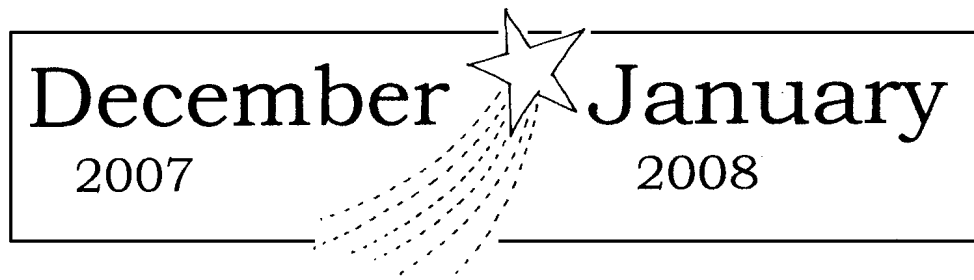


ELSTOW PARISH MAGAZINE



This Christmas...

**'For when I was hungry, you gave me food; when thirsty you gave me drink; when I was a stranger you took me into your home'.
(Matthew 25: 35,36)**

How many of you have completed all the Christmas shopping and have wrapped up all the presents? I haven't started yet! But my mother is ready! It does bother me, more and more at all the expense that Christmas brings. In May I went on an organised retreat to re-trace some of the steps of St Francis. I visited Assisi and some of the mountainous areas where St Francis worked with the poorest of the poor, and now many of these parts are a hub of shops and beautiful cafes. It brings a tinge of sadness every time I go, because it goes against everything that St Francis - I believe - would have stood for. And Christmas in Bedford Town Centre also brings for me a tinge of sadness because everything has gone crazy, with the busyness and the huge expense, which is the total opposite to what Christmas is truly all about.

I would like to tell you a story about Debbie: When Debbie left her foster home, she managed to get some lodgings but soon she was unable to pay the rent. She was thrown out on the streets. It was Christmas Eve 1988. Debbie said: 'I had a few bits and pieces to keep me warm, but the trouble is when you are sleeping rough,

you can never go to sleep properly. You feel there's no way out. You have nothing to eat, nowhere to sleep, no money coming in, it just gets to the stage when you don't care, even when people are trying to help you'. After drifting back to her home town, Debbie found accommodation with a friend, sleeping head to foot in the same bed and hiding in a cupboard in the morning to avoid the landlord. 'He found out', said Debbie, 'but he was quite nice about it, and just told me to get my claim sorted out, but I couldn't as I have not been able to stick at YTS'.

She fell into petty crime, which soon landed her in court. She had to do community service, which she liked, but said that it was necessity which had turned her into crime. Things changed for the better for Debbie when, with the help of Shelter, she found proper lodgings. For some time her world continued to be peopled with friends who had been in the same position as herself, seeing as enemies grasping landlords, the police and the mysteries of Social Security regulations.

Homelessness can be seen in three principal areas. *Firstly* there are the refugees, people who through war or famine are forced to leave their own country and settle in other lands where they are on the whole not wanted. Often they end up in refugee bases that are little better than prisons. *Secondly*, there are those who as a result of poverty have no proper home and live in shanty towns built out of cardboard and scrap materials. There are plenty of such towns in India, Peru, Bangladesh and other Third World Countries *and Thirdly*, there are the problems that exist in Britain. Every major city and town has people who sleep rough. I remember when I was on placement in Manchester I used to do a food run on a Monday night. And the number of young people who would appear for food was very shocking. I see the same in Bedford Town.

As Christians we must try to respond to the problem of homelessness which is faced by millions of people throughout the

world. A small example has been through the giving of 'Love in a Box'. Through your thought and generosity many young people in the poorest of places will receive a gift this Christmas, thank you.

During January and February, the Church is sending me to one of the poorest places in the World. I shall be returning to India after 12 years, this time to work in India. I shall visit the Delhi Brotherhood who provides a wonderful orphanage for young boys, and in Calcutta where the Sisters of Mercy care for the dying.

Some of the images that I will see will be a strong reminder to me of how fortunate I am, and how blessed so many of us are.

Christmas is a reminder for me and for you, of how our Saviour was born homeless in a stable, not in a three or four bedroom house, and had only three significant gifts, Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. In our help and support of others we can make such a difference to people's lives, **Jesus said: 'in doing it for the least of these, you did it for me'**. May I wish you a true and meaningful Christmas, and I hope that you may join us in Celebrating the Birth of Jesus at one of our Christmas services.

