

December 2020 Volume 41 Issue 12 £1.00
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**WISHING YOU A HOLY, BLESSED
AND HAPPY
CHRISTMAS SEASON**
FROM THE CLERGY, READERS, LAY ELDERS
AND ALL WHO SERVE IN THE
BLYTH VALLEY TEAM MINISTRY

TOP TIPS

Use nativity sets, fairy lights, children's artwork, glass pens, words from the gospels, carols, an advent candle (if safe to do so) and anything else to make it glow on the dark nights of December



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Or: office.bvtm@gmail.com

You can also find the entry form
inside - see Outside Back Cover

Judging will take place on
December 20th 2020.

Blyth Valley Times is published monthly by the Blyth Valley Team Ministry.

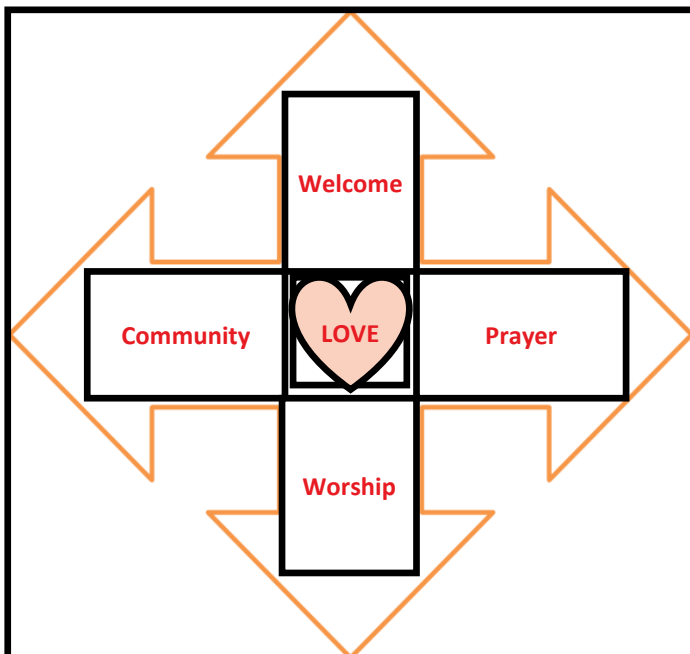
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Wisett. With Heveningham with Ubbeston, Huntingfield and Cookley.

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Find us on Facebook: [blyth valley churches suffolk](https://www.facebook.com/blythvalleychurchesuffolk)





TREASURER STILL REQUIRED!

The Friends of St Mary's Halesworth are seeking a volunteer to act as Treasurer, with effect from the beginning January 2021.

For more information please email:
win.sutton28@gmail.com

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Sunday Readings

29 November First Sunday of Advent Psalm 80.1-8,18-20 Isaiah 64.1-9 1 Corinthians 1.3-9 Mark 13.24-end	20 December Fourth Sunday of Advent Psalm 89.1-4,19-26 2 Samuel 7.1-11,16 Romans 16.25-end Luke 1.26-38
6 December Second Sunday of Advent Psalm 85.1-2,8-end Isaiah 40.1-11 2 Peter 3.8-15a Mark 1.1-8	27 December John the Apostle Psalm 117 Exodus 33,7-11a 1 John ch1 John 21, 19b-end
13 December Third Sunday of Advent Psalm 126 Isaiah 61.1-4,8-end 1 Thessalonians 5.16-24 John 1.6-8,19-28	

DECEMBER DATES

Thur	3rd	7pm	Advent Course
Thur	10th	7pm	Advent Course
Wed	16th	6pm	Doorstep Carols
Thur	17th	7pm	Advent Course
Thur	17th	7.30pm	Dunamis event
Sun	20th	3pm	Linstead Carols by Candlelight, by prior booking only.
Sun	20th		Light up Christmas Judging

BVTM Team Office

Due to the on-going Covid-19 situation, the Team Administrator is mainly working from home,
 (Tuesdays - Fridays, 9am-1pm).

The Team office in St Mary's Church is therefore currently operating reduced opening hours.

To contact the Team Administrator, please telephone 07752 275328.

Or email: office.bvtm@gmail.com

(Please use the above BVTM office mobile number, rather than the Team office landline number during this period).

If you have an urgent enquiry, please contact the Revd Jane Held on 07771 556391.

Email: jane@janeheld.co.uk

Blyth Valley Team Ministry - Rota for December 2020

This rota may change – always check our website: www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk or telephone Revd Jane or Revd Alison

Worship in the Blyth Valley in December 2020					
Year B – Track 2	6th December Second in Advent Purple	13th December Third in Advent Purple/Rose	20th December Fourth in Advent Purple	27th December John the Apostle White	3rd January 2021 Second after Christmas White
Group 1					
Halesworth St Mary	10.00 Team Eucharist David	10.00 Team Eucharist Archdeacon Jeanette	10.00 Eucharist BCP Malcolm W	10.00 Eucharist Jane	10.00 Team Service Alison
Holton St Peter	To Team Service	To Team Service	11.15 Christmas service John	To Team Service	To Team Service
Group 2					
Wenhaston St Peter	To Team Service	To Team Service	11.15 Eucharist Alison	To Team Service	To Team Service
Bramfield St Andrew	To Team Service	To Team Service	To Wenhaston	To Team Service	To Team Service
Blyford All Saints	To Team Service	To Team Service	To Wenhaston	To Team Service	To Team Service
Thorington St Peter	To Team Service	To Team Service	To Wenhaston	To Team Service	To Team Service
Group 3					
Chediston St Mary	To Team Service	To Team Service	09.30 Eucharist Vic	To Team Service	To Team Service
Wissett St Andrew	To Team Service	To Team Service	18.30 Christmas Service David	To Team Service	To Team Service
Spexhall St Peter	To Team Service	To Team Service	To other services	To Team Service	To Team Service
Linstead St Margaret	To Team Service	To Team Service	15.00 Christmas Service Malcolm H	To Team Service	To Team Service
Group 4					
Cookley St Michael	To Team Service	To Team Service	09.30 Eucharist Fr Jonathan	To Team Service	To Team Service
Heveningham St Margaret	To Team Service	To Team Service	To Cookley	To Team Service	To Team Service
Huntingfield St Mary	To Team Service	To Team Service	To Cookley	To Team Service	To Team Service
On-line					
Facebook:	Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 09.00		Saturday 09.30 Sunday 10.00		Monday - Sunday 21.30
ZOOM	Café Worship 10.00 Wednesday			Sunday Eucharist St Mary's 10.00	

HEALTH WARNING: ALL SERVICES SUBJECT TO SUDDEN CHANGE – PLEASE CHECK IN ADVANCE WITH YOUR LOCAL CHURCHWARDEN, CONTACT DETAILS ON PAGE 16 OF THIS ISSUE

Halesworth & Bramfield URC

Minister: Revd Jon Sermon

We have hope to have **gathered worship** again **every Sunday @ 11.00am** after Lockdown ends

Be we are also continuing online: Services on Zoom remain available, including:

Every Sunday: Worship @ 11.00am (join from 10.30am) & 6.30pm (join from 6pm)

Mondays (7th, 14th & 21st) Advent Bible Study @ 10.30am (join from 10am)

Every Tuesday: 30 minute lunchtime worship @ 12.30pm (join from 12pm)

Every Friday: Prayer meeting @ 9.45am (join from 9.30am)

Messy Church and additional events as announced.

...and Christmas Day @ 10.30am (no services Sunday 27th)

All events accessed via Zoom or Youtube.

Jon Sermon: 01986 873761 jon@sermons.me.uk

Judy Morton: 01502 724572

judy.morton@themortonpartnership.co.uk

Jo Moreira (for families and children)
jomohurc@gmail.com



Wenhaston Methodist Church

Minister: The Revd Peter Rayson

ALL SUNDAY SERVICES AT 10.30am

6	Sue Groome
13	The Revd Robert Soanes, HC
20	Laura Lawrance-Martin
27	No Service

CHRISTMAS MORNING FAMILY SERVICE
at 9.30am. The Revd Louise Morrissey

All these dates will only be viable if the present Lockdown ends on 2nd December.

We would welcome anyone to our services while observing the present regulations but only have accommodation up in the gallery where there is ample space for social distancing.

PLEASE WEAR A MASK

St Edmund King & Martyr Roman Catholic Church, Halesworth

**Mass available on Sundays, 9am;
and Wednesdays and Fridays 10am.**



LIFE EVENTS

**FROM THE REGISTERS
IN NOVEMBER 2020**

FUNERAL SERVICES/INTERMENT OF ASHES:

Elizabeth Mary Irving at Oakfield Wood Burial Park

Doreen Edith Riches at Holton

Hilary Jane Holden at Halesworth



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The Revd David Sochon writes...

Rather than the altruistic desire for the welfare or success of the whole community, "Self-fulfilment" and "happiness" seem to be the watchwords and guiding principles of today's society.

Many years ago I was talking with a group of teenagers about what they wanted from life. Without exception they all wanted "to be happy".

"Oh, yes, and what will make you happy?"

Some wanted a big car or big house, some wanted success in their chosen profession, some wanted money. It was generally "things" that they sought.

