

The Ampfield Messenger



*The Parish Magazine of
St. Mark Ampfield*

Christmas 2020

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£1

Dear Readers

We thank all our contributors for stepping up to the mark during the Pandemic. With no rotas, events or much going on at all, we have had a lot of space to fill. We realise that publishing the Messenger online has not been ideal for everyone. However, it has given us the opportunity to include more colour photographs and to try out new ideas. We hope you will continue to help us keep the Messenger on track. This year has been quite a steep learning curve for us!

We hope that you enjoy a happy and peaceful Christmas
Chris & Rob

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Letter from Vicar Victoria

As I write this the Prime Minister has just announced that the Lockdown will end on the 2nd Dec and that there will be a relaxing of the rules over a 5 day Christmas period. This is good news of course, maybe Christmas is not on hold after all, maybe we can celebrate in comfort and joy! But what does Christmas really mean to us? Is it just about presents and family, or should we, especially this year, be celebrating something much more profound....

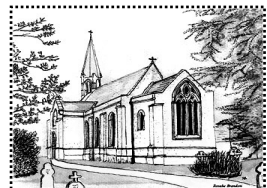
If we are able to spend Christmas with our loved ones (and certainly that won't be with everyone we'd like to celebrate with) perhaps the celebration will be more one of 'Thank God we are still here and safe' rather than 'Thank you for the presents' and of course there will be many families who are unable to say this, having lost a dear one this year. Where is the comfort for them?

Christ offers us that comfort and joy, even in loss. Jesus came to us a babe in arms, he came as an ordinary human being in an ordinary family, having the same thoughts and feelings as all of us, fully human, yet also fully divine. He grew to be a man, only made it to the age of 33, but he was sent to show the way to God, to help us understand the nature of God and to bridge a way to God.

Because of Jesus we know that there is more to life than the here and now, that there is a hope of something more once our earthly life is done. He came to assure us that each and everyone of us is made in the image of God and loved unconditionally by Him – no matter what. Wouldn't it be a wonderful world if we could only see in each person what God does? If we could forgive as God does, and if we could only learn to care for each other and our world as God does?

My Christmas prayer for all of you is that you find joy in the small things, that you are able to thank God for small blessings, that you remain fit and well and so do the ones you love. That you never forget the miracle of that first Christmas and resolve to keep God's words close to your heart as we move on from this pandemic and into a world made fresh...

May you know you are loved this Christmas,
God bless,



The Parish Church of St Mark, Ampfield

Our vision: To be channels of God's love in the world

Vicar

Revd Victoria Ashdown Tel: 02381 788031
email: revdvictoria@gmail.com

Ministry Team

Revd Vanessa Lawrence Tel: 02380 736671
Mrs. Sally Kerson Tel: 02380 737617
Mr. Jonathan DeVile Tel: 02380 736522

For any enquiries about baptisms, weddings or churchyards please contact the parish office, telephone no: 023 8073 7617

Email us at: **office@acnb-church.org**

Website: **www.acnb-church.faith**

Facebook: **www.facebook.com/acnbbchurch/**

The office is staffed 9 - 12 noon, Monday, Wednesday & Friday.
Please let us know if you have any news of those who are sick, in trouble, leaving or about to arrive

Churchwardens: Mr. Daryl Pugh, Tel: 01794 524307
Email: ampfield.churchwarden@gmail.com
Mr. Mark Braund Tel: 01489 860218
Email: markbraund@mac.com

Secretary PCC Jennie Edwards Tel: 02380 365041
Treasurer PCC Mrs. Pamela Morffew Tel. 02380 411146.
Email - acnb@gmail.com

Any cheques should be made payable to Ampfield PCC please

Gift Aid Secretary Mrs A Jeffery, Tel: 02380 252865
Email: nickandade@gmail.com

Magazine Editors Chris & Rob Kerr, Tel: 01794 367104
E-mail: cl.kerr@btinternet.com

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles. Note that the views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor or the Parochial Church Council. Advertisements in this publication do not carry the endorsement of the editor or the Parochial Church Council.

Worship Online and In-Person Worship

Advent reflections

As we enter Advent and wait in anticipation and hope, there will be daily Advent reflections on the benefice Facebook page (you don't need a Facebook account to read it, <https://en-gb.facebook.com/acnbcchurch/>) and linked from the benefice website. The reflections will pick up on the Advent themes of anticipation, light and hope; some will be videos, some will be written.

Christmas

Midnight Mass will be online this year and will be available on the benefice website and YouTube from 10pm on Christmas Eve. This will be followed on Christmas Day by Communion to Go between 09:30 – 10:30 at St Mark's, St Denys' and All Saints.

