

December 2018 Monthly News



When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

John 8: 12

**St Thomas'
Trowbridge**

**St John's
West Ashton**

**Kingfisher Church
The Mead School**

**Holy Trinity
Trowbridge**

Good News – a personal reflection

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ, the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

The angel’s words to the shepherds must have adorned a thousand Christmas cards and provided the text for countless Christmas sermons over the years. When I speak at school carol services and other special events over the next few weeks, I will be trying to get people to see how remarkable it is that we are still talking about that event 2000 years later, and to ask themselves why that might be. Why not try dropping that question into conversations this Christmas? Just ask: why do you think we are still talking about the birth of Jesus after all these years? It will be fascinating to hear what people say.



2018 has been an eventful year for me: a holiday in America, my Sixtieth birthday... and getting engaged! One aspect of the latter that has taken me by surprise is how genuinely happy the news of our engagement seems to have made so many people. Of course, we knew our families and friends would be pleased for us (although that wasn’t part of the motivation for doing it!), we just weren’t ready for the degree of delight and interest it has all caused. But come to think of it, that’s the nature of good news – people are excited by it, talk a lot about it and can’t wait to pass it on. Our news has been a hot topic for the last few months, but I sincerely doubt people will still be talking about it 2000 years from now. That remarkable feat has been achieved by an altogether more wonderful event – good news, in the midst of political turmoil, that has remained a cause of joy for all people and all time.

So why are people still talking about the Bethlehem birth as Good News so long after the event? Surely it must be for three reasons: firstly, it is true; secondly, it is wonderful; and thirdly, it is powerful. It is inconceivable that we would still be celebrating this birth if it had not really happened – and had a profound impact on the world, then and since. We still call it Good News because the person who was born is wonderful; in fact, he is God with us. And it is powerful because he still has the ability to change lives today, as he did from the beginning.

May the truth, wonder and power of this Good News be real once more in your lives and homes this Christmas.

Allan

Living Nativity

Have you ever wanted to play Mary in a Nativity play; or a shepherd with a tea-towel headdress; or a Wise Man bearing gifts? NOW IS YOUR CHANCE.

There will be a Living Nativity in Trowbridge on Saturday 15 December. Starting at the Civic Centre at 3.30pm; walk through the town; finishing at 4.3pm at St James' Church - where there will be refreshments (mince pies, perhaps!!).

Do come along – it will be fun – and dress as any nativity character.



The Gift of Encouragement.....

A conversation in a house of a very good friend, a clergyman, on facebook:

10.00pm and my wife (a teacher) is still marking.

Me: 'Can I help with that?'

Wife: 'It's phonics, you probably wouldn't understand it.'

Me: 'What age kids do you teach, again?'

Wife: '6 year olds'

Cheers love

and

At a meeting in London a guy comes up to me and says '....., isn't it?' Turns out he's a Vicar now. Last saw him when I was 22 - I apologised for not recognising him, but pretty chuffed that I'm still recognisable 28 years on told my wife, she said 'well, you have got quite an unusual face.'

Her ministry of encouragement is wearing a bit thin this week!!

Help us, Lord, to see ourselves through your loving eyes,
To see what you see in us and to come to realize
That everything that we possess comes directly from you,
The gifts, the talents you've placed within are there for us to use

To reach with hope to those that hurt, to those who've lost their way
It's your gifts, Lord, they're not our own, so take them, Lord, we pray
And use them for your glory, so others may be blessed
And have their spirits lifted and their souls also refreshed

So they can then be challenged to seek more after you,
To be much more empowered for whatever they may do
For each of us have talents that God has placed within
So we can encourage others to have a closer walk with Him

And as we encourage another, we can be encouraged ourselves,
For there needs to be a continual flow and a continual pouring out
And as we do this, we will find insecurities will disappear
And we'll be strengthened in His love to overcome our fears.