I said, "If you could be granted a million pounds, but have only one day to enjoy it before you died would you be happy?"

Suddenly they changed their opinions and now they almost all wanted to see their family and friends and share their love with them. When the chips were down it was not things, but people that they wanted.

One of the greatest pains of today's pandemic situation is that we have become more and more isolated, we cannot meet people. It is this restriction which is causing so much heartache and mental stress. We cannot, in person, share our love – to let others know that we love them and rejoice in that love reciprocated. We begin to feel detached and perhaps, after a while – despite phone calls or messages – even slightly less-cared-for ourselves.

Being unable to go to church or to share in fellowship and communion, may cause us temporarily to fear losing touch with, or being forgotten by, our mortal friends, but there is not the slightest fear that we shall be forgotten by our Creator and Heavenly Father. After all it is an illogical nonsense to imagine that God, who has sacrificed so much through the death of his Son to save his creation, would ever cease caring for it.

That we are loved and cared for is the great certainty for all Christians and the great hope that we share in these troubled times. Though we now walk through the valley of the shadow of death we are not alone for Christ walks with us and we are comforted by his presence and his promises for the future.

As we commemorated the saints of the past on All Saint's Day, Bishop Martin reminded us that we are all saints in our own time today and have the same responsibilities and share the same privileges as the saints of yesteryear. We pray regularly that we may follow their good examples and replicate their good deeds even through times of difficulty and suffering.

St Paul suffered many tribulations during his travels – both physical and mental; he was ostracised and plotted against by former friends, flogged, beaten, stoned, imprisoned, starved, cast adrift, shipwrecked You name it, he suffered it – and yet through all these troubles, some of which make our anxieties today seem rather trifling, he was convinced of the one great hope that Christ gives to all who believe in him and his promises – that we should be with him for ever.

"Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean that he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?... No despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death, nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears today nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below – indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8 35 – 38 NLT).

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News from Churches Together

On **Remembrance Sunday**, it was so good to be able to go ahead with our joint act of remembrance, socially distanced at the war memorial. **Thanks to all who contributed.**

Our Ecumenical Prayer Gathering on Saturday 14th November concentrated on prayer for our churches, our communities and indeed, our Nation. December is busy in other respects, so we'll set the next date in January.

You can access my regular 'encouragement videos' via the Churches Together Blyth Valley Facebook page or on Youtube at 'Jon Sermon'. Blessings, *Jon*

Volunteers needed!

We currently need volunteers for various roles in the **Blyth Valley Team Ministry**, please speak to the Revd Jane if you are interested in any of them.

- ❖ A volunteer to help manage our live stream, and video activity at services and to help in editing videos.
- ❖ Volunteers to go onto the Flower Rota at St Mary's Halesworth - please let John Ball, who is now doing the Flower Rota, know.
- ❖ Volunteers to lead intercessions, read readings, or help as stewards at services.
- ❖ Volunteers to act as welcomers and stewards at churches across the Team.
- ❖ Volunteers for the Community Larder.



Blyth Valley Team Ministry

STILL PRAYING —

church is not closed, even if some buildings are

Sunday worship on ZOOM at 10.00am every Sunday

ID 892 3344 9437 Passcode 253438

CAFÉ WORSHIP 10am every Wednesday (for access contact Revd Jane or Revd Alison)

Live Morning Worship on Facebook 9am. Live Night prayer on Facebook 9.30pm

f Facebook = Blyth Valley Churches Suffolk f

Churches currently open FOR PRIVATE PRAYER:

Chediston St Mary — Wednesdays and Sundays 10am-4pm

Cookley St Michael and All Angels — Sundays 10am-3pm

Halesworth St Mary — 10am-12pm daily

Heveningham St Margaret — Wednesdays 10am-12pm

Huntingfield St Mary — Wednesdays and Sundays 10am-3pm

Linstead St Margaret — by appointment (call 01986 785289)

Wenhaston St Peter — by appointment (call 01502 478855)

Wissett St Andrew — every day 10am-4pm

CURRENTLY CLOSED: Blyford All Saints, Bramfield St Andrew, Holton St Peter, Spexhall St Peter, Thorington St Peter, Walpole St Mary.

THE SITUATION IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING, PLEASE CHECK FOR THE LATEST DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE



One of the support agencies and charities close to the Revd David Sochon's heart is WaterAid. Living, as we are in the midst of a pandemic made him think of others who are suffering not only Covid, but the ever-present threat of cholera.

He imagined what would be the effect if the following headline appeared in the national press ...

DISASTER - 400 DIE IN AIR CRASH WORST EVER INCIDENT

For days the world's media would be agog. The world would be shocked. Hundreds of reporters would be sent to survey the scene. Investigators would be sent to find out what went wrong. There would be much hand-wringing and wailing.

And yet... and yet... **800 children die every day** from drinking polluted water collected from foul or stagnant ponds or streams infected by animal waste and it doesn't receive even a passing mention in the media. Women (generally) and children have to walk for miles, facing injury or danger from animals and other humans who may attack them, in order to collect an essential of life which may actually kill them..... and we, who have water enough and to spare at the turn of a tap, do little or nothing to help.

In the mid nineteenth century (1854) Dr John Snow reasoned that it was polluted water that was causing the death from cholera of thousands of Londoners and this discovery led to movements and legislation to improve water hygiene and sanitation until it reached the standards we now enjoy. In 1981 the water industry in this country established **WaterAid** as a non-governmental international charity to improve the situation for people living without safe, purified water, initially in Sri Lanka and Zambia – and now in many other countries. But forty years on and thousands still are dying every week from the lack of a basic essential of life that we take too much for granted.

Times are hard for all of us at the moment as we suffer under the many resulting effects of the Covid epidemic, but they are even harder for those suffering from both Covid **and** the threat of cholera. If we can find it in our hearts (and in our purses!) - apart from our many other commitments - to spare just a little something for WaterAid it would be a wonderful way to celebrate our giving this Christmas.

WaterAid may be contacted at:

**WaterAid 6th Floor, 20, Canada Square, London E14 5NN.
Telephone 0300 1234 41 (easy to remember!). Thank you!**



HALESWORTH DEMENTIA CARERS' FUND

H.D.C.F. would like to pass on this very important information sent from our Dementia Support Worker, Alice Sparksman:

Although we are under Lockdown again, the work of the H.D.C.F. is carrying on, and anyone who is in need of timely advice or help is very welcome to contact our Chairman, Teresa Fyfe, on 01986 875641.

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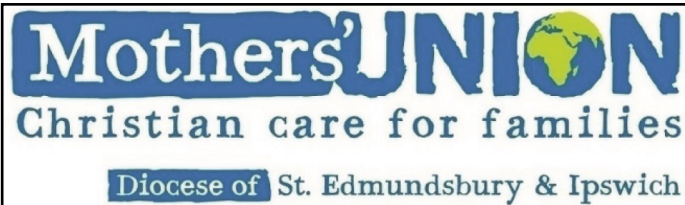
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Blue Christmas Service

This year, Mothers' Union members in Suffolk have recorded their 'Blue Christmas Service' so that it might be shared with those who would otherwise not be able or feel safe to come to church this Christmas. A Blue Christmas Service is a quiet and reflective service for those for whom Christmas 2020 is not going to be a happy and joyous time. This year has been a challenge for everyone, with many grieving for friends and family members who have died due to Covid-19. The pandemic has also resulted in many people losing jobs with resulting financial difficulties. Anxiety, fear for the future and depression have affected many people. All of us have experienced loss of physical contact with family and friends.

The service can be viewed from their website, www.musuffolk.org.uk from 5pm, on Monday 21st December, which is when the longest night of the year begins. The service will remain on the website until December 31st.

It has been a very strange and unsettling year for us all but I trust that you will enjoy a peaceful Christmas in whatever form it takes, and I hope that it won't be too long before we can resume our meetings. In the meantime, stay safe and well. With love and prayers.

Win

Diocesan President's Report for Zoom Council - 18/11/20

Branches have continued to meet via Zoom, and others are meeting in social groups of up to six. One Branch has reported that during Lockdown they have "raised the profile of the Branch in the parish and community, through project work, magazine articles, and virtual fund-raising....". Another branch reported that following the reprint of their first edition of the very successful *Prayers from the heart*, they are about to launch a new collection of Scripture Verses and Bible Readings. Sheran Harper, our Worldwide President, has even mentioned our *Book of Comfort* in the latest issue of *Families First*. I've been encouraged by the stories of Branches holding their membership together through regular visiting, telephone calls, emails, branch newsletters, and even the odd "Bags of Love" being delivered. Another imaginative and innovative meeting included a special "Bingo" session! In spite of everything around us, MU is still working away in the parishes and communities they serve. Congratulations to all, and a huge thank you to our Branch Leaders, their committees and the membership for all they are doing on behalf of MU.

