



KINGS NORTON
TEAM PARISH

THE MAGAZINE
FOR CHURCH & COMMUNITY

August 2019

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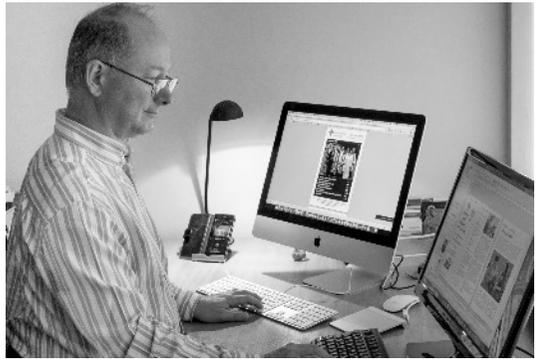
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We're making history with this month's edition and not only because our cover price has risen for the first time in years. As regular readers will know, we love to explore Kings Norton's past as well as its present. In this issue, Michael Kennedy uncovers a link with J.R.R.Tolkien (p.14), Pauline Weaver rescues a precious war memorial (p.12) and we dip into some 100-year-old memories of a boyhood spent in Kings Norton at the beginning of the 20th century (p.52).

Back to the present. With the summer holiday in full swing, it's just possible you may have heard the phrase 'Mummy / Daddy, I'm bored' a little too often recently. If so, we may be able to help, with our report on activities for children at Kings Norton Library and Park (p.49) and the results of some research into how to encourage children to read (p.46), not to mention the usual five-page spread of ideas for getting out and meeting people throughout this month (pp.32-36). If you're a gardener, 'Adam' has some useful tips on p.18 as well.

Meanwhile, a healthy curiosity about Christian faith and the spiritual life is alive and well across this large, diverse parish and it sometimes emerges where you might least expect it (p.8). If you have a bit more time on your hands this month, why not use it to ask some of the big questions that Larry refers to in his article (p.4)? Or maybe join others, in church or elsewhere, in deepening your understanding of the God who, in the words of Al Barrett (p.38), calls us to 'extricate ourselves from ways of indifference, division and death' and say a 'great big joyful YES' to the new life that Christ offers.

The Editor

FROM THE RECTOR

Questions, questions, questions

In popular culture and the media, August is regarded as the 'silly season'. This is because in the heady days of summer many people are on holiday and it seems a different spirit is abroad, a lighter more relaxed attitude prevails. Of course this is helped by good weather, sunny and hot, and our holiday plans or outings all go smoothly. For those who are unable to take holidays and have to consider extra child care arrangements, August can be fraught but hopefully family and friends will rally. It is the height of summer and we Brits love to talk about the highs and lows of the season.

August is a month when we could consider a light hearted approach to the 'big questions' of the day. A sideways approach to those world, national and local events which seem to preoccupy us and so often cause stress or concern: climate change, plastic waste, knife crime, Europe, politics, English cricket, our favourite football teams' plans for the new season, the future of the world; these sorts of things. August can be a month when we make a conscious effort not to think about such issues and instead give ourselves permission to turn off the news, take a break from social



media, avoid newspapers and instead sit in a sunny place reading a novel or listening on headphones to our favourite music compilation. Or you could think about God and the church.

Recently, I have been asked some basic questions about faith, belief and why the church does the things it does in the way it does. Faith is a world unto itself and has a multitude of doctrines and practices which seem mysterious, or even hilarious, to those

who first encounter them.

Those of us who are long-standing members of a faith community or church may look to those who aren't as if we belong to a quasi-secret club which they cannot fully enter unless they join. In previous generations where church-going was more common, it would be possible to talk to neighbours, friends and relatives about religion and its practices quite easily.

Today, anyone with serious questions about religion who is seeking to find out more is likely to scour the internet rather than ask someone they know. But the internet is a vast 'library' of knowledge with little regulation and therefore an inquirer might be left more confused than enlightened by reading what it has to say about religion.

Interestingly, even regular church members can be confused or unsure about what the church believes and the way it worships and works. Regular questions asked include: What is the difference between a Vicar and a Rector? Why do we have different coloured robes and decoration at certain times of the year in church? Why do we call it Pentecost instead of Whitsun? Why don't we have flowers during Lent? These are easily answered

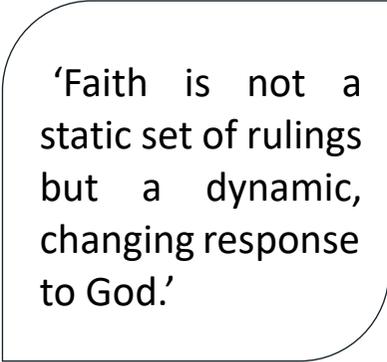
to the satisfaction of most enquirers as they relate to practicalities of church life.

However, some questions are less easy and have more than one response: What is the Holy Trinity? Why do we use 'He' when speaking of God if God is Spirit? How can homosexuals be Christians when the Bible says it is wrong? Why do some churches refuse to allow a woman to

be their vicar? How can a virgin give birth? Can anyone take communion? Such questions are not new to this generation. These matters have been argued about and deliberated upon for centuries in one form or another because

they relate to the core Christian beliefs.

The core teachings of Christianity are based upon the Bible and the historic councils of the church. The early Christian leaders began the process of interpreting and implementing beliefs. This has been an ongoing process because faith is not a static set of rulings but a dynamic, changing response to God. What went unquestioned by previous generations of believers (such as slavery, men's right to 'own' their wives, the divine right of kings and



'Faith is not a static set of rulings but a dynamic, changing response to God.'

queens to rule as absolute monarchs) are adapted and altered as we develop new insights into how people are governed and behave with a degree of fairness and justice for all.

Of course, religion has also been used to foster war and conflict and Christians have a shameful history of killing each other in vast numbers. Fortunately, in more enlightened times, differences over questions of faith and belief are addressed in ways which do not lead to actual war but are the subject of intense debates where historic authorities are quoted, the Bible consulted and insights from contemporary knowledge referred to. This process is often referred to in the Church of England as the *Via Media* (the Middle Way) a combination of a Bible, Tradition and Reason approach to complex questions of reformed faith in changing times.

We all have questions we would like answers to about God, faith and belief. Maybe we would like those answers to be clear, precise and definite; no ambiguity, no qualification, a straightforward 'Yes' or 'No'. However, in no other area of human activity would we expect things to stay the same and never develop. Would we like to be treated by a doctor whose practice still used methods from 1919 rather 2019?

Faith and belief are meant to be dynamic. Questioning and exploring are the reasons we have been given a brain to use and feelings and emotions to express our longings and our joys. So let's be open to questions and therefore open to God.

Have a great summer!

Revd Larry Wright



Mike Baker



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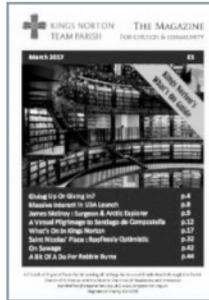
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Community Prayer @ Kath's Café

Most Wednesday mornings at 10.30 am, a group of Druids Heath residents gather at Kath's Café to share food and story. We talk through joys and challenges and pray together, for each other, for friends and family and for the flourishing of the estate. Other Kath's Café guests often join in. You're welcome too!

To help you get to know our regulars a little better, here are their responses to the following questions: How long have you lived in Druids Heath? What's special about the estate? What's special about Kath's Café? What are your hopes for Druids Heath?

Tamika

Tamika and her two daughters have lived here for four years. What's special to her are the people she's met in the community, how quiet it is compared to London and the scenery. She's got a great view from her tower block flat. Tamika sees Kath's Café as a place of unity where we can pray for the community and see the best of community gathered here. And the food's great!



Tamika hopes that there can be more on offer for young people in Druids Heath. She believes that, if there were more resources available, young people would be less bored and disengaged. There need to be more youth groups where teenagers can discover their talents and be taught new skills. She would love to set up a local radio station and involve young people. She is keen for people to collaborate on the estate, to bridge

generations in activities that will benefit the area. She wants the neighbourhood to become safer with less crime.

George



George has lived in a maisonette in the estate for twenty-one years. He thinks there are good community relationships in Druids Heath and that people are supportive of each other. He likes the fact that the estate is on the edge of the city and has a wide variety of local shops.

George thinks that Kath's Café is a brilliant hub for community and is amazed at the number of people he knows through Kath's. He says it's got a real community spirit. It's a community café where residents truly care for each other and are approachable.

George hopes that necessary improvements are made to the estate through effective consultation with local people. He recognises that residents are individuals and that what's needed to develop one area doesn't suit another location. There isn't a 'one size fits all' answer. He recognises that recent developments are having a positive effect on the community: for example, the re-energising of the Druids Heath and Monyhull Residents' Forum and the re-opening of the local library through community petition and protest.

Alma

Alma has lived in Druids Heath for fifty-eight years. She likes the people on the estate and she's got good and caring neighbours who watch out for her. Alma thinks that Kath is a very nice person and wishes her all the



best! Her breakfasts are good. Alma feels safe and taken care of here in the café. Everyone loves her here.

