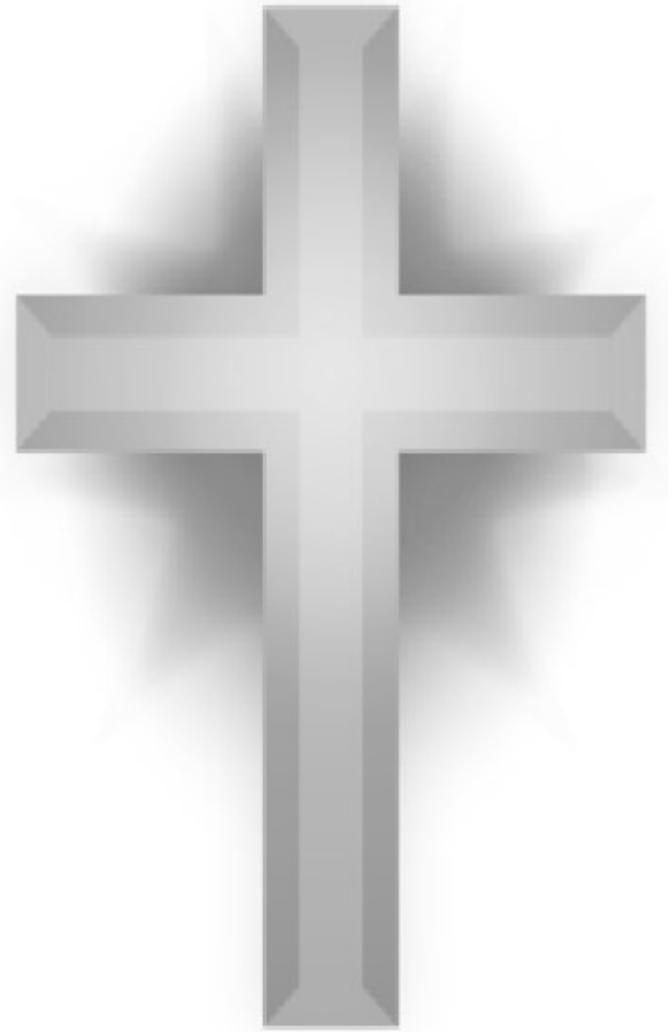
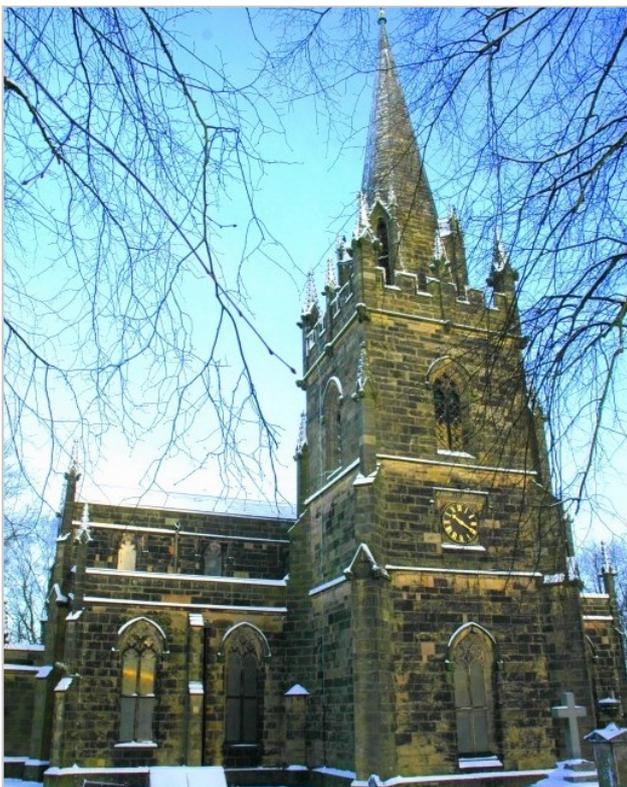


THE BEACON

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ALL SAINTS, SEDGLEY
& ST.ANDREW'S THE STRAITS



50p

FEBRUARY 2017

WHO's WHO

| | | |
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| Licensed Lay Minister | Jan Humphries | 01902 661275 |
| Pastoral Care | Tracey Bate | 01902 680727 |
| Worship Leader | Suzanne Bradley | 01902 880055 |
| Youth Leader | Laura Robinson | 01902 678572 |
| PCC Secretary | Chris Williams | 01902 672880 |
| Parish Office information baptisms, weddings, funerals and hall bookings. | Gail Griffiths | 01902 540289 |
| Parish Wardens | Keith Tomlinson | 01902 673366 |
| | John Anderson | 01902 677666 |
| Treasurer | John Anderson | 01902 677666 |
| Caretaker | Dave Bell | 07933 204132 |
| Server / Verger | Len Millard | 01902 676339 |
| Junior Church | Barbara Price | 01902 676591 |
| Brownies | Heather Churm | 01902 674709 |
| Ladies' Society | Geraldine Baker | 01902 674608 |
| Men's Society | Roger Berry | 01902 881374 |
| Mothers' Union | Liz Williams | 01902 672880 |
| Noah's Ark | | |
| Parent & Toddler Group | Linda Edwards | 01902 672556 |
| Rainbows | Liz Naylor | 07827 629648 |
| Web Editor | Martin Jones | 01902 884461 |
| Youth Group | Laura Robinson | 01902 678572 |
| Bell Ringer | Keith Williams | 01902 672585 |
| Organist | Martin Platts | 07941 173252 |

A letter from the Archdeacon of Dudley

It is the time for New Year's resolutions again. I wonder if you have made any, and whether if so, they have been broken already! Last year I resolved to lose weight, regain my fitness, and train to run a 10k, which I hadn't done for a few years. I'm proud to say I did it! As the pounds fell off, I completed the Worcester City 10k in September, and knocked seven whole minutes off my personal best. An enjoyable achievement, but one for which I had to work very, very hard.

