

# The Parish of Beltingham with Henshaw

## Parish Newsletter Dec 2022/Jan 2023

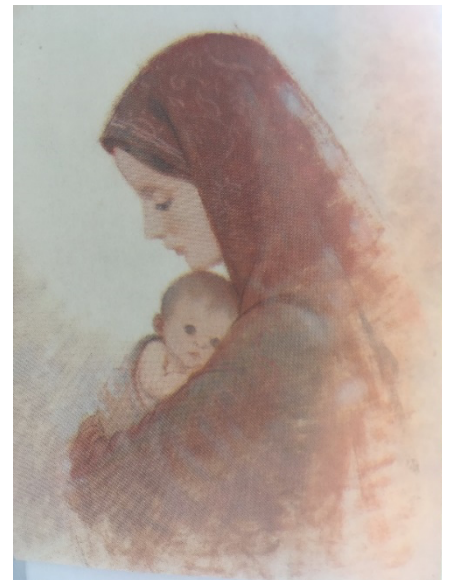


### View from the Vicarage - December 2022

This time last year I'd been interviewed, they'd told me I'd got the job, but I couldn't tell anyone yet because the DBS police checks were being processed. Everyone here knew there had been interviews and they were waiting for news – why weren't they announcing who was coming?! Meanwhile, in my old parishes there were big changes ahead which they knew nothing about! What a strange state of affairs. I could go on to think that at the birth of Jesus, some were unaware that something big was about to happen, meanwhile the Wise Men and all who were waiting for the kingdom of God were wondering why God was taking so long to reveal his plan, while the select few, Mary and Joseph, already knew the news!

Typical clergy thinking of parallels there. People who talk of God seem often to talk of parallels to explain a point, and search for illustrations and sometimes it can get a bit corny, but the problem is when talking of God, that it's a bit hard to express the depths that are there when you walk with him. The bible talks of the Spirit of God, like a wind, or in other places like a burning fire within, or God rescuing his people, carrying them on eagle's wings, or in another place renewing their strength so they soar like eagles. I hope this Christmas time that you will spend a moment thinking deeply about what is going on in the story, enough to need some sort of parallel to explain to someone else what entering into the story was doing to you. When I saw who else was coming, when I entered the stable, when I saw the babe with its parents and knew him, it was as if...

I'm looking forward to Christmas and hope to see you at some of the events advertised elsewhere in these pages. I wish you all the best for the season 🎅.



**Our services for the Christmas period are set out in this newsletter. Come and join us – you will be very welcome, especially at our Carol Service at All Hallows', Henshaw on 18 December, when we all enjoy a glass of mulled drink and a mince pie at the end.**

### Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Safeguarding is at the heart of the Christian faith; it means the action the Church takes to promote a safe culture in our Church. In our Parish, we commit ourselves to provide a safe, caring, and welcoming space for everyone. "Being faithful to our call to share the gospel therefore compels us to take with utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has" (From "Promoting a Safer Church" The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy Statement)

What is your attitude to the term "Safeguarding"? Do you think that no problem has ever arisen in our church, so we need not worry about it? We must always be aware of what could happen. The members of the PCC have undertaken training in Awareness of Safeguarding.

If you are concerned about the well-being of someone in the church, or that someone you know is at risk of, or is being abused, or presents a risk to others, please pass it on to me or to a Churchwarden. Your concerns will be addressed with confidentiality and passed on to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser.

Information about "Promoting a Safer Church" is available on the notice board in the porch, please contact me if you want further details. From Sheila Walker, Parish Safeguarding Officer, Tel: 01434 322369, Mobile: 07731761423, Email: sm59walker@gmail.com

### **Church Service times for December 2022 and January 2023**

<b>Date and time</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Church</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> December at 10 am ***	Benefice Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	Holy Cross Haltwhistle
11 December 11 am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	All Hallows', Henshaw
18 December 11 am	Carol Service	Rev'd Steve Wright and Rev'd Keith Teasdale	All Hallows', Henshaw
25 December 11 am	Christmas Day Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	All Hallows', Henshaw
1 January 10 am ***	Benefice Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	Holy Cross Haltwhistle
8 January 11 am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	All Hallows', Henshaw
15 January 11 am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Keith Teasdale	All Hallows', Henshaw
22 January 11 am	Morning Prayer with reflection	Anne and Carol	All Hallows', Henshaw
29 January 11 am	Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	All Hallows', Henshaw
5 February 10 am ***	Benefice Holy Communion	Rev'd Steve Wright	All Hallows', Henshaw

\*\*\* Please note that on dates marked with \*\*\*, the service is at 10 am. Please also check which church is holding the service.

