

We knit to support the work of various charities:

- Blankets for the premature baby unit
- Baby clothes for the Stillborn and neonatal death organisation
- Socks, scarves and hats for Help the Heroes
- The Donor Charity
- Children's Hospital – cardiac unit
- Other church fund raising projects

We knit prayer shawls that are given to those in our parish who are unwell or housebound, to let them know we are thinking of and praying for them. And we will knit special requests too – for instance recently we knitted ponchos for the Women's World Day of Prayer event.

If you like to knit or natter (you don't have to do both!), then come and join us. And if you have the pattern and wool for that something special that you never seem to get around to making, then come and talk to us – we can probably do it for you!



Bishop's Comment

Time to give your soul some rest.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest.. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11: 28–30

At the end of quite a challenging chapter, the evangelist Matthew presents Jesus as having a change of mood as he reassures his crowd of listeners that being a follower of the Son of God is not all about hardship and penitential heavy labour.

In fact, it is quite the opposite. Jesus reminds us that our human life, with its complex patterns of work, relationship and need for fulfilment, is actually quite heavy-going. It can often leave us feeling weary and worn down, as if we are carrying a heavy load. It is hard to find rest for our souls. Our hearts can feel angry and strident and we feel too defensive to be learners, wanting instead the safety of control and power.

This year has been quite burdensome for many, especially those concerned with the wellbeing of society and who have responsibilities for those who

are disadvantaged. As cuts are made and funding streams axed, we become anxious for ourselves and for those around us. We may too share a deeper anxiety, fuelled by our Christian faith, about the shape of our society and the provision been made for people who are poor, seeking asylum, unemployed or homeless.

But just as we are instructed to ensure we have a Sabbath rest day for our minds and bodies, we need to find a Sabbath space in which to rest our souls. Traditionally, our summer season is when we relax with family, take part in some sport we enjoy or catch up with old friends. Usually we come away invigorated and relaxed – sometimes we come away even more tired!

This summer I urge you to give your soul some rest. Find places you can be peaceful and take time to read, pray and meditate. I know for many of you finding space and time is not easy, but the more we can peel away the layers of business, the stress of self-importance and the cravings to consume, the more we will learn from Jesus and in him find the deep rest we need to live our lives fully as disciples of Christ.

+David

Source: birmingham.anglican.uk

RE.ACT

A phenomenal response from faith communities has seen a petition presented to the Prime Minister. Representatives from the RE.ACT campaign, including several MPs, submitted a petition of over 140,000 signatures to 10 Downing Street. The initiative calls for the Rt. Hon Michael Gove MP; Secretary of State for Education, to rethink his plans and to include GCSE Religious Education (RE) as a humanities option within the English Baccalaureate.

The controversy surrounding the exclusion of RE from the Baccalaureate has received much criticism from high profile faith leaders, academics and MPs. Notable names include the Bishop of Oxford and Former Conservative MP Ann Widdecombe, who have all criticised the current plans.

At a parliamentary level, 111 MPs have signed an Early Day Motion (EDM) on this issue; 17 MPs advocated for its inclusion at a recent Westminster Hall debate and several Peers asked questions in the House of Lords last month.

The campaign has also encouraged thousands of members of the general public to consider contacting their local MP to register their concerns

on this issue and to support EDM 1375.

Several MPs from across the major political parties, including Stephen Lloyd MP who tabled the EDM, Rt. Hon. David Lammy MP and Fiona Bruce MP, will present the petition. Fiona Bruce, MP for Congleton, who organised the Westminster Hall debate last month said:

"Religious issues are frequently at the top of any news agenda. Today's RE helps young people make sense of that and wider world affairs. It also promotes community cohesion as it allows young people, who are growing up in a diverse society, to discuss and understand the views and opinions of people whose beliefs and values differ from their own, in the safety of the classroom environment. I believe passionately in the importance of RE, which is why I organised the Westminster Hall debate in Parliament and am pleased to present the petition, along with several other MPs today. With over 140,000 signatures the petition clearly shows the public value RE too."