Our Trustees too have been working hard – thinking up new ideas and ways of "doing MU", attending MSH webinars, promoting MUE sales, and sorting out MSH database queries and our own website. Much hard work is going on behind the scenes: Cathie sorting out the Charity Commissioners; anniversary cards and cheerful letters sent out to our members; Diocesan members, whose numbers are increasing, receiving current information and thoughtful reflections, and the work of AFIA still reaching out to those less fortunate and to key-workers. Our links with the Women's Refuge are on hold at present due to Covid-19, but we still hold them in our hearts. There is just so much more going on.... and all of us praying for the work of Mothers' Union here and overseas alongside, of course, our Prayer warriors in the Prayer Chain. Beryl has continued to hold the fort and been a tower of strength, keeping us aware of all those who are unwell (including our own trustees and officers and their families in these difficult days),

those who have recently lost loved ones, or their jobs or security (flowers have been sent to Angus Travel who have served us well over the years) - our thoughts and prayers go out to them, and especially for those who have lost so much.

Disseminating information: The latest edition of *Families First* has recently been dispatched to all members on the database. Our November DP Conference at High Leigh has been cancelled and will now take place on Zoom. Representation in the Diocese has been exclusively via Zoom. A pop-up Mary Sumner Day service, although well prepared with MU resources, was not a success. One branch has closed due to dwindling numbers.

Our bi-monthly newsletter, produced by Trustees, is going down really well with Branches. During Lockdown, it has been amazing to learn of all the things that have been going on in Mothers' Union in our Diocese. Working alongside others, fund-raising and support for parochial activities on behalf of the local church has included the Historic Ride and Stride challenges, foodbank deliveries, and supporting local clergy and pastoral care.

We are in a time of transition, and as Trustees in our Diocese, we have much optimism about the way ahead. We want to maintain our small groups meeting regularly together, but maybe now in new and different ways. We want to "Rebuild hope and confidence" – our MU theme for 2021; and we want to grow our fellowship, caring and supporting one another. There will come a time when all the MU members across our Diocese will be able to affirm our identity as MU members, meet up again face to face and "rejoice and give thanks for all the blessings that we have received". Take heart – things will change for the better!

Linda Ginn MBE

Mothers' Union at i-Chameleon

The MU NSA (North Suffolk Area) Committee have now met and have discussed how to allocate the money we raised at i-Chameleon at the beginning of October, which amounted to almost £1200. We considered how to use the money in supporting and empowering families in our Diocese, the UK and Overseas.

£100 will be to purchase £5 and £10 Gift Tokens for the mums and their children in the Women's Refuges in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. £300 to the MU Overseas Fund. £300 to the MU Britain & Ireland Fund. £150 to Selig's 'Hope into Action' for 15 previously homeless people who are now living in 'permanent' accommodation, to provide Christmas stockings; each pair of socks containing items such as a hand-warmer, diary/notebook and pen, pack of tissues, torch, chocolate coins/bar.

We provided Christmas stockings in 2019 for the 30 people who were in the Ipswich Night Shelter on Christmas Eve, which were very much appreciated.

The deposit has now been paid for I-Chameleon for next year - 21st to 27th Oct. The balance will be kept in the MU NSA account held by our MU Diocesan Treasurer. Some monies are also held in reserve for the various Open the Book Teams across North Suffolk to buy Lion Storyteller Bibles and Handbooks for new members. This will be when OTB Teams can once more go into Primary Schools to take regular assemblies.

**Janet Walkey, Waveney & Blyth Deanery
MU Leader. Tel: 01986 872594. E:janetwalkey@hotmail.com**

2021 MU Diary: I have an MU Diary surplus to requirements! It cost me £4.25 and has a grey cover for 2021. Each week is set out on the left hand page and the right hand page is blank for any notes.

Janet Walkey

St Mary's, Halesworth Receipts Summary October 2020

Planned Giving	£1401.00
Gift Aid	£181.00
Fees	£183.00
Collections	£330.00
General	£31.00
TOTAL	£2126.00

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The Dunamis Fellowship Britain & Ireland are offering this as a special Christmas event

It will be a 90-minute Zoom event, including worship, prayer, Bible readings, and some short teaching about how the Holy Spirit has always been present from Genesis to Revelation, in particular through the Christmas Story.

Thursday 17th December @ 7.30pm

*You need to register to receive your personal
access link to the Zoom calls
(80 spaces available).*

Go to www.dunamis.org.uk



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News from our Sister Churches

HALESWORTH & BRAMFIELD UNITED REFORMED CHURCHES

Dear Friends,

Like all the churches, we went through the 'roller-coaster' of re-opening (in a limited way with precautions) and having to close again. It is particularly hard for those who can't connect through Zoom. And we can't be sure, at the time of writing, what the situation will be after 'lockdown 2'.

We hope to be back to gathered morning worship – and as soon as we can, some kind of parent & toddlers or family-focused gathered activity. But our Advent Bible Studies (Monday mornings @10.30am) will be Zoom only.

In the midst of all this ongoing uncertainty God's faithfulness is the one thing we **can** rely on. We have recently been using a very moving new worship song: "Sovereign Over Us". It has themes about God meeting us in our sorrow, teaching us to trust... The Chorus (singing to God) is:

Your plans are still to prosper
You have not forgotten us
You're with us in the fire and the flood
You're faithful forever
Perfect in love
You are sovereign over us

You can find it on Youtube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vw5osFG4WZk>

We are discerning a growing prayer call to bring the Nation before God, specifically repenting - on behalf of ourselves and the whole community – for the ways we live, speak and act as if God is not real or not relevant. We are praying that the experience of Covid, which has shaken all our 'certainties' will lead many to re-assess and seek relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Blessings

Jon



The
United
Reformed
Church



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Festive Halesworth!



We're all planning to be festive ready
and open again on
Thursday December 3rd*
See you then!

*government guidelines permitting

Shop festive locally!



Doorstep Carols in our Villages

Wednesday 16th December, 6pm-7pm

Sing along with Radio Suffolk

We are all warmly invited, as churches, to
organise carol singing on village doorsteps this
Christmas to spread some much needed cheer
and raise funds for local charities.

With the help of Radio Suffolk. Tune in to Radio Suffolk
at Ipswich - 103.9 FM | West Suffolk - 104.6 FM
Lowestoft - 95.5 FM | Aldeburgh - 95.5 FM.

This is also on DAB and also on BBC Sounds.

More details from Revd Jane or Revd Alison

Festive Halesworth



Festive Fridays in December*

LATE NIGHT OPENING

5.30-7.30pm

*government guidelines permitting



DOORSTEP CAROLS



BBC RADIO
Suffolk



DOWNLOAD

Visit the website doorstepcarols.co.uk
and download the words.



TUNE IN

The carols will be broadcast on **your local BBC
Radio station** to help us all stay in time
and in tune (& via BBC Sounds on the 24th)



SING

Simply sing along on the night, in household
bubbles only - Help us spread the word with
your neighbours!

Raising money for local charities

www.doorstepcarols.co.uk

Book exchange in
St. Mary's Halesworth

Working in partnership with the
Halesworth Volunteer Service/Covid response team

*Phone trees / buddy & good
neighbour schemes*

Zoom Bible study
group

Listening ear service

*Community Larder /
Foodbank*

Churches together
in the Blyth Valley
online worship

***Wednesdays Cafe
Church via Zoom***

Maintained contact with our schools
and care homes

Community partnerships in our villages

'LEAF' - Lived experience advisory forum

Sunday worship live streamed on
Zoom and Facebook

PRAYER - WORSHIP - COMMUNITY - LOVE

THANK YOU
St Mary's Halesworth
For donating 20 bags of food, equivalent to 200 meals
Your donations make a BIG difference
to local people in crisis.

WORSHIP AND PRAYER
IN THE BLYTH VALLEY

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Coronavirus left you
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COMMUNITY
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**www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk
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Nine Team Churches OPEN
daily for Private Prayer

Volunteers to shop/get medication

Pastoral ministry prayer daily

**Daily service AM & PM on the
Blyth Valley Facebook page**

Gathered worship in Eight Team Churches

**The Team has been deepened and enriched over the year
by some of the challenges we faced**

Dialogues des Carmelites

At the front of the stage some fourteen women, former Carmelite nuns, stand huddled in a group. Some are old, barely able to walk. Others are middle aged, and one or two stand determined and resolute in their youth and strength. All have been told that they are no longer permitted to be nuns, but are compelled by the French Revolutionaries to return to secular life. The youngest in the group, a novice nun named Constance of St Denis, looks around as if waiting for the arrival of someone else.

The date is July 1794 and the French Revolutionaries, having abolished the monarchy and the aristocracy, have now turned their attention to the Church, which is under a period of intense persecution, with priests, monks and nuns the prime target. The dreaded guillotine has been set up in central Paris and the Carmelites have been condemned to death by this cruel method. Off stage the swish on the guillotine can be clearly heard as, one by one, beginning with the oldest and most infirm, the Carmelites begin the long march to martyrdom, with the abuse and catcalls of the enemies of the Church echoing in their ears.

Dolefully, they begin singing as they walk. The tune and words of the *Salve Regina* echo round the stage, becoming more and more reduced in volume as the grim procession continues. Only one or two Carmelites are left and Constance is waiting to begin her walk. As she looks round one more Carmelite joins her, Blanche, and together they make their way to execution and martyrdom. We hear the guillotine fall for the last time, the crowds go home wondering, the music dies away to silence and the audience break out spontaneously into wild applause for the orchestra and singers before they take their bow on stage.