Alma would like to see something good coming out of the area, something that will bring neighbours together and connect people more. She prays that local people will have more understanding of our Creator and of Jesus Christ. She's happy that residents not connected with the church have asked us to pray for them.

Esther

Esther has lived in the estate most of her life, approximately thirty years. She believes that there is a special feel to the community in Druids Heath and the way people connect here. There's a bond between residents. It feels like a small community with some tight

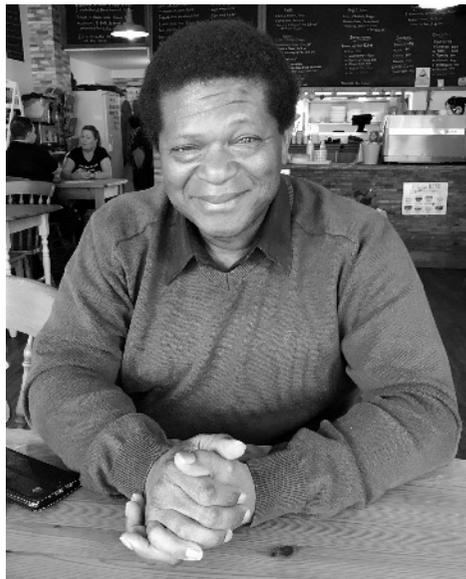


links. As she looks around Kath's Café, she sees how many people gather here. It's a great place to meet new people and form new connections. For example, prayer here started with just three people and grew. She believes that there is a special magnetism that draws new people when something good happens.

Esther understands that because of the Druids Heath Regeneration Project, residents are facing uncertainty at the moment. She thinks some people have lost hope and that bonds in the community have been shaken. She hopes for the restoration of relationships and for renewed hope. She loves to be part of a big family and to see people connecting. She recognises that more could be done for young people on the Estate. A nurturing community can enable young people and help them to take responsibility. She doesn't want to pinpoint what needs to happen. There's a beauty in leaving space for God to do what He wants to do which isn't tainted by human understanding.

Devon

Devon is Esther's Dad and has also lived on the estate for thirty years. In 1990, when his young family was growing, he needed to move house and chose Druids Heath. Devon likes the shops and the semi-rural location. When his children were little, they could see cows and sheep from their bedroom window. He thinks there



was more community spirit than than now with more sharing of resources, even nappies!

Devon says that Kath's Café is somewhere to meet people, a common meeting area. If you say 'Hi!' to someone, there's potentially the beginning of a new relationship, like meeting other Mums and Dads at school. Friendships develop. Kath is a special member of the community. She's so friendly and 'get-on-able' with! Prayer times at Kath's are very special. Devon thinks it would be lovely if the group could continue to grow and more people could join us.

He hopes that Druids Heath can be a safe and happy place for everybody to live in which will help their individual emotional well-being.

The Revd Catherine Matlock

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Found In A Skip

The Thoughts of a Lay Minister

I really enjoy a good mystery: book, film, family history. I've spent many hours researching my family history and learning to use the various resources that are now available. But, at the moment, I am working on a mystery that is proving really hard to solve.

Some of you may remember earlier this year the story in the news of a memorial that was found in a skip. It was retrieved by a local estate agent who kept it safe and tried to find a new home for it. The stone was in memory of Flight Lieutenant Ron Crook who was a member of Kings Heath Royal British Legion and who led a project to create a Battle of Britain tapestry.

As Chaplain of the local RAF Air Cadets, I was delighted to be able to offer the memorial a new home. Wanting to dig a bit deeper, I decided to try and find out more about the man and the tapestry. And there begins the mystery!

Usually, when you start researching someone, you have a few clues to start you off, at least a full name, a date and a place of birth. But not this time. We

had nothing except the inscription on the stone and no-one seemed to know any

more. The inscription reads 'In memory of F/LT Ronald Crook, project originator of the Battle of Britain tapestry, and for his generous bequest to the Kings Heath branch of the Royal British

Legion August 1993.' It's not much to go on. We have spent hours searching archive sites, directories and trawling Google, but we have found nothing.

What about the tapestry? Well, we knew that it had been donated to the Battle of Britain

Museum but they, in turn, gave it to the RAF Museum. Their online records include no details. There is not even a photograph of the tapestry. We know it is a replica of a stained-glass window in Westminster Abbey, that it contains 48 panels of 48,000 stitches per panel. That's over 2 million stitches! But that is about it. It doesn't seem ever to have been on display.

'If the memorial hadn't been found in the skip the story could so easily have been lost for all time.'



One of the cadets said to me recently, 'But it's really sad that no one remembers him'. And she is right. It is sad. And if the memorial hadn't been found in the skip the story could so easily have been lost for all time.

Despite all of that, despite not knowing, we will remember this man. There has been a service (photo below) and we have rededicated the memorial. It is on

display at the Cadet Squadron Headquarters in Kings Heath and all the cadets who pass through will see it. Hopefully, we'll also continue to search and discover more about the story of Ronald Crook and, one day, we will be able to tell the full story of this man and the project he undertook.

Pauline Weaver



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TOLKIEN AND KINGS NORTON

The recent feature film about the early life of JRR Tolkien made much of his childhood in Birmingham. That's not surprising, because even though he effectively left the city in 1911, he often acknowledged its influence on him and his world-famous stories.

Through rather unfortunate circumstances, he and his family lived in and were familiar with, several different parts of South Birmingham and the Lickey Hills area for some 15 years between 1895 and 1911, when Ronald went to Oxford University. Both in terms of his daily life and its historic buildings, Kings Norton will have been familiar to him. In fact, the Birmingham Council website that covers local history claims that for a few weeks, he lived here!

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien, known to friends and family as Ronald, was born in South Africa in January 1892 and died in Bournemouth in September 1973. He is, of course, best known for his three magical fantasy novels *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Silmarillion*, which became the basis of a



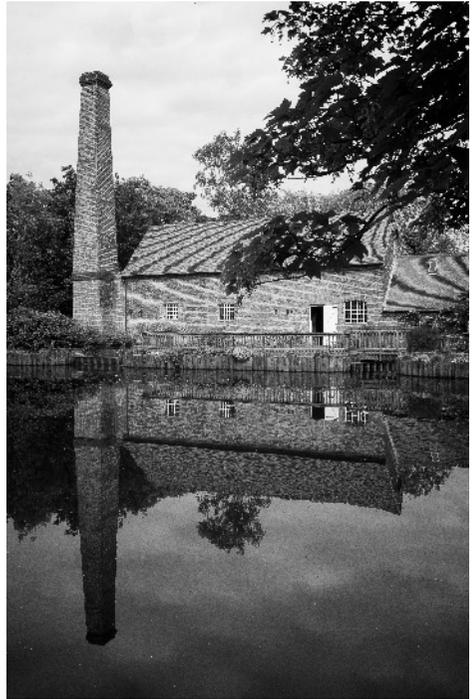
remarkably successful series of cinema epics. But he wasn't simply an author; he was a very distinguished academician. He was

Professor of English Language and Literature and Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, from 1945 to 1959, and was made a CBE in 1972.

Now to his local links. His parents, Arthur Tolkien and Mabel Suffield, grew up in Birmingham. Arthur Tolkien's father, a music-seller and piano teacher, had moved from London to Birmingham in the early 1840s. The Suffield family had been in Birmingham since 1810.

Arthur emigrated with Mabel from Birmingham to South Africa in 1889 to gain promotion in his work in banking. However, in 1895 they decided to move back, so Mabel brought her two sons Ronald and Hilary to England, in advance of Arthur's return. They were never to see him again as he died of typhoid soon after their departure. Mabel had brought the boys to Kings Heath, where her parents lived. In 1896 she and her two young sons settled at Gracewell Cottages, now an address on Wake Green Road. It was a cottage on the Sarehole estate, the in the North Worcestershire countryside.

Nearby was Sarehole Mill (above right), an enormous inspiration to the young Ronald, who even then was spinning fantastical stories in his mind. It was to become the 'great mill' in *The Hobbit*. It stands on the River Cole, which of course rises near Kings Norton.



The family moved several times in the next few years, first to Alcester Road, Moseley to be closer to a tram route into the city after Ronald started at King Edward's School, but they were not in Moseley for long. By March 1901 they were living in Westfield Road, Kings Heath.