With Very Best Wishes, Jeremy.

*******NEWS*******

CHRISTIAN AID NEWS

The total amount raised during Christian Aid Week 2007, by 30 churches in and around Bedford, was £31,747. This was a large increase on the total for the previous year, and £1,107 was collected in Elstow. Thank you to those who worked so hard to achieve this. Sheila Batiuk, Local Secretary, Christian Aid

**Confirmation Service @ Elstow Abbey
10th December at 7.30pm with the
Bishop of Bedford**

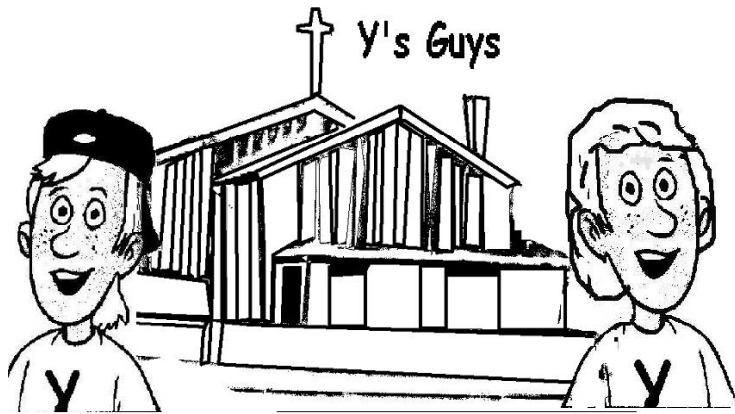
ADVENT STUDY COURSE

Monday 3rd December @ St Michael's 8pm

Tuesday 11th December @ Elstow Church Hall 8pm

Wed 19th December @ St Mary's Cardington 8pm

Y's Guys Meet at Children's Holiday Club



Twenty-seven children enjoyed the first Autumn Children's Holiday Club at St Michaels. The "Y's Guys" Holiday Club ran for three mornings on the 23rd, 24th and 25th October 2007.in St Michaels Church itself.

At the "Y's Guys" Holiday club Children aged between 5 to 12 years learned about St Peter, who was one of God's "Y's Guys" They heard stories, designed pictures, made collages, sand bottles and Mexican crosses, played games and danced to lively songs, to answer three "Y" questions.

These questions were: Why are we Special?

Why can we be wise?

Why did Jesus Come?

The Club was great fun for the Children and for all the helpers. So of whom had not done a holiday club before. Captain David Wells who devised and lead the club says, " I would like to thank all those who came and help to make "Y's Guys" a success. I hope that this will be the first of many Children's and Young people's Activities that will complement the Sunday School at St Michaels."

"Y's Guys " end with a special family communion on Sunday 4th November.

Tunes of Glory



At the start of our Christmas Midnight Service a solo choir voice starts the singing of No 34 "*Once in Royal David's city*". Every year this begins our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols to Dr Henry John Gauntlett's famous tune "*Irby*". In writing the hymn, Mrs C F Alexander original object was to teach children the meaning of what we celebrate at this very special time, so as to make clear not only **what** happened but **why** it happened. The hymn skilfully combines Bible story and Christian theology. I wrote about this hymn in the December 2003 Elstow Magazine, but here I want to concentrate on the composer of the tune, Henry John Gauntlett.

About 1840 the movement in favour of a reform of church psalmody began to take shape, and several clergymen and musicians associated themselves with the project, but none more conspicuously than the Rev W H Havergal and Dr Henry Gauntlett, the pioneers of modern psalmody. Few English musicians of the nineteenth century had such an influence on the psalmody of all denominations as Henry Gauntlett. He was connected with nearly every tune-book of importance, editing some and contributing to many others, and he was always keen to advance the interests of church music.

He was born at Wellington, but spent most of his earlier years at Olney, where his father was vicar. As a boy he soon showed an aptitude for music, and began composing tunes at a very early age. His father offered him a farthing for every tune or chant he copied out. A few days later Henry knocked at the study door and presented a thousand tunes and chants all copied out, which he accompanied with a request for a guinea to settle the account. His father paid up, but ended the contract.

Anxious to improve the musical service at Olney, Henry promised his congregation that if they would subscribe for an organ he would find a player. However, young Gauntlett soon undertook to play himself, and when the organ was erected he was duly appointed organist at the age of nine. I have myself played that organ a number of times; the console has a glass frontage with Henry Gauntlett's memorial on it. He held the position for eleven years, being educated meanwhile by his father with a view to taking holy orders. In order to celebrate the accession of George IV, he organised a performance of the *Messiah*, and as editions of the work were at that time scarce and expensive, he made copies of the parts for his village choir, and brought off a very creditable performance.