Such is the final scene in the opera composed in 1956 by the French composer Francis Poulenc and first performed at La Scala, Milan, on 26th January 1957. La Scala had asked Poulenc to compose a ballet for them, but the composer replied that he already had the subject of a new opera in his mind and so the Carmelites made their first appearance on the stage, at what must be one of the most moving operas composed in the twentieth century.

The story opens shortly before the beginning of the French Revolution when Blanche de la Force informs her widowed father and her brother of her decision to become a novice

nun. Her father and brother are appalled – Blanche is very quiet and shy and they don't know how she will cope in the convent. But she is accepted and on her first day another novice nun, Constance, informs her that it has been revealed to her that they will die on the same day, and in the near future.

After some time has passed it is clear, even in the convent, that the French church is destined for a time of unparalleled persecution. Blanche's brother visits her and implores her to join the family and travel to safety in Switzerland or England. But Blanche is determined: she will not abandon her vows. Similarly the convent chaplain holds the final service in the chapel. The nuns suggest that he, too, finds a place of safety, but he tells them that this would be a gross dereliction of his ordination vows to leave his flock at such a perilous time.

The inevitable day comes when the nuns are arrested for not accepting the rules of the Revolution. One of the soldiers confides in Constance and Blanche that he too is a Christian believer. He used to serve as Sacristan in his local church and regarded the parish priest as a brother. To his shame and regret he has compromised his faith and become one of the Revolutionaries.

In the confusion of the arrest, Blanche slips away and returns to her old home. But she finds it empty and ransacked by the Revolutionaries. She realises that her place is with Constance and the other Carmelites waiting to suffer martyrdom. And so she returns to fulfil her destiny.

We are told by those who have studied the history of the French Revolution that, whatever their hostility to the Church, the people were thoroughly disgusted with the pointless execution of the innocent Carmelites. The Reign of Terror could not continue, a new form of government was introduced and a few years later, Napoleon became Emperor and Christianity was restored throughout France. Churches, cathedrals, abbeys and monasteries were re-opened.

But the memory of the Carmelites lived on, and their burial place can be found in Paris to this very day. As we read of severe persecution of Christians throughout the world, maybe Poulenc's message is more relevant today than it was when the opera was first performed 63 years ago.

George Long

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THE COMMUNITY LARDER

Big, big thank you's from the Community Larder are due to HawWood Farm and to Matthew Waters (*pictured below*). Matthew did a huge shop and brought tons of items we really need and HawWood Farm brought us tons of treats, which we also really needed. Thanks guys!

A huge shout out too goes to Brewin Dolphin who recently gave a lovely substantial grant of £250 to the Community Larder - we will be able to get some lovely Christmas extras for our Christmas hampers with that.

We also receive our monthly FARESHARE crates - we are so grateful to each and every individual who donates in whatever way - goods, time, or money... every penny is used to improve our larder service for those who need an extra boost for whatever reason.

In just one week, at the end of November, the Community Larder served over 50 people. Saturday mornings are very busy. Pictured below are two of our fantastic volunteers - Jo and Lisa, re-stocking during a break in proceedings.

The Community Larder desperately needs: Breakfast cereals, shampoo, evaporated milk, tinned lentils, strawberry jam, custard and salad cream.

AND nice small *Christmassy* things (chocolates, Christmas puds and mince pies, chocolate coins, crackers etc, treat nuts and nibbles for our Christmas hampers please.

Please telephone the Revd Jane Held on 07771 556391 for details of how to donate items.



Quiet Reflection during Advent

As well as the course the bible study group are following, we are running a short Advent course on three consecutive Thursday evenings in December. The sessions will include images, poetry and bible readings for reflection.

Sadly the sessions will be over Zoom but if you would like a copy of the materials to study on your own, please let us know.

Thursday 3rd December 7pm – Theme - “Shadows”

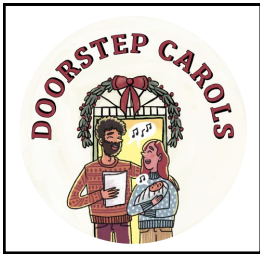
Thursday 10th December 7pm – Theme - “Waiting”

Thursday 17th December 7pm – Theme - “Messengers”

If you would like to register or have materials sent to you, please contact
Revd Alison Alder at alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk
or 01502 478855.

We hope you will be able to join us.

Revd Linda Berry and Revd Alison Alder



CAROLS ON THE DOORSTEP

The Lightwave Community are working with Radio Suffolk to get everyone singing carols on their doorsteps at 6pm on 16th December.

Please reserve the date and encourage your streets and neighbourhoods to join in. We will encourage singers to give to local charities:-

The national website for Doorstep Carols (www.doorstepcarols.co.uk) are happy to put up half a dozen Suffolk Charities on their website for people to donate to.

To be included, the cause should be meeting social need in Suffolk and be capable of receiving donations through Just Giving. They will need to send Archdeacon Sally Gaze a picture and a short description of the charity.

If you would like to recommend a charity to be included, please email: archdeacon.sally@cofesuffolk.org - the name of

the charity and ideally the person whom she should contact with their email and telephone number.



Christmas 2020

Unlike any Christmas in memory this one is going to be different

- ❖ We know it's hard to plan;
- ❖ We know the goal posts keep changing;
- ❖ We know singing is still not possible (but who knows....it may be!);
- ❖ The rule of six create complications as does the number we can fit into churches with social distancing.

BUT put on those Christmas-themed face coverings and join us for:

1. **LIGHT UP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! For Christmas – illuminate a window of your house with a Christmas story or carol theme (prizes for the best).**
2. **And lots of things around all our villages in the Christmas season!**



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Keep warm & safe this winter



Blyth Valley Ministry Team



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Assistant Curate

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& Friday)**



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**E: alisonalder@
hotmail.co.uk**
**(off duty Monday
Tuesday & Friday)**



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Linda Berry**
Assistant Curate

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Huntingfield, IP19 0PU
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**(off duty Thursday
& Friday)**

The Revd Vic Hopkins *Honorary Associate Priest*
Tel: 01986 875934
Email: csninefour@btinternet.com

The Revd David Sochon *Honorary Associate Priest*
Tel: 01986 781151
Email: davidsochon@googlemail.com

The Revd Malcolm Walkey *Honorary Associate Priest*
Tel: 01986 872594
Email: malcolmwalkey@hotmail.co.uk

The Revd Pam Bayliss *Honorary Associate Minister (Methodist)*
Tel: 01502 471763 *(Foodbank)*
Email: revbayliss@btinternet.com

Diana Gardiner *Reader, also Chaplain at HMP and YOI*
Tel: 01986 784174 *Warren Hill and Hollesley Bay.*
Email: osmg.diana@gmail.com

*If telephoning, please always leave a message,
if there is no one available to take your call.*

Team Council Contacts

Geoffrey Kiddy: *Lay Chair of Team Council*
Email: mail@wisettlodge.co.uk
Pedro Cockerton: *Team Treasurer*
Tel: 01986 873431. Email: treasurer.bvtm@gmail.com
Carolyn Clarke: *Clerk to Team Council & Team Administrator.* **Tel: 01986 875941 or 07752 275328.**
Email: office.bvtm@gmail.com

CHURCHWARDENS - FIRST POINT OF CONTACT FOR LIFTS

PARISH	CHURCHWARDENS	CONTACT
Blyford	Alison Cackett	01986 874442
Bramfield	Robert Gamble	01502 478682
Chediston	Graeme Williams Veronica Downing	01986 875342 01986 873184
Cookley	Jane Evers	janeevers@btinternet.com
Halesworth	Jason Busby John Ball	01986 873336 01986 874962
Heveningham	Camilla Warrillow Janet Pleasance	01986 798408 01986 798533
Holton	John Hewlett Chris Knevett	01986 875913 01986 872467
Huntingfield	Emma Ward	01986 785343
Linstead	Malcolm Heath	01986 785289
Spexhall	Fred Woods Janet Sochon	01986 781256 01986 781151
Thorington	Trish & Mike Gower	01502 478267
Wenhaston	Jonathan Alder	01502 478855
Wisett	Geoffrey Kiddy Nick Evans	01986 873173 01986 872372

Karen Wynne Evans - *Team Choir Director*
Tel: 01986 873431
Email: karen.wynne.evans@virgin.net

Jason Busby - *Organist - Halesworth, Holton and Team*
Tel: 01986 873336 Mobile: 07817 863533
Email: jasonbusby@yahoo.co.uk

Blyth Valley Times

is published monthly by the **Blyth Valley Team Ministry**.

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Please ensure all copy is sent to blyth.valley.times@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE: Deadline for ALL copy for the January 2021 issue is:

Thursday 10th December 2020. Publishing date: Friday 17th December 2020.

Advertising: Advertising starts from only £48 per year.

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St Mary's Church, Steeple End, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8LL. Tel: **07752 275328**.

BVTM: office.bvtm@gmail.com

BVTimes: blyth.valley.times@gmail.com



HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU? NEED A LISTENING EAR???