Return to in-person worship

As we come out of lockdown, we'll be able to have in-person services again. We will return to the pattern of services that we have had for the last few months (with the exceptions of Communion in the Glade and Morning Prayer taking a pause) – with a mix of in-person and online worship:

1st Sunday of the month

09:30 Worship For All online

09:30 Communion at St Mark

Between 11:00 and 12:00 'Communion to go' at St Denys

3rd Sunday of the month

09:30 Communion at All Saints, streamed live online

11:00 BCP Communion at St Denys

Between 11:30 and 12:00 'Communion to go' at St Denys

Other Sundays of the month

09:30 Communion at All Saints, streamed live online

Between 11:00 and 12:00 'Communion to go'

2nd and 4th Sundays at St Mark

5th Sunday (if there is one in the month) – see website for details

Tuesdays:

17:15 Visual Compline online

The pattern above for Communion to go is what we expect but there might be changes, if a church building is used for a wedding, for example. Please keep an eye on the benefice website to stay up to date. If you haven't already signed up for the weekly newsletter, you can do so on the website (<https://www.acnb-church.org/newsletter/>)

or by emailing joinin@acnb-church.org.

Abbie West

Dogs of Ampfield

This is Dudley and he's a regular visitor to Ampfield woods and surroundings. He's a Tibetan terrier with one brown and one blue eye. Mostly he walks with his besties, Maisie and Bonnie.



Our virtual dog show has been postponed until January due to technical issues.



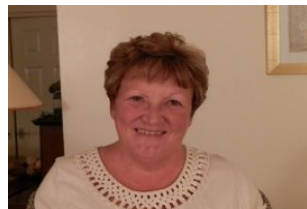
Janet's special mince pies

2oz butter
4oz sugar
2oz ground almonds
2oz ground rice
Dash of almond essence
1 egg white

Blend these together to form a paste and spread on to a layer of mincemeat on individual pastry cases.

Bake at 150° fan oven for 20 minutes.

This recipe is in memory of Janet, who died recently from MND. Janet was known for her delicious mince pies and her renowned topping took them to another level.



Friends for Lunch

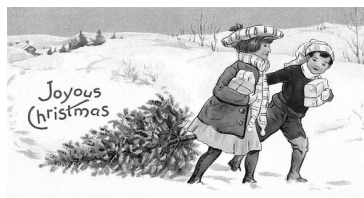
It has been a long time since last we met to share a meal in St. Mark's room. 19 diners enjoyed cottage pie together in March - it seems such a long time ago!

Because of delays due to Covid, the renovation of the kitchen (to which our members so generously donated) has not yet taken place. We are hoping to go ahead in the New Year and will keep you updated on progress. We have been planning menus for next year and hope that it will not be too long before we can get together again.

In the meantime, some happy memories of last year's Christmas Lunch:



Happy Christmas from
Agne Kate Chris Rosea Sheila Annie and
Ron



CHRISTMAS CAMEOS

Early 50's

Christmas morning. Squawking in the chicken run, which was unusual. Looked out of the bedroom window, to see my dad carrying, somewhat triumphantly, a chicken to the shed. Went to the shed later-feathers everywhere.



Boxing Day 1962



A wonderful Christmas Party in Fareham with my aunts and uncles, grandparents, mum, dad and brothers. Opened the door to go home. Deep snow everywhere. It had started during the evening and we weren't aware of it. The famous Big Freeze had arrived. My uncle managed to drive us some

three miles home, but very little traffic then moved until early March. The only Christmas in my lifetime when it snowed. But not on Christmas Day. In the summer of this year, a cousin sent me a video of that very evening. Nostalgic, emotional memories.

60's-80's

I was part of a large family who held parties in each other's houses which lasted from Christmas Day until 30 December. Scenic journeys to the South East of Hampshire and the Sussex coast beyond. Laughter, food and games. Remember Black Magic or The Moon is Round? Never any television and we still don't watch it on Christmas Day.

1990's-date

Nuffield Theatre, Southampton. Their Christmas Show (they were far different from pantos) was a family staple. Our children and grandchildren all received their introduction to the theatre on these occasions. Rapt attention (adults too), laughter and always much discussion afterwards.

A production of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* was simply superb. Even after all these years, we still pick up something new when we view it. In 2019, the brilliant Guy Masterson performed a one-man show of the book at the Theatre Royal, Winchester. We had seen him earlier in the year in that marvellous little theatre at Smallhythe in Kent performing Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood*. Virtuosity personified.