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An Extract from Azaria's blogg

Azaria recalls Cossett in Les Miserable:- Her dream is to be safe, to be happy, but above all to be loved. Her story continues, and she is rescued from her troubled life and she goes on to be happy and indeed loved.

And she goes on to say: Recently I visited a children's home here in Guatemala, I was with our street team and we were visiting a little girl who has been rescued from the streets. She is part of family with many difficulties and has suffered a lot in her young life.

She was often the one who her mother would take out her anger on, both verbally and physically. Her older brothers were increasingly taking her to the streets and forcing her to do solvents with them. They themselves are only children. If anyone needed rescue it was her.



Fortunately she was rescued and now she literally lives in a castle on a hill. The children's home where she is now living is just outside the city on a hillside surrounded by trees and beautiful views. The girls' house is a brightly coloured pink and purple castle and every little girl that lives there is seen as a princess. Her future is looking brighter as she is now in a safe place, where people care for her, treat her well and love her - like all children deserve, like all people deserve. It saddens me to think that unlike Cosette this little girl probably didn't have a place to escape to, a place to dream of. She probably didn't know that she could dream or how to do so. Thankfully now she can learn how to dream and see those dreams turn into realities.

Like this little girl, rescued from an abusive life, and Cosette we all desire to be loved, we need to be loved. How incredible is it that we can be, that we are? We are loved by a Good Father, a love that is so great, love that is unconditional, that is pure. What a gift.

We don't need to dream of a castle on a cloud, we can be rescued and know that God has already prepared a place for us in His mansion. A place where we will be safe, happy and loved, a place even more beautiful than a princess castle on a hillside.

You can keep up with Azaria's Blogs on <https://www.streetkidsdirect.org.uk/index.php/blogs/staff-blogs/azaria-spencer>



Remembrance Sunday 11 November 2018

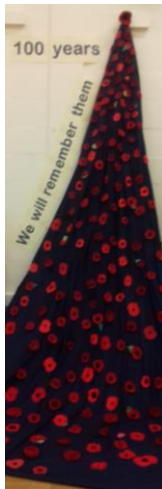
Well done and thank you to everybody who knitted and crocheted poppies for the displays in St Thomas', Kingfisher and St John's. We all received far more poppies than we had expected but each display was beautiful, caring and different churches looked very special.



At St Ts we had the two banners – one with the dates and the other 'We will remember them', we were also able to put strings of poppies around the church. But very poignantly we were able to put 41 poppies on stems in the grass outside of church – one for every member of the parish who was killed in action in that dreadful conflict



Kingfisher worked with the schools and community to make their eye-catching drape



Jean Robertson writes:



The Ladies Did St John's Proud

To commemorate the end of WW1, the country as a whole, held special events and church services. West Ashton was no different. The ladies of the village; WI and friends of St John's were requested to knit or crochet 400 poppies. This was to make two poppy falls, one each side of the chancel – in fact nearly 800 poppies were made, and every poppy was used within the church and grounds. 10 November saw a coffee morning in the church to enable all those who took part in this quest to view the end result. Then in the village hall that evening, a talk had been arranged on WW1; then a BBC documentary was shown followed by a bread and cheese supper. The Musical Memories came to provide entertainment and songs from that era. Then on the 11 November, we had an extremely good service with the sermon by Allan being first class. Two readings were made by David Birks, a "Tommy" in full uniform and Wing Commander Craig Walker based at Northwood. Names of the fallen men of West Ashton were read out and the laying of a wreath took place. The service ended with refreshments and much banter. The bell was then rung a hundred times at 12.30.

May St John's thank everyone who had helped in any way for this special weekend – those who made items; brought photographs /items and attended these events. A truly memorable weekend on many counts.

"They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old:

We Will Remember Them".