Aged about 40 years, he earnestly commenced work with a view to reforming the psalmody and congregational singing in the churches, and his influence for good soon made itself felt far and wide. His fame as one of the most accomplished organists and church musicians of the day was already established; whatever he did in that direction commanded respect. His first great undertaking was the editing of the *Comprehensive Tune-Book* (1846), which was intended for general use. This contained three hundred tunes from various sources, and included many of the favourite tunes of the period, with several new arrangements. Then in 1852 he edited the *Church Hymns and Tune-Book*, which production is noticeable as marking a new era in psalmody, inasmuch as it suggested the "fixed time" principle, which was afterwards so successfully adopted and established by Hymns A & M. This contained many of Henry's best-known tunes, including "St. Albinus," "St. Alphege," "St. Fulbert," "St. George" (or "St. Olave"), "Triumph" (originally "The Tune of the Blessed Sacrament"), and "University College."

One day, during the compilation of this book, Dr. Gauntlett was sitting at dinner when a messenger came to say that the printers could not find the tune assigned to the words, "The hymn of glory

sing we." "Give me some paper," he said, pushing aside his plate, and in a few minutes the well-known tune was composed. It subsequently appeared in two or three hymnals set as a C.M., but probably without the composer's sanction.

In 1852, Gauntlett was appointed organist of Union Chapel, Islington, and during the nine years he was associated with Dr Allon he raised the standard of the music to a high degree of excellence. In 1858 the *Congregational Psalmist* was issued under their joint editorship. It was quickly taken up by the Congregational churches, which for twenty years had been subsisting on the old *Union Tune-Book*. Various additions were made to it from time to time, until the complete edition was issued in 1887 under the editorship of Dr W H Monk. A comparison between the first and last editions of this work forms an excellent object-lesson in the history of psalmody during the years represented.

Gauntlett wrote several tunes for the first edition, including "Houghton," and also contributed a very interesting preface. The last work undertaken by him was the editing of the tune-book issued by the Wesleyans in 1876. He was invited to succeed George Cooper, the first editor, who died soon after his appointment. But unfortunately, Henry Gauntlett had only superintended the work for about three months when he too was summoned to his last rest, dying suddenly of heart disease on February 21, 1876. **John Crookall**

LESSON READERS

DECEMBER 2007

December 2nd Purple	10.00am Romans Ch 13 v. 11 - end 11.15am Micah Ch 4 v. 1 - 7 6.30pm Isaiah Ch 52 v. 1 - 12	Matthew Ch 24 v. 36 - 44 1 Thessalonians Ch 5 v. 1 - 11 Matthew Ch 24 v. 15 - 28	Barbara Routledge Peter Batiuk Glynis Annan
December 9th Purple	10.00am Romans Ch 15 v. 4 - 13 6.30pm 1 Kings Ch 18 v. 17 - 39	Matthew Ch 3 v. 1 - 12 John Ch 1 v. 19 - 28	Lynn Harris Peter Moss
December 16th Purple	10.00am James Ch 5 v. 7 - 10 11.15am Zephaniah Ch 3 v. 14 - end 6.30pm Isaiah Ch 5 v. 8 - end	Matthew Ch 11 v. 2 - 11 Philippians Ch 4 v. 4 - 7 Acts Ch 13 v. 13 - 41	John Hinson Ann Knight Margaret Eastwell
December 23rd Purple	11.15am Micah Ch 5 v.2 - 5a 6.30pm FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS	Luke Ch 1 v.26 - 38	Miriam Clark
December 24th White	11.30pm To be agreed		Colin Albon
December 30th White	11.15am Isaiah Ch 35 v. 1 - 6 6.30pm Isaiah Ch 49 v. 7 - 13	Galatians Ch 3 v. 23 - end Philippians Ch 2 v 1 - 11	Lizabeth Burrows Barbara Routledge

LESSON READERS ROTA FOR JANUARY

It has not been possible to include the Lesson Readers Rota for January in this magazine. Readers will be notified with the usual list in due course.