*If you or someone you know needs a prayer or
you have something on your mind or heart
WE ARE HERE FOR YOU*

If you live in Halesworth, Wissett, Spexhall, Chediston, Linstead, Walpole, Heveningham, Ubbeston, Huntingfield or Cookley: **Rev'd Jane is at the end of her phone (07771 556391) call, text or email jane@janeheld.co.uk**

If you live in Wenhaston, Thorington, Bramfield, Blyford, Holton: **Rev'd Alison is at the end of her phone (01502 478855) call, text or email alisonalder@hotmail.co.uk**

WORSHIP AND PRAYER IN THE BLYTH VALLEY

You can join in a daily service (on Facebook - Blyth Valley Churches Suffolk page) - 9am Monday - Friday (currently not on Wednesdays); 9.30am Sat/Sun; 9.30pm all week, 10am Zoom café worship

• AND/OR

You can use a service we have prepared for use at home at the same time as we are worshipping – available on www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk or by post

• AND/OR

And you can contact Jane (07771 556391) or Alison (07584416277) for a private prayer and worship service on the phone

ECUMENICAL CLERGY

The Revd Peter Rayson,
Wenhaston Methodist
Church Minister

38 Ashburnham Way,
Carlton Colville NR33 8SJ

Tel: 01502 560178

Email: revpeterrayson@gmail.com

Jon Sermon, URC Minister
Halesworth & Bramfield URC,
Quay Street, Halesworth IP19 8EP

Tel: 01986 873761

Email: jon@sermons.me.uk

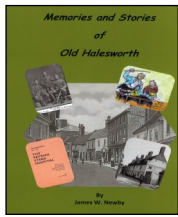
Father Richard Ireson
Roman Catholic Priest
St Edmund King & Martyr Roman
Catholic Church, Church Farm Lane
Halesworth IP19 8SY
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John Hewlett	01986 875913	johnfhewlett@btinternet.com
Eileen Salmon	07938 199067	
Janet Walkey	01986 872594	janetwalkey@hotmail.com

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*Proceeds from the sale of this book
will be donated to St Mary's Regeneration Fund*

VISIT THE BLYTH VALLEY TEAM MINISTRY WEBSITE:

www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk
for the latest information on Services etc.



There are lots of news items on
our Facebook page too.

Find us at:
blyth valley churches suffolk



CAFÉ WORSHIP

WEDNESDAYS – 10.00AM

ALL WELCOME TO JOIN US ON ZOOM

CONTACT Revd Jane FOR THE CODE
TO USE TO JOIN IN

You've made sure that your nearest and
dearest are safe and your immediate
circle of neighbours is sorted.

**Please let us know if there's anyone
else that you think might need us.**

- Shopping
- Prescriptions
- A phone chat
- Advice
- Foodbank/vouchers



**Things are changing but
we are still here to help.**

Call Halesworth Volunteer Centre 01986 875600
or email covid@halesworthvc.co.uk

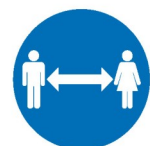
We must keep on protecting each other.



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES



If you need help from Waveney Foodbank you will need a referral voucher.

Just call one of our partner agencies:

Citizens Advice National Helpline 0808 208 2138
South Norfolk Early Help Hub 01508 533933
Halesworth Volunteer Centre 01986 875600

There are collection places for Foodbank donations in Bramfield, Chediston, St Mary's Halesworth, Halesworth Co-op, Holton, Rumburgh, Spexhall (2), Wenhamston and Wissett.

If anyone who is willing to host a box outside their home, please could you let the Revd Jane Held know: (07771 556391).



You can now donate from £1 to £100
Just text the word **FOODBOX** then the amount to 70085.

So to donate £3 Text **FOODBOX 3** to 70085

If you don't want further information from us

Text **FOODBOXNOINFO 3** to 70085

Texts will cost your donation amount and 2 messages

Registered charity number 1151679 registered in England and Wales



You now need to Self-refer at all our centres

Visiting the Foodbank is classed as an essential journey

We operate strict cleaning and social distancing measures

Diss: Hope Church Mon –Thurs 10-12pm Fri 11-12pm

Beccles: St Luke's Church Mon and Fri 2-3pm

Beccles Baptist Church Wed 10:30-12:30

Halesworth: St Marys Church Wed 10:30 –11:30

Harleston: St Johns Church Tues 2-2:45pm Fri 3-3:45pm

Bungay: Community Centre Tues 10-11am Fri 2-3pm

Long Stratton: St Marys Church Fri 12:30—2:30pm

Loddon Area call 01508 521179 leave a message for

Poringland Area call 07707 790680 leave a message

Framlingham Area call 07388 791126 leave a message

Stradbroke Area call 01379 388493 leave a message

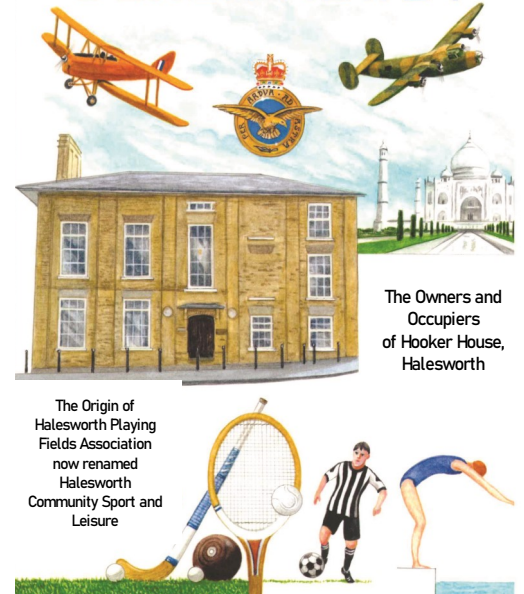
If you are struggling to afford food

please go to your nearest centre

If you are struggling to afford food and self isolating call 07484 394749

Visiting the Foodbank is classed as an essential journey

The Life and Times of DEREK NEWBY



Copies available from Halesworth Bookshop

The Owners and Occupiers of Hooker House, Halesworth

The Origin of Halesworth Playing Fields Association now renamed Halesworth Community Sport and Leisure



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Independent Living Centre & Show Home at
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(opposite the Library) Tel: **01986 873803**



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BHTA



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News from Town & Villages



Blyford

Correspondent

Alison Cackett 01986 874442

acackett@me.com

Bramfield

Temporary Correspondent:

Jane Held

www.bramfieldandthorington.suffolk.cloud

Hi all, a short column this month (largely because your temporary correspondent is VERY pushed for time. (Note: anyone willing to take it on would be a tremendous help!). Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Foodbank box at the garage – it is very gratefully received. Christmas extras would be a wonderful extra for someone struggling at Christmas time, if you can spare a moment to get and drop something off!

Christmas arrangements are all very tentative as we have no idea whether we will be able to congregate, or celebrate Christmas worship together in any shape or form. There will be something really lovely we hope, which makes allowances for all sorts of restrictions. We will post notices about it all over Bramfield, once it is all agreed, and we will ask Andrew to circulate it round his email group, but at the very least, there will be a beautiful tree, all decorated... with special somethings to be confirmed.

The school are helping us by hosting the posada for a week too – Mary, Joseph, the donkey, the sheep and the Llama

(the Llama being a tradition birthed at Bramfield school three years ago!) will visit on their way to Bethlehem Halesworth.

We will try and keep everyone posted in these uncertain times, but, whatever happens, have a very, very, happy and blessed Christmas.

Chediston

Correspondent Sally Aldous

01986 873363

www.chediston.suffolk.gov.uk

We anticipate Christmas with bated breath, whatever the outcome it will be like none other.

It was very sad that we were not able to come together to celebrate Remembrance Sunday and remember all those who fell in WWI and WW2 and other conflicts more recently. However, on the Saturday before, the magnificent broadcast from the Royal Albert Hall on television went a long way to remedy our feelings. Tribute was paid to all those who gave their lives, albeit “behind closed doors”. Dame Vera Lynn also received many plaudits for her wartime efforts, especially when she sang her well-known songs to brighten the prisoners of war in Burma and this was well portrayed.

What an extraordinary time we are living in which is causing so much hardship and uncertainty. The one ray of hope is the promise of a vaccine which hopefully will protect us all.

I would like to thank Jane for sending us a copy of Bishop Martin’s sermon

when he preached at Halesworth on 1st November which, unfortunately, I was unable to attend. Also, many thanks to Jane for writing to us all on 2nd November re Remembrance Sunday and to Alison for her letter on 10th November. You really keep us in touch at this exceedingly difficult time and raise our spirits.

Graeme Williams writes:

By the time you read this latest missive, we will know whether we are able to have another go at having shared services together in our church. If Boris so decrees it, we will give it a try! These days it seems everything we plan comes with so many ifs, buts and maybes – all very difficult.

Christmas Carol Service

Clearly, we will not be able to have our traditional Christmas Eve Carol Service, with a full church and extra chairs required, but planning is underway to try to hold a shortened outdoor carol singing event, with appropriate social distancing of course. Please keep an eye on church and parish noticeboards, along with the village website and other means of communication.