The Bishop of Oxford also said in support of the campaign: "This petition demonstrates the strength of feeling around the subject of RE. A survey of RE teachers published only last week shows that the subject is beginning to fall off the



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 2nd July 2011**



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 Margaret Robinson, Christ the King, Erdington, Anne Hinks, St George Newtown, Richard Sudworth, Christ Church Sparkbrook & St Edmund, Tyseley, Revd Canon Faith Claringbull, Diocesan Director of Ordinands, Bishop Andrew, Bishop David, Revd Canon Dr Alison Joyce, Retreat leader, Debra Buckley, St Mary & St Ambrose, Edgbaston & St Paul, Balsall Heath, Susannah Rudge, St Francis, Bournville, Alison Taylor, St John, Sparkhill, Douglas Machiridza, St John Perry Barr & St Matthew, Perry Beeches.

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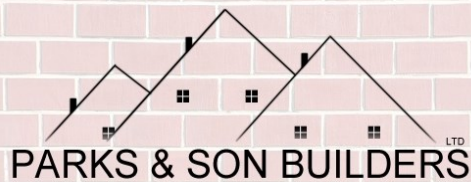
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of the birth of Jesus, the mood changes dramatically. Choirs of angels appear - not a handful but 'a great army of heaven's angels' who lift our eyes and prayers heavenwards as they sing 'Glory to God in the highest, peace to his people on earth ...' (13-14)

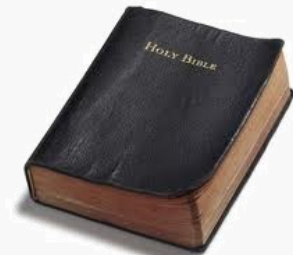
The shepherds are poor men, forced to work 7 days and nights a week, outside the village, outside regular worship and so rejected as ungodly. Here though, they enter into the presence of Mary and her precious son, and are welcomed right at the heart of the mystery. Matthew has kings, also outsiders, worshipping. Luke's balancing account champions the place of the poor. I just love the way he emphasises that the angelic revelation is for you and me too! Outsiders no more, but a big 'WELCOME' on the door mat awaits us when we bow in worship!

Christmas belongs to Luke's gospel, but his words are preparatory, not a story of the end, but the beginning. Faith in Jesus inevitably leads to the passion and crucifixion. Simeon almost steals the scene later in the chapter. He's a man of faith, at home in a place of worship. He sees in Mary and her son a lot more than could be known at that moment (v29 - 32). He faces Mary with a harsher note of another reality; the proud not easily scattered, mighty kings not readily descending from their thrones, the hungry not quickly fed, the rich resisting with all their power any prospect of being sent away with empty hands. Just look across the world right now to Libya, Zimbabwe, Syria. Nothing in the fundamental nature of humans changes without sacrifice.

Grandson, Maximilian, then 3 years old, was outraged in church when he heard they were celebrating Jesus as King. In that extra loud voice that small children can produce in quiet moments, he said; 'Jesus is NOT a king, he's a baby!' So many times I fear we stay stuck with a cutesy image of the baby and fail to find the pointers to the harshness of the cross and the wonder of resurrection and redemption through Jesus, truly God. Re-reading Luke's account of the birth of Jesus grounds me in a deeper faith and sense of value - and the sense of God's worth I must find in all I meet. I just wish I was much better at righting injustices! I love this chapter of the Bible!

Would you believe one of my favourite hymns is *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*!?

Thelma Mitchell



What is your favourite Bible story? Why not help celebrate the 400th anniversary of the KJV Bible by writing it down and sending it to us so we can share it with our readers?

Editor

My Favourite Bible Story (Luke 2:1-20)

High in the sky, the sun is shining and the temperature's soaring. Naturally, my thoughts turn to Christmas! My favourite Bible story may seem quirky because we re-tell it only at Christmas. However, the familiar territory of Luke's account of the birth of Jesus is at the heart of the incarnation, God with us, a truth, a joy, a comfort for all seasons.

Let's begin at the very beginning ... the opening verses of this gospel. Luke says he is writing an orderly, eyewitness account so that *'you will know the full truth about everything ...'* So there! He then introduces us to Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, who is about to give birth to the one who will prepare the way of the Lord.

There is a cosiness and warmth in this family story, a 'gather round, settle down' quality and its very ordinariness at times a surprise. Yet it is the inside account of God's love for the rejected, the marginalized, those outside the system. Women, babies, humble shepherds take centre stage, God's chosen recipients of eternal truth and salvation. I have always loved the way Luke draws together the mundane and the heavenly in Jesus, truly human and truly divine.