Our streamed service of Morning Prayer on Tuesdays and Thursdays on Facebook will pause after 22<sup>nd</sup> December and will resume on Tuesday 10 January. Please ask Carol or Anne if you would like information about how to connect to this service.

#### **From the registers:**

Memorial Service in St Cuthbert's, following cremation on 16 December, Alice Storrow

## Report from the PCC

At the November meeting of the PCC, the services for the Christmas period were discussed. There was also a discussion about the future use of St Cuthbert's church in Beltingham. Six Sundays have been identified next year when the service could be held there. More details on this will be circulated later. The PCC also approved the proof of this year's Christmas card, and learnt about progress regarding the website and the newsletter. The report on church finances indicated that we would end the year in a good position, having received an unexpected reimbursement of overpaid council tax for the Vicarage in Haydon Bridge and two generous donations from the Smith Trust. The report from the Safeguarding Officer showed that we were up to pace with all the necessary safeguarding training. There was also a discussion about the purchase of a digital hymnal, to provide the music more effectively on those occasions when no organist is available.

## Advent

We are in that period of the church year known as Advent. During the darkest days of winter, we are preparing for the birth of Christ. This is a season of reflection and expectation. Each Sunday during Advent has a traditional meaning, representing the Christian virtues of love, joy, hope and peace. There are no flowers in church, but we will place the Advent wreath with its evergreen foliage and five candles, four around the edges and one in the centre. The first two and the fourth are purple, the traditional colour during Advent. The third candle is pink, when it marks a shift from the solemn tone of the first two Sundays to a more joyous atmosphere of anticipation. The white candle in the centre is lit on Christmas Day.



### Advent calendars

These are a German tradition, which began as a way of helping children to count down the days until Christmas. The first printed version was made in 1908, with little doors that opened to reveal trinkets. They rather died out during the 1939-45 war but were reintroduced into the USA after the war, and became very popular there when in 1953, the President was pictured opening one with his grandchildren. They are much more sophisticated now and often have a commercial theme rather than a strictly religious one.

## Christmas pudding – something different

Made in the shape of a normal Christmas pudding, Celebration Ice Cream is a delicious alternative. This recipe is sufficient for 6-8 people, obviously depending on how greedy everyone is!

Take 75g dried apricots, finely chopped, 75g of mixed prunes and figs, finely chopped, 225g of a mix of seedless raisins, currants and sultanas, 4 fluid oz brandy, 15 fluid oz double cream, 4 egg yolks and 3 tablespoons of golden syrup. Line a pudding basin with clingfilm – you will be able to turn the pudding out more easily. Soak the fruit overnight in the brandy. Whip the cream, not too stiff but until it is holding its shape. Whisk the egg yolks over warm water until pale and creamy. Mix all the ingredients together. Spoon into the lined basin and freeze.

### Recipe for Christmas All Year Long

Take a heap of child-like wonder  
That opens up our eyes  
To the unexpected gifts in life—  
Each day a sweet surprise.

Mix in fond appreciation  
For the people whom we know;  
Like festive Christmas candles,  
Each one has a special glow.



Add some giggles and some laughter,  
A dash of Christmas food,  
(Amazing how a piece of pie  
Improves our attitude!)

Stir it all with human kindness;  
Wrap it up in love and peace,  
Decorate with optimism, and  
Our joy will never cease.

If we use this healthy recipe, We know



we will remember  
To be in the Christmas spirit,  
Even when it's not December.