The family moved again in 1902, to Oliver Road, Edgbaston. This was near the two towers in Edgbaston, Perrott's Folly and the Waterworks Chimney, which were the inspiration for the Two Towers of Gondor in his stories. The family were usually very short of money, partly because Mabel had converted to Catholicism in 1900 and some of the family disapproved strongly and withdrew

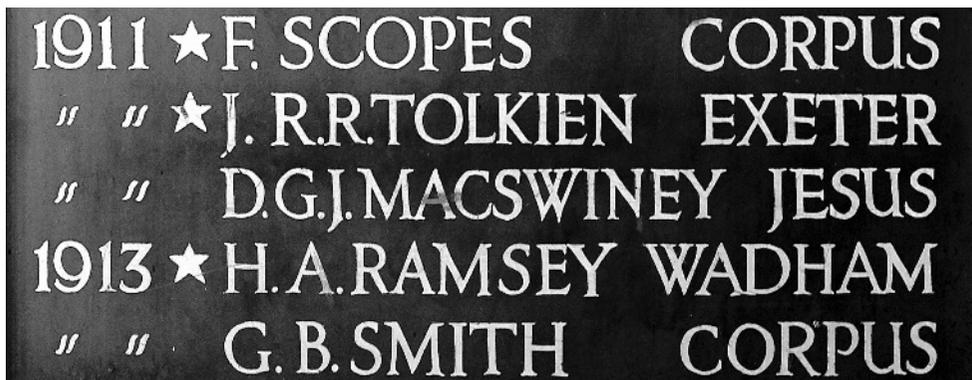
financial support from her and the children. However, despite these impecunious circumstances, Ronald showed real ability: with coaching from his mother, and her sister Jane, he won a scholarship to King Edward's School, which was then in its original building in New Street (opposite page). He played rugby for the school and was also an enthusiastic member of the school Debating Society. With friends, he formed a club that met to talk about literature and current affairs after school in the school library, or over lunch in the new café at Barrows Stores in Corporation Street, which many readers will remember with fondness.

Perhaps because of financial stress, Mabel developed diabetes in spring 1904. There was no effective treatment in those days, and in November that year, she died. She had appointed Father Francis Xavier Morgan, a priest of the Birmingham Oratory, to be the boys' guardian.

After their mother died, the two brothers experienced a fairly rootless existence, being dependent on the support of the extended family. In December 1904, according to the Council website, the boys stayed with an uncle and aunt in Kings Norton. Soon after, they moved in with their Aunt Beatrice in Stirling Road in Edgbaston and lived there for three years. In early 1908, the brothers moved a short distance to lodge with relatives in Duchess Road, Edgbaston.

As portrayed movingly in the recent film, there Tolkien met his future wife, Edith Bratt, who was also lodging there. Sometimes they would go and have tea and cakes in Birmingham cafés. But Ronald's guardian Father Morgan strongly disapproved of their friendship and moved Ronald away.

It was shortly before the loss of his mother that Tolkien started a lasting affection for the Lickey Hills. Mabel had spent time in hospital, and to





KING EDWARD THE SIXTH'S SCHOOLS, NEW STREET, BIRMINGHAM

help her recovery she went to stay in the postmaster's cottage near Rednal. Her sister May Incedon lived nearby near Barnt Green. The boys had always enjoyed their visits to the Incedon family, particularly at the big family gatherings that took place at Christmas. On the Lickeys they picked bilberries, played games and flew kites: Ronald, in particular, enjoyed gazing out from the Hills in the direction of Kings Norton and sketching the view.

Later, there was a happy outcome for his relationship with Edith. He once wrote in a poem that they were like 'two fair trees... utterly

entwined...'. They were married in March 1916 and had a very large family.

Tolkien survived the horrors of the front line trenches in the First World War, which again forms a key element of the recent film about his early life. Then he returned to Oxford and built his highly successful academic career. He carried on writing his fantasy novels, and the first of them, *The Hobbit*, was first published in 1937 when he was 45 years old. It met with immediate acclaim and his life changed forever.

Michael Kennedy

Summer In Your Garden



Seasonal tips from a green-fingered reader

This month

Repeat-flowering roses can often flower into November but must be dead-headed to keep them in a flowering mood!

Autumn flowering perennials are forming buds in readiness for their contribution to the end of season displays. Many of these, like asters, form clumps and now is the time to earmark good varieties for digging up and splitting after flowering. I just split the clumps with a sharp spade, which reminds me that sharpening the edge of tools like hoes and spades with a file can make a tremendous difference to the speed with which you can work. (Ask a professional!!)

Think about next year's spring bulbs. Daffodils are best planted in clumps of single varieties. Buy them as soon as they appear and plant immediately for the best results.

Hardy perennial plant of the month

Bergenia. Pink or white flowers appear in early spring and, together with their shiny leaves, sometimes called elephant's ears, make for a handsome display when very little else is flowering. They thrive in the shade of deciduous trees and are easily

propagated via their tough rhizomes. Don't plant them too deep. One of their more curious names is *Pig Squeaks* from the noise given off when you rub the fleshy leaves between thumb and forefinger. I have never been able to get this to work. RHS award varieties are *Sunningdale*, *Irish Crimson*, *Biedermeier* and *Claire Maxine*.

Winter vegetables

At least part of your vegetable area can be devoted to these useful plants and you still have time to sow the seeds provided you can protect them from pests, wood pigeons included. For a good list of varieties consult Thompson & Morgan (tinyurl.com/y29ympvv).

House Plants

As things cool, back off on the watering (and Christmas Cactus will soon start arriving in the shops). Look forward to buying pots of hyacinths and other spring bulbs from the greengrocers very cheaply. Hardly worth bothering with your own!

Adventure Corner

In the past, Parks and Gardens Departments would fill our parks with summer flower beds (there is a modest

example at Kings Heath Gardens) and in the middle of the bed would be a soaring plant with leaves like a banana leaf and topped with red or yellow orchid-like flowers, a canna (right). In the light of our milder winters and warm summers, could this be the English plant of the future?

Things have moved on and, in Japan, selective breeding has produced a strain of cannas with bigger flowers, shorter stems and better adapted to cooler climates. Sometimes known as Takii hybrids but more commonly as cannova. I have grown these beauties and they are ideal for two nice terracotta pots outside a south-facing doorway or indeed, in time, you can increase your stock by splitting and plant up a south-facing flower bed for a truly tropical effect (treat like dahlia tubers in winter). They like plenty of water and a regular liquid feed. For more information see hartcanna.co.uk.

You can buy the fully-grown plants from Dobies, young plants ready for growing on in pots from Hayloft, both on the internet. For the really adventurous with a greenhouse or conservatory, cannova seed is now available from www.nickys-



nursery.co.uk, but move quickly as it can sell out rapidly.

I wonder if the price of imported plants will soar after Brexit?

On that sobering note, I will bid you farewell until September.

Adam the Gardener

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Sustainability 3

This month, I am out and about discovering the realities and practicalities of "driving by electric" as I go further afield in the new vehicle. So far, everything has been positive, although I do find myself still checking and comparing petrol prices as I pass fuel stations (old habits die hard).

During my 'silent month', I have a

challenge for our readers. Does anyone know of a way recycle textiles which are too old to be sold in a charity shop? They can be turned into vehicle upholstery filling and similar uses. How do we get them from wardrobe floor to car seat?

Sylvia Fox

Sure Feet Podiatry

Joycelyn Williamson

B.Sc. (Hons) Podiatry, M.Ch.S, HCPC Registered

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FOODBANK NEWS

In mid-June, the Foodbank celebrated Christmas! No, the Trussell Trust doesn't advocate adherence to some weird cult, nor counter-culture plans, but this was an imaginative way to use some surplus food and raise a few funds, while also having a good time together. Friends from Hawkesley Church and the Foodbank joined together at Hawkesley Pastoral Centre in the early evening of June 22nd to have a summer Christmas and we chose the hottest day so far in the year. It gave us the chance to understand what Christmas in Australia and New Zealand must be like; and the bells didn't ring "in the Bleak midwinter"!

We ate Christmas pudding and custard, listened to handbell carols, took a chance or two on the raffle and even pulled the odd cracker and

enjoyed a decorated tree. In the spirit of all good modern parties, there were even take-home bags of baked beans and pasta shapes! Somewhere along the way, we raised £108.90 for the Foodbank and Hawkesley Church, then Hawkesley Church raised further money for the Foodbank the next day during its morning service.

We could not use the puddings for the Foodbank itself, as we are unable to give out any food containing alcohol, however small the traces may be. We hope that the remaining puddings will be on the menu at the Cotteridge Café in Advent. Please remember to exclude Christmas puddings or mince pies in your giving this coming year unless they are alcohol-free.

What event can we plan for baked beans and/or pasta? Any ideas?



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WHAT'S ON IN KINGS NORTON?

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

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

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

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

Societies, Clubs & Venues

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

LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS

Kings Norton History Society www.kingsnorton.org.uk, clivehartwell48@sky.com

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

Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve www.fknnr.org.uk, Amanda Cadman on 0121 624 3865 or 07 887 512 382

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

Friends of Historic Kings Norton www.kingsnorton.org.uk, fhkn@btinternet.com, St Nicolas' Place 0121 458 1223

We raise funds for the restoration of the historic buildings that are known collectively as Saint Nicolas' Place (SNP), through membership subscription and events organised by the group. Members receive regular newsletters containing updates about SNP and listings of Birmingham-wide heritage events. Membership is £10.00 per annum or £7.00 for those not in full-time work. We also arrange guided tours of the Saint Nicolas' Place Heritage Buildings.