Miscellany

Such a host of other memories - Handel's *Messiah*, school nativity plays and other Christmas events, children opening presents - wrapping paper everywhere, visits to the ice rink at Somerset House in London, Pictionary, Choral music on the radio and CD, and the Christmas Services at St. Mark's - beautiful flower decorations, nativity scenes and a constant reminder of what Christmas is about. Unmissable. **Alan**



Safety Guidance for your Christmas Crib

The coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on the way we conduct our lives, with many new rules and restrictions governing our health and safety. One area of concern is your Christmas Crib. Although there are several weeks to go before Christmas, you will need to start planning now. You will need to begin with a thorough risk assessment to ensure your Crib is COVID-secure. Here is some further guidance:

1. A maximum of 4 shepherds only are permitted in the Crib.
2. Shepherds must wear facemasks (unless exempt) and strictly observe social distancing (2m or 1m+ with mitigations).
3. Jesus, Mary and Joseph form a family bubble and thus may be placed together.
4. The ox and the ass need Declaration of Non-Contamination Certificates, obtainable from the Department of Agriculture.
5. The Three Wise Men, since they come from a non - Schengen Area, will be subject to a 14-day quarantine, whether or not they have tested

negative for Covid..

6. The straw, moss, palm branches and other decorations must be disinfected, with hands washed for 20 seconds after handling.
7. Angels flying over the Crib are now forbidden, owing to the aerosol effect produced by the batting of wings.
8. Shepherds are permitted provided they are not more than 70 years old or suffering from underlying medical conditions or in another vulnerable category.
9. The inn, along with other businesses in the hospitality sector, is closed until further notice.
10. For 2020 only, a Pontius Pilate should be added to the Crib to explain to authorised participants the protocols for washing and sanitisation of hands.

From a diocesan newsletter, found on Facebook by Jean.

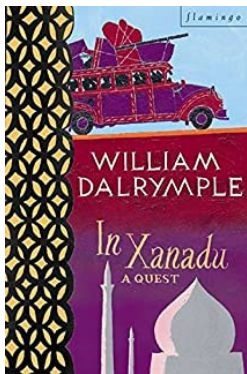


Christmas Puzzle - can you work out Nigel Babb's Christmas Greeting?

Answer on p. 29



Book Reviews



In Xanadu: A Quest by William Dalrymple, 1989.

If you're an armchair traveller then to read the books of William Dalrymple is a treat and a half. Even if not then they're worth the read for their ability to describe with profound knowledge and wit the affairs of India and Pakistan, in particular.

In Xanadu is his first book written when a Cambridge undergraduate in the early 1980's. This is reflected in the writing which is not as mature as in his later books but best reflects youthful exuberance in setting off from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem to seek out Kubla Khan's summer palace of Shangdu which Marco

Polo did 700 years before travelling along the Silk Road.

He describes the people he meets, their cultures and historical contexts, as he travels through Iran, Turkey and Pakistan and ultimately into China at the end of the Cultural Revolution. The bureaucratic shenanigans in getting visas and passes left me exhausted and constantly wondering how I'd have fared in similar circumstances. With all this, getting to Xanadu was a near run thing. As I began to question whether all the effort was worth it, he reflects upon Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem Kubla Khan which sets his quest most satisfyingly in the context of the poem's fantasy.

Pongo





84 Charing Cross Road by Helene Hanff

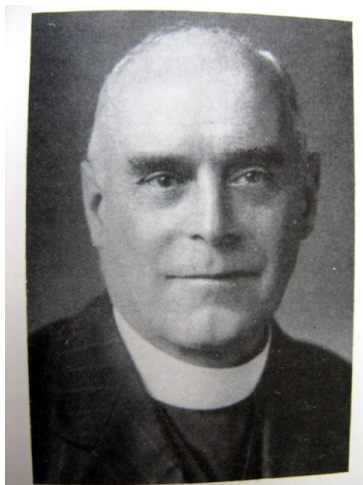
This delightful book contains 1 letters from Helene Hanff, a bibliophile and children's author who lives in New York City, to an Antiquarian Bookshop, Marks and Co, in Charing Cross Road. For twenty years, starting just after World War 2, she is in regular correspondence with Frank Doel at the Book Shop with her requests for rare editions that she was unable to find in New York. Her letters are very witty and to begin with Frank's missives are staid and very formal, but she wins him over with her warmth and humour. Helene gets to know other staff at the shop and, especially at Christmas, sends over food parcels and other commodities she knows are in short supply here, because of the rationing. She intended to come to London for most of those years, but various problems cropped up each time she started to plan a visit, and she didn't travel to London until after Frank had

passed away and the Bookshop had closed.

The book also includes a piece called The Duchess of Bloomsbury Street, a fascinating documentary of her trip to London and all she did and who she met, including Frank's wife and daughter. She became very friendly with Joyce and Reggie Grenfell. She had such fun and you can imagine all her rushing around when you read it. She loved all the parks and didn't mind the rain at all, had her portrait painted in one of the Squares – she loved being outside! She also adored the shops, Harrods, Harvey Nichols, as well as St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey – she had dreamt of visiting them for years. The Tower of London, which although she went twice, found the queues were so long and with her busy schedule, there was no time to wait!