SIDESMEN'S ROTA
DECEMBER 2007/JANUARY 2008

December 2 nd	10.00am 11.15am 6.30am	Mrs. S. Brown. Mr. F.W. Crossen. Mrs. C. Parrish.	Mrs. R. Haines. Mr. P. Batiuk.
December 9 th	10.00am 6.30pm	Mrs. B. Routledge. Mr. P. Moss.	Mrs. J. Barnicott.
December 10 th Confirmation 7.30pm		Mr C. Albon.	Mrs. B. Routledge.
December 16 th	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Mrs. R. Albon. Mrs. M. Crossen. Miss. M. Eastwell.	Mrs. A. Morris.
December 23 rd	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	The Young People. Mrs. A. Knight. Mr. C. Albon. Mrs. R. Albon.	Mrs. B. Routledge. Mrs. C. Parrish.
December 24 th	5.30pm 11.30pm	The Young People. Mrs. R. Albon. Mrs. S. Brown.	Mrs. A. Knight. Mrs. A. Morris.
December 25 th	10.30am	Mr. P. Batiuk.	
December 30 th	11.15am 6.30pm	Mrs. M. Crossen Mr. P. Moss.	
JANUARY			
January 6 th	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Mrs. S. Brown. Mr. E. Crossen. Mrs. G. Annan.	Mrs. A. Morris.
January 13 th	10.00am 6.30pm	Mrs. B. Routledge. Mrs. C. Parrish.	Mrs. S. Batiuk.
January 20 th	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Mrs. R. Albon. Mrs. L. Burrows. Miss. M. Eastwell.	Mrs. J. Barnicott.
January 27 th	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	The Young People. Mrs. A. Knight. Mrs. V. Whyatt-Routh.	
February 3 rd	10.00am 11.15am 6.30pm	Mrs. S. Brown. Mrs. M. Crossen. Mrs. G. Annan.	Mrs. A. Morris.



**REMEMBER A LOVED ONE WITH A CHRISTMAS
POINSETTIA**

Over the years we have become used to remembering a loved one at Easter with a Lily.

This year we are helping to decorate our beautiful Abbey with Poinsettias in memory of a loved one.

If you would like to join in this new idea please buy your Poinsettia(s) and if you wish put a label on it with the name(s) of the person(s) you are remembering and bring it to church with you. It can then be placed in a suitable position in church. But please do not stand it on any of the woodwork in the Abbey without placing something such as a saucer under it.

After 6th January, please feel free to collect your plant(s) and take it home with you.

If you would like more information, please speak to either Colin or Barbara.

KEMPSTON MUSICAL SOCIETY- CAROLS FOR CHRISTMAS



Members of Kempston Musical Society will again be singing in aid of The Friends Of Elstow Abbey on Monday, December 17th at 7.30pm. Admission is £5.00 for members of The Friends and £5.50 for non-members.

The evening, which has become an annual event is always very popular, if you have not been before why not come this year and join in the celebration of Christmas.

THE CHURCH CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2007/JANUARY 2008

DECEMBER

1 ST	Saturday	7.00pm	Quiz Night in Elstow Church Hall with Fish and Chip supper
2 nd	Advent Sunday		
		10.00am	Family Communion with Sunday School and the lighting of the first Advent Candle (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (JRC)
		2.00pm	Baptism of Olivia Beard and Joseph Walker (JRC)
		2.45pm	Baptism of Ruby Isla Page and Georgia Page (JRC)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
3 rd	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Confirmation Rehearsal, Elstow Abbey
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Advent Course at St. Michael's.
4 th	Tuesday	7.30pm	Bellringing quarter peal
5 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group – Christmas Icing
6 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		Noon	No lunch at Red Lion, Christmas Lunch on 13th

		1.30pm	Funeral of Mary Bartram @ Elstow Abbey
7 th	Friday	7.00pm	Choir practise
8 th	Saturday	2.00pm	Making Christingles in the Church Hall
		3.00pm-	
		5.00pm	Pantomime rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
9 th	Sunday	Advent 2	
		10.00am	Parish Communion with Sunday School and the lighting of the second Advent Candle (JRC)
		3.30pm	Christingle Service
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (JRC)
10 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group Christmas Party meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	No Prayer Group
		7.30pm	Confirmation at Elstow Abbey by The Bishop of Bedford: The Right Reverend Richard Inwood
11 th	Tuesday	11.00am	Bellringers Bedford District 'Tailenders'
		8.00pm	Advent Course at Elstow led by Canon Nigel Morrell
12 th	Wednesday	10.00am	Abbey Middle Christmas Concert @ Elstow Abbey
		11.30pm	Coffee Morning followed by Christmas lunch in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group Christmas Party
13 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12.00noon	Christmas lunch at the Red Lion
		6.00pm-	