Friends of Kings Norton Park friendsofkingsnortonpark.blogspot.com, info.foknp@gmail.com

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

The Fields Millennium Green Trust www.fieldsmillenniumgreen.btck.co.uk, Maggie Sweet 0121 628 1247, sweetc5@sky.com

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

SOCIAL CLUBS & SOCIETIES

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

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

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

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

Kings Norton Women's Institute

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

Women's Institute (Afternoon group) *Sally Saunders 0121 458 6019*. Meets every third Tuesday of the month from 2pm till 4pm; (Evening group) *Marion Atkin 0121 441 5817*. Meets every third Monday of the month 7 pm for 7.30 pm.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kings Norton Supper Club *Annette Dickers 0121 459 2700 ardickers@outlook.com*

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

Kings Norton Society *Annette Dickers 0121 459 2700 ardickers@outlook.com*

We are a group of very sociable people of all ages (not a youth club), now in our 59th year. We meet once a month at Kings Norton Tennis Club, usually on the last Friday of the month. Attendance normally averages 40 people or more. We have supper and a varied programme of events.

SPECIALIST INTEREST GROUPS

U3A (University of the Third Age) www.u3a.org.uk, knu3a.membership@gmail.com

Kings Norton's local U3A was successfully established in the first few months of 2017. The U3A is a nationwide organisation based on local groups providing opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to come together and develop their interests. Run on a voluntary basis, it sees members sharing their knowledge and experience with others in interest groups through informal activity sessions covering a wide range of subjects and activities.

Spoken Trend tom_mccann@hotmail.co.uk and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @spokentrend, Tom McCann

Spoken Trend is King's Norton's first regular venture into 'open-mic' spoken word and performance poetry. Launched in January 2017, it is already attracting a significant audience. It gives participants of all ages, many completely new to the activity, the opportunity to perform their own works in front of like-minded people. It takes place on the first floor of the Bull's Head pub on the last Wednesday of every month. Those wanting to perform should check in from 7.00 pm. The event is free for performers while spectators pay a £3 entry fee.

Kings Norton Photography Society www.kingsnortonphotographicsociety.com

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

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

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

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

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

Greenlands Chess Club www.chess.com/club/greenlands, Richard Collett 0121 458 7617 or 07874 216935

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

Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice www.birminghamhospice.org.uk
suebarkerdavies@gmail.com, Sue Davies 0121 608 0646

We are a local group of volunteers who raise money to care for people living with life-limiting illnesses, their families and carers in Birmingham and Sandwell. We organize fundraising activities such as regular charity quizzes and stalls at local festivals. We also aim to raise awareness of the wide range of services offered by the hospice. We meet locally at 7.00 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month so, if you might like to join us or can spare a couple of hours occasionally to help, please contact Sue (as above).

Kings Heath Horticultural Society bron.salway@blueyonder.co.uk

Kings Heath Horticultural Society is the local horticultural society for Kings Norton residents. It usually meets at Manningford Hall on Bells Lane, B14 5TJ. We have a wide range of speakers on gardening-related topics. We also hold two informal shows, spring and summer, where members display and then vote for their favourites. We meet from March to December, usually on the first Monday of the month at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. Membership costs £6 annually plus £2 members' entrance fee per meeting, or £3 for visitors. For more information please email Bron Salway.

Mentor Link www.mentorlink.org.uk, Elaine Southall 0805 937347,
elaine.southall@mentorlink.org.uk

Mentor Link is a children's charity supporting vulnerable and distressed children and young people. It works with schools across much of the West Midlands, including Kings Norton. It is seeking locally-based volunteers to help its work for one or two hours a week. Full training is provided.

SPORTS & EXERCISE CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

Health Exchange www.healthexchange.org.uk, 0800 1583535

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

South Birmingham Ramblers www.sbramblers.co.uk

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

Active Parks, www.beactivebirmingham.co.uk, 0121 464 2012

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

Kings Norton Tennis Club, *Grange Hill Road B38 8RE* www.kingsnortontennis.co.uk, 0121 458 2351

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

Kings Norton Motorcycle Club www.evoice.org.uk/knmcc, *Gordon Green* 07504 676766

Formed in Kings Norton in 1944, we are a family-friendly motorcycle club with interests ranging across all types of motorcycles, from classic to modern. Some members take part in trials, scrambles, and hill climbs. We meet weekly on Thursdays at the Woodbourne Sports and Social Club in Rumbush Lane, Earlswood from 8.00 pm onwards. There is a thriving programme of social activities.

Kings Norton Golf Club *Brockhill Lane B48 7ED*, www.kingsnortongolfclub.co.uk, 01564 826789

We offer one of the premier golf courses in the West Midlands, set in 220 acres of beautiful parkland and featuring 27 holes of championship standard, a par 3 short course, a putting green and practice facilities. Applications for membership are welcome. Our impressive Grade 2 listed Weatheroak Hall clubhouse is also a popular venue for weddings, private parties and marketing events. Throughout spring and summer 2018 the club is running a series of lessons for ladies who want to get in to golf. Participants do not need any special golf gear, clubs and balls are provided. The cost is £25 for 5 lessons. More details on the Home and Ladies' pages of our website.

Push Bikes www.pushbikes.org.uk/event/bournville-gentle-cycling, *John & Hilary Porter* 0121 477 2156

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

Black Adder Clog Morris, blackaddersecretary@gmail.com or *find us on Facebook*

Morris Dancing is an ideal way of having fun and keeping fit. Dancers and musicians, beginners or advanced, men and women are welcomed by Black Adder. We meet most Thursdays

(except August) from 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. in Selly Oak Friends' Meeting House at 930 Bristol Rd South, Birmingham B29 6NB. If you want to come along, please email us to check we're meeting that week.

COMMUNITY CENTRES & VENUES

Saint Nicolas' Place, 81 The Green B38 8RU, www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk, info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk, 0121 458 1223 .

Kings Norton Library, Pershore Road South, Birmingham. B30 3EU kings.norton.library@birmingham.gov.uk , 0121 464 1532

Druids Heath Library, 1 Idmiston Croft, Birmingham B14 5NU, druids.heath.library@birmingham.gov.uk, 0121 303 7171

The libraries provide a wide range of books, CDs and material for all ages including community information and local history. There are also meeting rooms for hire and internet access. The Libraries organise a range of regular events including activities for children and other specific interest groups.

Bells Farm Community Centre, Bells Farm Close B14 5QP, www.bellsfarm.org.uk, 0121 433 3532

Greaves Hall, Greaves Square B38 9LX www.opkn.co.uk/greaveshall, 0121 448 8760

Hawkesley Community Centre, 51 Edgwood Road B38 9RN, www.facebook.com/HawkesleyCommunityCentre, 0121 399 0122

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

Manningford Hall, Bells Lane B14 5RY, www.manningfordhall.com, 0121 430 6005.

MUSIC VENUES

Tower of Song, 107 Pershore Road South, B30 3JC, www.towerofsong.co.uk, 0121 486 1300

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

The Church in the Parish

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

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

St Nicolas' Parish Church

on The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU

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

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

Mon & Weds	9 am	Morning Prayer
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Hawkesley Church (Anglican & Methodist)

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

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

Immanuel Church

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

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

During the Week

We open Saint 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. **All are welcome.**

Wednesday 10.00 am - 12.00 noon : **Open Church**
Thursday 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm : **Marriage and Christening (Baptism) enquiries** in Saint Nicolas' Church
Saturday 10.00 am - 12.00 noon : Coffee and "Knit & Natter" in St Nicolas' Church

Children's Activities

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

Children are welcome at all services in all our churches. We offer All-Age worship and special activities for children on certain Sundays.
Please see our weekly newsletter for details.

Growing in Faith

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

Help us to keep our Parish Church open

It costs almost £1,000 a week to keep St Nicolas' Church open. We welcome all financial support through donations and especially through regular Planned Giving. Do ask for details and, if a taxpayer, ask how you can Gift Aid your offering.

Christening (Baptism) and Weddings

Saint Nicolas' Church is open on Thursday evenings between 6.30 pm and 8.00 pm for enquiries about Christenings & weddings. This is an opportunity to make a booking to talk about these services in more detail.