Christmas Fair

Of course, our wonderful Christmas Fair has gone the same way as most events this year, which is really unfortunate, not only for church funds but also the opportunity for such a lovely community meeting of villagers. Once again, we are trying to run innovative ways of extracting your cash via on-line methods. By the time this publication emerges, you may well know what cunning plans we have!! In the meantime, Joyce Gregory is willing to sell her famous runner bean chutney and jams for church funds, from home. So, if you don’t want to miss out, please give her a call and place your order. Her phone number is 01986 785392. Ann Williams is making face masks in Christmas fabrics for the same cause, so please give her a call too, if you fancy cheering yourself, family and friends up, on 01986 875342.

And another of our church supporters, Judy Fossett, has offered to take orders for her dinky Christmas cakes. They are



traditional fair fayre (see what I did there?!), and make great presents. To place your order, give Judy a ring as soon as you can, on 01986 785389.

Chediston & Linstead WI

The committee have convened, appropriately distanced, to share news and views but alas no members meetings have been planned for the foreseeable future. Speakers have been booked from next April and hopefully some sense of normality will have returned by then. During lockdown, the WI was able to give some financial support from club funds to various local charities.

Whatever happens between now and Christmas probably the only thing we can guarantee is that the festive season will be different.

We truly hope that you can make the best of Christmas with family and friends. Who knows, perhaps the real meaning of Christmas will be able to cut through the commercial nonsense.

Have a wonderful Christmas and using the now hackneyed mantra for 2020, please stay safe!

Halesworth

Correspondent Jason Busby
01986 873336

2020 will be remembered for so many reasons. But I would like to focus on one story which has brought joy to so many. One story which inspires me to keep making music. One story which demonstrates why music is at the heart of our lives and worship. 80 year old Paul Harvey, composer and music teacher, was diagnosed with dementia in 2019. Paul's son gave him a challenge to create a piece of music from just four

notes. Two million hits on Twitter later, the piece recorded by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra with a single released this is truly a demonstration of the healing power of music. Mr Harvey's family hope the attention will get people talking about how music can help people with dementia. If you haven't heard the piece go to:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p08w7wh2>

or simply search Paul Harvey and you will easily find the piece to download. Sending love and Christmas Blessings to Mr Harvey and thanks for the beautiful music.

Christmas is just around the corner, facing the prospect of Christmas like no other with limited services, no Christingle or midnight services. No seven verses of *O come all ye faithful* with the triumphant final verse descant! Where are we going to for our fix of music and worship?? I'm sure *Carols from Kings* will feature on TV in some form. Many of our Cathedrals will live stream a Carol Service, perhaps we will here in the Blyth Valley. Don't despair with a flick of the radio, TV, live stream, you will find a Carol to sing along to somewhere. You will find details of all our Christmas Services in *BVTimes*. However do pop into St Mary's at some point and see the Crib under the High Altar. 'May the almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of angels bring us all. Amen'.

Just a thought, you can also go on the 'In Harmony' website and many many Christmas videos are being uploaded, sung by local singers from across the diocese visit:

<https://stedscathedral.org/music/inharmony/christmas-2020/>

Do you remember the 'blood swept lands and seas of red' art installation created in the moat of the Tower of London, between July and November 2014? It commemorated the centenary of the outbreak of WWI and consisted of 888,246 ceramic red poppies, each intended to represent one British or Colonial serviceman killed in the War. Remembrance Sunday was celebrated here with a socially-distanced gathering around the War Memorial at 3pm on November 8th. Thanks go to Sarah, Sophie and Emilia Busby and Gwen and Simon Woolner who, along with myself, spent a couple of hours cleaning and sweeping the arboretum and War Memorial. Thanks also to Jane Held, Jon Sermon and Father Richard for leading us through the act of Remembrance. Did you see the new flag flying from St Mary's?



Thank you to Sophie (pictured above) who laid the wreath for St Mary's. 'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old; age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning We will remember them'.

Following a meeting recently with the Revd Canon Richard Henderson (Rural Dean), John Hewlett, Emma Ward and I were set the task to update the Parish Profile, which is the document which accompanies the job advertisement for the post of Rector/Priest in Charge. We



wanted to add a page on 'The Churches Response to Covid-19', where we bullet-pointed everything which has been achieved. This created a rather striking page demonstrating the grace of a community coming together in a crisis and how the Team has been deepened and enriched over the year by some of the challenges we have faced. (None of this of course would have been possible without the driving force of Jane, Alison and an army of volunteers THANK YOU ALL). The page we created is included on page 12 of this issue.

It was a blessing to have Bishop Martin with us for a Team Service celebrating All Saints with a service of Light & Life on November 1st for the departed. The Commemoration of the Faithful Departed celebrates the saints in a more local and intimate key. It allows us to remember with thanksgiving before God those whom we have known more directly: those who gave us life, or who nurtured us in faith and to remember our loved ones departed. To see the pulpit covered in hearts with names of those we have lost was beautiful. Even if we were worshipping with Covid-19



restrictions. Hear us, O merciful Father, as we remember in love those whom we have placed in your hands. Acknowledge, we pray, the sheep of your own fold, lambs of your own flock, sinners of your own redeeming. Enfold them in the arms of your mercy, in the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and in the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.

A Christmas blessing for you all: May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary and **the peace of the Christ-child** be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of **God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit**, be among you and remain with you always.

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S 50/50 CLUB

The result of the November draw is as follows: 1st prize Ann Baldwin; 2nd prize W Pagan; 3rd prize G Woolner.

Holton

**Temporary Correspondent
John Hewlett**

johnfhewlett@btinternet.com

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

On Sunday 8th November there was a short Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in St Peter's churchyard, led by Chris Knevet and attended by about 28 people. The name of Holton villagers who died in the two World Wars were read out, wreaths were laid on behalf of St Peter's, the Royal British Legion and Holton Parish Council; the Last Post was played and the two minute's silence observed, lest we forget.



Later in the day at 12 noon, a similar Act of Remembrance was held at the USAAF memorials at Holton (Halesworth) Airfield, read by Richie Pymar and attended by some 20 people. Wreaths were laid at the three memorial stones by local people and a representative of the USAF from Lakenheath.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

We expect to be unable to hold our usual Carol service and Christingle service this year due to Covid-19 current restrictions. But we are planning a Service of readings and music at 11.15am on Sunday 20th to be led by John Hewlett (Government and Archbishop willing). We regret that owing to limited space for physical distancing, seats will have to be booked beforehand: please contact John Hewlett **01986 875913** or Chris Knevet **01986 872467**. **First come, first booked!**

Best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas from John Hewlett and Chris Knevet, Churchwardens.

National Christingle service for The Children's Society - 13th December

You can take part in a National Christingle Event on Sunday 13th December which will be an online service. 'You're invited to feel the magic on a grand scale'. The actual service takes place at 9am, but it will be streamed onto Facebook and YouTube, so you can follow it at any time. You can find out more on the websites below:

churchofengland.org/ComfortAndJoy
about a week before (6th Dec) and on the Children's Society Facebook page:

facebook.com/childrenssociety
You should be able to download an Order of Service.

Last year there were over 5,500 Christingle services in support of The Children's Society, raising over £1.2m to help vulnerable children and young people in this country. The need is even greater this year.

Children's Society Boxes

Thank you to all those who responded to my appeal to bring their boxes to St

Peter's in October. At the time of writing, about 26 out of 41 have been emptied and the contents counted and banked, thanks to the sterling efforts of our church Treasurer Simon. Thank you Simon, it's a task very few of us would consider undertaking.

So far the total received is about £500. This is fantastic, considering most of us have not been paying for shopping with cash this year. It included a number of cheques made out to The Children's Society. We usually raise £600 - £700, which includes the proceeds of the coffee morning, so we are doing well. I'm sure The Children's Society will be very pleased to receive our donation towards their invaluable work with children and young people.

**Janet Walkey, Local co-ordinator for
The Children's Society for St Peter's
Holton and St Mary's Halesworth**

WORD OF THE YEAR

Collins give us a word for each year,
Received with a grin or maybe a tear.
Could it be something newly invented,
or recycled like "unprecedented"?
Would it be full of rhyme and rhythm,
or the Education Department's
"Algorithm"?

Accepted with neither smile nor frown,
they have safely adopted "Lockdown".

Simon Larbey

Bird boxes for sale

Individual ones £6; triple ones £10. All income to St Peter's Holton. Tel Chris K on 01986 872467.



Holton & Blyford Village Hall Tote

Winners for November: 1st prize £25 Rob Garner; 2nd prize £10 Mike Davis; 3rd prize £5 Bert Green; 4th prize £5 Helen George.

Linstead

Correspondent

Malcolm Heath 01986 785289

www.linstead.suffolk.gov.uk

THIS WEIRD NON-YEAR CONTINUES TO twist and turn, throwing up challenges by the minute. If you want an analogy,

think of Laocoön struggling with the serpent Covid.



I'm sure we all sympathise with him as we try to plan forward.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY WAS memorable for its limited and low-key commemoration, with no service at Linstead. More than ever before, our watchword has to be 'Lest we forget'. Linstead does have a claim to fame in that it has, according to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the only recorded embroidered war memorial in the world.