		7.00pm	Carol Singing at Bunyan's Mead
		7.30pm	Team Council meet at St. Mary's Cardington
15 th	Saturday	2.00pm	Wedding Rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
		4.00pm	Pantomime Dress Rehearsal
		6.30pm	Pantomime Performance in the Church followed by a Bring and Share Supper in the Church Hall
16 th	Sunday	Advent 3	
		10.00am	Family Communion with the lighting of the third Advent Candle (JRC)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion with the Laying on of Hands for Healing (JRC)
17 th	Monday	9.30am-	
		Noon	Elstow Lower School rehearsal @ Elstow Abbey
		10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.30pm	Annual Concert of Christmas Music in the Abbey by Kempston Musical Society in aid of The Friends of Elstow Abbey. Admission Members of The Friends £5.00 non members £5.50.
19 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		1.30pm-	Elstow Lower School Christmas Concert
		3.00pm	at Elstow Abbey
		8.00pm	Advent Study Course at St Mary's Cardington (JRC)
20 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		5.30pm	Carol Singing round Elstow - meet in The

			Car Park
21 st	Friday	10.00am	Rehearsal for Crib Service
		7.00pm	Choir Practise followed by refreshments at the Rectory
22 nd	Saturday	2.00pm	Children's Christmas Party in the Church Hall
23 rd	Sunday	Advent 4	
		10.00am	Young People's Service with the lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle (JEH)
		11.15am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		6.30pm	Festival of The Lessons and Carols (JRC)
24 th	Monday	Christmas Eve	
			NO MUMS AND TODDLERS
			No Prayer Group
		5.30pm	Crib Service
		11.30pm	The First Communion of Christmas (JRC)
25 th	Tuesday	Christmas Day	
		10.30am	Family Communion (JRC)
26 th	Wednesday		NO COFFEE MORNING OR SOUP
27 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (JRC)
		12.00noon	Wedding of Russell Vaughan and Helen Bradbury (JRC)
30 th	Sunday	Christmas 1	
		10.30am	Joint Service of Holy Communion for the United Benefice at St. Mary's Cardington everybody is most welcome to share in this act of united worship. If you would like a lift to

Cardington please speak to either Colin or Barbara.

11.15am Morning Prayer (Group)

6.30pm Said Evening Prayer (Mr Robert Heley)

31st Monday New Years Eve

NO MUMS AND TODDLERS

JANUARY

2nd Wednesday 11.30am Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall

6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall

3rd Thursday 11.00am Holy Communion (Revd Stephen Smith)

12.00noon Monthly Lunch at the Red Lion

6th Sunday The Epiphany

10.00am Family Communion (The Rev'd Mervyn Terrett)

11.15am Morning Prayer (Canon Philip McDonough)

6.30pm Evening Prayer (Mr Peter Moss)

7th Monday 10.00am Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall

7.00pm Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

9th Wednesday 11.30am Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall

6.30pm Youth Group meet in the Church Hall

10th Thursday 11.00am Holy Communion (Revd Stephen Smith)

8.00pm Finance and Standing Committee meet at Wilstead

13th Sunday Epiphany 2

		10.00am	Parish Communion (The Right Reverend David Farmbrough)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (Canon Philip McDonough)
14 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse

DEADLINE FOR MATERIAL FOR FEBRUARY MAGAZINE

16 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
17 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd Stephen Smith)
20 th	Sunday	Epiphany 3	
		10.00am	Family Communion (The Venerable Trevor Jones Archdeacon of Hertford)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Group) Preacher Captain David Wells
		6.30pm	NO EVENSONG at ELSTOW ABBEY
		6.00pm	The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service @ Priory Methodists: Preacher Bishop Peter of Northampton
21 st	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
23 rd	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
24 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd Stephen Smith)

		7.30pm	Meeting of the Parochial Church Council in the Church Hall
26 th	Saturday	2.00pm	Children's workshop in the Church Hall
27 th	Sunday	Epiphany 4	
		10.00am	Young People's Service (JEH)
		11.15am	Holy Communion (Rev'd Dr. Colin Davey)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer followed by Holy Communion and the Laying on of Hands for Healing (Canon N Morrell)
28 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
30 th	Wednesday	11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group meet in the Church Hall
31 st	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (Revd Stephen Smith)