*By Joanna Fuchs*

## Mistletoe

Mistletoe is a parasitic plant which grows widely in Herefordshire. It is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and shouldn't be gathered without the permission of the landowner on whose property the tree is located. It is toxic, although it has a history of having medicinal properties, having been used for the treatment of epilepsy, headaches, arthritis, high blood pressure, infertility and is currently claimed to help to treat cancer. There is a tradition of hanging mistletoe at Christmas, and in Britain the idea of kissing under it arose among servants in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Girls who were not kissed would remain unwed for another year. Its earlier origins were in the saturnalia festival in ancient Greece. Greek and Roman mythology endowed the mistletoe with special powers. Aeneas, the hero of Troy was able to visit his late father in the abode of the dead after cutting a bough of mistletoe. The Romans hung it over doorways to promote love and understanding and to protect the household.

## The nation's favourite Carol

In on-line polls in recent years, it seems that the carol, O Holy Night has regularly been voted as Britain's favourite carol. The words were written by a French wine merchant and poet, Placide Cappeau in 1843 at the request of his parish priest, to celebrate the renovation of their church organ in Roquemaure, near Avignon. Later that year, Adolphe Adam composed the music. He was a noted teacher, with Delibes among his pupils, and is probably best known today for the ballet music in Giselle and Le Corsaire, as well as the music for O Holy Night. The words of the hymn as we know them were the previous best loved carol was Silent Night. Its origins go back to 1818 when the words were written by an Austrian parish priest, Joseph Mohr. He took the words to the local schoolmaster and organist, Franz Xaver Gruber, who wrote the tune. It gained much wider recognition because it was adopted by groups of travelling folk singers. In another poll, after those first two places, the following carols featured: In the Bleak Midwinter, Hark, the Herald Angels sing, O Come all ye faithful, O Little Town of Bethlehem, Once in Royal David's City, Away in a Manger, Joy to the world, O Come, O come Emmanuel. How would this match with your own favourites?

**Christmas crackers** These were an idea of Tom Smith, who began selling almond sweets wrapped in paper, which was twisted at both ends and which contained a little strip of paper with a poem written on it. The famous bang was added later. A further refinement was to replace the sweets with tiny presents, and the poems with jokes. It was Tom's son Walter who added paper crowns.

## Bowes Lyon Trust

Small grants can be made by the Bowes Lyon Trust to people within our parish who face hardship or a sudden emergency. You can apply by calling Nigel Collingwood, the secretary to the Trust in confidence on 344119.

**Contributions to the Flower Fund** – if you would like to make a donation towards Christmas flowers, please hand it to one of the Wardens, or to Pauline Storey.

**Bardon Mill Parish Council** The Parish Council meets in the church Room at All Hallows', Henshaw. Members of the public are welcome to attend and can take



part in the Annual Parish Meeting at a date to be announced for 2023. Future dates for Council meetings: 13 December and 14 February.

## Epiphany

The Church of England website tells us that in the Western churches, the Epiphany ('manifestation') is an occasion to celebrate one element in the story of Christ's birth, the visit of the magi, the Three Wise Men, understood as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Matthew's account speaks simply of 'wise men from the east'; it was later that fixed their number at three, made them kings and gave them names – Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

The season of joyful celebration that begins at Christmas now continues through the successive Sundays of Epiphany, and the festal cycle ends only with the Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas). On February 2, exactly 40 days after Christmas, Mary went to the temple for purification, taking the baby to be dedicated to the Lord. The child who has been manifested to the magi at his birth is now recognized by Simeon and Anna, when he comes to be presented in the Temple according to the Law of Israel. He is both 'a light to lighten the Gentiles' and 'the glory of God's people Israel'.

Candlemas continues to be seen as a day of purification, renewal and hope. Some churches hand out candles or bless the candles brought by the people. There are also some traditions associated with the day – for example, an old English song says "if Candlemas be fair and bright, come winter, have another fight. If candlemas brings clouds and rain, go winter and come not again."

Snowdrops are sometimes called Candlemas bells because they bloom early in the year.



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