We read the book after seeing the play at Salisbury Playhouse. The stage setting was so imaginative and clever, being divided between Helene's flat on one side of the stage, and the bookshop on the other. 84 Charing Cross Road has also been the subject of a film starring Antony Hopkins and Anne Bancroft (1987).

Jennie



The Reverend Hubert Murton Lake

Revd. Lake was the vicar in Ampfield from 1921 –1925. During this time he wrote a booklet called “THE MEMORIALS of AMPFIELD” which he sold for 3/6p. It gives a detailed account of the building of Ampfield church and a glimpse of the parish in the 1920`s. The original of this booklet must be very rare now but I am fortunate to own a copy

and I propose to extract some stories and insert them into the Ampfield Messenger as he wrote them.

One of the great charms of England, which makes its appeal to all visitors to this country, and which provides beloved memories to those of our children whose destiny has called them to make their home in other lands, is the country villages. Nestling among the ancient trees, that have weathered the storms of centuries; surrounded on all sides by open fields that feast the eye with their vivid and changeful colour, the air vibrating with the liquid, mellow notes of Nature’s countless songsters, stand the picturesque homes of England’s workers in field and wood, embowered in clinging vines that burst into the glory of flower under the shelter of the eaves.

To other lands may belong the glory of towering, majestic mountain, the mighty rivers and land-locked seas, or of cities dowered with the relics or a bygone glory of Art and Architecture which never ceases to inspire and please, but to England, one hopes, there will ever remain at least this one claim to tender remembrance – just the country village in all its silent repose, and eloquent beauty.

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...Cont.

Such a one is Ampfield. Situated on the high road from London to Bournemouth, a ceaseless traffic passes its doors, and yet seems unable to break its calm, or prevent its people from pursuing the even tenor of their way! For in the country nature is supreme, and nature is calm and reposeful, and is not so easily to be disturbed.

The traffic passes and is forgotten, but nature remains and here it is nature in its loveliest aspect.

To be continued

Nick Jeffery



Ampfield Calendar 2021

Ampfield 2021



Copyright © R Allen - All Photographs

We are delighted to offer a 2021 Calendar photographed, designed and produced by our own local celebrated photographer Charlie Allen.

The cost is £9.99 + postage.
All proceeds (less production costs) will be generously donated by Charlie to St Mark Church to be put towards urgent repairs to the west and other stained glass windows.

To order, please contact Charlie Allen :
crwallen61@gmail.com



Knapp Lane Berries



Summer Rainbow



Hillier Reservoir



In response to Covid-19

AMPFIELD

NEIGHBOURS

working with

unity

The Test Valley Borough Council Volunteer Support Group

A group of Ampfield residents have come together to help as volunteers working with Unity during the Covid-19 pandemic. Unity is the Test Valley Borough Council Volunteer Support Group.

If you live in Ampfield and need help with collecting prescriptions or shopping
contact

**Unity on the Test Valley Community Helpline -
0330 400 4116**

or

UnityC-19@unityonline.org.uk

Remembrance Sunday 2020

It is mid-October. Time to start thinking about the war memorial and all the traditional activities that are associated with Remembrance Sunday. Not that there ever is anything to worry about, but it seems wrong to waste such a good opportunity. In any case, one never really knows.

The difference this year, as has been the case with so many things, is the ever-intrusive impact of the coronavirus. There was constant talk in the media concerning a second lockdown - would this happen? If so, what would be the impact? Sadly, for much of the year St. Mark's church had been restricted by the rules governing internal gatherings. Only the war memorial remained as a possible focus for any act of remembrance in the parish. However, the memorial had two advantages - it was outside and bubbles, of whatever size, could be accommodated relatively easily. Thus the decision was made to go ahead.

The first thing to do was to set up the site. Actually, the real first thing to do was the risk assessment but then it was the site. The warm summer followed by a period of much rain had encouraged the local plant life to spring up everywhere and it had to be reorganised (bearing in mind there is no such thing as a weed - merely a plant growing in the wrong place).



Cont...

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It had already been decided that, dueThe memorial garden needed to be cut back in order that we might once again see the footpaths on either side and the grass had to be cut. In this respect, grateful thanks should be given to the resident of the house opposite, whose timely intervention with a most excellent mowing machine saved the writer many hours with a pair of blunt scissors. The flower troughs were duly replanted and, as a final touch, our ever-vigilant 'tommy' was placed on sentry duty.

Due to the pandemic, we would try to restrict the annual programme to its most essential elements. The spiritual side was in the safest of hands with Rev. Victoria. We just had to wait for Downing Street to decide what we might be allowed to do. When it came, the news that Acts of Remembrance would be exempted from the lockdown restrictions was most welcome.

So, on a grey but dry November Sunday morning, a number of 'bubbles' of Ampfield Residents were gathered at the end of Knapp Lane. After an initial welcome, the names on the

monuments were read out by one of our retired servicemen followed by the Exhortation. At 11:00 we heard the chimes of Big Ben to bring in the two minutes silence, broken by the Last Post from the Cenotaph. Wreaths were laid. We were then led in prayer by Rev. Victoria who, in full clerical robes, had positioned herself almost on the A3090 with every intention of (very successfully) slowing passing traffic.

It was a lovely and very moving occasion. One that, perhaps due to challenging outside influences, will be in people's memories for quite a while. It did what it set out to do, it remembered, but it also provided friends and neighbours with the opportunity to have a natter and a general catch up. Very important these days!

Graham



Friends of Chapel Wood

Sadly, due to the uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus lockdown, there was no working party in November. That was a particular shame, since we subsequently discovered that charitable and volunteer-based activities are effectively exempt for the restrictions. However, we did manage to organise our annual business meeting.

In line with conventional wisdom, this was a 'virtual' meeting. Its main purpose is to ensure that we stick, more or less, to our five-year management plan, whereby the woodland is divided into a dozen specific compartments, depending on vegetation and position. Each compartment has its planned list of necessary tasks. These cover everything, mending fences, maintaining footpaths, clearing invasive species, etc.

Our input is to plot the next six months working parties to ensure nothing important is overlooked. We also consider the burial ground. In addition, we will look at any special projects we feel would be of



benefit to the woodland and, most importantly, the visitors who use it. We also review the risk assessment to ensure it remains relevant and think about any forthcoming financial considerations.

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This year our regular programme will again centre heavily on maintaining footpaths and fencing. We will also make further inroads into removing the ever-insistent *Rhododendron ponticum* from some compartments. Left to its own devices, this plant would take over. In particular, we aim to clear the rear of the burial ground except for a 'hedge' around the boundary.

Our projects this year include creating a vista at the west end of St. Mark's, with seating overlooking the pond area. We hope to be able to build a path down to the pond from the rear of the church but think we will need to engage the services of a mechanical digger to remove roots. We also hope to make some progress with the reinstatement of the dipping platform. This is the subject of investigation currently.

Whilst not as exciting or convivial as meeting and working in the wood, the annual business meetings are extremely important in their own right. They provide focus, plus the opportunity to exchange thoughts and ideas. We all look forward to getting back out there again in December - let's hope it stays dry.



Graham

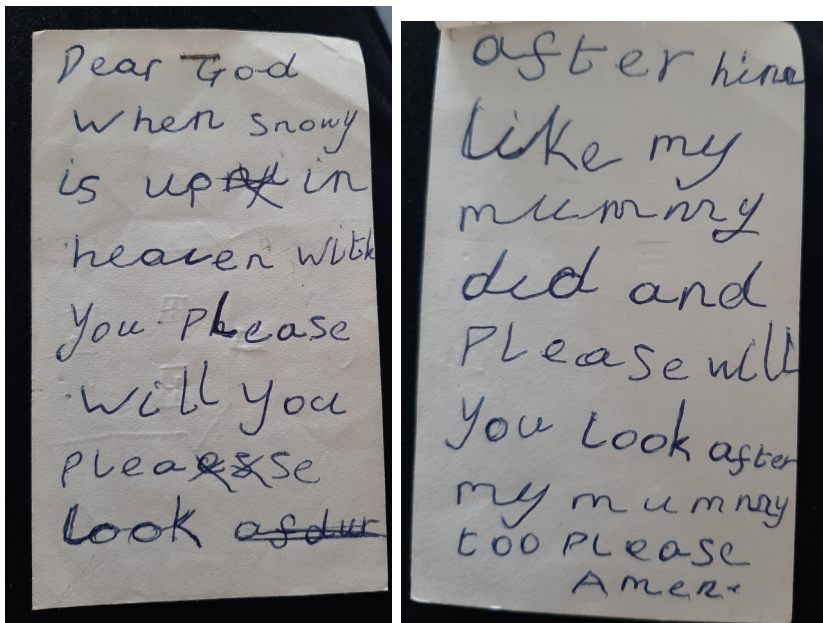
A child's prayer for Snowy

Spending time with my mum recently (we are in a bubble) we were looking through some old photos and letters, Mum had kept. One of the things we found was a prayer I wrote for Snowy, who was our pet hamster, and looking at the prayer, he must have just died. Unfortunately there is no date on the paper, but I think I was about 6 or 7 at the time. For those who need a translation it reads:

Dear God When Snowy is up in heaven with you please will you please look after him like my mummy did and please will you look after my mummy too please. Amen.

Clearly I hadn't learn anything about punctuation, at that point, but did manage the correct use of "too!"

Jo Hooper



Can you identify the famous people from their epitaphs?

"The Entertainer" "He Did It All"



Answers on p. 29

The Benefice and Covid

Although for most of this year our Church Buildings have been closed, the church itself has been far from closed. Worship has continued online throughout the week as well as on Sunday morning with regular congregation members and many others joining in. Twice weekly news/pastoral letters have gone out keeping everyone in touch with what's going on in the church and community, and making sure everyone's needs, both physical and Spiritual are taken care of. During the first lockdown some of us were involved in shopping, picking up prescriptions and other activities to help those who were self-isolating.

Despite many weddings having to be cancelled due to the Covid restriction we have still been able to celebrate with four couples which has brought much joy in dark times. As Remembrance came within the second lockdown, we held our Services to remember both those whose funerals took place this year and The Act of Remembrance for those who lost their lives in war, online and laid wreaths at our various War memorials of Ampfield Chilworth and North Baddesley in quiet prayerful peace at 11 O'clock on the

Sunday morning. There was also a remembrance prayer trial in the beautiful setting of St John's churchyard, North Baddesley for all to take a moment of peace and reflection.

We are sorry that we cannot meet as a praying worshipping Christian community, and miss meeting together, but we continue our daily prayers for our communities across the benefice and look forward to meeting once again when it is safe to do so. Our priority is to keep everyone safe and well. We look forward to celebrating Advent and Christmas in a different way this year, do keep an eye on our Facebook page and website to see what's going on. At the moment we are preparing Advent reflections which will be on-line everyday and will be presented by each member of the team in turn.

As Government guidelines are always changing it'll all be a bit last minute this year for all of us, but whatever comes we know that God so loved the world that at that very first Christmas His Son was born, God with us, to walk the journey with us in our sorrows and in our blessings,

**Rev'd
Victoria and
the
ministry
team**



PCC Meeting held, via zoom, on Monday 23 November 2020

Revd Victoria chaired the meeting and opened with prayers. Some of the points covered were:-

Ride and Stride, which took place in September, raised £207.50 for St. Mark's Church.

The Messenger – Chris and Rob Kerr reported that the meeting had not yet taken place to discuss future plans for the Messenger, so if anybody has a view, comment or idea about how the magazine should proceed, please get in touch with them. For those people who would like to have a paper copy, rather than reading it on line, this could be possible with some being printed by the Benefice Office.

New Kitchen in the Church Room- this work has been delayed for various reasons, but it is hoped that it might be installed in time for the Lent Lunches in 2021.

Treasurer's Report – We have been very lucky with our giving, gift-aided and planned income, which is in line with the budget. Even though there has been no fundraising this year, we have managed to pay all our bills so far. There will, however, be an overall

loss for the year.

Mission Giving - PCC was very keen to still donate to five charities at the end of the year, and the following have been chosen:-

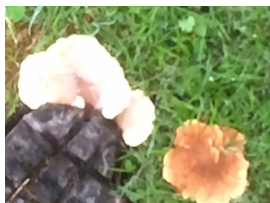
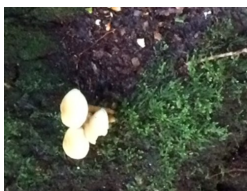
The Royal British Legion
Romsey Young Carers
Romsey Food Bank
CAP – Christians against Poverty (helps anyone in debt to work their finances out, free of charge)
The Children's Society

West Window – Mark Braund, Churchwarden, is in the process of submitting the final application to the Covid 19 – Emergency Heritage At Risk Response Fund, for help with the repair of the stained glass in the three lancet windows in the West gable, and also the single window in the South side, which has also been found to be in need of repair. PCC is very grateful for all Mark's work on this project. We wait to hear if we have been successful.

**Jennie
Edwards
PCC
Secretary**



**A collection (not all) of various fungi discovered over the year in Chapel Wood.
Can you identify them?**



Cont...
Chapel Wood Fungi





SOCIAL DISTANCING WAS PROVING TO BE
A PROBLEM.

Nigel Babb

Answer to Nigel's Christmas Quiz on p.



Wishing Ewe
ay fanta stic
Christmas day
and joyful
Newe Year

Answers to gravestone quiz on P. 23

Spike Milligan - "Dúirt mé leat go raibh mé breoite" – (*Irish for "I told you I was ill"*)

Leslie Nielsen – "Let 'Er Rip"

Dean Martin – "Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime"

Frank Sinatra – "The Best Is Yet To Come"

Bette Davis – "She Did It - The Hard Way"

Castaway of the Month - Sam Price



How to encapsulate me, my life and memories in music...what a challenge! I've given it some thought (despite being time deprived so this is being typed right on the deadline which is very typical of me!) I have a love of dance, wine, and beautiful unspoilt places so I believe I will do just fine on a lovely desert island.. .so here goes a quick snapshot

1. **Frank Sinatra ' I've got you under my skin'.**

Despite having no singing voice, and clasping a hairbrush as if a microphone, I won the Brownie pack holiday talent contest, probably due to pure hilarity at an 11 year old girl mimicking her mother's favourite singer? I loved the Brownies, I had every square mm of my left arm tightly packed with badges.

2. **'Bright Eyes' Simon and Garfunkel.**

Bizarrely, looking back it did not sink in that I could not sing for some years and I even got picked for lead in the Church Choir – I think my confidence exceeded my perceived talent by some degree! I loved this song , the theme to the film Watership Down so inexplicably myself and my friend sang a duet in front of the whole school aged 14 in the music competition. It was the most embarrassing experience possible, she missed her cue and I tried to chip in and we both of us dried up. When we did squark a few notes out we were completely flat and I wished the ground could open up! Good learning experience, never volunteered to sing again in public!

3. **Kool and the Gang – Get Down on It.**

Dancing was and is a passion I did ballet till I was 18, and being a girl of the 80s didn't we just have the best pop songs? This one reminds me of our A level trip to Cornwall with the dishy biology teacher, we had a fun week examining seaweed, rock pools and eating cream teas

4. **Bob Marley – Don't worry 'bout a thing.** I took the motto 'work hard play hard' seriously at uni (Edinburgh, dentistry) and this particular song reminds me of an all night party where we drank far too much in Highland Park and at 5am where just gently swaying to this track!

5. **Gay Gordons**– what can I say I was at a Scottish university – an enduring memory of many exuberant Ceilidhs was letting go of the Dean of the dental school from one of my 'death grips' whilst spinning during a Strip the willow.

6. **ABBA – Dancing queen** - simply the best pop band ever.

7. **Saturday night fever – the bee gees** – up there with ABBA – both tracks have me sprinting to the floor to imagine myself 30 years younger – joy!

8. **Madonna – La Isla Bonita.** I waited years to find a red dress like the one she wore in the video.

9. **Pomp and Circumstance – Elgar.** I have to mention this one as my darling hubbie and I have been married 25 years in December 2020 and having one of the first civil weddings outside a registry office we had to choose only non religious music at the castle in Kent where we married. This was our wedding march!

Book: it would have to be a mighty tome listing every wine in the world, with tasting notes so that I could learn enough so that when I am rescued I can continue with my wine exams....

Luxury item – insect repellent I do get bitten a lot!



Memories of Christmas in Ampfield

This was a poem written originally by Honor Goodhart and printed in Punch on 27th October 1920, just over 100 years ago. For all of you with log burning stoves, this advice is still sound. The words in the verses below came from the original poem, but were made into a folk song by Danny Spooner and Duncan Brown in their 2016 CD, Labour and Toil.

I love this poem because it reminds me of Chapel Wood, the wonderful woodland we have at the heart of our village. A few years ago we built a large bonfire in the glade just before Christmas. We assembled as darkness fell around the glowing fire with friends and neighbours to sing carols as we watched the red and orange sparks rise into the treetops and disappear into the night sky. We all tucked into hot jacket potatoes from the embers, when the singing finished. It was a happy and memorable evening.

Logs to Burn

Logs to burn, logs to burn,
Logs to save the coal a turn.
Here's a word to make you wise
when you hear the woodman's
cries.

Beech wood fires burn bright and
clear,
Hornbeam blazes too,
If the logs are kept a year
to season through and through.

Oak logs will warm you well
if they're old and dry.
Larch logs and pinewoods smell,
but the sparks will fly.

Pine is good and so is Yew,
for warmth through wintry days.
The Poplar and the Willow too,
they take too long to blaze.

Birch logs will burn too fast,
Alder scarce at all.
Chestnut logs are good to last,
cut them in the fall.

Holly logs will burn like wax,
you should burn them green.
Elm logs like smouldering flax,
no flames with them are seen.

Pear logs and Apple logs,
will scent your house and home.
Cherry logs across the dogs,
they smell like flowers in bloom.

Ash logs so smooth and grey,
burn them green or old.
Buy up all that come your way
they're worth their weight in gold.
Cont...

...Cont.

I will miss the Christmas Market this year. It always heralds the beginning of the Christmas period in the Village. The stallholders always work so hard to make the December Market special. The Village Hall Christmas Tree usually stands sparkling in a spotlight on the stage. We always make sure we book Father Christmas well in advance for the morning of the Market, he hands out chocolate treats to young and old. A few Christmases ago it was such a cold and icy morning that Father Christmas had to help our intrepid customers to and from their cars amidst flurries of snow. Families will soon begin to think about preparing for Santa's visit and will start listening out for the clatter of reindeer hooves on their roof tops, I rather like this poem which describes unrest in the North Pole stables before the Christmas rush and sends out a plea for new reindeers to help out !

Help wanted by Timothy Tocher

Santa wants new reindeer
The first bunch has grown old.

Dasher has arthritis;

Comet hates the cold.

Prancer's sick of staring
at Dancer's fat behind.

Cupid married Blitzen
and Donder lost his mind.

Dancer's mad at Vixen
for stepping on his toes.

Vixen's being thrown out -
she laughed at Rudolph's nose.

If you are a reindeer
we hope you will apply.

There's just one tricky part;
You must know how to fly.

**On behalf of the Village Hall
Committee and the Market
Team I would like to wish you
all a very wonderful, healthy
and happy Christmas !
We'll look forward to seeing
you all again in 2021.**

**with warm wishes from
Julie Trotter**



Thought for the Month



And so this is Christmas, we hope you have fun, the near and the dear ones, the old and the young. The immortal words of John Lennon have a poignant significance this year. We all know that we can get together for Christmas in good sized family groups but there lies the dilemma. After months of (in the main) good behaviour, listening and obeying the advice coming at us from those

in the know, should we put it all at risk for five days get together. Christmas is such a time of get together for families, a time of magical relaxation and catch up and wonderful excitement for children. We are all missing a lot of the joy of Christmas, by not having the lovely nativity services and carols and, to be honest, just missing the get togethers with others, especially for church services. I really miss going to church services, as do many of us.

What does Christmas mean to many of us? I think it is a time of reflection, a time to appreciate what we have and to be aware of the enormous amount of people who are finding it hard, especially this year. Christmas to me means a lovely fire (or log burner) turkey, decorations, Christmas trees, presents, excited children (especially excited children) and a nice snooze after too much dinner. Party games come out at Christmas, after lying dormant in the loft all year, Christmas films to follow and a small sherry (make that large) to finish it all off. Also, opening presents. What fun it is to watch children and grandchildren opening their presents. It makes it all worthwhile. Just think how magical it all must be for them.

Cont...

...Cont.

On a personal note, this year, health wise, has not been my best. It has been a great comfort to me to know how much people cared and prayed and I thank you all for that, from the bottom of my heart. Seeing the huge toll that the pandemic has inflicted on so many families this year, my problems seem so insignificant. We must keep them all in our prayers. Prayer is so important, such a comfort, in our everyday lives.

Thank goodness that Father Christmas is exempt from all restrictions and can deliver presents everywhere, as usual. He does not even have to wear a mask. I am not sure whether the reindeers have to wear one though. Wouldn't that be a sight to behold. May we all take comfort and joy in the wonderful celebration of the birth of Christ and I hope that everybody has a lovely Christmas, whether they decide to get together or stay apart. Such an important decision. Above all, everybody please endeavour to keep safe and let us all please remember and pray for all those good people that are not so fortunate as ourselves. God bless you all.

Ron



Information

If you need any Zoom meeting links, would like to join in with readings or intercessions, would like prayers said for you or someone you know, or would just like to comment, please email or joinin@acnb-church.org.

Hampshire public libraries are currently closed for browsing for the remainder of the national lockdown however, they are offering many services. Check their website for details.

Nextdoor.co.uk

Neighbourhood hub for connecting with local services.

Online Facebook groups:

Romsey News and Information Group

The original Facebook Group for Romsey.

Romsey Garden, Nursery & Plants, Info. Sharing etc.

Good source of local plant delivery and availability, seeds and growing information.

Recommended online suppliers:

Donald Russell (meat): hello@donaldrussell.co.uk;

www.donaldrussell.com

Regal Fish: info@regalfish.co.uk; www.regalfish.co.uk

Local Representatives

Member of Parliament: Caroline Nokes; Phone: 01794 521155

County Councillor: Alan Dowden; Phone 02380 266458

TVBC Councillor: Martin Hatley; Phone: 02380 254040

Ampfield Parish Council: Chair Bryan Nanson; Phone: 02380 267760

Contributing to the Messenger

Contributions to this magazine are always welcome, however it may be necessary to edit or shorten articles.

Copy should reach the editors by the 15th of the month please.

As a guide, one page = approx. 325 words (fewer if you would like to include a photo).

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Bookings taken for private parties
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