**More details at www.kingsnorton.org.uk
parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk 0121 458 3289**

Events Diary August 2019

Thursday 1 August

- BCAT STARZ – Art (5-12yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women’s Fellowship, St Nicolas’ Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Black Adder Clog Morris, Friends’ Meeting House, Selly Oak 8.00 - 10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 2 August

- Friends of Kings Norton Park; conservation activities (volunteers welcome). Meet in car park off Westhill Road, 10.00 am - 12 noon
- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Kings Norton Library 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5’s

Saturday 3 August

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.00 am
- Book Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Friends of Kings Norton Park: ‘Playing in The Park’ activities, Kings Norton Park, 11.00 am - 2.00 pm

Monday 5 August

- Kings Norton Tennis Club children’s camp (until 9 August). Contact Matt on 07503 747433 to book
- Kings Heath Horticultural Society, Manningford Hall, Bells Lane, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm: Abby Gulliver ‘The Alpine Collection at Winterbourne’

Tuesday 6 August

- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am -12.30 pm
- Mustard Arts – Rebel Art School (4-16 years), Kings Norton Library, 2.00 pm -4.00 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 7 August

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am

- Local History Group, Kings Norton Library, 2.00 pm-4.00 pm
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Quiz
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 8 August

- BCAT STARZ – Music (5-12yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women's Fellowship, St Nicolas' Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Songm 8.30 pm

Friday 9 August

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Mustard Arts - Clay Play (4-16 yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.00 am – 12 noon

Saturday 10 August

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.00
- Book Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Fields Millennium Green Trust volunteer working party, Fields Millennium Green, 10.30 am

Monday 12 August

- Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice, Stirchley United Social Club, 41 Hazelwell Lane, B30 2PR, 7.00 pm

Tuesday 13 August

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Planetarium Sessions (ages 5-12 years), Kings Norton Library at 2.00 pm, 2.40 pm & 3.20 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 14 August

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Bring & Buy Sale
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 15 August

- BCAT STARZ – Drama (5-12yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women’s Fellowship, St Nicolas’ Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 16 August

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5’s

Saturday 17 August

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.

Monday 19 August

- Kings Norton Tennis Club children’s camp (until 21 August). Contact Matt on 07 503 747 433 to book
- Bournville Townswomen’s Guild, Friends’ Meeting House, Bournville, 2.00-4.00 pm

Tuesday 20 August

- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am -12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women’s Institute (afternoon group), Friends’ Meeting House, Cotteridge, 2.00-4.00 pm: Linda Constable on ‘Tai Chi’
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 21 August

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 22 August

- BCAT STARZ (5-12 yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women’s Fellowship, St Nicolas’ Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 23 August

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)

- Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5's

Saturday 24 August

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.00 am
- Fields Millennium Green Trust volunteer working party, Fields Millennium Green, 10.30 am
- Friends of Kings Norton Park: Bat Walk. Meet in car park by changing rooms at Kings Norton Playing Fields, 8.00 pm

Monday 26 August

- Late Summer Holiday
- Kings Norton Library closed until Wednesday

Tuesday 27 August

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 28 August

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 29 August

- BCAT STARZ – movement (5-12yrs), Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am-12.30 pm
- Birmingham Philatelic Society, Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 2.00 pm: Charity Auction
- Kings Norton Women's Fellowship, St Nicolas' Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Black Adder Clog Morris, Friends' Meeting House, Selly Oak, 8.00 - 10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 30 August

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Kings Norton Library 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5's

Saturday 31 August

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.00 am

Saint Nicolas' Place Weekly Diary

Monday

Pilates with Julia 11.00 - 12.00

Rainbows 5.30 pm

Guides 7.00 pm

Zumba 7.00 pm (Verity 07 966 690 476)

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

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

Tuesday

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

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

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

Brownies 6.00 pm- 7.30 pm

Wednesday

Extend Exercise Class 9.30 – 11.00 am

Shapes & Adders Toddler Maths 9.45 - 10.45 am

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

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

Deeley's Dragon Martial Arts 6.30-7.30 pm

(enquiries@beeches-martialarts.co.uk)

Pilates 7.15 - 8.15 pm

Thursday

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

Brownies 6.30 pm-8.30 pm

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

Yoga Really Works Pregnancy Class 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Friday

Illumination Youth Theatre 4.00 – 5.30 pm

(ages 5-10); 5.30 - 7.00 pm (ages 11-18)

(Melanie 07 766 724 834)

Yoga Really Works Stretch & Relax with Baby 11.00-12.00 noon

Saturday

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

Kings Norton Farmers' Market

The Green, Kings Norton,
Birmingham B38

2nd Saturday Each Month

Get
FRESH

Next market
Sat 10th August
2019
9.00 - 2.00



Founded 1616, re-established
2005. The first Community
Interest Farmers' Market
in Britain



Ordained a Priest

On 29th June 2019, The Reverend Catherine Matlock, our Pioneer Curate, ceased to be a Deacon when she was ordained a Priest in the Church of England. At a buffet lunch that afternoon at Saint Nicolas' Place, which brought together family and friends from across the country, our Rector, The Reverend Larry Wright, succumbed once again to his fondness for offbeat humour, presenting Catherine with a small gift to mark her new status as one of the first 'Pie'n'Ears' in the Diocese of Birmingham.



Among the first duties of a newly-ordained priest is to preside over her first service of Holy Communion. Catherine's earliest opportunity to do so at St Nicolas' Church arose the following morning. As is traditional on these occasions, she had invited a friend and colleague, the Reverend Doctor Al Barrett, Vicar of Hodge Hill on the eastern edge of Birmingham, to preach the sermon. Here is what he said.

SA YING NO

in order to say Yes

Francesco Bernardone's family were up-and-coming, newly rich. His dad was a shrewd and ambitious businessman, and as his fabric business made money, he bought up tracts of land from struggling landowners in the area. Young Francesco had seemingly limitless money to spend, and his father encouraged him to splash it around freely. Aside from his wealth, Francesco was a popular young man, charming, witty, and by all accounts a bit of a party animal. He was also a fighter, alongside many of the other young men of the city, committed to defending their wealth and property from hostile neighbours.

Clara Favarone, by contrast, came from a long line of aristocracy and was intended to be married, in time, to a similarly aristocratic husband. She lived in a grand palace, high up on the city's central hill, and even as a young woman had earned a widespread reputation for great honesty, kindness and humility.

When Francesco's father discovered that his son had not only donated the money from the sale of some expensive cloth for the restoration of a ruined



local church, but had also sold the horse he had been riding, his father came to find him, dragged him home in a fury, locked him up for several days, and demanded a court hearing to have the erratic behaviour of his son punished. In the public hearing that followed, Francesco not only repaid the money in question, but stripped himself naked, handing every piece of his fine clothing back to his father, renouncing

his inheritance, his family, his status, to follow Jesus to the very edges of society, living in community among the marginalized and excluded.

Clara, meanwhile, after months of planning and preparation, slipped out of the palace one night under cover of darkness, and sought sanctuary in a convent about 4 km from the city. The very next day, some of her male relatives found her and stormed the chapel where she was hiding. Her sister Catherine who followed Clara two weeks later was again pursued by family members, who beat her until she appeared lifeless. Both sisters, however, resisted their family's violent efforts to take them back home and, with Francesco and some of his new brothers, committed themselves to establishing communities of solidarity, sanctuary and tender care, spaces of resistance and humanizing transformation in a divided, violent society.

'As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home."

Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

It is dangerous to read biblical texts in isolation. Dare I say it, the Jesus in this passage from Luke's gospel doesn't come across as much fun, very likeable, or even particularly compassionate. There is a single-minded, tunnel-visioned intensity about this man who, we're told, has "set his face to go to Jerusalem", and nothing, and no one, it seems, will deviate or delay him from that path.

So thank God for the reminder in today's psalm (Psalm 16), that this path of Jesus is in fact "the path of life", that walking this path is to walk with God, "in [whose] presence is fullness of joy". If we are to make good sense of what God is calling us to today, we need to hold these two things alongside each other: the single-minded intensity, and the fullness of joy. Jesus invites us to say a great big, joyful YES. But that Yes also requires us to say some careful, but firm NO's.

Just remember, lest this harsh bit of Luke's gospel confuses that memory, Jesus had absolutely nothing against Samaritans (the woman at the well, for one); he had nothing against caring for one's family (he goes out of his way to heal Peter's mother-in-law); and he had nothing against grieving for those who have died (think of his tears at the death of his dear friend Lazarus). What

Jesus is demanding, in his followers - and demanding, I think is the word - is what another of the psalms (Psalm 86) calls "an undivided heart". To follow Jesus, to be a co-worker for the kingdom, to walk the path of life, requires our full, undivided commitment right here, right now. No "buts", no qualifiers, no conditions, no competing demands. [...]

But in the world that we live in, to follow the way of Jesus, to walk the path of life, demands a lifetime of disentangling, of extricating ourselves from ways of indifference, division and death. That's what Francesco and Clara discovered, or St Francis and St Clare of Assisi, as we tend to call them. That to say 'Yes' to Jesus required them

to say 'No' to the lives that they had previously had and to the power, status and violence, the social and cultural assumptions and divisions, that those lives were bound up with. For Francis and Clare, it required them to say 'No' to the consumption, competitiveness and 'gated communities' of wealth; to say 'No' to the violence so often mobilized to protect vested interests and the status quo; to say 'No' to the

'To follow Jesus, to be a co-worker for the kingdom, to walk the path of life, requires our full, undivided commitment right here, right now. No "buts", no qualifiers, no conditions, no competing demands.'

exclusion, abuse and exploitation of those deemed less-than-human; to say 'No' to those desires in ourselves that seek to deny our interrelatedness, diminish our humanity, and hide from the truth. And of course, Francis and Clare's world is not that different from our own. Many of the No's that they had to say, are No's required of us too so that we too can say 'Yes' to the way

of Jesus, the path of life. Some of these No's, in our society of Brexit-exposed divisions and ecological emergency, are perhaps even more urgent than they were for Francis and Clare, and certainly no less so.