FEBRUARY

3 rd	Sunday	Next before Lent	
		10.00am	Family Communion (Rev'd Mervyn Terrett)
		11.15am	Morning Prayer (Canon Philip McDonough)
		6.30pm	Evening Prayer (Captain David Wells)
4 th	Monday	10.00am	Mums and Toddlers Group meet in the Church Hall
		7.00pm	Prayer Group meet in the Summerhouse
		8.00pm	Meeting of the Friends in Elstow Church Hall
6 th	Ash Wednesday		
		11.30am	Coffee Morning followed by soup in the

			Church Hall
		6.30pm	Youth Group outing
		7.30pm	Sung Communion (The Rev'd Mervyn Terrett)
7 th	Thursday	11.00am	Holy Communion (Canon Nigel Morrell)
		12 noon	Monthly Lunch @ the Red Lion
		8.00pm	Finance and Standing @ Elstow

Visiting ministers in February (during Jeremy's two month study leave, additional to the Calendar)

10 th February	10.00am Parish Communion – Venerable Paul Hughes Archdeacon of Bedford
	6.30pm Evensong – Canon Philip McDonough
14 th February	11.00am Holy Communion – Canon Nigel Morrell
17 th February	10.00am Family Communion – Revd Christopher Terry
	11.15am Mattins – Group
	6.30pm Evensong – Mr Robert Heley
21 st February	11.00am Holy Communion – Revd Len. Moore
24 th February	10.00am Youth Service
	11.15am Holy Communion – Bishop Richard, Bishop of Bedford
	6.30pm Evensong with Holy Communion, Healing and the laying on of hands - Revd Peter Littleford
28 th February	11.00am Holy Communion – Revd Len Moore

*Come and See the Children's WORK
PANTOMIME - Snow White and the Gnomes!!
ELSTOW ABBEY Sat 15th December 6.30pm. No
Charge!
Followed by a bring and share supper in the Church
Hall*



ELSTOW BONFIRE NIGHT

November 5th already seems like a long time ago, but I couldn't let us slip into December and January without a few words about the memorable fireworks night and bonfire we attended at Elstow Abbey. When we arrived the bonfire of wooden pallets had already been assembled; a towering structure that, once alight, was almost taller than the old abbey walls, and blazed so fiercely that the crowds of families had to stand well back! There was one rather worrying moment when the falling sparks and leaping flames seemed about to set the entire field on fire but, thanks to the quick wits of the volunteers who sprang into action with shovels and stamping feet – and thanks also, I suspect, to the number of prayers that were hastily being said! – the danger was averted and the magnificent display could get well and truly underway. The rockets that had been cheerfully supplied gave off some lovely explosions and it was warming in more ways than one to see the dozens of upturned faces, young and not-so-young, illuminated in the shadow of the abbey in all shades of red, yellow and green. Especially impressive was one firework which exploded with deafening bangs and a glorious curtain of golden rain – unexpected but very enjoyable! It was the first “social” event we had been to since we became part of the church, and everyone was so friendly that I'm sure it won't be our last! All too soon we had to slip away, leaving the crowd to enjoy hot soup and sausages and the rest of the show – congratulations to all involved!

HRH Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Wedding Anniversary



As I write, the celebrations are beginning for Her Majesty's Diamond Wedding Anniversary, which fell this year on Tuesday, November 20th. I was fortunate enough to get to the summer opening of the Buckingham Palace State Rooms this year, and they were holding a special exhibition celebrating the Queen and Prince Philip's wedding. It really brought it home to me what a milestone it is to have achieved, and it was fascinating to find out all the details of the wedding back in 1947. I am sure some members of our parish will be old enough to remember it, and also the Coronation, but I wasn't born until the Queen's Silver Jubilee Year (!), so for myself - and my parents! – the Queen is the only monarch we have ever known.

A highlight of the poignant display in the exhibition has to be her, beautiful, intricate Norman Hartnell wedding dress. The ivory silk bridal gown is decorated with 10,000 hand-sewn seed pearls, sparkling crystals and features a 13ft embroidered silk tulle train. There's also a selection of the Royal bridal jewels, including the dazzling 1919 Russian tiara that secured the Queen's veil and was originally made for her grandmother Queen Mary. Archived black and white footage of the wedding also screens in the exhibition room, including the carriage procession, the Queen's appearance on the balcony, the crowds outside and private images inside the palace.