When I read the details - and Luke is good on detail - I love that it is Mary's story. A woman's story is surprising in

itself, in that aggressively male dominated world. Here the family have to travel to Bethlehem for a census. This journey of about 90 days from Nazareth involves a long, hard hike through the hills of Samaria, dangerous and very tiring, if you make it out alive. No wonder they arrive too late for a space for the imminent arrival of a baby. *'... for there was no room for them to stay in the inn ...'* (v7b) are surely some of the most poignant words in Luke.

The inns of the east were large courtyards, a fire in the centre for warmth and cooking, pillars round the inside of the walls, like a cloister, to tether the animals and prop against for sleep. Luke, by fleshing out Mary's deprivation, campaigns for private sanctuary, a safe and accepted place for all women giving birth. Well, he is a doctor! Mary gives birth, crouched low to the ground, with painful love, as all mothers do. In his telling, Luke helps ground our faith in reality.

Even the detail of the swaddling clothes should surprise us. It was totally normal at the time, the baby oiled and wrapped tightly in strips of cloth to keep the limbs straight, so why mention it? Luke is emphasizing how our Lord and Saviour enters the world like all human beings. Jesus truly can and does empathise with us in our human predicaments.

Just as we settle into the ordinariness

June 2011 Baptisms

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

5 th June	Harriette Eleanor Rose Haynes
5 th June	Darcie Mo Jean Sutcliffe
5 th June	Noah Joel Eric Thompson
5 th June	Caitlin Karen Wheatley-Hockell
12 th June	Rebekah Kathryn Marcus
19 th June	Aiden Michael Colin Boyce
19 th June	Jack Jayden Maxwell Hawkins
19 th June	Teigan Chanelle McBain

June 2011 Marriages

"Those whom God has joined together"

4 th June	Daniel Graham Morritt and Helen Elizabeth Alger
4 th June	Matthew James Guttridge and Louise Marie O'Farrell
4 th June	James Adam Saynor and Jessica Suzanne Close
18 th June	Jonathan David Willey and Laura Jane Eaton
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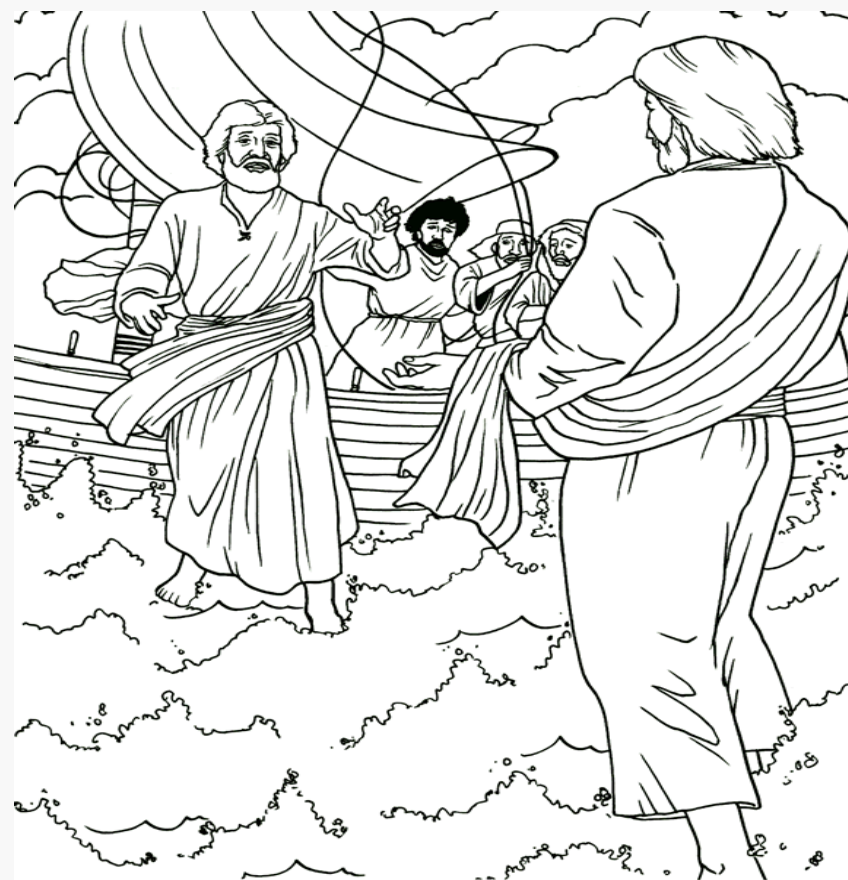
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remain focused on him, knowing that in the times that we too become distracted by what is going on around us, Jesus reaches his hand out to us, just like he did to Peter. It is our choice whether to put our faith back in God and grab hold of his hand during these storms.