And what about Catherine, dear friend, newly-priested Pioneer Curate? What does God ask of you,

through, around, or in spite of, today's Scripture readings? The 'job descriptions' of 'pioneer' and 'priest' allow for so many things you can say 'Yes' to, it can often be hard to utter your 'No's. For some of you here, to hear Catherine say 'No' at all may feel uncomfortable, difficult to take. Did not St Paul say he was 'all things to all people', you might say to yourself? [...] On the other hand, is Catherine to be



like the Jesus of today's Gospel reading, setting her face in one direction only, on one small section of the parish, boldly pioneering where no one has pioneered before, saying No to 'here', so she can say a wholehearted Yes to 'there'? There is a careful, prayerful discernment in the role of pioneer priest which is unenviable. There is no blueprint. No roadmap. As St Francis himself wrote towards the end of his life: "No one showed me what I had to do." Only slowly and gradually, one faltering step at a time, do we - pioneers, priests and saints among us - discover what walking the way of Jesus, the path of life, looks like in practice. [...]

The priest, poet and Shropshire lad Mark Oakley was once revisiting the county of his childhood when he came across a shepherd, leaning on a traditional shepherd's crook. Joking with the shepherd that his boss, the

bishop of London, had a very similar crook, Mark asked him if he used it to haul in the naughty stray lambs. "No," said the shepherd, "that's not what it's good for. I'll tell you what I do with this crook. I stick it in the ground so deep that I can hold onto it and keep myself so still that, eventually, the sheep learn to trust me."

So Catherine - and those with whom you travel here in Kings Norton - as you take this next step, together today, on your journey into priesthood, may God gently, patiently, kindly make in you an undivided heart, that with Francis and Clare you may more firmly say 'No' to the ways of indifference, division and death, and more joyfully say 'Yes' to Jesus' life-giving way, to the eucharistic, Sabbath time, of love, joy and peace.

The Revd Dr Al Barrett

Enriching Prayer

Part 4

Last month, I wrote about two different ways of prayer meditation. This month, the focus is on a further method, called Lectio Divina.

This form of meditation or contemplation is from the Ignatian Tradition, that is, it grew out of the Jesuit monastic order, the Society of Jesus, founded in 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola. It centres upon reading a Bible passage slowly and prayerfully. It is advisable to set aside about 20 to 30 minutes to do this and to make sure that you are quiet and comfortable before you begin.

What you choose to read is up to you but, generally speaking, don't pick a passage that is unfamiliar or too long, because *Lectio Divina* is not intended to introduce you to something new, but to allow you to experience and feed on what you already know.

If this is the first time you have tried this method of reading a Bible passage then choose a favourite story or event from one of the Gospels. Having decided on your passage, ask God to help you to open up the passage. You might like to use this prayer as you begin:

All-Seeing One, above me, around me, within me.

Be my seeing as I read and hear these words.

Look down upon me,

Look out from within me,

Look all around me.

See through my eyes,

Hear through my ears,

Feel through my heart,

Touch me where I need to be touched and, when my heart is touched, give me the grace to lay aside these words and ask significant questions.

Why has my heart been touched?

How may I be changed through this touch?

Read the passage through once, slowly, without trying to analyse it. Then read it through again noting anything (a word, maybe, or a phrase) that catches your eye. Perhaps it seems an odd word to use, maybe you don't know what it means. Perhaps you feel disturbed by it

or encouraged. Now read the passage again, stopping at the word or phrase that caught your attention. Concentrate on this section alone. Maybe read it several times, even aloud.

Stay with this word or phrase for some time, asking questions such as: Why did the writer use this word or phrase? How does it fit into the story? What might it have meant to the original hearers? How does it make you feel and why?

Think about your own life. Do the words have a bearing on anything that you may be going through or that is worrying or that is good in your life right now?

An example using Matthew 11 v 25-30

As I read these words, I'm struck by the last phrase: 'And I will give you rest' (verse 28). It's like I've never read or heard them before and yet I have. Thousands of times. How can I explain the relief and freedom from guilt that these words bring? How often have I heard people talk about bringing their cares and worries and burdens to the foot of the Cross and leaving them there? I've even done it with stones and bits of paper. And how often does it leave me feeling guilty because, when I walk away, nothing seems to have changed? And I ask myself, is it because my faith is too small? Is it un-Christian in some way, not normal, to have burdens and cares? Are my worries and cares not important? Why can't I leave them behind?

And then I read these words: 'All you that are weary and carrying heavy burdens, I will give you rest.' Not 'I will take them away from you', as if they don't matter or are unimportant. But rather, 'I will give you rest'. In other words, 'Let me, Jesus, help you to carry them'.

I hear his voice saying, 'Let me take the strain, the greater weight, so that you can have a rest from carrying it all. In a while when you are stronger again, you can take more of the weight. Your burdens are important to me too. I don't want to wipe them away as if they don't matter. I want to help you, equip you to carry them. I want to ease the load so that you can gain strength to carry them more easily.'

For some reason that I don't quite understand, I find this a more liberating thought than the idea of having my burdens taken away. I like the idea of being better equipped to carry my cares. I can say, 'Yes please, Jesus' to this.

A prayer

Thank you, Lord, that you care about me and my concerns. Thank you that you don't want to brush them all away as if they don't matter and I shouldn't be worrying about them. Give me strength and courage to find the answers and, if there are no answers, give me peace in the knowledge that you walk with me and share the load. Amen.

The Reverend Jayne Crooks

O HAPPY BAND OF PILGRIMS

Regular readers of this magazine will know that Kings Norton Team Ministry and the Church of St. Francis of Assisi, Bournville are organising a pilgrimage together to Assisi and Rome in mid-October 2020.

We expect to fly from Birmingham to Rome then straight to Assisi where we plan to stay at the delightful Hotel Rocca, near the church of Santa Chiara (Saint Clare), founder of the Order of Poor Sisters. This hilltop town, the birthplace of San Francesco (Saint Francis), is situated on Monte Subasio, with stunning views overlooking the valley of the River Tiber. As well as its Christian heritage, Assisi boasts two medieval castles on its outskirts and a Roman Temple dedicated to Minerva in the centre.

In Rome we plan to stay at the Waldensian Christian Hotel, Casa Valdese, situated in a quiet area of Rome yet only a 15-minute walk to the Vatican in one direction and Piazza del Popolo and the Spanish Steps in the other. And there are

also two excellent gelaterie (ice cream shops) nearby, not to mention the metro!

There will be a meeting for anyone interested, **at noon on Sunday 15th September in the Lady Chapel after the service in St. Nicolas' Church.**

The Reverend Gail Rogers of the Church of St. Francis of Assisi and I will be firming up details in the next few weeks and I will share these with all interested on 15th September. If you are not able to be there but would like to join us or hear more please leave your name, telephone number and, if possible, your email address in the Parish Office or speak to me after the 10.30 am services at St. Nicolas'. We're then planning an Italian evening with those joining us from St. Francis' in October.

If you have any questions or queries please contact me via the Parish Office.

Thelma Mitchell

MAY & JUNE 2019

MARRIAGES & THANKSGIVINGS

25th May	Andrew Jon Osborne & Fay Alexandra Cavey-Wilcox
1st June	Paul James Harris & Hollie Louise Atkinson Lee Thorton & Jemma Bench James Robert Hewett & Victoria Elizabeth Russell
15th June	Mark Webb & Nadine Pemberton George Robert Beckett & Christine Janet Beckett (30 years)
22nd June	Owen Dunhay & Jodie King

The Orchard Tree Project

This is the project we supported at St Nicolas' Church with our giant card last Christmas. The money was sent to *Embrace the Middle East* and we funded the planting of six olive tree saplings.

The planting of a tree is an act of hope and faith, even in an orchard or wood which is in territory not involved in one of the most complex wars of our generation.

Since 1967, Palestinian farmers have lost more than 800,000 olive trees which have been uprooted or burnt as a result of the Israeli occupation.

Our live trees are thus part of a peaceful and productive response to this awful situation. The olive tree can be viewed as a powerful symbol of Palestinian rootedness in their land.

Our trees were planted in February this year. Placed in fields at risk of confiscation, our trees will help to protect

the farmers' lands, and give a hope of a harvest of fruit (for oil and soap) and wood. Thank you for your generosity.



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The Answer's Yes!

Is Your Child A Reader?

Isang Awa, a PhD Candidate in Education at the University of Cambridge has been conducting research into children's reading. Here are some of her findings.

Not every child is a bookworm, but research shows that developing a love of reading early in life can provide many benefits. From a positive impact on academic achievement, increased general knowledge, vocabulary growth, improved writing ability, and helping children to develop empathy, it's clear reading can play an important role in a child's development.