The absence of a visible external War Memorial has engendered a tradition of planting Poppy Crosses just by the church gates (or where the church gates normally are). So here, amidst the autumn leaves and in the pale November sunshine, is Linstead's



garden of remembrance. The crosses commemorate the five sons of the parish who died in the First World War. With them are four crosses in memory of the four German airmen who died when their aircraft crashed in Linstead whilst attacking Metfield Aerodrome. Theirs was the last enemy aircraft to crash in Suffolk and it happened just a few days before hostilities ceased in Europe. The last cross is a personal one and represents my uncle who died in a raid on Brest in 1940. I never met him and my aunt remarried later in the war. He was, in the family, very much the forgotten man and this, I feel, brings into sharp relief, the importance of Remembrance Sunday. So many who died are forgotten, not least because all who remembered them personally, are now dead themselves. It is just so important that the memory of their sacrifice continues, even if they themselves have passed out of memory. I would urge anyone in Linstead who has a particular person that they want to be remembered, to add a cross of their own, next year.

I NOW HAVE TO WEAR MY CHURCH Treasurer's hat. This year we have to raise £5628 as our contribution to the Diocesan Quota. This pays for all the running expenses of the Diocese, including the stipends of our priests (when we have any). Remarkably, for a parish of just over a 100 souls, each year we raise our Quota, or at least get very close. There has been no opportunity to hold fund-raising events this year and we are looking at a considerable shortfall. Meanwhile, most of the expenses of the Diocese continue. I am therefore making a special appeal for funds to help us pay as much of our quota as possible (this year we have £4,128 still outstanding). Please send cheques to me, payable to Linstead PCC. Very many thanks.

SO WHAT ABOUT CHRISTMAS? I HEAR you all cry. What I am proposing is this: Our regular Carols by Candlelight will be held (Lockdown(s) permitting) at 3pm on Sunday 20th December. Now we will not be able to accommodate our normal church-full, so those of you who would like to attend, please contact me. It will be on a 'first come, first served' basis, and all seats will be reserved. I cannot be specific about numbers, because it will depend on the size of family bubbles. Mindful of the requirements of social distancing, I will juggle around with applications to get

as many in safely as I can. Masks must be worn. Lessons will be read as normal, but there can be no congregational singing. However, this gives us a golden opportunity for some very interesting music. I have some ideas but would appreciate suggestions from you for favourite pieces, as long as you can supply the recordings. It will be a very different experience, but

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT

**The annual service of
Christmas music and
readings will be held on
Sunday 20th December
at 3pm.**

This is an event for the whole family so please do join us. There may be seasonal al-fresco refreshments afterwards

**And don't forget to bring
MASKS, a candle
and candle-holder!**

**PLEASE REMEMBER THAT
SEATS MUST BE BOOKED
BEFOREHAND ON A**

**FIRST COME - FIRST SERVED
BASIS. Contact Malcolm
Heath (01986 785289 or
mlheath@aol.com)**

This event will be subject to the regulations in force at the time and may have to be cancelled.

potentially could be great fun and very Christmassy! There can be no refreshments in the church but, miraculously, some may appear in the churchyard afterwards.

CHEDISTON & LINSTAD W I USED THE magic of the telephone to hold its AGM. By the simple expedient of 'phoning round, it was agreed that the present officers and committee should stay. However, no meetings are planned until the coast is clear, Covidly speaking.

IT ONLY REMAINS FOR ME TO THANK you for your support and wish you all a very happy, but above all, healthy Christmas.

ROTAS FOR DECEMBER

DATE: FLOWERS & CLEANING

6th	No Service
13th	No Service
20th	Mrs P Keable & Mr D Keable With general help for Christmas
27th	No Service

Spexhall

Correspondent Janet Sochon
[http://spexhall.onesuffolk.net/
Home/](http://spexhall.onesuffolk.net/Home/)

It was a strange, but moving, Remembrance Sunday service this year under the pandemic restrictions. Fred had cleared away piles of fallen leaves so that we were able to stand in the Churchyard suitably masked, sanitised, and socially distanced round the memorial in the sunshine. We remembered with respect and thanksgiving the sacrifice of so many

who had died for our freedom and I could not help but notice as we stood in silence that while we reflected on death, new life was springing up beneath our feet as the primrose leaves were beginning to emerge to give us new hope for next year and the future. Hope is one of the gifts that Christianity brings to the world even amid the present anxieties.

As I sit to write Christmas cards to those friends we have known for so long and may not see for a while, I find the cards which feature words such as "hope", "joy", "love", and "peace" are so much more positive and appealing than pictures of robins or reindeer or fat Father Christmases.

We look forward to the ending of these most stringent precautions so that services may resume over the Christmas season... details will be announced soon. In the meantime, I wish you all the joys and blessings of Christ's message of love.

Thorington

Correspondent Trish Gower
01502 478267

The PCC held their annual meeting in the open air and all the church officers remain in place. Thanks very much again to Jane and the PCC members for all they do to keep the church in good shape!

Due to exceptional circumstances with Covid-19, the church is not open and there are no services planned until next year, just support and worship at other local churches as detailed in the magazine.

We will be back in touch with updates and for 2021 as soon as we can, in the meantime wishing you all a good winter and keep well in these strange times.

Any queries about the church, do contact Trish.

Wenhaston

Correspondent
Margaret Bloomfield
01502 478502

margaret@wrush.plus.com

Here we are again after a month of lockdown. We are all hoping that the numbers of Covid-19 infections has decreased and we are able to resume

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alternatively by email to emma.jones@suffolkfamilycarers.org**

NHS
James Paget
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our activities, but time will tell. Therefore, I am unable to publish any service times as yet until we know what the Government decides on what we are allowed to do.

Meanwhile, the Blyth Valley Team of churches has been doing its best to interact with people through streamed services, Zoom meetings and services, and an Evening Candle prayer every night. The church folk are also involved with making sure the needy have enough to eat via the Foodbank and the Community Larder. The congregations have been in touch with people who are not on line to make sure they are not forgotten. There have been a lot of prayers for those for whom the lockdown has been a difficult time. Your church is here for you.

Here in Wenhaston, every year we donate 5% of our unrestricted income to charity and this year we have sent £475 each to Crisis (the charity for the homeless) and East Anglian Children's Hospices. We have been unable to do any fundraising, but hope these donations will help in some small way.

I do hope that all our readers will have as good a Christmas as is possible, and that you will be able to see your families. God bless you all.

Margaret Bloomfield

WENHASTON FOOTPATH WALKING

Dependent upon Covid-19 restrictions at the time, Gail Attfield will lead a walk on Tuesday 8th December starting at 10am from the main car park at Walberswick. Those who wish to lunch at The Bell in Walberswick will have to arrange direct with the pub (01502 723109).

Wissett

Correspondent

Nick Evans 01986 872372
nickandmaggie@btinternet.com

BVTimes November 2020: "At last a pattern of services is emerging...". Not for long, but we did have our candlelit All Souls Commemoration in traditional fashion, and we did have an outdoor Remembrance Sunday Service led by both Churchwardens, gathered round the porch decorated by Susan Fitch; Hugh Spink tolled the tenor bell and Tobin Lambert read the names. The weather was fair, 26 people and one dog came, and it was good to see that the ceremony was much appreciated by some of the 'wider church community'.

The church is still decorated with red

and rosemary, and the haunting silhouettes of the Great War dead remain in the pews. After all the powder and shot, and an actual PCC on-line vote which favoured a modified Patronal Festival, we shall have to keep St. Andrew's Day 2020 in private after all, remembering how splendid it was last year, with a quarter peal, Jason playing, and Edward in great form, his last celebration with us.

Meanwhile, at present, our rulers are sparing December. We expect to be unable to sing carols in church, quite obviously, but at the time of the usual Carol Service, **6.30pm on Sunday 19th, we plan to have a Service of Readings and Music. It will be necessary to book, through Maggie and me. If more would like to come than we can safely seat, we will put on the same service again at 6.30pm the following day.** This year it is our turn to have the **Midnight Mass of the Nativity at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve, also booked through us please,** but we cannot have the Crib Service. Our first service planned for 2021 is the **Epiphany Service of Light at 6.30pm on Wednesday 6th January.**

St Martin's Summer was short this year, but leaves are falling and autumn tidying up has to be done. Wissett has its own Tierra del Fuego, up Grays Lane.



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Worship: Missing church? So are we, but we still worship every day.

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Daily morning prayer (currently not on Wednesdays): 9am (9.30am Sat); **Daily evening prayer:** 9.30pm;

Eucharist: at 10am every Sunday.

You can join in with us and talk to each other on ZOOM every week by emailing Revd Jane for an invitation for: **Wednesday Café Church** at 10am (Eucharist one week, morning worship the next).

See www.blythvalleychurches.org.uk for the Orders of Service,

or if you want printed copies, please contact Jane and she will post them to you.

OR you can tune into the Church of England Services on the radio or television – see your TV guide.

Prayer: Every day we pray for: All those on our Team prayer list, the world, the church, and those who are in distress, trouble, sickness, or who have died.