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CHILDREN'S PAGE... with Gail.

Hello everyone!

Together let's take a look at
Matthew 14:22-33.



Walking on Water

In this story, we see Jesus and one of his disciples, named Peter, do something incredible - at the command of Jesus, Peter gets out of a boat and walks towards Jesus. I know what you're thinking, "That's not incredible!" But really it is because the boat isn't on the shore, it's in the middle of a lake. *Peter walks on water!*

Jesus' disciples were in a boat on a lake. It was very windy and a storm had started up. The disciples were scared. Jesus knew they were frightened and wanted to comfort them. They were so far out on the lake that the only way Jesus could reach them was to walk on the water. When the disciples saw Jesus walking towards them, they were even more frightened because they did not know it was him. Jesus commanded Peter to walk to him. Peter got out of the boat and walked on the storm-tossed water towards Jesus. Everything was fine until Peter stopped looking at Jesus and looked at the strong wind. Then he began to sink. Jesus reached out to Peter and caught him, gently blaming him for having little faith, for focusing on the wind and not on him.

God gives us the strength to get through the storms of our lives. It is up to us to choose to put our faith in Jesus and

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- 8th June Betty Linda Bruce, 61. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 8th June Dennis Moloney, 73. Service at St Nicolas Church, burial in Kings Norton Cemetery.
- 9th June George Bye, 74. Cremation at Yardley.
- 10th June Beatrice Oates, 87. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 10th June Donald Brian Godfray, 77. Service in St Nicolas Church, burial at Kings Norton Cemetery.
- 17th June John Stanley Davies, 82. Cremation at Robin Hood.
- 20th June Irene Wilkes, 86. Cremation at Redditch.
- 27th June Eugenie Smith, 84. Service at St Nicolas Church, burial in St Nicolas churchyard.
- 28th June Jean Beatrice Harwood, 77. Cremation at Lodge Hill.
- 29th June Kathleen Mary Holeyman, 86. Cremation at Yardley.
- 30th June Eric Albert Jackson, 86. Cremation at Lodge Hill.

At Saint Nicolas Place

Women's Fellowship Seniors' Club (Over 65's)

7.30pm 1st Thursday; Secretary: Carol Devic
Every Wednesday 1pm – 3pm
Christine Bowen & Marlene Collyer

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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 at Hawkesley Church Centre

Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm
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Scouts (10½-15½): 8 pm Rob Keenahan 244 0789

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Heritage and Learning Officer: Matthew Knox

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e-mail:- parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk Open: 10 am - 1pm Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri

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

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

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 (Mon-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 Priest)	458 3289/459 3733
The Revd Donald Sampson (Methodist Minister)	458 3289/476 7223
Mrs Fay Fearon (Reader)	458 3289/451 1914
Mrs Ruth Howman (Reader)	458 3289

WARDENS

St. Nicolas Hawkesley	Paul Shelton, Anne Hughes 458 3289 Jim Clarke 550 3455/07939 838086 Elaine Cooper
Immanuel	Alan Haynes 459 4711

PCC (Church Council)	Secretary: Judy Ash Treasurer: Tracey Adams
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 6.30-7.45 p.m.; Seniors/Adults 8-9pm.
Handbell Ringers Mondays 3-4.30 p.m - please phone first to check we are meeting if you are hoping to come along.*

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 Treasurer (Subscriptions) Advertising Manager Parish Website

Alan Haynes 459 4711	editor@kingsnorton.org.uk
Alison Blumer 486 2837	
Evelyn Finn via Parish Office 458 3289	
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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 Parade Service - All Age Worship 11.45am Matins (BCP)
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 Suns: Special services/Evensong (BCP)*

Mon, Wed, Thu 9am Morning Prayer

Thursday 11 am 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 – Morning Worship

4th Sunday – All Age Worship

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, 9.30 am (term time) in St Nicolas Church for 0-5's and parents/carers

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.

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.

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.