It has also been argued that on top of providing pleasure, reading literature helps children to cultivate an imagination. And an overview of several studies on reading for pleasure suggests that it may also be a way to combat social exclusion and raise educational standards.

But despite the huge benefits that reading offers, evidence suggests that young people are reading less and that many children fall behind in reading from about the age of 10.

Some teachers believe that parents



should be more active in supporting their child's reading. This is understandable as studies on successful literacy achievement often feature either support from a parent or a teacher, indicating how both can help children to develop a love of books.

But while it's important that parents and teachers become actively involved in helping children to read more, my research reveals there are some things parents and teachers may do that actually put children off reading.

Let them choose their own books

In my research with children between the ages of nine and 12, I explored the extent to which they read for pleasure and the different factors that affected their reading engagement.

Things such as parents or teachers selecting the books the children read in their leisure time, or parents not allowing the children to read their preferred books were shown to have a negative impact on children's reading engagement. As were parents or teachers forcing children to read and parents insisting that children read books to the end.

Children enjoy reading more when they've chosen their own books.

Some of the children in my study complained that their parents always selected the books they read in their leisure time and that the parents' selections were not always books that the children liked. A little boy described the books his father

selected for him to read at home as "hard books" and could only recall one occasion when he had enjoyed reading the book his father selected.

There were also complaints by other children that their teachers selected the books they read during the reading period at school, and that usually, they did not like the books and often did not read them.

Don't force it

Some children also complained that their parents did not allow them to read the books they had an interest in. For instance, one boy said that he liked Enid Blyton books, but his father did not allow him to read these. A girl complained that her father stopped her from reading Diary of a Wimpy Kid books because "they don't teach anything".

A few children complained of either being forced to read when they would rather not read, or being forced to complete a book they had lost interest in.

So, as important as reading is for a child's development, my research shows why children must be allowed to exercise their right to not read or stop reading at anytime, as to do otherwise is likely to put them off reading altogether.

Make it fun

From my interviews with the children, I also discovered that it was common practice for teachers and parents to ask children questions about the books they read and that reading aloud done by teachers at school was usually accompanied by questions. While this might seem like a useful learning technique, it's not one that goes down well with the kids.

All the children I spoke with said they did not like being asked questions after reading and that it took away the fun from reading. One boy said that knowing he would be asked questions about the reading "kind of makes me feel like they're

going to give us an exam or a test afterwards".

As the findings from my study show, when it comes to books, it's important to respect your child's preferences, even if they do not meet your expectations. Indeed, there is evidence to show that children best enjoy reading books they self-select and that doing otherwise may reduce the potential for pleasurable engagement in reading.

So given this, both parents and teachers would do well to remember that sometimes children just want to curl up with a good book of their choice and simply enjoy the process of reading for what it is.

This article was originally published in The Conversation under the title 'You could be putting your child off reading - here's how to change that'. It is reprinted here with permission.



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An Eventful August IN PARK AND LIBRARY

There's an activity-filled programme of new events in Kings Norton Library and Kings Norton Park this August.

As well as its normal programme, the Library is hosting a series of events by BCAT, the Birmingham Centre for Arts Therapies. Taking the BCAT STARTZ identity, the charity uses the arts as a catalyst to help children to enhance their interest in books and improve literacy development, communications and self-esteem. There are five separate sessions based on art, dance, drama, music and play, all targeted at 5 to 12 year olds, and all taking place on Thursdays from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm.

There are also workshops organised by Mustard Arts, aimed at the 4 to 16 age range. Its 'Rebel Art School' is on Tuesday 6 August from 2 pm to 4pm, and a 'Clay Play' workshop is on Friday 9 August from 10 am to 12 non.

There is also a Planetarium event on Tuesday 13 August, when a meeting room at the library will be converted into a spectacular display of stars and plan-

ets. Suitable for 5 to 12 year olds, the event includes three sessions, at 2 pm, 2.40 pm and 3.20 pm.

The Library advises that booking for all these events is essential, as there is likely to be high demand. This can be done by calling 0121 454 1532.

There's also much to do in Kings Norton Park in the next few weeks, both in terms of looking after the environment and having a good time. All events are organised and co-ordinated by the Friends of Kings Norton Park.

On Friday 2 August from 10 am to noon there will be a range of conservation activities, for which the Friends are seeking volunteers. Anyone interested in helping to keep the Park in the best possible condition should email the Friends at info.foknp@gmail.com.

The following day, Saturday 3 August, sees a free event called 'Playing in the Park' with a range of games and craft

activities. To help out, the Friends are being joined by the National Trust, Lickey Hub Rangers and Northfield Arts Forum. Families are invited to bring their own sports gear, games and toys and, of course, a picnic. The event begins by the car park off Westhill Road and runs from 11 am to 2 pm. Other local organisations that would like to set up their own activity and promote their own group should also contact the Friends of King Norton Park.

On Saturday 24 August there's an International Bat Night. Also free for all participants, it will be a walk and talk led by Lisa from Brum Bats. Those interested



should meet at 8.00 pm in the car park by Kings Norton Playing Fields, next to the football changing rooms. The Friends' Chair Lynn Horsnett says 'It'll get cool as the night progresses, and the grass might be damp and uneven, so please come suitably dressed and with appropriate shoes....and please bring a torch if you can.'

The Official Reopening Of **Druids Heath Library**

Although it had actually resumed normal service a few days before, Druids Heath Library hosted an official re-opening event on Saturday 15th June.

Together with young people from the local community, a ribbon was cut by Councillor Jayne Francis, Birmingham City Council Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture. Also attending were Steve McCabe, MP for Birmingham Selly Oak, and Julien

Pritchard, the local councillor who helped to mobilise the local demonstrations and petitions which helped avert the feared closure of the Library.

Druids Heath librarian Helen Donaghy commented, 'We are now driving forward to ensure that as many local people as possible understand what the library can provide, and use it accordingly.'

TO BETHLEHEM

I know it is only August (or July as I write this) but it is time to start planning for Christmas and this year we have an Exciting New Plan.

This year, as a parish, we are going to undertake a new adventure: To Bethlehem! This is a very different and ambitious way for us to tell the Nativity story to our local community and it will need everyone's help to make it happen.

For three days in December, we are going to turn the church into Bethlehem (with a bit of Nazareth and distant lands thrown in for good measure) and re-tell the Christmas story. If this is to happen we are going to need props, scenery, costumes, actors, stewards, ticket sellers; the list is endless. A small and enthusiastic team will be helping to plan and manage the project (they don't know it

yet) but there are still plenty of jobs that will need doing and lots of ways to be involved.

Over the next few weeks, we will start asking you to hunt through your homes and charity shops for certain items we need, and also to sew, to paint and to do all sorts of other things. Please keep an eye on our newsletter, website, magazine and social media pages, follow our plans and see how you can be involved.

Don't forget, either, to put the date in your diary or on your calendar, to come along and to experience the final production on the **12th, 13th and 14th December**.

If everyone helps we can make this into a fantastic event.

Pauline Weaver



The people who run the Book Sale didn't seem interested in my collection of racy French 19th century novels and tomes of German theology. There must be another way I can help my local church.

'Where there's a will, there's a way, Edgar. Where there's a will...'

It's never too late to be generous. Talk to one of the clergy about remembering Kings Norton Team Parish in your will, or enquire at the Parish Office.

Boyhood Memories of Kings Norton

Among the many interesting documents which have arrived in the Editor's inbox this year has been a copy, possibly incomplete, of a booklet entitled 'Boyhood Memories of King's Norton by F.Clulee'. Beneath the title on the front cover is a sketch or engraving of The Saracen's Head (as Saint Nicolas' Place used to be called) and St Nicolas' Church. The picture is signed in one corner with the name D.V.Melling and the subtitle beneath it reads 'Fifth pamphlet issued by Kings Norton History Society'. The original must, at some stage, have lived on the shelves of Birmingham Library, for it bears their circular stamp.

Whoever F.Clulee may have been, he had a remarkable gift for evocative writing. The story he tells of a childhood spent in King's Norton (he spells it with the apostrophe) during the first two decades of the 20th century is packed full of colourful characters, vivid reminiscences and fascinating historical detail. He must have been blessed with an unusually accurate memory which enabled him to recall in later life acute observations made when he was not yet a teenager. With a few strokes of the pen and a mischievous sense of humour, he brings to life sights and sounds, smells and sensations gathered during what seems to have been a very full and happy childhood in an idyllic English village.

Above all, it is the local characters who lodge in the mind, many of whose names he remembers and whom he sketches with glee: his Dad's great aunt Mary-Ann, known 'very aptly' as Aunt Udder; Cissie, his parents' maid at their house in Wharf Road, who cleaned the globes of the paraffin lamps and trimmed the wicks

each morning; Miss Foster of the Kings Norton Village School who was 'all nose, buck teeth and spit'; Farmer Griggs' Chinese labourer, 'a sinister, funny-looking old chap of whom we were afraid'; and Aaron the Miller, with his great white beard and Quaker hat, his cat Smoke on his shoulder, watching the wagons unloading'. This short text, so rich in colour, so filled with believable personalities, calls out for a skilful scriptwriter capable of breathing life back into Kings Norton as it was on the eve of World War One, much as the BBC brought to life Flora Thompson's unforgettable 'Lark Rise to Candleford' for television 10 years ago.