Commented [PK1]:



'Rock' in Cyprus

'Rock' is the title of a musical by Christian composer Roger Jones. In November I had the privilege of being part of a team that took this musical on tour to some of the English-speaking churches in Cyprus. We were a team of 8 from Christian Music Ministries (CMM, which is Roger Jones' team): Roger and his wife, a tour manager, and 5 soloists. We were ably supported during the two week visit by people from the local churches in Cyprus, including local organisers, tech team, hosts and the fabulous choirs that had been rehearsing hard before we got there.

The musical 'Rock' tells some key parts of the story of Simon Peter. From the opening arrangement of the hymn 'Rock of ages' to the final declaration 'On Jesus the rock I will build my life', it presents Peter's story intertwining with that of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and the birth of the church at Pentecost. There's a particular focus on how Peter let Jesus down the night before Jesus was crucified, but how Jesus' love and forgiveness was so much more powerful than Peter's failure.

Sometimes a musical can convey a familiar story like that with new insight and power, and one of the things I love about working as a volunteer with CMM is the way that God so often touches people in a new way through musical presentations of the Bible. Playing the part of Jesus, I felt a particular privilege in communicating God's love, not just to Peter but to everyone.

'Rock' has a moving and powerful message, and we were excited about having the opportunity to share this message with people in Cyprus. We did four performances: in Aya Napa, Larnaca (which we also used as our base), Paphos and Limassol. Very different venues, and quite different choirs and audiences, but in each place there was a sense that God was gently touching people.

As well as the performances, we had the opportunity to participate in worship at churches in Larnaca and Limassol, and then on the final Sunday afternoon we led a special session on being open to the Holy Spirit. We were pleased that about 30 people came to that event, and were really blessed by the way the Spirit moved and touched people.

The trip wasn't all hard work. The team gelled together well, and we had quite a bit of fun relaxing together and with our hosts. Actually, we seemed to spend a lot of time eating!

We will never know all of the ways that God used the tour, but we saw some wonderful glimpses of His transforming work in people's lives. Thank you for supporting us in prayer while we were away.

If you would like to find out more about CMM, its website is www.cmm.org, or have a chat to me. I'm one of a team of volunteer associates who help with the events that CMM runs throughout the year, mostly in local churches in the UK.



Christmas Meditation

Angela Grist will be leading a Christmas Meditation at the Beracah session on Wednesday 12th December.

Although this is the 'Beracah slot' ALL ARE WELCOME - men as well as women



'Gigspanner' at Holy Trinity

Around 200 people attended the 'Gigspanner' concert on 22 November.

The professional group was made up of 5 excellent, enthusiastic, gifted musicians and it was a pleasure to see them perform on the new 'stage' at Holy Trinity. Hopefully, this will be the start of concerts being held there.

The professional lighting enhanced the building, and it was good to see so many people there. The organisers were delighted with the venue and are looking to using it again for large events.

Contrary to a recent article in the Wiltshire Times which gave the impression that Holy Trinity 'used to be a church' – it is still a church, and the principal use will always be as a resource for Christian worship and events. But it is good to be able to offer it for community use as well. And we need bookings like that to help to meet the costs.

Later in the month the building will be filled again as local schools use Holy Trinity for their Christmas services, and they are always really special occasions.



Christmas Tree Festival at St James'

For the first year this year we were able to display a Christmas tree in the St James Festival – unfortunately by the time you read this all 60 of the trees exhibited will be gone!!

It was fun to do and we tried to depict all that had happening in St Thomas', Kingfisher and Holy Trinity over the year – including baubles with photos of Beth (appointed youth worker), Allan (60th birthday) and Allan and Janet (engagement). We will be able to do the wedding next year!!!

'Snow flakes' bore the names of all or childrens and young peoples groups and crackers told of all that we do mission, praise, prayer, street pastors, town chaplaincy, soup run –and so much more. It was really good fun to decorate it with all the other groups decorating theirs.



So why not give it a go next year – if I can co-ordinate it you certainly can!! Just have a word with me, before I have a word with you!!!