Resolutions about health and exercise are good to make and keep, but even more important is maintaining our spiritual health, our journey of discipleship. In the letter to the Hebrews we read:

“.... let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)

Just as we can only run a physical 10k if we train for it, we can only run the race set before us spiritually if we exercise spiritual discipline. The New Year is a good time for a spiritual health check, and an opportunity to resolve to build some good training patterns. To strengthen our discipleship muscles, we may wish to commit to reading a Bible passage each day, and meditating on it, using notes, a commentary, or one of the wide range of apps now available. We might try a new pattern of prayer – perhaps lighting a candle for an allocated time each day in a regular place, creating space to encounter God, or booking in a quiet day or retreat at Mucknell Abbey or Glasshampton Monastery. It might even be a good time to find a 'training partner' with whom you can pray, or join a group in your church seeking to grow together.

In this season of new beginnings, let's commit to run our race with perseverance, knowing we have Jesus as our coach and Personal Trainer.

A Letter from the Bishop of Worcester

Andreas Whittam Smith is best known as the man who started the Independent newspaper. Equally significantly, as First Estates Commissioner, he has effectively ‘run’ the Church Commissioners for quite a few years – and done so brilliantly. He’s stepping down soon and late last year he addressed the House of Bishops. I was struck by what he said – that he feels more hopeful about the Church of England now than he has done for a long time.

That’s quite something coming from a seasoned old hack like Andreas and I found it very encouraging. Why did he feel so hopeful? He felt the Church is at long last waking up to the fact that ‘business as usual’ is no longer an option and, more than that, is taking bold and innovative steps to reform and renew.

The scale of the challenge is enormous: The proportion of people in our country who have much understanding of the Christian faith, let alone practise it, is declining fast. What is needed is nothing less than the re-evangelisation of England. That’s not an invitation to despair though, but a challenge to which, in the power of the living God, we can rise.

One exciting development in our diocese is the Calling Young Disciples project. Ruth Walker, its director, has already begun her ministry here and three Mission Enablers have already been appointed and will be taking up their posts soon. I hope and pray that their ministry will bear much fruit – not just to reverse the ‘institutional decline’ of the Church but bring people to a vibrant faith in the living God revealed in Jesus.

The renewal of the Church is not just up to them though; responsibility for it lies with us all. Please pray that we may all, as Kingdom People, fulfil our vocation to witness effectively to God’s great love for everyone in Christ. May He make us instruments of his love, his compassion, his justice and His freedom.

+John

A message from Lyn

As I write this the Valentines cards, and some Easter Eggs, are already in the shops and it is very noticeable how quickly retailers jump from one season to the next, hardly finishing one before setting up for the next. To be fair, in this time of uncertainty for those who supply and see these things, I suppose the earlier they get them out, the more they hope to sell.

Yet in a society which seems to be always looking to the future and the next big event be it individual, or collectively, it seems sad that each day isn't enjoyed for all that it can bring, for all the possibilities. In all our lives there are the days we can't wait to be over for whatever reason, but there are plenteous days to be hopeful and expectant in.

As Christians we are encouraged to live every day to its fullest, to take every opportunity to make God's story known through our words and actions, to show God's love through our own example of living in faith. In a month which celebrates Love, in all the cards, chocolate, etc, it would seem possible to see what an impact is made when love is celebrated. But Christians have another lasting reminder of Love, Love demonstrated in rawness, pain, shame and disgrace in the death of Christ our Lord, Love freely given, with no conditions, by God in Christ because HE LOVES US.

So as we jump rapidly through the big retail events of this time and through the coming months, let us take the time to appreciate each God given day and opportunity to know and love him more, because there is nothing made from card, chocolate, ribbons or precious metals that can show love, REAL LOVE than a tatty, coarse, wooden cross on which Love personified died for all of us.

Plough Sunday

8th January

By Sam Setchell

Plough Sunday, the Sunday after the feast of Epiphany or “Twelfth Night” marked the end of the mid-winter Christmas festivities. The twelve days of partying and celebrations finished. Plough Monday was back to work. But before work started, the plough (often a communal one for the whole village) was brought to church to pray for a blessing on it and the work it would do. After the service it was taken (often with dancing) round the village and villagers were invited to make contributions to the cost of its upkeep and the upkeep of the Church that had blessed it.

This year the Chaplaincy for Agriculture and Rural Life will be joining the annual Plough Sunday service at Tibberton Church at 10.30am on 8th January. All are welcome to come along to share in this service, during which a traditional plough will be blessed.

In medieval times some ploughs were kept in the parish church, and some churches kept a ‘plough-light’. In days when work was scarce in winter, the observance of Plough Sunday looked forward to the time of sowing with the promise of a harvest to come. It has been reintroduced in some parishes as a focus for asking a blessing on human labour near the start of the calendar year.