We also pray daily:

Monday	The NHS, associated professionals, and all the staff involved	Social Care, residential and home care, carers	All those involved in funeral services
Tuesday	Local businesses, our shops, supermarkets, pharmacies and for our economy	People working in utilities, connectivity services and bin collection, road maintenance etc	Armed forces, police, fire service and first responders, prison services and social workers
Wednesday	Our teachers, in schools, universities, and for those in research and for those providing ways to educate, engage and entertain children	Our children and young people whose lives have changed and whose futures look different	All families, apart or together, for all those laid off, made redundant, furloughed or otherwise not able to work
Thursday	Food producers, farmers, food chain workers, delivery drivers,	Staff in supermarkets, shops and those who in creative ways keep us fed, including pubs and restaurants	The foodbank, and the fresh food voucher scheme
Friday	Volunteer organisations and community groups	Our local groups, and organisations managing our responses to caring for and supporting our communities to keep us safe	Our neighbours and friends
Saturday	County, District, Town and Parish Councils, and the County Resilience Group	All local government and public sector staff	Our Town and our villages
Sunday	Ourselves and our families	Our Ministry Team, Elders, Churchwardens and parishes	Our Diocese, our Bishops, Archdeacons and Rural Dean



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Halesworth & District Museum

From the Archives

It seems that Christmas this year may be very different from usual as the world continues its battle with the Corona virus. Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has said, "Plan for the worst and hope for the best.", before adding that, hopefully, it will be all over "...in time for Christmas". This echoes WW1, when ...the British public thought that the First World War would be 'over by Christmas' in 1914...such a common feature of war fiction, memoirs and histories... * An enduring image is that of British and German soldiers playing football on Christmas Day during unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front. We wage a different war now with lockdowns, tiers (and tears), face coverings, (Happy Birthday) hand washing and the social-distancing dance.

In its archives the Museum has an autograph book that belonged to Mrs Ivy Moore, Red Cross volunteer, with entries from soldiers recuperating at the Patrick Stead Hospital during WW1. Private J McLough, who was wounded at Neuve Chapelle, wrote:

"When you take this little book And read the verses through.
Will you think of the one who wrote this, As he often thinks of you".

It is dated 19th November 1915 so he almost certainly spent Christmas at the hospital.

And, undated, DW Ryan, of Royal Field Artillery, wrote:

"A Merry Christmas to all Patrick Stead Nurses".

Some 40 years on and Christmas at Patrick Stead 1953 was reported as follows:

"Christmas week commenced on Sunday evening with carols sung by the Revd Hulbert and St Mary's Church Choir. On Tuesday evening the Beccles Salvation Army played and sang carols. All the carol singers were served with refreshments. Carols were sung in the wards on Christmas Eve by the staff. The entrance hall was decorated as a Swiss Village Scene, the general wards as Swiss summer and winter scenes and the maternity wards with scenes from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. An illuminated Christmas tree (originally given to Holton School by the Earl of Stradbroke) stood in the entrance hall. Christmas Day started with each patient finding a stocking on the bed. The Revd Hulbert conducted Holy Communion in 'A' Ward. Visitors during the morning included Sir Robert and Lady Gooch. Dr Cursham carved the turkey for the patients' Christmas Dinner. The turkey was cooked and delivered by Mr. Ellis. Father Christmas (Mr Clare) visited the Hospital at 3.30pm and distributed presents from the Christmas Trees to each patient and each member of staff. He had a special stocking for Gail Thompson who was born on Christmas Day. Patients' visitors were entertained to tea. Music was enjoyed during the morning and evening with the aid of an amplifier supplied by Mr Ian Carter. On Boxing Day, the patients in 'A' Ward enjoyed a quiz session during the morning and a film show was given in the afternoon by J W and D A Newby. A baby was born on Boxing Day – Stephanie Calver. The staff all worked very hard to make Christmas time a happy one for the patients. The Nursing Staff Party was held in Matron's sitting room on the 1st January".

It would be brave to try to predict where we shall be and how we shall be able to celebrate Christmas 2021. An unknown author wrote:

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future.... It is a wish that every cup may overflow with blessings and that every path may lead to peace".

* *'Over by Christmas': British popular opinion and the short war in 1914* Stuart Hallifax.

Jenny Janes



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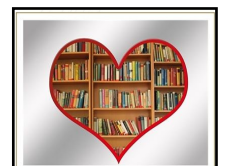
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- * Saturdays and Wednesdays 10.30am - 11.30am
- * Thursdays 9.30am - 10.30am
- * Come and collect up to six books
- * All books quarantined on return for 72 hours (for safety)
- * Social distancing and hand hygiene apply
- * All books from Halesworth Library from stock that was withdrawn before Lockdown



20^a SIGN OF THE FISH

books cards refreshments

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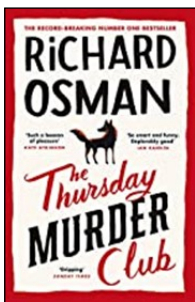


Jolabokafloð

Have you heard of **Jolabokafloð** (literally Yule, or Christmas, Book Flood)? One of Iceland's winter traditions sees everyone give their family a 'flood' of books on Christmas Eve. Introducing the tradition over here would have many benefits I'm sure (not that I'm biased, or anything!) – and what is nicer than curling up with a good book in those days between Christmas and New Year. To help you on your way to establishing your own tradition here are a few suggestions.

Is it only we old 'uns who remember the catchphrase "a Christie for Christmas"? Television has embraced it although it's several decades since a new book has been a possibility, but a good mystery is always welcome.

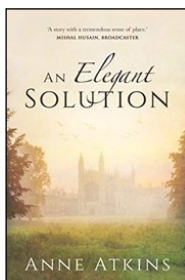
And now for some 'useful' books. We are probably fed up with hearing these are unprecedented times, but to help us navigate the challenges could be:



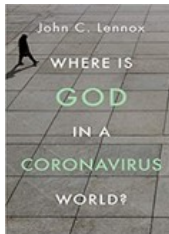
The Thursday Murder Club Only published in September, this is already a runaway bestseller and my favourite read of the year. Reviewers have given it glowing reviews "such a beacon of pleasure" (Kate Atkinson); "So smart and funny. Deplorably good" (Ian Rankin). Four energetic and intelligent pensioners living in a rather posh 21st century retirement village have kept their minds active by trying to solve

photocopied "cold cases" contributed (illegally) by one of their number, a retired police officer. (The others were a spy, a psychiatrist and a Trade Union leader with a dodgy family.) When a real murder affects their community, they enthusiastically deploy their freshly honed skills to keep one step ahead of the police to solve the crime. The characters and plot are multi-layered, the resolution surprising. Meanwhile we all learn a bit more of love and loyalty in trying circumstances.

An Elegant Solution Theo, who is autistic, is a Junior Research Fellow in Number Theory at Cambridge. Prompted by an academic supervisor to demonstrate how to trace the provenance of bitcoins he happens across a shocking revelation, with embarrassing ramifications for the whole University. Being unable to dissemble due to both his Christian faith and his autism Theo places himself in some danger, escalated by a terrorist plot engineered by a childhood acquaintance, a ruthless plot to rock the seat of power, murder the innocent and change the face of Cambridge forever. How all these threats are resolved makes for a gripping read, ending with the 'elegant solution' of the title.

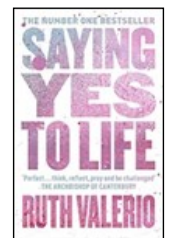


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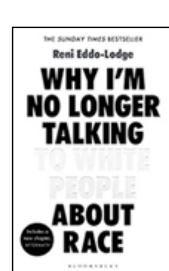


Where is God in a coronavirus world? Is a question that troubles many, and many have felt their faith shaken. John Lennox is both Emeritus Professor of Mathematics and a lecturer in Christian apologetics, his writings are intellectually rigorous and faith - and Bible - informed, and in this case accessible and comforting. It is also a tiny book of just

60 pages, ideal to pop in all your loved ones' Christmas stockings.



Saying YES to life. For everyone who hopes we can 'reset' the world, slow down and respect the environment, and for those who wonder 'how?' Using the six days of creation as a framework, this study and meditation relates resurrection hope to matters of environmental, ethical and social concerns, and shows what it means to be human and a Christian in this context.



In September I introduced *We need to talk about Race* (in the church), in my own reading I followed this with *Why I'm no longer talking (to white people) about Race*, by Reni Eddo-Lodge, which is most illuminating (and very well written). The writer explains that however sympathetic, supportive and non-racist we are we just don't 'get' black experience how it is lived: this goes a good

way to putting that right. This book sparked a national conversation and won many awards.

Val Jennings

For Sign of the Fish

Wishing you all the Joy of Christmas

Good news. God willing and Lockdown rules permitting, *Sign of the Fish* will open on Wednesday mornings during December, from 10am to 12pm, for the sale of books cards and Christmas gifts. Sadly it is not possible to offer refreshments under the new rules. Please 'phone ahead on 07770 465 785 to check the shop is actually open.



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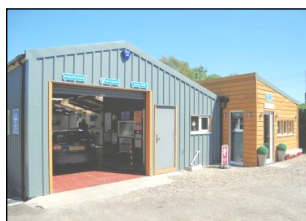
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Judging will be undertaken on the 20th December 2020