Pat

Holy Trinity – to the 1980s

Nine years after the Armistice the Stancomb family – generous benefactors to Holy Trinity Church – dedicated the reredos in memory of Agnes, who had died in 1920 aged 80. This has mosaic panelling dedicated to the Transfiguration.. Other memorials at this time include a plaque in memory of Francis Samuel Hancock, a member of the choir for 45 years; and a window was dedicated in memory of the Norris family, long-time worshippers and benefactors.



Plans were made to celebrate the centenary in November 1938: Holy Communion at 7.00 followed by breakfast in the hall; Holy Communion at 11.00am; and Festal Communion at 7.00pm followed by a reception – all very remarkable plans for Tuesday, showing the importance of church life at that time. Medals for the Sunday School Scholars; photographs of the church (for sale); and the erection of a screen between the chancel and nave were also planned – but with the incumbent (Rev Bold) moving to Granchester all was put on hold until a new incumbent was in place. Under the new incumbent (Rev William Church!!) the celebrations were postponed to All Saints Day 1939 and of course World War II intervened - although the screen was erected in August 1940. This was dedicated to Bishop Lovell who, in his address, referred to 'confidence in the ultimate victory' and 'people must prepare themselves to adjust to peace and consecrate their lives to the one possible Dictator, God.'

In December 1944 it was decided that the preferred thank offering and war memorial should be a new choir vestry (they even needed faculty permission which was granted in 1949) and permission was also given to remove the fixed altar rails in the Lady Chapel – these were replaced by moveable ones in memory of Ulrich Holborrow; a former Sunday School superintendent and church warden.

56 men from the parish were killed in action in World War II. They are named along with the inscription of 'Greater love hath no man than to lay down his life for his friends'.

One of the problems we face today – the cost of heating such a large space - was noted even back in 1951 when the heating system was extended.

The coronation of our Queen in 1953 was commemorated by the installation of a new communion table in the All Saints Chapel, but two years later the table was moved to the former choir vestry which was converted in to a side chapel. In 1960 the woodworm riddled furniture was replaced by new pews in memory of Cyril Gover and Ethel Ricketts and a Miss Blanchard commissioned the wooden/ plaster crucifix as a thanksgiving offering for her recovery from a serious illness. At this time with major repairs needed a campaign with glossy brochures and a campaign supper was launched. This doubled the income, but it was not enough, and the PCC agreed to send details of the mounting problems to every parishioner. With the completion of this work in 1962 pew rents were abolished and it was planned that the holders' names were removed from the pews (although this didn't actually happen). A planned giving scheme was inaugurated. Even though money was needed by the church, HT continued to invest in the community, contributing to the building of the Park Club.

Complete internal decoration was carried out in 1967/8 – but the repainting caused many problems not recognised until the mid-1980s - the walls had been painted with the 'wrong' paint meaning that the walls couldn't breathe. Finance for this was raised by special appeal which included film and fashion shows, a fete at the boys' high school and a concert by the local Philharmonic choir.

Interestingly the minutes of the PCC record that the budget for the year was 'received with alarm and concern' as it showed a deficit of £200!

Alteration work in 1969 meant that there was scaffolding in church and this was used as a 'Noah's Ark' for a production of Noyes Fludd by Benjamin Britten. In 1971 yet more repairs were needed with a cost in excess of £21,000 – the PCC minutes at the time recorded 9 possible ways forward, which included: Patch up the church as needs be; Leave it to our successors; Rebuild the church on the hall site. The first option was seen as the only practical one, but only the most urgent of repairs was done storing the problems up for the future.

1977 administration of the chalice by lay members was approved. And the first part of the Trowbridge relief road was started leading to HT being known as the church on the roundabout. Paths were laid around the church and a number of gravestones were removed. 1980/81 saw a number of changes internally.