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Ladies Society

Canada Part 3 - Mary Zielonka

This is the third talk by Mary, about her year long visit to British Columbia as an exchange Teacher. She lived in a small town called Kitimas and her talks are all based on letters that she home each week.

Letter No, 10th November. They had been making Christmas Decorations and there is little enthusiasm for this, the Canadians don't celebrate Christmas as we do. The main reason is, there are so many different races and religions, they don't wish to cause offence to anyone. As well as teaching in the primary school in Kitimas, she also taught the violin to two girls, they were the daughters of the local Doctor. He was Chinese and was at that time running for Mayor I never ascertained whether he got the post or not. I'll find out at the next episode of Mary's sojourn in Canada, next January?!

Letter No, 11th November 25th

She found the boot of her car full of water and ice all over the back seat! It cost 100 dollars to have it sorted. Mary learned many things for herself whilst in Canada. She learned to play squash which she enjoyed very much and also learned different types of lettering. She passed round a sample of Gothic lettering which she had done - it was beautiful and she did weaving, we have seen samples of her weaving at a previous talk and she still enjoys doing it.

Mary said that she didn't really enjoy teaching, but thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Her final letter for this talk was letter No 12 dated 7th December. They had a concert with the school children and the audience talked all the way through the concert!

Thank you Mary for your talk, we look forward to the next instalment!

I understand we are doing some more travelling at our next meeting on February 6th when Pauline will give us another talk about her world tour, rumour has it that it will be about "Leaving America and visiting Japan" I hope to see you all there.

Molly Taft

Christingle Service 2016

I must thank everyone who made the 2016 Christingle such a great success. It was a wonderful experience for me to be there in a church full of people rejoicing and enjoying the ages-old Christmas story.

As usual Barbara Price organised the event and her daughter Lorna led the service wonderfully. Of course volunteers who made the actual Christingles also need a special mention as do the children who took part in the Nativity play.

The event raised **£ 412.05** for the Children's Society

I would like wish all of our generous and faithful supporters of the Society at All Saints' a very happy 2017

Anne

Women get sportier

More than 7.2 million women now play sport and do regular physical activity. That has narrowed the gender gap to 1.55 million.

The number of netball players has risen by 25,400 in two years, and hockey players by 4,500, following the successful 'This Girl Can' campaign to push women to take more exercise.

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Candlemas

In bygone centuries, Christians said their last farewells to the Christmas season on Candlemas, 2 February. This is exactly 40 days after Christmas Day itself.

In New Testament times 40 days old was an important age for a baby boy: it was when they made their first 'public appearance'. Mary, like all good Jewish mothers, went to the Temple with Jesus, her first male child - to 'present him to the Lord'. At the same time, she, as a new mother, was 'purified'. Thus we have the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple.

So where does the Candlemas bit come in? Jesus is described in the New Testament as the Light of the World, and early Christians developed the tradition of lighting many candles in celebration of this day. The Church also fell into the custom of blessing the year's supply of candles for the church on this day - hence the name, Candlemas.

The story of how Candlemas began can be found in Luke 2:22-40. Simeon's great declaration of faith and recognition of who Jesus was is of course found in the Nunc Dimittis, which is embedded in the Office of Evening Prayer in the West. But in medieval times, the Nunc Dimittis was mostly used just on this day, during the distribution of candles before the Eucharist. Only gradually did it win a place in the daily prayer life of the Church.

St Valentine's Day

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day - 14 February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February. One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows.

There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 his relics have been claimed by the Carmelite church in Dublin.

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The Beacon is published ten times a year and the cost for the year is £5. A larger typeface version of The Beacon can be provided on request.

Articles for the February magazine need to be sent to:

admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

by

Friday 17th February

and needs to be in Arial typeface, size 18.

WEBSITE: www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk

CHURCH OPENING



**Friday mornings from
10.30am to 12.30pm**

The church is open for quiet prayer
& coffee and a chat.

DIARY DATES FOR FEBRUARY 2017

Dates for Diary

Mothers' union:

7th February 2.30pm - the way forward - Margaret Penn

11th February 10am - AGM in church

21st February 7.30pm - desert island choices

Funerals

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| John Alfred Clarke - | 7th December - Gornal Crem |
| Keith William Upton - | 9th December - Gornal Crem |
| Jacqueline Bullock - | 16th December - Gornal Crem |
| Kathleen Annie Mantle - | 22nd December - Gornal Crem |
| Annette Mary Mullard - | 30th December - All Saints' |
| Janice Norma Jones - | 2nd February - All Saints' |
| Mary Cleaver - | 9th February - All Saints |

Flower Rota - February 2017

February 5th - Vacant

February 12th - David and Elaine Melhuish / Pauline Gregory

February 19th - Margaret Martin / Len Millard

February 26th - Vacant

Sarah Powell

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Ladies Society

December Bring and Share Supper

Unfortunately Molly was unable to be with us to share our festivities, so we send good wishes and hope to see her well in the New Year.

Geraldine reminded ladies of our 1st Anniversary of meetings in the Meeting Room and asked if we were happy to continue. A resounding "Yes", was the answer. It is comfortable and cosy!

So with tables laden with a variety of savoury and sweet food, and a bottle of wine or two, we began our celebratory Christmas Bring and Share Supper.

Convivial chatter and laughter filled the room, and even a song was heard from one group of ladies! Well done!

A kindred spirit pervaded as we enjoyed a pleasant evening together with the added anticipation of winning one of the several raffle prizes. Earlier, at the end of November, several ladies had enjoyed a Christmas Meal at The Forge, in Gornal. Many Thanks to Geraldine who organised this event.

We look forward to the New Year, when in January, Mary Zielonka will share with us more of her, Letters from Canada.
Happy New Year Everyone!

Anne Wakefield.

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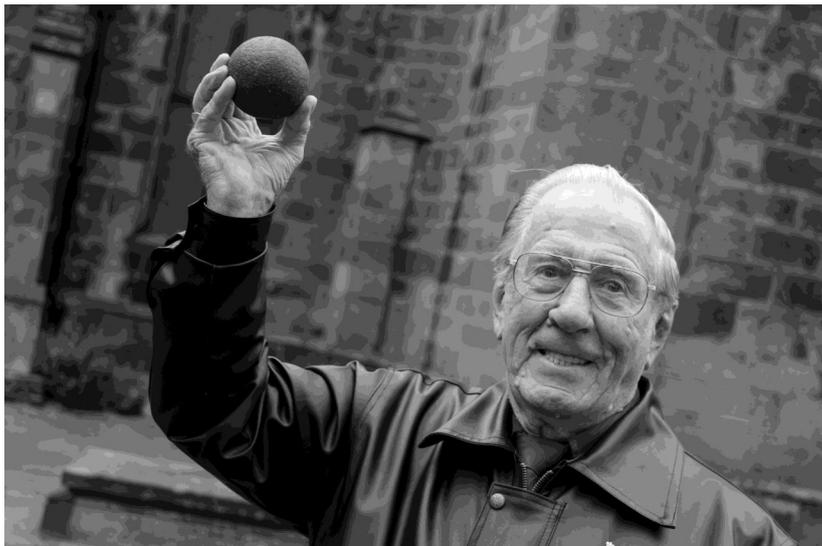
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Come and enjoy the fun with friends & company

Cannon ball surprise at our Friday Coffee Morning

Harry Shaw kindly brought a most unusual item of memorabilia to show fellow attendees at our Friday coffee morning at All Saints'.

Over 60 years ago, Harry was working as a draughtsman for the Joseph Gillott company, who made pens and other items of stationery. A new factory was being built on Birmingham Road, close to Dudley Castle.



One day Harry came across a cannonball turned up by bulldozers creating the car park, probably left over from one of the two sieges of Dudley Castle during the English Civil War.

We asked expert Adrian Durkin of Dudley Council about the find, and he said:

“From the look of it, the cannon ball could be from a saker (a field piece) or a demiculverin (possibly the smallest possible siege piece)”.

Investigations are continuing!

On another historical theme, Doreen Onions, whose aunt Sarah Bunn worked as a live-in maid at the old All Saints' Vicarage for Revd TG Swindell and his wife in the 1920s, came to see us.

She told us her memories of All Saints' Sunday School, which was held in the Old School Room (now the site of Iceland) in the late 1940s. She swapped memories with Dorothy Inett, who was our Sunday School Teacher in the 1960s - by this time the Old School Room was dilapidated, so Sunday School was held in Church.

Martin Jones

A Priceless Find – by accident!

70 years ago this month a couple of shepherds in the hills above Qumran near the Dead Sea idly threw a stone into what they thought was an empty cave. When they heard the sound of smashing pottery they searched inside, and found the most important biblical discovery of the century.

Their stone had led them to what became known as the Dead Sea Scrolls, manuscripts of the entire Hebrew Bible except for the book of Esther, stored in clay vessels. The scrolls were the work of a religious community called the Essenes, who lived near that site before and during the life of Jesus.

As scholars slowly unravelled them they discovered that they were handling manuscripts of the Bible which were hundreds of years older than any we had previously possessed. Most of the biblical manuscripts on which our translations had previously been based were copies of copies, carefully crafted in monasteries over the centuries by people dedicated to preserving the sacred text. But inevitably, in the process, there were occasional slips in the copying, and at times it's obvious that those who were doing it didn't understand the words they were copying.

So, in February 1947, the world had access to a much older and therefore more accurate record of the Jewish Scriptures – the Bible of Jesus and the first Christians. The most remarkable thing is actually how few 'mistakes' there were, seeing the centuries of copying – and not one that seriously affects our fundamental understanding of the Bible.

Those two shepherds 70 years ago ensured that we today have a Bible text which is as close to the original as one could ever hope to get.

Some observations on our Christian pilgrimage

Jesus is the bread of life, not the cake for special occasions. Anon

When we have given God all that we have and are, we have simply given him his own. William Plumer

God knows us altogether and cares for us in spite of that knowledge. J Charles Stern

Spiritual growth consists most in the growth of the root, which is out of sight. Matthew Henry

The future belongs to those who belong to God. This is hope. W T Purkiser

Although modern man zestfully explores outer space, he seems quite content to live in a spiritual kindergarten and to play in a moral wilderness. Carl F H Henry

Prayer: It is necessary to draw near to God, but it is not required of you to prolong your speech till everyone is longing to hear the word 'Amen'. C H Spurgeon

I lived to thank God that all my prayers have not been answered. Jean Ingelow

We have no liberty to say that our sole responsibility is to preach the gospel of salvation, since moral and social righteousness will then follow normally. John R W Stott

Temptations are everywhere, and so is the grace of God. Anon



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Memories of Mary Cleaver

by her friend **Sheila Kendrick**

I knew Mary as a member of our congregation at All Saints' since the early 1980s.

In the 80s and 90s she was a regular at the 8.00am and 6.30pm services on a Sunday, whereas I usually attended the 10.30am service.

However we became firm friends during the Prayer Groups that were led by Fr Philip Hughes, our Curate, in 1992. Indeed Mary invited me to stay in her house in St. Austell in Cornwall in 1994 - and we went to Fr Philip's Induction as Vicar at Boscoppa.



Mary performed many functions in the running of church life - for example, she was part of our church cleaners' group.

She was a member of Ladies' Society, and later became Chairman. She made friends so easily and so genuinely and was always in touch with them.

She would give practical friendship to many people, sometimes at considerable cost to herself.

Over the years Mary and I went out together whenever we could.

One service we loved to attend was our Holy Communion on Ascension Day morning, followed by breakfast - we hardly ever missed this special occasion.

We would go on church trips whenever possible; we would always join in Study Groups, and even Keep Fit in the church hall.

Mary was a keen theatre-goer and loved classical music - just a few of her many interests.

Our favourite time to chat on the phone was any weekday at 4.30pm.

Mary was above all a true friend. With her strong Christian faith, she was a gentle and lovely lady.

She will be very much missed

Mary Cleaver

We are sad to announce that our dear friend and fellow parishioner **Mary Cleaver** has died. Mary had been ill for some months.

A former senior teacher at Alder Coppice school in Sedgley, Mary was a supporter of our church for decades. In recent years she regularly attended Midweek Communion; she was also part of our Tuesday morning Church Cleaners' Group, who do such a wonderful job in keeping our church beautiful.

Our thoughts and sympathies are with Mary's family and with all those who knew her.

Thank you

Jenny and I would like to thank everyone for their cards, telephone calls, visits, gifts and good wishes during last year, while I have been having numerous eye operations. Hopefully this latest, the 7th, will be the last!

Our special thanks to Linda and Roy, and Keith and Brenda for all their help during this time, which is much appreciated.

I hope to see you all soon.

Rob Lavender

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Mwathi Musyoka and her family are from Kairungu village in Kenya. She joined a programme called FIVE (Flourishing in Vulnerable Environments) She joined to improve her knowledge of farming. Before that she could only sell one bag of maize for 1250ksh (Kenyan shillings). There was soil erosion causing low production, and the family were very poor.

Mwathi says: “Now my crops are doing much better because of what I learned about soil conservation. I can sell two bags of maize and two of cow peas for a total of 6100 ksh. We also grow beans, green grams and sorghum.”

“I could not afford school fees, so the children missed entire terms. Now I have started to pay off my debts, and I no longer have to buy so much food from the market.

My son Vundi has applied to Meru Technical College and Makau to the Teachers College, but they cannot qualify until all their secondary school fees have been paid. I pray that better harvests will mean I can pay this money.”

“The training in soil conservation has been very helpful. Now we eat every day, and I am hoping for better yield. I am proud of my farm.”

“Other farmers come to see how I do soil conservation and to learn from me. I want to grow sorghum and green grams because these need little rain, so will survive a drought.”

The money you raise through Fair Trade helps families through organising and paying for training courses. So, join our Big Brew this year in Fair Trade Fortnight and help even more families towards a brighter future.

Fair Trade Fortnight 27th February – 12th March 2017

Big Brew morning at All Saints: Friday 11th March

Mothers' Union

Our theme for 2017
'Faith in Action'

2017 is a year for us to highlight the ways in which we already live out our faith through action; it is also an opportunity for us to consider new ways in which to do so, being ever aware of the changing needs of society, and always looking to God for his guidance and provision.

Our first meeting of the year was an opportunity for members to share in Communion, refreshments and the collection of subscriptions. The AGM is on Saturday 11th February at 10.00am in church and it is hoped that all members will be able to attend.

Our evening meeting in February, entitled 'Desert Island Choices' is an opportunity for members to share memories in an informal setting. This is based on the radio programme 'Desert Island Discs'. You need to choose a book (not the Bible or works of Shakespeare, which you will have), a piece of music and a luxury item which is inanimate and of no use in escaping the island or allowing communication. This should be an interesting and enjoyable evening.

Dates :

7th February - 2.30pm The Way Forward, Margaret Penn
(change to programme)

11th February - 10.00am AGM in church

21st February - 7.30pm Desert Island Choices

Liz Williams

Name the Film

- | | | |
|----|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Haphazard gathering | Random Harvest |
| 2 | He has left university | The Graduate |
| 3 | You must remember this | Casablanca |
| 4 | This film was dedicated to the fifty | The Great Escape |
| 5 | He was found there | Paddington |
| 6 | Would you want her on your drive? | The Lady in the Van |
| 7 | He 'phoned home' | ET |
| 8 | A place to retire to? | The Exotic Marigold Hotel |
| 9 | Huge | Titanic |
| 10 | The flying vehicle | Chitty Chitty Bang Bang |
| 11 | Robbers of the sea | Pirates of the Caribbean |
| 12 | You lend them things | The Borrowers |
| 13 | Meal at the jewellers | Breakfast at Tiffany's |
| 14 | Hot carriages | Chariots of Fire |
| 15 | They were 'her girls'. | The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie |
| 16 | 200 against 5000 | The Alamo |
| 17 | We spotted a lot of them | 101 Dalmatians |
| 18 | Flavoured male | A Man for All Seasons |
| 19 | Larry Adler played throughout | Genevieve |
| 20 | His register saved many | Schindler's List |
| 21 | They sing their hearts out, that's why it's a sin | To Kill a Mockingbird |
| 22 | Farewell spud | Goodbye Mr. Chips |
| 23 | They were blue | Avatar |
| 24 | A marvellous river, say | The Magnificent Seven |
| 25 | Blown away | Gone with the Wind |
| 26 | Locomotive offspring | The Railway Children |
| 27 | The way to the 2016 Olympics | The Road to Rio |
| 28 | She disappears | The Lady Vanishes |
| 29 | He was no bow, say | Alfie |
| 30 | Female | The Iron Lady |
| 31 | Magician down under | The Wizard of Oz |
| 32 | Cake baker's tome | The Jungle Book |
| 33 | Two American soldiers | GiGi |
| 34 | Fairground attraction | Carousel |

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 35 | Celestial battles | Star Wars |
| 36 | Annual ladies | Calendar Girls |
| 37 | Call for assistance | Help |
| 38 | Valuable digit | Goldfinger |
| 39 | Revolution on a chocolate bar | Mutiny on the Bounty |
| 40 | Solitary dwelling | Home Alone |
| 41 | The best tale | The Greatest Story Ever Told |
| 42 | Platform trainer | Stagecoach |
| 43 | Stupid tie | Dumbo |
| 44 | Will was smitten | Shakespeare in Love |
| 45 | A quiet craftsman | The Artist |
| 46 | Confectioner's heaven | Charlie and the Chocolate Factory |
| 47 | Monarch | The Queen |
| 48 | The cattleman strikes twelve | Midnight Cowboy |
| 49 | He would be at a baptism | The Godfather |
| 50 | Very chilly | Frozen |

Congratulations to Jenny Lavender who won the quiz

Caring for others helps YOU

Looking after your grandchildren, or providing emotional support to others, can help extend your own life by up to five years, according to a recent study.

Grandparents who provide occasional care for their grandchildren live, on average, five years longer than those who do not. And childless people who provide occasional care for others in their social network live on average three years longer.

The study, at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, concluded that a 'moderate level of care-giving involvement does seem to have positive effects on health.'

Maedoc of Ferns

Are you wondering about which charities to support this year? Does it matter to you if your money is used wisely or not? If so, then Maedoc of Ferns is the patron saint for you this month. He certainly knew how to deal with people who would waste his money.

Maedoc (d 626) was born in Connacht, and educated in Leinster and St David's Pembrokeshire before returning to Ireland in the early 7th century. He founded a small monastery on land given by Brandrub, prince of Leinster, at Ferns, in Co. Wexford. He also founded monasteries at Drumlaane and Rossinver. He must have been loved, because after his death his bell, his staff and reliquary were carefully preserved – you can see them today in the National Museum (Dublin) or the Library of Armagh cathedral.

Maedoc had a reputation for self-denial, holiness and charity. But he was not 'stupidly good'. The story is told of how one day some spurious beggars hid their fine clothes and dressed in rags, and came to the monastery pleading for his help to buy new sets of clothes. Maedoc invited them in, and did some investigating. When he discovered their fine clothes hidden outside, he gave them away to real beggars nearby, and then sent the imposters off in their dirty rags, with neither new clothes nor alms. Rather cleverly done!

Christmas Tree Festival

Thank you to all who decorated Christmas Trees and supported the Festival in any way. £600 was raised over the two weekend and in addition to this the West Bromwich Building Society donated £500, which all went to the Salvation Army.

Liz, Chris & Jonathan

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Yoghurt Cake

Denise Whittingham

Use a yoghurt carton as a measure for the ingredients.

- 1 carton Natural Yoghurt
- 1 carton oil
- 2 cartons caster sugar
- 3 cartons SR flour
- 1 lemon (un-waxed)
- 3 medium eggs, beaten.

Grate rind from lemon into mixing bowl.

Add yoghurt, oil and eggs.

Add sugar and flour, beat until smooth.

Pour into a loaf tin (a two pound or two one pound tins).

Cook at gas reg 5 or 375 deg F or 190 deg C until cooked. (around 45mins to an hour) Test with a skewer.

Squeeze lemon juice over the cake/s while still hot. Leave till cold, sprinkle with caster sugar.

Tips:-

- 1 - Use an orange as an alternative.
- 2 - If cake is browning on top too quickly and inside isn't properly cooked, then cover top of cake with foil.

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Around the Parish

Pauline Turner has informed us of her wonderful news:

David and Nicki Turner have announced the birth of **Samuel Alan Colin Turner** on 21st December 2016 at 10.47am, weighing 8lb 8oz, at King's Mill Hospital, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottingham.

Samuel is **Pauline and Alan's** first grandchild.

Congratulations Pauline - best wishes to you and your family.

We would very much like to continue this feature of the magazine that Dorothy Inett edited for so many years; however few people have so far contributed items of news.

If you have anything that you'd like to share, please see Martin Jones at the 10.30am All Saints' service on Sundays or at our Friday Coffee Mornings, or email him at mmjones29@blueyonder.co.uk

A Big Thank You

A big thank you to one and all for your prayers and get well cards throughout my chemotherapy treatment. This has now been completed and the news is good so far. I could not have done this without all your support. Hopefully I will have some hair by the summer!!