Apart from these big showpieces, the most interesting parts of the exhibition were the quirky minor details – for example, as rationing was still in place, the Queen's 2,500 wedding presents ranged from a magnificent diamond necklace to a humble bath sponge, and included 500 tins of pineapples from Australia and also 131 pairs of nylons! Public interest in the Queen's wedding dress also reached such fever pitch that designer Norman Hartnell was forced to whitewash the windows of his workshop to ensure secrecy. Here are some more fascinating facts:

- The Queen is the first British monarch to have celebrated a diamond wedding anniversary.
- The Duke of Edinburgh and his royal bride were showered with rose petals as they headed off on honeymoon.
- Their wedding cake was a mere nine feet high and was cut by Prince Philip using his naval sword.
- Among the couple's 2,500 wedding presents were two pairs of bed socks, a hand-knitted cardigan and a home made tea cosy sent in by members of the public.
- On the day of the wedding, the grave of the Unknown Warrior was the only stone not covered by a special carpet inside Westminster Abbey.
- The day after the 1947 ceremony, Princess Elizabeth followed a tradition started by her mother of sending her wedding bouquet back to the Abbey to be laid on the tombstone.
- Philip had two stag parties the night before the wedding. The first was held at the Dorchester and, surprisingly, the press were invited.
- The marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten on November 20 1947 saw trumpet fanfares introduced for the first time at a Royal wedding in the Abbey.
- Preparations for the big day included the careful checking of BBC microphones due to a previous mishap. At a royal wedding in 1934, the Abbey cross hit a microphone which was dangling above the altar steps.
- There were so many people who needed to sign the marriage register that they were unable to all fit into St Edward's Chapel to do so.
- Among the hundreds of wedding presents sent in from well-wishers around the world was a piece of crocheted, cotton lace made from yarn personally spun by Mahatma Gandhi.

- Other gifts from abroad included a gold and jade necklace given by King Farouk of Egypt and a writing desk from the Government of New Zealand.
- As well as jewellery from their close relatives, the newlyweds received salt cellars from the Queen, book shelves from Queen Mary, and a picnic case from Princess Margaret.
- The couple departed for their honeymoon from Waterloo station, accompanied by the Princess's beloved corgi, Susan.

But, as well as the interesting details we can recall about that day, it's important to remember that this is a marriage which has endured for 60 years; a marriage which has been played out in the full glare of public duty and Royal responsibility, and which has stood the test of time as a true partnership. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh's 60 years of marriage was praised by the Archbishop of Canterbury as a faithful and creative partnership lived in the "full light of publicity".

Dr Rowan Williams said the milestone was a symbol of the relationship between the people and monarch and was part of her "unqualified commitment" to every aspect of her reign.

The royal couple, who celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary tomorrow, were surrounded by their family, senior politicians past and present, and a 2,000-strong congregation as they listened to the sermon in Westminster Abbey - the venue for their wedding.

Princess Elizabeth and Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten wed on Thursday November 20 1947.

The young bride and groom's ceremony provided the nation with a splash of colour in the tough post-war days - a morale boost in the wake of Britain's conflict with Germany, and the widespread rationing the nation still faced.

The Archbishop told the congregation: "Every marriage is a public event, but some couples have to live more than others in the full light of publicity.

"We are probably more aware than ever these days of the pressures this brings. But it also means that we can give special thanks for the very public character of the witness and the sign offered to us by this marriage, and what it has meant to nation and Commonwealth over the decades.

“And part of what it has meant has had to do precisely with the sense of unqualified commitment that has been so characteristic of every aspect of this reign: the faithful and creative personal partnership at the centre of everything else has been a sign of creative faithfulness to a task, a vocation, the creative faithfulness that secures the trust, love and prayerful support of millions.”

Dr Williams also told the congregation: “Today we celebrate not only a marriage but the relationship between monarch and people of which also that marriage is a symbol: a relationship in which we see what levels of commitment are possible for someone upheld by a clear sense of God’s calling and enabling, and the corresponding vision of the worthwhileness of this national and international family that is the Commonwealth, which has been the recipient of such unswerving service.

“So before we complain too loudly about a world of disposable relationships and short-term policies, a world of fracturing and insecure international bonds and the decline of trust, we should remember today that we have cause for thanksgiving - thanksgiving that God has made human beings capable, against all the odds, of reflecting his own completely costly and self-giving commitment to his world; that the gift of marriage makes this capacity visible in our world; and that, in the lives of the couple with whom today we join in celebration, that bracing, renewing and hopeful vision of faithful generosity has been for 60 years set so clearly before our eyes.

“May it be so for many more years.”

Among the congregation were senior royals including the Prince of Wales, the Duchess of Cornwall and Princes William and Harry, military chiefs of staff and some of the Queen's godchildren.

About 500 members of Royal Household staff - past and present - were also among the guests at the Abbey in central London, including some of the servants who have worked most closely with the monarch and her consort over the years.