This is as far as the booklet goes. The church was decommissioned as a parish church and we took it over as a chapel of ease in 2010 – most of us know what has happened since. But does anybody have any information about Holy Trinity for the missing 30 years (1980 – 2010)

Sunday Services Plan December 2018 - 10.30am Services

Date	St Thomas'	Kingfisher	St John's
2	Advent Sunday Morning Service	Advent Sunday Morning Worship	Advent Sunday Holy Communion BCP
	Lead: Allan Coutts Preach: Allan Coutts	Lead: Steve Hockett Preach: Ed Greening	Reuben Dunnings
9	2nd Sunday in Advent Holy Communion	2nd Sunday in Advent Morning Worship	2nd Sunday in Advent Service of the Word
	Lead: Allan Coutts Preach: Allan Coutts	Lead: Ed Greening Preach: Alison Bennett	Angela Grist
16	3rd Sunday in Advent All-Age Christmas Celebration	3rd Sunday in Advent Carol Service – 4.00pm	3rd Sunday in Advent Holy Communion
	Lead: Allan Coutts Preach: KFC Pulpit Swap	Lead: Alison Bennett Preach: Alison Bennett	Andy Yorke?
23	4th Sunday in Advent Morning Service	4th Sunday in Advent Holy Communion followed by Carols at The Red Admiral	4th Sunday in Advent Carol Service
	Lead: Judy Wright Preach: Judy Wright	Lead: Reuben Dunnings Preach: Reuben Dunnings	Allan Coutts
24	Christmas Eve - 11.15pm Midnight Communion		Christmas Eve 11.15pm Midnight Communion
	Lead: Allan Coutts Preach: Allan Coutts		Colin Turner
25	Christmas Day	Christmas Day	Christmas Day
	Martyn Whittock	Steve Hockett	No service
30	1st Sunday of Christmas child-friendly Morning Service	1st Sunday of Christmas	1st Sunday of Christmas Morning Worship
	Colin Turner	No Service	Angela Grist

6pm Your Kingdom Come, Holy Trinity

Date	Preacher
2	Reuben Dunnings
11	Prayer for Christmas events and leaflet distribution
18	Allan Coutts
25	No service – Carol Service at St Thomas'

Children and young people at St Thomas' meet as follows:

Holy Communion – start in groups, join families at 11.30am.

Family Service – all together (with their families) throughout service.

Morning Service – in service for the first 20 minutes, then into groups.

The Parish Office

Tel: 01225 754826

e-mail: office@stthomastrowbridge.org

Church Office open 9.30am - 1.00pm, Tues to Friday

St Thomas', Kingfisher Church, Holy Trinity & St John's Church West Ashton

Dates for your Diary December 2018

Sun	2	1.00pm 5.00pm	Roast Lunch, St Thomas' Prophetic Encouragement, Holy Trinity
Mon	3	10.00am/1.00pm 10.00am	Parents and Toddlers at St Thomas' Childminders and Toddlers in St Thomas'
Wed	5	10.00am 2.30pm	Beracah in St Thomas' Mission Prayer, St Thomas'
Thur	6	9.45am	Messy Church at St Thomas'
Fri	7	10.00am 4 – 6.00pm	English Conversation Group, St Thomas' Prayer, Praise and Prophecy at Holy Trinity
Mon	10	10.00am/1.00pm	Parents and Toddlers and Childminders Christmas Party at St Thomas'
Wed	12	10.00am 2.00pm	Beracah in St Thomas' – Angela Grist leading a Christmas Meditation – ALL WELCOME Holy Communion (BCP) at St Thomas'
Thur	13	9.45am	Messy Church at St Thomas'
Fri	14	10.00am 4 – 6.00pm	English Conversation Group, St Thomas' Prayer and Praise at Holy Trinity
Sun	16	12.30am	Bread and Cheese Lunch
Wed	19	10.00am	Beracah in St Thomas'
Fri	21	4 – 6.00pm	Prayer and Praise at Holy Trinity

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL**