

# Link

For the parishes of Bunbury & Tilstone Fearnall



December  
2012 &  
January  
2013

*Kindness is a hard thing to give away; it keeps coming back*

*Ralph Scott*



## ‘Sleeping Beauty’ gets Christmas off to a roaring start in Bunbury *(more photos on page 9)*

### Christmas services at a glance:

**Christingle** - Sunday 2 December @ 4pm

**Nativity** - Sunday 16 December @ 10am

**Crib service** - Monday 24 December @ 4pm

**Midnight communion** - Monday 24 December @ 11.30pm

### Christmas Communions:

St Jude's @ 9am

St Boniface @ 10.30am

**For the full diary - including Carol Services - turn to page 5.**



The theme of this issue is **gifts**... here is a taste of what's inside:



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What does God want us to give at Christmas?



04

Organ donation: Is it a Christian duty to give?



08

Year 2 ponder their best gifts

## Who we are



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### The Link

Please contact us if you would like to advertise your business or if you wish to send us your news, views and pictures.

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You can also read The Link online at:  
[www.stbonifacebunbury.org.uk](http://www.stbonifacebunbury.org.uk)

## Community news

Many congratulations to **Pat Edgley and John Ellis** on their engagement - we are delighted for you both!

Many happy returns to **Pat Edgely**, who celebrated her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday this month, and to **Arthur Cowap**, who we understand will celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 1 February.



Congratulations to **Dawn Brabazon and Mark Unsworth**, who were married at St Boniface on 20 October.

Tilly's is holding a **quiz night** on Friday 7 December at 7pm. Tickets £12 includes supper. All proceeds to St Boniface church. St Boniface will be **lighting the tree of lights** again this Christmas. Please complete the form on page 6 if you would like a light on the tree. The tree will be lit after a special Evensong at 4.30pm on 9 December. After the carols around the tree on Christmas Eve, **Good Companions** will be serving mulled wine and mince pies in the village hall. Further **Christmas Choir practices** for the St Boniface Carol Service will be held on 1 and 8 December, 10.30am-12pm. **The Carol Service will be held on Sunday 16 December.** All are welcome to participate. For further information please contact Andrew Dean on 261222.

**Bunbury Methodist Chapel** will hold their Carol Service on Sunday 23 December at 10.45am. All are welcome.

**Bunbury Primary School** is organising a **Bags2School** collection. Bags2School specialises in good quality second-hand clothing, bedding, soft toys, paired shoes, hats, belts and handbags. Please bring any bags to school after 3pm Monday 3 December or before 9am Tuesday 4 December. You can also drop off any bags at The Pavilion on Saturday 1 December 10-11am. All collected bags are weighed and a price paid per tonne to the school.

The **Bunbury Gardening Club** will hold a **quiz night** with mulled wine and mince pies on 15 January, starting at 8pm at the village hall.

**Sadlers Wells Community Woodland** needs a few volunteers to take over the management and maintenance of the wood as a village amenity, as three of the present trustees are now over 80. No great skills are required, just enthusiasm for the environment and a desire to maintain the wood for the benefit of the village. It does not require a lot of time, and many of the jobs can be done when convenient. If you would like to get involved, please contact either Ernest Croley (tel 260344) or Mike Bourne (tel 260944).

The **Bunbury Village Day Group** is searching for **volunteers** to help with the next Village Day, which will be held on Saturday 15 June 2013. Please contact Steve Mort on 262473 if you can help.

**Jane Overy** would like to thank all those who donated shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child this year. The boxes have been delivered to



their depot at Wrexham and will soon be on the way to disadvantaged children in Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

The **Parish Plan Committee** is making good progress towards the circulation of detailed questionnaires for the villagers to complete and thus help shape the future of Bunbury. As an incentive to complete the survey, which will be ready in early 2013, there will be prizes! For more information, please contact Andrew Thomson on 261805.

**Are you up for a challenge?** If so maybe you could **raise money for St. Luke's Hospice** by taking part in one of their events in 2013. How about the London to Paris Bike Ride 3-7 July, or the Sahara Desert Trek & Street Child Project 19-26 October? To find out more come to an open evening at the Hospice, Queensway, Winsford CW7 1BH on Tuesday 20 November 7-8pm. Contact Liz Wells to reserve your place 01606 555816 [liz\\_wells@stlukes-hospice.co.uk](mailto:liz_wells@stlukes-hospice.co.uk)

The **copy deadline** for the February issue of the Link is **Friday 11 January**. The magazine should be in church for delivery on **Friday 25 January**.

### Our prayers for December

We pray for all who are ill including youth worker **Kim's sister** recovering from major surgery, Debbie Shears' mother **Renate Clayden, Eileen Overy, Danny Jones, Bill Corn, Walter and Mary Williamson, and Betty Clauson**. We pray for everyone who is mourning a loved one including **Sue** and the family of **Don Watson**, and the families of baby **Grace Burrows** and **Dorothy Frances Dakin**.

### The Link team needs fresh faces!

The current editor has to stand down mid-2013. If you are keen to see the Link continue, please contact Jo Mason on 733971 or email [parishlinkeditor@gmail.com](mailto:parishlinkeditor@gmail.com) to find out more about what is involved in its production.

## A note from the editor

*At this time of year, our thoughts turn to giving. We listen out for clues of what our loved ones might like for Christmas; we scan the numerous brightly-coloured catalogues that tumble temptingly on to our doormats; we ask friends for inspiration as we try to figure out just how we will find the perfect gift for our children that won't break their hearts or the bank. And often we realise that we all get as much - if not more - joy from giving as from receiving on Christmas day.*

*This issue of the Link is all about **giving**: we ask our young people what, if they could give anything, they would most like to give their parents; we celebrate the generosity of those who gave shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child; we hear which charities the PCC will give to in 2013; and in our Great Debate, we consider one of the greatest gifts we could give - a part of ourselves to someone in need through organ donation.*

*These strands can be woven into a single question: What does God want us to give Him for Christmas? Micah, a prophet who lived about 700 years before the birth of Christ, said: 'And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.' (Micah 6:8). This Christmas, God is looking for the gift of lives characterised by justice, mercy and humility: Justice: As God is just, we try to do right for those less fortunate than ourselves.*

*Mercy: That we love the unlovely even when they don't love us back. How has God dealt with you this year? If He has forgiven you, forgive others. If He lifted you up when you were down, seek to lift others. Where God has overlooked our faults, let's overlook the faults of others.*

*Humility: the opposite of pride. Everything we have is a gift from God. Although some may have more or less than us, we can still thank God and do our best.*

*As the carol says:*

*'What shall I give him, poor as I am?*

*If I were a shepherd, I'd give him a lamb.*

*If I were a wise man, I'd do my part.*

*What shall I give him, I'll give him my heart.'*

## Lighting up our church

**St Boniface is looking for people to sponsor the floodlighting of the church for a week in the winter to commemorate a family occasion or loved one. The donation will help to keep St Boniface illuminated in the cold, dark winter months. The minimum donation is £15. Please sign up using the notice board in the church.**

TIM HAYWARD

Your Vicar



Imagine walking into a room and finding a beautifully wrapped present on the table, and attached to the present is a gift tag that reads: 'This present is for you, but don't open it now... wait!'

How would you feel - intrigued or irritated? Perhaps a combination of the two.

In reality, I wonder how many of us would obey the gift tag and wait. Waiting is not something most of us do easily. Our frustrations at waiting begin at an early age and are hard to outgrow. When I tell my children to wait, I see on their faces that familiar expression of emotional agony. I recognise it, not so much because I remember feeling that way when I was their age, but because at times I still feel that way and am less able to express it quite so openly.

All around us we are encouraged not to wait, but to have what we want now. Our credit-driven society urges us to 'buy now, and pay later'; our smart phones make us

## The gift of Advent

available even when we are not, and people are aggrieved if they have to wait for more than 24 hours to receive a reply to an email. Waiting is, increasingly, a strange notion. We expect immediacy.

Given all this, it seems almost ludicrous that the church should have Advent - four weeks dedicated to waiting.

My prayer for this Advent is that I might re-learn the ability to wait.

Treat yourself to a few minutes of stillness today. See what a difference it makes. Listen to a piece of music, read a favourite poem or just dare to be silent. Peel back the layers of your subterfuge and look again at what your heart longs for and what it believes.

Advent is about getting ready for Christmas, and Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts.

God bless all our hearts and homes this Advent.

## Nativity at St Boniface - Sunday 16 December



The Nativity play for children of all ages and everyone (including the youth group) will be held on Sunday 16 December during the 10am service at St Boniface. All children will be able to take part in some way and costumes will be provided.

There will be a rehearsal on Sunday 9 December straight after the 10am service, but if you can't make the rehearsal, you can still take part - just come along on the day. On Sunday 16 December please arrive at 9:30 am so that we can get you into your costume.

If you have any questions please phone Debbie Shears (260707).

## "Prelude to Christmas" Concert

at St Boniface Church, Bunbury

by

Bunbury Singers

Musical Director: Daniel Keen

Accompanist: Rob Glassonbury

Special Guest Appearance:

The Bunbury School Choir

Saturday,

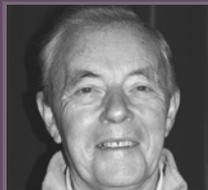
8<sup>th</sup> December 2012 at 7.30 pm

Admission £7.00 (including refreshments)

Tickets available from the Church Committee or

Neil Dewson-Smyth (01829-261680), choir members or Mike McDermott (01829-732361) or come along and pay at the door.

Proceeds to St. Boniface Church and Bunbury Singers.



## Eric Wallington

Reader Emeritus

### Thought of the month

Carol-singing time is with us once again! And I'm reminded of the true story of how one of the most popular Christmas carols was written.

In 1865, a young American clergyman had arranged to journey to the Holy Land. He was just 30 years old and it was a long and arduous journey. After American independence, American Anglicans no longer called themselves 'Church of England' and so Phillips Brooks was known as an Episcopalian. He had chosen to take a vacation from his post as rector of a church in Philadelphia. And so it was that on Christmas Eve that year he was able to attend the midnight service in Bethlehem.

Later that night he rode on horseback returning to Jerusalem and,

looking down from the road along the ridge, he marvelled at how peaceful the village of Bethlehem lay below him and he could effectively describe the scene to his friends when he returned.

Just over a year later he put his feelings into a poem, 'O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie'. The world over, it has given us the most popular of the Christmas carols. And the carol reminds us of the words of the shepherds to whom the birth was announced by angels: 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us'. And so at Christmas, in our minds and in our hearts, we also go to Bethlehem to see what God has done for us.



## The Great Debate: Is organ donation a Christian duty?

**If 90% of people in the UK believe that organ donation is the right thing to do, why has only 30% of the population joined the Organ Donation Register?** Perhaps one reason is that some people are unsure just how organ donation fits with their faith - or whether their faith supports the act.

The Mission and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England has published its response to the NHS Blood and Transplant Consultation on Organ Donation Post 2013 Strategy, saying: *"The Church of England affirms that: 'giving one's self and one's possessions voluntarily for the well-being of others and without compulsion is a Christian duty of which organ donation is a striking example."* The response repeats the Church's opposition to selling organs for commercial

gain, while accepting organs being freely given by living donors with no commercial gain.

Some of the reasons put forward for Christians in support of organ donation are:

- For Christians, acts of mercy are a part of the self-sacrifice that God requires of us. Christ is the paradigm of self-giving.
- The Christian faith is based upon the revelation of God in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus taught people to love one another and to embrace the needs of others.
- Organ donation can be considered by Christians as a genuine act of love.
- Christians believe in eternal life, and preparing for death should not be a source of fear. Nothing that happens to our body, before or after death, can impact on our relationship with God.

- Ensuring that we are on the NHS Organ Donor Register and that relatives know of our wishes in advance will help to relieve loved ones of anxiety if the opportunity to donate arises.

The Bishop of Carlisle, the Rt Revd James Newcome, has said: "Christians have a mandate to heal, motivated by compassion, mercy, knowledge and ability - and this extends to organ donation. The Christian tradition both affirms the God-given value of human bodily life, and the principle of putting the needs of others before one's own needs."

If you would like to know more about the Organ Donation Register, please call 0300 123 23 23 or visit [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk). If you are troubled by how this issue affects you and wish to discuss it further, please contact Tim Hayward (contact details on page 2).



## Pat Edgley

Reader

### To Jesus, with Love

How is the Christmas shopping going? Well organised and finished? Not started yet?

The way we shop says a lot about us.

One browses anxiously to find the exact thing.

If they like it, we feel clever and good, but when they hate it, we are the failures.

The second type rushes in and grabs whatever comes to hand - "that'll do" - without a thought, so long as it all gets done.

Giving and receiving are acts of love; filling a shoe box for a child far away brings such joy, and graciously accepting something unsuitable gives us the chance to show our love, too.

God gives us so much, in fact, everything we have. What can we give in return?

All he asks is our love, however feeble. We are never failures to him.

Dearest Lord Jesus,

We thank you that you came into our world,  
A baby born in a stable in Bethlehem  
As a gift of love from God the Father  
To heal and to save.

The Shepherds came and gave you a lamb.  
The wise men brought rich treasures.

We have just the right present for you.  
May we give it by caring  
For our neighbours, our friends, our families  
May we give it by remembering those who are in need.  
That gift you hold most precious - our love.

## 'Behold I have engraved you on the palms of my hands' (Isaiah 49)

The hands of God are the ultimate safe place to which we can commend our loved ones, ourselves and the things most precious to us. Our hands tell our stories; we each have our own identity, our own unique fingerprint and handprint.

During our family service, the congregation wrote prayers and placed them into God's hands. The children and young people made a collage of their own handprints. The larger hands protected the smaller hands inside the smaller circle. When the handprints had dried, we put them under the sculpted 'hands of God' which have been travelling around families in the village and into school. God bless the work of our hands.



## Christmas messages



Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our friends in Bunbury and Tilstone Fearnall. With love, **Pat Edgley and John Ellis**

Wishing everyone a happy Christmas and peaceful New Year. Love from **Graham, Sue, James, Rachel and Jonathan Melia**

**Kath and Peter Collinge** wish all their friends in Bunbury a very peaceful Christmas, and health and blessings for 2013

Wishing everyone a very happy Christmas, from the **Crotty family**

Wishing all our friends in Bunbury and Tilstone Fearnall a peaceful, joyful Christmas and a happy, healthy 2013. **John & Jo Mason and family**

**Megan and Roger Fairweather** would like to wish all their friends in Bunbury a very happy Christmas and New Year

Sending love and best wishes for a truly joyful Christmastime, from **Eric Wallington**

**Anne James and family** wish everyone a Happy Christmas and every good wish for 2013.

Happy Christmas to all our friends in Bunbury! Wishing you a wonderful and blessed time. With love from **Nick and Alex Sanders** (on a very windy hilltop in Mellor) xx

## Church diary for December-January

Sunday 2 December	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion 4.00pm Christingle	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley St Boniface	Wednesday 2 January	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Wednesday 5 December	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 6 January	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley
Sunday 9 December	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion 4.00pm Carol Service 4.30pm Evensong	St Jude's St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface	Wednesday 9 January	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Wednesday 12 December	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 13 January	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion 4.30pm Evensong	St Jude's St Boniface St Boniface
Sunday 16 December	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Morning prayer 10.00am Family worship 11.00am Carol Service 6.30pm Carol Service	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley St Boniface	Wednesday 16 January	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Wednesday 19 December	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 20 January	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Morning prayer 10.00am Family worship 11.00am Matins	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley
Sunday 23 December	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface	Wednesday 23 January	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
24 December Christmas Eve	4.00pm Crib Service 7.30pm Holy Communion 11.30pm Midnight Communion	St Boniface Calveley St Boniface	Sunday 27 January	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface
25 December Christmas Day	<b>9.00am</b> Holy Communion <b>10.30am</b> Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface	Wednesday 30 January	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 30 December	10.00am Family Communion	St Boniface	Sunday 3 February	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley
			Wednesday 6 February	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface

For those we love and those we miss

## Bunbury Tree of Lights 2012



To sponsor a light on the tree at St Boniface this Christmas in aid of our church building please fill in the form or contact Jill Robey on 260081 jill@1manorcottage.co.uk

I would like a light on the tree to celebrate: (please give details)

.....  
.....

I would like to donate £..... (£5 minimum)

I would like to Gift Aid my donation to Bunbury PCC  
Tick box (Charity No 1133106)\*

\*To be able to gift aid your donation you must pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax in the tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that will be reclaimed on your gift (25p per £1 donated). If you pay income tax at a higher rate you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your self assessment tax return if you want to receive the additional tax relief.

Name:.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

Signature.....

Tick box for an entry in the Book of Lights

# Bunbury gathers for Remembrance



Remembrance Day fell - for once - on a Sunday, and Bunbury saw another wonderful gathering of its members and those of surrounding villages.

People of all ages came together to remember all those who gave their lives in all the wars this nation has fought in since 1914. The photograph above shows many of those who formed the parade on the way back from St Boniface. The rain that had drenched so many on the way to the church had gone away and the sun was out. It is estimated that up to 100 members of the Scouting Association took part; truly a magnificent turnout by the village youngsters.

The Rt Hon Mr Stephen O'Brien MP presented John Walker with a Certificate of Merit for long service to the Royal British Legion (RBL) - pictured below. Johnny, as most people know him, has been an active and vital member of Audlem and Bunbury RBL for 65 years, holding office at various times as chairman, vice-chairman, chairman of the service committee, the welfare committee and a poppy organiser. His work for the branch and the ex-service men and women and their relatives in the village has been tireless. He is invaluable, as he knows and remembers everyone so well. A lovely - well deserved - award which everyone managed to keep a secret from Johnny - quite an achievement in itself!

Jill Waits, on behalf of James Walton, Chairman of Bunbury RBL



It was good to gather on Remembrance Sunday across the generations to remember those known to us and those unknown, those whose lives have been given and taken away in conflict, writes the Revd **Tim Hayward**. Our collective memory and our desire to keep their memories alive is a sacred thread that unites all of our community. Some of us are older, some of us younger, yet each one of us will have our own cherished memories or stories of loved ones.

Many of us were wearing poppies - a flower that has come powerfully to symbolise hope in the midst of death. Our hope comes not from denying death and the pain that it causes; rather our hope - Christian hope - comes from the fact that love is stronger than death, light more powerful than darkness, the poppy more resilient than the killing fields.



## If you could ask God for anything this Christmas, what would you ask for?

Healing, perhaps? To be re-united with loved ones? True happiness for your families and friends? World peace, maybe? An end to suffering?

And I wonder: what is the most precious gift you have received over the years? It needn't have been at Christmas time, but what was it and who gave it to you? How did it make you feel? Why was it so special?

At Christmas, we celebrate the greatest gift ever given: the gift of love. In the baby Jesus, we see love personified. We see God is love. All our preconceived ideas, and assumptions about what God is like are turned upside down by that babe in Bethlehem. When we think of God we often think of God as big and strong, well you can't get much smaller and more vulnerable than a baby. We may think of God as the great

controller, pulling the strings behind the universe, whereas the babe at Bethlehem is dependent and wholly reliant on others for his health and well-being. We often think of God as somewhere out there; holy, separate from us. In the Christ child, God comes to live with us here, as one of us. And we can readily think of God as scary and disappointed with us, however at Christmas the babe comes to bring us peace and to show us he loves us, always has done and always will.

In that manger, God gave to us all we could ever want or need or imagine. He gave himself - extravagantly gift wrapped in a baby. Heaven touched earth in a vulnerable, fragile, powerless, beautiful baby.

God bless all our hearts and homes this Christmas.

Tim Hayward

## Give us 2 minutes... Father Christmas!



**We managed to catch up with Father Christmas - who always visits St Boniface each year at the Crib Service on Christmas Eve - as he was planning ahead for his busy period. We were delighted when he agreed to share his 'Two Minutes' with us.**

### **If you had a motto, what would it be:**

Don't let the snow get in the way.

### **It's a celebrity Christmas party. Who would you like at your table?**

The Elves work so hard all year I think they should be invited, but to be honest I wouldn't mind a little one-to-one time with that fairy off the Christmas tree.

### **What's your favourite Christmas carol?**

By the time I'm dropping off presents in the Caribbean on Christmas Eve, I'm getting pretty tired but I do love singing along to the Calypso Carol at that point - it's got a great rhythm and fits in with the steel bands that seem to play there all night long.

### **What would you call your autobiography?**

Plum pudding comes later. And wow do I appreciate it!

### **What is the best present you've ever given?**

A cheerful smile on Christmas morning (or any other day) is the cheapest and best present anyone can give, and with a merry "ho ho ho" it's even better.

### **What is the best present you've ever BEEN given?**

A day of rest on Boxing Day.

### **What is the best book you've read to date?**

The Christmas Story has got everything: drama, innocence, power, hope, joy, a bit of underlying menace (that Herod was a terrible man, particularly around children), and of course the first ever Christmas gifts (although I must admit I'm not into giving frankincense and myrrh myself).

### **If you could change one thing about Bunbury, what would it be?**

Wider chimneys everywhere. It's either that or I must cut down on the mince pies.

### **What is your biggest regret?**

That the Santa All Stars don't score enough goals.

### **If you were granted one wish, what would it be?**

The number of houses to visit keeps going up, and to be honest my eyesight's not what it was and we keep going the wrong way. So what I could really do with is a sat-nav on my sleigh to make sure I get all the presents delivered on time.

### **What is the one thing that people would be surprised to learn about you?**

I like a Brandy with my mince pie. Although I don't mind when people leave sherry instead - I give it to Rudolph (which perhaps explains why we keep getting lost and I need a sat-nav).

### **What would you like to achieve most over the next 12 months?**

Make sad people happy by persuading them to act every day with the same kindness, fun and thought for others as they do on Christmas day.

### **What is your favourite place and why?**

My chimney at Bickley when I can hide away and get on with my jobs.

### **How would you spend your ideal weekend?**

Thinking about how to avoid Monday morning.

# Year 2 goes exploring at St Boniface...



On Tuesday 13 November, Year 2 visited St Boniface to discover more about 'What is a church?'. Having trekked across the fields, they were met by 'Rev Tim' (as they call him) and Mrs Buxton, who very kindly gave them a guided tour of the church.

Their eyes were truly opened and they learnt so much! They marvelled at the beauty of the stained-glass windows, discovered village shields held high by angels and explored the pulpit, nave and

Ridley chapel - they even sang a song from the choir stalls! Later on they asked Tim questions about the history of the church and how he became a vicar. Their morning was made complete



when they were all allowed to ring the main church bell - so if local residents were wondering what all the noise was about, it was Year 2!

They returned to the school having had a wonderful morning in this magnificent church, and would like to say a big thank you to Revd Tim and Mrs Buxton for being so generous with their time.

Vanessa Greenbury and Year 2

## ...and gives us *their* thoughts on gifts

While touring the church, Year 2 was asked to think about the best presents they had ever received. Here are some of their thoughts (and if you ever doubted the power of technology, read on...)

- "The best present was a speed boat!"
- "My best present was my iPad."
- "My best present was a creating kit."
- "My best present was my watch."
- "My best present was a best buddy and my friends."
- "My best present was mum, dad and Jesus."
- "My best present was Ziggy, my cat."
- "My favourite present was a set of Horrible Henry history books."
- "My best present was a go kart."
- "My best present was a Nintendo DS."
- "My best present I ever got was my friends."
- "My best present I have been given is pens."
- "My best present was a computer."

The children then turned their attentions to the best presents they had ever given to anyone else:

- "I gave my daddy a HUGE bar of chocolate."
- "I gave my mum and dad a card to go to a restaurant."
- "I gave a big flower to my sister."
- "I gave Sam a Lord of the Rings Lego set."
- "The best present I've given was some flowers."

Finally, we asked them, if they could give their mum and dad anything in the world, what would it be (and, judging by these answers, maybe technology is not such a big deal after all...)

- "I'd give my dad a big hug."
- "I would give my mum a pop-up card."
- "I would give my brother a Phantom of the Opera suit because he loves Phantom of the Opera."
- "I would give my mum a cuddle and a kiss."
- "I would give my mum a big bunch of flowers to make her smile."
- "I would give my mummy and dad a big kiss."
- "I would give Granddad an airfix Bentley."
- "I would give mummy a big holiday and daddy a day off work."
- "I would give mum some wine and dad a beer."
- "I would give my mum and dad some beer."
- "I would give my mum and dad a cuddle."
- "I would give my mum some money, and a chocolate and a kiss."
- "I would buy mum a box of chocolate and red wine."
- "I would give my mum a cup of tea."
- "I would give my mum a big kiss."



# Sleeping Beauty comes to 'Bunburia'



Congratulations to Young Christians for staging a fabulous panto again this year. Special thanks go to Tom Crotty, who was not only the inspired author but, with co-conspirator Andrew Dean, provided the music and sound effects. The choreography was thanks to a very patient Alyson Hanlon, and lighting was courtesy of Steve Edwards of Prism Lighting. The stage design, beautiful costumes, refreshments and everything else were provided thanks to youth worker Kim Beswick, some very 'willing' YC parents and other stalwart volunteers, to whom we are eternally grateful. Special thanks to Mike Johnson for help with the staging, Peter and Kath Collinge for a wonderful spinning wheel, Tim Hayward for being a great sport in his first panto, Chris Green for always being a good sport...and everyone's favourite dame, Mike Ridley for NOT remembering his lines! And lastly to a wonderful bunch of Young Christians who have put their all into performances and have yet again done us proud!

## PCC gives £4,000 to charity

On behalf of the parish churches, Bunbury PCC undertakes charitable giving each year. They recently asked for suggestions of charities to support this year, and were grateful to those who made suggestions.

The current policy is that about half of the giving goes to UK charities, 30% to local charities and 20% to those operating overseas.

The PCC was fortunate to have just over £4,000 to give at a time when any sum is greatly appreciated by struggling charities. It was therefore decided to spread the giving widely as follows:

- i) the Church Urban Fund, a UK charity working to relieve poverty in inner cities;
- ii) local charities Hope House and The Wingate Centre for disabled children;
- (iii) overseas charities, The Barnabus Fund, which works to assist those undergoing Christian persecution, Tearfund, and Village Water, a charity working to provide water to villages in Zambia.

We also agreed to support the link to the Dioceses of Aru and Boga based in the troubled Democratic Republic of Congo, not only financially but also by establishing links and prayer contacts. No matter how tough we may feel things are, we are so fortunate compared with the beneficiaries of these charities and feel blessed to be able to support them in this way.

**John Mason, Treasurer, Bunbury PCC**

## General Synod and *that* vote...

The Church of England's General Synod met in London 19-21 November, writes member of the House of Laity **John Mason**. It passed a motion that all workers within the CofE should be paid the living wage to ensure they were taken out of poverty, it endorsed an initiative that will increase the work of parishes to assist the young unemployed, and it changed church rules so that children and other lay people can help in the administration of communion.

You will probably have heard about none of this good work. But you will no doubt be aware (and amazed!) that they failed to pass legislation that will allow there to be women bishops.

The rules of Synod mean that at least two thirds of each of the three houses (bishops, clergy and lay members) must separately vote for the legislation for it to pass. It failed because only 64% of laity voted for it although it was passed with large majorities by the bishops and clergy. Overall three out of four members voted for it and in the knowledge that the vast majority of those "in the pews" wanted it and that 42 out of 44 dioceses had formally approved it. There was therefore huge upset and hurt at Synod with a genuine sense of shock when it failed and a feeling that the whole process was flawed.

The process will start again but it cannot do so for a few years for legal reasons. Meanwhile those of us who strongly support women bishops and the importance of spreading the Christian message will hope that the damage to the credibility of the church can be contained, and that more of the genuine good news of its work will be heard and recognised.

# Jean Houghton - always there, always smiling



**Friends and family gathered to bid farewell to Jean Houghton, who died on 7 October.**

Born Jean Margaret Foxcroft in 1943 in West Kirby, Jean grew up with her parents, Edith ('Chips') and Eric, and her brother James, in Hoylake. She later moved to Alpraham, attending Tilstone Fearnall Primary School and later was one of the first students to attend Tarporley High School. From there, Jean went on to study Domestic Science at Chester College, after which she worked in the hotel industry.

In 1976, she married Reg and, in 1978, gave birth to their son, Charles. The family lived in and around the Bunbury area until moving to Wistaston in 1996.

In addition to being an avid reader and excellent cook, Jean was deeply involved in village life; in particular, she was involved with the church group, Young Christians, for many years, first alongside Rita Aston and later Teri Williams (pictured below). Always game to get involved with the



Jean with the Young Christians on Hilbre Island



Jean pictured with Teri Williams

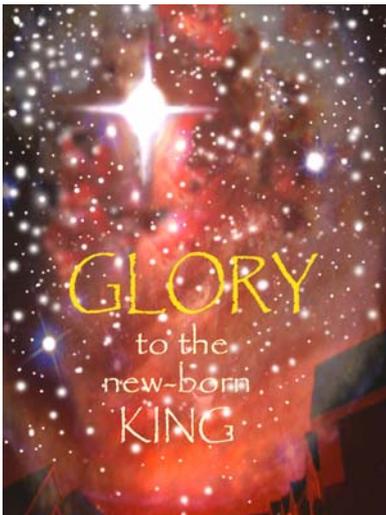
many pantomimes staged by YCs over the years, one particular favourite was when she played the front half of Daisy the cow in 'Jack and the Beanstalk'! Always there for her family and friends, her enthusiasm and love of life will live on not only in her family but in the lives of the many young people she influenced.

## Frances Dakin - To the Manor Farm Born



Frances was born in 1940 at Manor Farm in Peckforton, the home for many prior generations of her family. Like her family before her, she lived virtually all her life in the parish. Following her elder sister Mary, Frances began her education at Beeston Towers School, before moving to Market Drayton and then back to Nuthurst in Nantwich. She completed her secondary education at Nantwich Grammar School and then joined her sister and parents working on the farm. As a member of young farmers she met her future husband, Lincoln, whose family had moved to Malpas from near Alderley Edge and in 1962 they celebrated their marriage in Chester. They became tenant farmers at Manor Farm, continuing on from her parents. Manor Farmhouse soon became a busy place, with the addition of their three children, Jackie, Audrey and Lynda. It was also home to Frances' mother and mother-in-law. All three girls were members of the St Boniface choir. Jackie, Frances' eldest child, has maintained the family tradition by remaining at Manor Farm, but Audrey now lives in Edinburgh (where she is still in a choir). Lynda, however, moved to the Diocese of Bunbury, **South West Australia**. The family has expanded with Frances' seven grandchildren. Frances was a valued member of Peckforton community in many ways, including Clerk to Peckforton Council for 16 years. She also sat on the Village Room Committee and supported the WI. She has also delivered our very own Parish Link to her neighbours around Peckforton since she was a schoolgirl. The photograph (left) was taken this year during Lincoln and Frances' golden wedding celebrations at Queens Hotel in Chester, the location of their wedding reception.

# The gift of a new year



At the start of the New Year we celebrate Epiphany. We remember the visit of the wise men to Jesus and we think about the gifts that they brought: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Gold - the most precious metal in the world. People often say that it's a gift for a king, and it shows that the wise men knew that Jesus was a king. But I think it's more than that. I think it's a symbol of love. What

we give to God isn't just what we have left over, but it's the very best and most precious thing we have - the gift of ourselves.

Frankincense - a special kind of incense that smells beautiful when it is burned. For the wise men from the east, incense would have been used to represent the prayers of the people rising up to God. What are your hopes and dreams and prayers for the New Year?

Myrrh - a bitter perfume used for healing and embalming the dead. By giving the baby Jesus myrrh, the wise men were acknowledging that here was someone who was going to bring healing and wholeness, not just to his own people, but to the whole world. In what ways might you be a blessing to those who need help this New Year? Whom do you know that is suffering in body, mind or spirit?

January is an opportunity for all of us to think about the gifts we have and enjoy, and to ask God's blessing on them and all our lives.

God bless all our hearts and homes this New Year.

Tim Hayward

## In tribute

### Mary Vernon - much-loved mother and grandmother

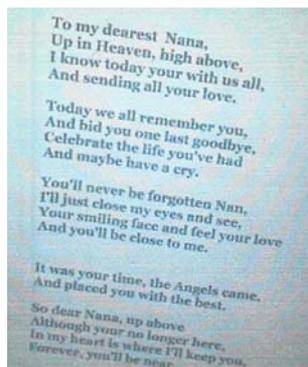


Mary Vernon's five daughters, twins Janet and Jane, Carol, Linda and Tracey, paid tribute to their mum at her funeral on 10 October.

Born in Nantwich, Mary and her late husband George spent their lives in this area, living in Faddiley, Bulkeley,

Spurstow and more recently Tattenhall. Mary worked at The Crewe Arms for many years.

Once their children were grown, she and George enjoyed bus tours and foreign holidays, especially in the sun, and Mary was devastated at the loss of her husband seven years ago. She was a much-loved mother and grandmother, as indicated by the lovely tribute read by granddaughter Sarah Jane Parker (shown above).



## Two Saints Way

There is a brand new pilgrimage route passing through the middle of Bunbury, known as the Two Saints' Way. Its two ends are at St Werburgh's, (Chester Cathedral), and St Chad's in Lichfield, just down the hill and across a field from Lichfield Cathedral. The 88 mile

pilgrimage can be walked in either direction, traversing Stoke, Stafford and Stone en route. It is generally suggested that the whole pilgrimage is best completed in a week.

The way is marked with two kinds of markers: travelling towards Chester, follow the goose of St Werburgh; towards Lichfield the symbol is the cross of St Chad (both pictured); these are visible in the



village where the route joins/leaves School Lane, through the strip of woodland alongside the River Gowy, and where the path leaves/joins Bunbury Lane just below the Large's farm. The path goes through St Boniface's churchyard and on towards the canal at Bunbury Lock.

The October Link carried a couple of photos of Jill Robey and Amber Middlemiss utterly rain-drenched whilst putting up these markers. For more information go to [www.twosaintsway.org.uk](http://www.twosaintsway.org.uk). Those with smart phones can also use the QR codes embedded in some of the interpretation panels and route markers to find out more.



## News from St Jude's

It's a strange paradox that, no sooner has the annual day of remembrance - a time of great sorrow to many people - passed, so we begin to get all excited about the forthcoming festival of Christmas!

By the time that this is published we will have had the annual Christmas Fair, which we hope will have raised plenty of funds to meet the financial demands of the new year.

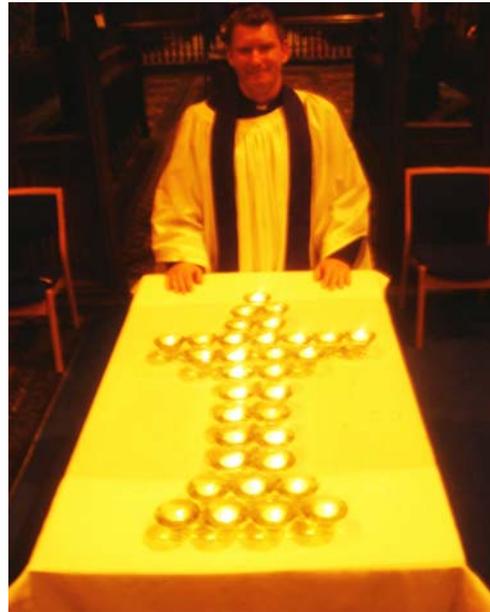
As part of our Christmas festivities, our Carol Service will be held on Sunday 9 December at 4pm; there will therefore be no morning service that day. So if you wish to hear some lusty (but tuneful) singing, do come along.

In order to enable Tim to be with us for our Christmas Day service, the time has been brought forward to **9am**. Our friends at St Boniface have also changed the time of their service to fit in with this temporary arrangement.

A major event to look for forward to in the New Year will be the visit of Bishop Keith Sinclair, Bishop of Birkenhead, to take place on 22 September at the Harvest Festival; the first visit from the higher levels of clerical life for a many a year!

**A Happy New Year to all from St Jude's!**

## All Souls' memorial service brings comfort



Thank you to all those who came to our All Souls Memorial service on the 4th November. It was a special and poignant occasion, where loved ones were remembered and treasured, and candles were lit in honour of them. May God give to you and to all those you love, his comfort and his peace, his light and his joy, in this world and the next.

## Kiddies corner

### Advent

Who do you want God to bless? Colour in a present for them and write their name on the label.



# Interfaith study day focuses on the Holocaust

**How about spending a day studying the Holocaust?** Not, on the face of it, the most attractive of prospects. Sometimes, however, we can't go for the easy option or avoid remembering the things we'd prefer to forget. So with some trepidation and driven by a sense more of duty than desire, places were booked.

Organised by the Manchester branch of the Council for Christians and Jews, this study day was truly ecumenical. Held at Menorah Reform Synagogue in Manchester, there were about as many dog-collars as *kippot* (Jewish skullcaps) - and some of the clergy wore both. The day was introduced by The Right Revd Brian Noble, Bishop Emeritus of Shrewsbury, who reminded us why this study is vital: 'If we forget, we don't learn; if we don't learn, we repeat'. But the day was not just about recalling facts; it was an attempt to look into our own personal mirrors to see the evil in us, not just around us, to be honest about the shadow - as well as the light - that lives in all of us.

Bishop Noble's introduction was followed by a riveting overview by Canon Albert Radcliffe of the spiritual and theological blindness of the German Protestant Church during the Holocaust. He described the context in which Hitler rose to power: a German people humbled by a defeat in World War I that they could not understand; an economy blighted by depression and the debt imposed for reparations; infrastructure destroyed by bombings; lands removed from German control; a church which used a pseudo-scientific basis to justify racism and anti-semitism; all these factors built on a German psyche that believed obedience was a moral virtue. This dangerous combination created a fascism that made Germans feel proud again - a feeling which Hitler fed in pursuit of his vision. Canon Radcliffe finished by reminding us all to be most mindful when we feel particularly *good* about something: feeling good about something just may be a precursor to idolatry. And the moment we stop being critical, we cease to be perceptive and evil can emerge.

Just as we were feeling both moved and unsettled by this observation, synagogue member Eric Roth began to describe his story: a second generation Holocaust testimony which described his father's incarceration at Dachau, his subsequent release and deportation from Austria and the deaths of both his parents and other family members in the camp. It was deeply affecting to see the photos of the concentration camp, now with middle-class homes newly built on its outskirts, to hear Eric describe how his family's neighbours were friendly one day and turned on them the

next, and to recognise the anger still present in his voice as he described his family's experience. Eric reminded us not to think that it could never happen to us. And certainly as we look around the world today, we appreciate the fragility of our personal security.

After another riveting talk by Catholic theologian, Professor John McDade on the importance of Judaism as a basis for Christianity, Rabbi Haim Shalom finished the study day by discussing Jewish responses to the Holocaust. He pointed out that in 1919, there were 18m Jews in the world, the vast majority of whom lived in Europe; there are now 13m Jews in the world, 12m of whom live in Israel and North America. It would appear that, since 6m Jewish lives were lost in the Holocaust, most remaining European Jews have 'voted with their feet'.



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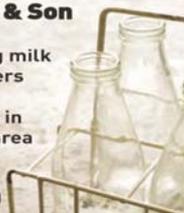


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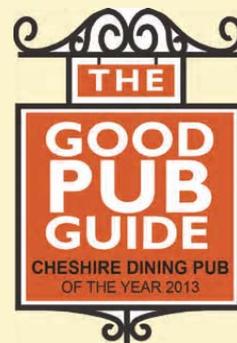


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