Our best bit of news was a wonderful Christmas present: our 1st Grandchild, Samuel Alan Colin Turner born 21st December weighing in at 8lb 8oz to David and Nicki. All are doing well. We spent Christmas with them and plenty of cuddles.

So once again Thank You and have a great 2017 to you all.

With love, **Pauline and Alan**

Film Review: Silence by Martin Scorsese

I can thoroughly recommend the recently-released film '**Silence**' by **Martin Scorsese**.

It concerns two 17th century Portuguese Jesuit priests, Rodrigues (Andrew Garfield) and Garupe (Adam Driver), who receive news while in Macau that their mentor and teacher, now a missionary in Japan, has apostatised his Catholic faith under torture. They set out to find the priest, Ferreira, played by Liam Neeson, to ascertain whether the rumour is true.

They encounter a very hostile environment - the Japanese regime is intent on expunging any trace of Catholicism from their land and is taking ruthless measures to achieve their aims. The Japanese Christians are resolute and take great care to keep their faith secret from the authorities. However the Jesuits' arrival puts everyone in danger, and the brothers' faith is tested to the extreme when they in turn are captured and called upon to renounce their faith - or condemn the Christian converts to execution.

The film not only looks great, it also raises key questions about holding onto one's faith in adversity that are relevant to the struggles faced by Christians in countries around the world today where the prevailing faith and culture is opposed to Christianity.

Martin Jones

The man who created Greenwich Mean Time

The British mathematician and astronomer Sir George Biddell Airy died 125 years ago this month. Not a household name, he nevertheless had a long-term effect on everyone's lives by establishing Greenwich as the location of the prime meridian, through calculations made using an immensely accurate telescope he invented called the Airy Transit Circle.

Greenwich Mean Time became legal time in Britain in 1880, and was adopted in principle as the basis of universal time in 1884.

Sir George was not so much a brilliant scientist as a meticulous engineer and a self-taught expert in many areas, including theology. His wife Riarda, who he met on a walking holiday and proposed to after two days, was the daughter of the Rev Richard Smith, private chaplain to the Duke of Devonshire. After being initially rejected by Mr Smith, because of his limited means and prospects, he persisted in his suit for six years until he was successful.

Sir George was elected president of the Royal Astronomical Society four times, for a total of seven years between 1835 and 1864. No other person has been president more than four times.

He was famous (or notorious) for the care and foresight with which he planned his life. He made a careful note of everything that occurred in his life or interested him and never threw anything away. These records still exist.



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Dormston House and The Hobbit

We recently received an enquiry concerning the **Homers of Sedgley**, and about **Dormston House** where John Twigg Homer lived. The Homers had their own chantry chapel in the old church, yet curiously their graves were left outside by the Choir Vestry entrance when the church was rebuilt in the 1820s.

John Twigg Homer (1865-1934) was a solid citizen - Parish Warden, as well as being a Sedgley Urban District councillor, a county councillor for Staffordshire, a Guardian of the Poorhouse and School Board Chairman for Sedgley.

The connection between the Homers and the village of Dormston in Worcestershire, 15 miles due west of Stratford upon Avon is interesting. It would appear that the manor of Dormston was inherited (following a lawsuit) by **Richard Homer of Sedgley**, the nephew of the previous owner John Keeling. It was later passed on to Richard's son **Charles Kemp Homer** and thence to his grandson **Charles Henry Homer**.

Thus there was a 'Homer family' connection with the village of Dormston – though John Twigg Homer appears to have been part of a different branch of the family. Whether he actually owned the manor, or parts of it himself at any point is unclear. However there was an affinity with the place, because at some point the name of the large house at 17 Dudley Street changed from 'The Villa' to 'Dormston House'.

Not only does the manor contain an outstanding 15th century half timbered church dedicated to St Nicholas but also **Bagend Farm**, a late 16th-century building, now much altered externally. **JRR Tolkien's** aunt lived at **Bagend** - he stayed with her as a child while recovering from pneumonia. He subsequently used the name **Bag End** for **Bilbo Baggins' home** in his book **The Hobbit** and the countryside around Dormston was probably the inspiration for **The Shire**.

Martin Jones

Times Past

Staffordshire Advertiser - 1st February 1862 - SEDGLEY

BURGLARY AT THE OLD HALL FARM. – At an early hour last Thursday morning some thieves succeeded in effecting an entrance into the house of Mr. Pemberton, the Old Hall Farm, but being disturbed they failed to possess themselves of any considerable quantity of booty. By cutting away the glass they got into the kitchen through one of the windows, and after ransacking and plundering the lower part of the house of some articles of plated goods, wine and wearing apparel, they conveyed them to an adjoining field, where they partook of the wine. After this they seem to have returned to the house and attempted to force open an iron safe with a pickaxe. The noise they made alarmed Mr. Pemberton, who at once got up, and calling for his gun, the fellows hastily decamped, leaving behind them everything they had got except a couple of pairs of boots. From the manner in which the men got into the house and attempted to open the safe, it is evident they were not practised hands. On Saturday morning, police-sergeant Tomlinson learned that a servant who had recently left the hall had stored her box in Sedgley with the injunction that no one was to look inside, this girl has not been seen since, and Mr. Tomlinson on searching the box found a number of keys, among which were some skeleton keys.