Representatives from the former Royal Yacht Britannia, the Royal Train and the Royal Squadron were also in the congregation, as were around 20 members of the public from across the country who married on the same day as the Queen and the Duke.

RECIPE

Well, that's November done with, and thoughts turn naturally towards Christmas now; that wonderful time of the year, and for many a welcome chance to get together with families and catch up, share joy, play games and dig out those seasonal recipes!

Here's one for brandy butter, that simple addition to that good old favourite, Christmas pudding!

How to make brandy butter:

A hard sauce flavoured with brandy. This is the traditional accompaniment to Christmas pudding.

Ingredients

1/2 cup (4oz) butter
just over 1/4 cup (2oz) icing/confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon brandy

Method

- Cream butter and sugar together.
- Stir in the brandy and beat into the butter and sugar mix.
- Put into an attractive dish and keep in the refrigerator until needed.
- When serving the Christmas pudding, add a good tablespoon of the brandy butter for real seasonal indulgence!



CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

M	E	R	R	Y	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	L
Q	R	Y	E	W	S	E	R	H	G	H	J	K	A	P
S	S	D	I	G	A	F	G	H	J	K	L	Z	N	C
H	V	N	N	A	T	I	V	I	T	Y	F	N	T	J
E	D	I	D	G	H	J	K	L	I	Y	A	O	A	G
P	K	W	E	E	R	T	T	Y	U	M	I	P	C	A
H	A	Z	E	J	E	S	U	S	W	X	C	V	L	B
E	C	A	R	O	L	V	B	O	N	M	S	T	A	R
R	Z	C	V	S	B	N	N	M	Q	W	E	R	U	I
D	Q	W	E	E	R	S	T	Y	U	M	I	O	S	E
S	A	S	E	P	D	F	G	H	J	A	N	G	E	L
Z	X	R	V	H	O	L	L	Y	N	N	M	Q	W	G
R	T	T	Y	U	U	I	O	O	P	G	A	I	S	D
Z	X	C	V	B	N	N	E	L	V	E	S	N	V	M
T	I	N	S	E	L	A	D	F	G	R	M	A	R	Y

MERRY CHRISTMAS

ANGEL GABRIEL

REINDEER

MANGER

CAROL

HOLLY

SANTA CLAUS

IVY

NATIVITY
MARY

ELVES
SNOWMAN

JOSEPH

TREE

JESUS

TINSEL

KINGS

SHEPHERDS

Christmas Anagrams

A dozen festive anagrams for you to solve - they are all the titles of Christmas songs or carols.



YA A GERMAN WAIN	
IF A HOT CELLO MAY FUEL	
THE WINGS REEK	
ONLY A THREE DOCK	
RELAX SHOUTS SEC	
SWISH TIRE SHAPE	
JILL BEGS LEN	
FRATS WET MOONSHINE	
WRIST SEAM HITCH	
SOFTER THE NIL	
JOELY DOT WROTH	
TED SHELL HACK	

From the Registers October 2007

	Communicants	Attendance	Collections
4 th	13	13	4.00
7 th	37	86	277.55
11 th	7	7	3.30
14 th	39	76	252.17
18 th	10	10	4.20
21 st	34	68	194.60
25 th	11	11	24.00
28 th	38	107	231.46
	189	378	991.28

Baptisms

Oct 28th Joshua Lee Watson M

Marriage

October 26th Nicholas Paul Ellis and Sarah Dawn Mann

Greetings from the Hubands

Advent is almost upon us, and by the time you read this you will be well into preparations for Christmas and all your celebrations. We have decided to send fewer cards this year, but we want to send all our 'Elstow friends' our love and best wishes for Christ's peace at Christmas.

We are grateful that all four of us are well and have had a good year. Jo continues her work with Traidcraft, spending much time running workshops in India, and Geoff is in his fourth year teaching Science at Malmesbury, a rural comprehensive school. With love and best wishes for the New Year, *Richard and Anthea*

Merry Christmas!

DON'T FORGET WE SHALL WANT PLENTY OF CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE FIRST MAGAZINE OF THE NEW YEAR! WHY NOT REVIEW THE CHURCH PANTO, SEND US YOUR NEWS AND PLANS FOR THE YEAR, OR SHARE A FAVOURITE RECIPE OR POEM? WRITE TO JACQUIE PRYCE, 13 ACORN WAY, BEDFORD, MK42 0QN, OR E-MAIL jakhat77@hotmail.com.