It is also a document which I would like to be able to reprint in full in the Parish Magazine, for the enjoyment of our readers and the historical record. Before I can do so, of course, I will need to establish whether it is still covered by copyright, if so, who holds it and whether or not they are happy to give their permission. If you can help here, I'd be

very grateful to hear from you. The subtitle ('Fifth pamphlet' etc) implies that there are more treasures of this kind waiting to be unearthed on forgotten shelves in Kings Norton attics; so maybe this appeal will uncover yet more literary gold.

Meanwhile, you may be intrigued by some of the facts and impressions to emerge from this gem of a narrative. The writer recalls a world before radio, TV, telephones, cars, electricity, gas and refrigeration in which children were bathed in tin baths in front of the fire and the only toilets were outside. Ten years before the outbreak of the First World War, the Worcester to Birmingham canal was a busy highway for beautifully painted longboats steered by 'bargees [...] with their little upside-down clay pipes'. Transport depended entirely on horses. The May Day Horse Parade on The Green was a big event and attracted breeds of all kinds 'from Shires down to Shetlands'. The five pubs then open on The Green ensured that everyone had a good time.

Mr Clulee's memories of his schooldays were, of course, filled with slates, scratchy nibs and inkwells. The world he knew was one in which children had proper adventures, scrapes which could have flowed from the pens of Enid Blyton or E.Nesbit. Friendships between village children, of whom there were large numbers, often became friendships for life. In an era before commercialised entertainment, their leisure time was filled with all kinds of games bearing colourful names like Hi-ackey and Sally on the Mopstick (does anyone remember what these involved?). Walks to and from

school across open country were punctuated by the climbing of trees or fishing for tadpoles. From the bridge over the railway line at Kings Norton Station, children would try to spit into the funnels of passing trains. Kingfishers flashed blue in the River Rea valley. On Wednesdays, which were market days, herds of cattle converged on Kings Norton in droves and sometimes caused havoc by escaping into front gardens. A single-horse carriage called a 'growler' plied the route between village and station.

World War One brought travel restrictions, rationing, blackouts and even Zeppelin raids ('trapped in a cone of searchlights, like a little silver cigar'). There was little local entertainment beyond church concerts, but the writer remembers the annual Mop Hiring Fair as a highlight, and it seems to have been a much bigger, more colourful event than it now is, partly, no doubt, because there was more space for the many and varied sideshows and entertainers who used to flock to it. The Mop was held, not on The Green as it is today, but in 'the Lakin', a field behind the school. There were, of course, a Fat Lady and a coconut shy, and, among the many acts Mr Clulee remembers with tremendous clarity, one went by the wondrous name of 'Captain Wombell and His Lions'.

The many vivid word pictures which fill the pages of this childhood memoir include a description of the watermill which stood on the site now occupied by the petrol station on the corner of Camp Lane and Pershore Road South. If you've ever visited Sarehole Mill (see page 15), you'll have an idea of what it looked,

smelled and sounded like, and the writer spent long periods of his boyhood there 'quite unsupervised, which was entirely wrong and it was lucky there were no accidents'. In the world he describes, that of 100 years ago, it was normal for Kings Norton boys to help out not just with milling (messaging about on the millpond, or setting fire to flour-covered cobwebs when not actually working) but with haymaking ('dusty'), pig killing ('much more to our liking') and ratting. What the boys got up to with their air rifles has to be read to be believed; but, as the writer concludes, 'Boys will be boys'!

We owe a great debt to Mr Clulee for taking the time to put pen to paper. His skill with words, his sense of humour and his great affection for the village in which he grew up are evident in every line. I do hope that, in due course, you will be able to read his 'Boyhood Memories' for yourself. And perhaps, if you too have been here a long time and remember the village as it used to be, you would like to record your own reminiscences and send them to editor@kingsnorton.org.uk.

David Ash

The Elephant in the Room

This month, Eddie regales readers with a tale of guffaws, giggling and gratuitous graffiti. Who would have thought people could be so rude?



I have another tale regarding the P&O liner *Canberra* in early 1961. This was before her maiden voyage, so we're going back to Belfast.

The ship was soon to depart for sea trials and would eventually arrive in Southampton, from where it would set off for Australia. The whole ship's company were now on board and we had a busy time getting everything shipshape each day.

We were told that there was to be a drinks party for the shipwright's departmental heads, commonly known as the 'Bowler Hats', who had been invited to bring their wives. The event would be held in the Tourist Class Ballroom, otherwise known as the Island Room. It had a large dance floor which included laminated panels with scenes of tropical landscapes, palm trees and so on and some birds and animals on the walls. Up to 200 people were expected so, in addition to the usual bar, there were to be temporary bars at each end of the room.

Well, the party was a great success as the guests drank everything available, including the sherries and vermouths, in fact, everything alcoholic that we had! A small speech was to be made by our Captain and one of the directors of

Harland and Wolff, the shipbuilders.

Suddenly, we heard peals of laughter, the wives, in particular, giggling loudly. The source of the amusement turned out to be one of the wall panels. One of them, which featured a painting of two elephants, had been defaced by an improvised addition to the male elephant's anatomy!

Oh dear! I don't think the senior officers were too pleased. The speeches were swiftly made and our rather drunk guests were quickly ushered off the ship.

Of course, all the barmen and stewards, including myself, were in fits of laughter, which made our hard work in hosting the party and clearing up the ensuing mess much easier to complete.

Eddie Matthews

It's Sponsored Walk Time!

The Annual Hawkesley Church Sponsored Walk is taking place on August 17th 2019 at 11am and for the 1st time, we are being joined by Immanuel Church who aim to raise funds for Immanuel Church. The walk is about three to three-and-a-half miles long. If anybody would like to walk or sponsor one of the churches, please contact either Kevin on 07 989 322 237 hurney.kevin@yahoo.co.uk (Hawkesley) or Marie on 07 966 247 936 (Immanuel).

CONTACTS

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

81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU
parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk 0121 458 3289
www.facebook.com/KingsNortonTeam

THE MINISTRY TEAM

Team Rector	The Revd Larry Wright
Assistant Rector	The Revd Eliakim Ikechukwu
Parish Lay Minister	Pauline Weaver
Curate (Pioneer)	The Revd Catherine Matlock
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Methodist Minister	<i>To be announced</i>
Readers	David Ash, Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman, Parisa Pordelkhaki
Lay Preacher	Steve Wright
Music Ministry	Sylvia Fox
Pastoral Care Team Coordinator	Chris Gadd

THE CHURCH WARDENS

St. Nicolas' Church	Peter Hay & Julie Hill
Hawkesley Church	Jim Clarke 0121 550 3455 or 07 939 838 086
Immanuel Church	Sue Hartley

OTHER CONTACTS

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

MUSIC

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

BELL RINGING

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

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

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Scouts and Cubs

198th Birmingham St Nicolas'

Alan Haynes (Group Scout Leader) 07 534 615 489
198thscouts@gmail.com

*Tuesdays at Oddingley Hall,
Oddingley Road, B31 3BS*

Beavers (6-8yrs): 5-6 pm
Cubs (8-10½): 6.15-7.45pm
Scouts (10½-14): 8 pm

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

at Hawkesley Church Centre

Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm
Brownies (259th Birmingham): Wednesdays 6.30 pm
Guides (141st Birmingham): Thursdays 7.00 pm
www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

Hawkesley Church Primary Academy

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

Headteacher: Vicky Sumner

JUNE 2019

BAPTISMS

2 nd June	Keira Betsy-Mae Thompson
16 th June	Billie-Anne Spalding
16 th June	Irina Blossom Mohamed-Miller

“**BAPTISM** marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God’s love. ”

The Baptism Service, Common Worship

JUNE 2019

FUNERALS

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

4th June	Anne Sheila Alison	80	SN.Bu.CY
5th June	Joyce Josephine Bayliss	88	SN.Bu.KN
7th June	Linda Ann Hughes	64	In.CY
7th June	Mavis May Richards	78	Bu.CY
12th June	Christine Elizabeth Bittles	74	SN.Bu.BE
20th June	Emma Jane Trezise	95	SN.Bu.BE
21st June	Tabitha Wanjiru Fray	43	SN.Bu.KN
21st June	Thelma Jean Waldron	86	In.CY
28th June	Sarah Elizabeth Jones	51	SN.Bu.CY

SN : Service at St Nicolas’ Church, **Cr** : Cremation, **Bu** : Burial,
In : Ashes interred, **BE** : Brandwood End, **CY** : Churchyard,
KN : Kings Norton, **LH** : Lodge Hill, **RD** : Redditch, **RH** : Robin Hood

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