Birmingham Daily Gazette - 17th February 1915 - SEDGLEY'S RATE

At a meeting of Sedgley District Council last night it was decided to make a new general district rate of 2s in the pound, being an increase of 2d compared with the present one. Mr. Brown explained that the increase in the rate would in all probability be only temporary

Birmingham Mail - 21st February 1939

SEDGLEY. – Modern house, freehold; two sitting, three bedrooms, large bath room, garden, garage; fine view; £1000; view by appointment. – Telephone Sedgley 3127.

Just Thoughts.

Just remember that children, marriages and flowers in the garden reflect the kind of care they get from you.

The power of One.

One song can spark a moment.
One flower can awake a dream.
One tree can start a forest.
One smile can start a friendship.
One handclasp will lift a soul.
One star can guide a ship at sea.
One word can frame a goal.
One vote can change a nation.
One sunbeam lights a room.
One candle lights the darkness.
One laugh will conquer the gloom.
One step must start each journey.
One word must start each prayer.
One hope will raise our spirits.
One touch can show you care.
One voice can speak with wisdom.
One heart can know what's true.
One life can make a difference.
So you see, it's up to you.

Opportunity is missed by most people because it;s dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Everything you are against can weaken you; everything you are for can empower you.

A flower does not think of competing with the flower next to it, it just blooms.

Be yourself. Accept yourself. Value yourself. Forgive yourself. Bless yourself. Express yourself. Trust yourself. Love yourself. Empower yourself.

Happiness comes when we stop complaining about the troubles we have and offers thanks for all the troubles we don't have.

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May God give you the grace not to sell yourself short.

Grace to risk something big for something good.

Grace to remember that the world is now too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love.

May God take your eyes and see through them.

May God take your lips and speak through them.

May God take your hands and work through them.

May God take your heart, and set it on fire.

Don't wish away your days, waiting for better one's ahead. Enjoy the day you have to spend right now, today.

However long the day, evening will come.

Tell special people how special they are.

It's normal to make mistakes, that's how we learn.

Don't forget to go for a walk from time to time, just to take in the view.

Compiled by **David Melhuish**

WWI Timeline - Events of 1917

February 1917

1st German "unrestricted submarine warfare" begins. Norwegian Government forbid all foreign submarines to use Norwegian territorial waters.

3rd United States of America sever diplomatic relations with Germany.

16th British Government gives pledge in House of Commons that the restitution of Alsace-Lorraine is an object of war.

17th Australian War Government formed.

20th Inter-Allied Conference (Russia, France, Gt. Britain, & Italy represented) assembled in Petrograd is dissolved.

23rd Kut reoccupied by British Forces.

24th Turkish army retreat as Battle of Kut 1917 ends.

25th German forces withdraw from front line positions on the Ancre as part of the "withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line". German destroyer raid on Margate & Broadstairs. British 'S.S. Laconia' sunk by submarine.

26th President Wilson asks Congress for power to arm merchant ships.

27th President Wilson states that he considers the sinking of S.S. Laconia the "overt act" for which he was waiting.

28th German proposals to Mexico for alliance against the U.S.A. published in the American Press.

"Germany is finished"

The comment of German Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg on the decision made by the Kaiser and the military chiefs allowing unrestricted U-boat warfare.

Operation Alberich.

In February the Germans began withdrawing to well-prepared, heavily fortified defences at the Hindenburg Line. This reduced the length of the trenches they had to defend, freeing up troops no longer needed. They gave up more territory than the Allies had been able to gain in three years of warfare.

Trench Cake recipe from Elizabeth Craig's Economical Cookery book.

8oz flour
4oz margarine
1tsp vinegar
1/4pt milk
3oz brown sugar
3oz cleaned currants
2tsp cocoa
1/2tsp baking powder, nutmeg, ginger, lemon rind

Grease a cake tin. Rub fat into flour in basin. Add dry ingredients. Add the soda dissolved in vinegar and milk. Beat well. Put into tin. Bake in a moderate oven.

(Tin size and oven temperature not given!)

Rosemary Moss



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SERVICES FOR THE MONTH

FEBRUARY 2017

5th February - Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

All Saints 8am - the Revd canon Judith Oliver
St Andrew's 9.30am - the Revd canon Judith Oliver
All Saints' 10.30am - Morning Prayer with Jan Humphries
St Peter's 10.30am - the Revd James Makepeace
All Saints' 6.30pm - Jan Humphries

12th February - Sixth Sunday after epiphany

All saints 8am - the Revd Lyn Rowson
St Andrew's no service – see All Saints - 10.30am
All Saints' 10.30am - team service - the Revd bill mash (black country urban industrial mission)
St Peter's - no service – see All Saints - 10.30am
All Saints' 6.30pm - Jan Humphries

19th February - Seventh Sunday after epiphany

All saints 8am - no service
St Andrew's 9.30am - the Revd James Makepeace
All Saints' 10.30am - the Revd James Makepeace
St Peter's 10.30am - Morning Prayer with Suzanne Bradley
All saints' 6.30pm - Jan Humphries

26th February - Last Sunday after epiphany

All Saints 8am - the Revd Lyn Rowson
St Andrew's 9.30am - Morning Prayer with Jan Humphries
All Saints' 10.30am - the Revd canon Alvyn Peterson
St Peter's 10.30am - joint service at all saint's
All Saints' 6.30pm - Compline with Jan Humphries