

DECEMBER 2018/JANUARY 2019 £1

COMMENT

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCHES IN TRING



CAREGivers Required

Home Instead
SENIOR CARE
To us, it's personal.

Do you have a caring
& compassionate nature?
Then you should talk to us.

We are looking for Caregivers to assist the elderly with non-medical services including companionship, home help and personal care in their own home. No experience is required as we provide full training.



Contact us on 01442 233599

Home Instead Senior Care

The Lockhouse, Frogmore Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9RJ
www.homeinstead.co.uk/hemelhempestead

Are you looking for
flexible and rewarding
part-time work?

Terry and Stewart
welcome customers old
and new.

Full range of Fuller's
ales including seasonal
offerings and a Guest Beer.



Freshly prepared home-cooked food.

Wide choice weekday menu
and Sunday Roasts.

THE
ROBIN
HOOD
TRING

CAMRA
**Pub of
the year**
Mid-Chilterns
2008



The Robin Hood Inn

1 Brook Street, Tring, Hertfordshire HP23 5ED

t: 01442 824912 e: info@therobinhoodtring.co.uk

www.therobinhoodtring.co.uk

Editorial

You might be forgiven for thinking that you had picked up the November edition of Comment as we have dedicated so much space on the front cover of this December/January edition to Tring's commemoration of the Armistice 100 years ago. I hope you will also feel that the efforts of the Poppy Team, and all those who helped and supported them, were worth it. Tring certainly came out in force to honour the dead on 11 November 2018, with over 650 people in the Parish Church, many of them standing and spilling out of the doors. The oldest person I saw in the Church was 97 and there were a number of babes in arms too. There were people from most of the other Churches in Tring and the villages attending, as well as many from the community who

had come for this special day. We will remember them.

As another year of Comment draws to a close, I would like to thank all those who have contributed by writing articles, submitting pictures, coming up with ideas and by sharing their stories; but also to thank those who advertise regularly and those who subscribe – helping us to get the numbers more or less right each month. Thank you also to those who provided all the beautiful poppy pictures and especially to Steve Kitchener, Janet Goodyer and Ben Cartwright.

While we take a little break before the February edition, I hope you will be thinking of what you can contribute in 2019. Without you, there would be no Comment!

If this Christmas is the first for someone in your family – your new baby or new grandchild – and you would like to submit a photo of baby's First Christmas, we would be happy to print them in February. Please supply the photo with baby's name and date of birth. The deadline is 6 January.

With very best wishes for a special Christmas from all of the Comment editorial team.

The Editor



Leader

I like predictability. I'm not really one for surprises. I find routine helpful; it provides a sense of order to an often chaotic life. I tend to chart the calendar year through various sporting events – the year tends to start with some darts, closely followed a bit of Six Nations, the start of Formula One, the Boat Race, Grand National, FA Cup final, some snooker, Wimbledon, the odd golf competition (and a quiet prayer for an Olympic games or international football competition) before we get into the Autumn series. Other sports are, of course, available although the routine is there – the way it has always been done (certainly in my mind).

Whether you are someone of a faith or none, it is easy to get into a rhythm or routine. There may be a whole range of reasons behind why a person chooses not to attend a Church: their background, current pace of life or not perceiving a need. Equally, those who do attend church may point to their background, current pace of life or perception of a need as a reason for attendance. It is easy to slip into a routine – indeed at another level this routine may include where you sit in a Church, the type of music you like, your theological viewpoint on whatever the matter of the day is or anything else... 'We've always done it this way' is a cry you may be familiar with.

At High Street Baptist, we have

just finished a sermon series called 'Life beyond Tring'. Part of the thinking behind this was that it is easy to become insular when between ministers (as we are now) as people focus on keeping the show on the road; this was an encouragement not to. Equally it has been great to hear from both internal and external speakers about their involvement in different fields both regionally, nationally and in some cases internationally, and explore how what they do informs their faith and how their faith informs what they do. But, I think, for me, the most important reason for this series was that it was to encourage people to think: think about the reasons behind why people believe what they do, express their faith in the way that they do and reflect on how we live our lives of faith – perhaps even considering breaking the chain of routine based on our upbringing, perceived theological principles or churchmanship.

We've heard from a CEO of a Christian outward bound centre, serving missionaries in Asia, a speaker from International Justice Mission, a senior police officer based in the Midlands, a couple of people who work in mental health (both on a regional level and international level), someone who is involved in development work around the world, a trustee of a charity working with faith groups and ecological matters, and about the Christian foundation of

the NHS. We've been encouraged always to be ready to give an answer for the hope we have, while reflecting on the crucial importance that the church has in society today and that we do not need to hide away.

As we slip into our own personal routines for Christmas and the New Year (whether this involves jumpers, aged decorations or the annual family visit), can I encourage you this Christmas to reflect on the God who did not stick to the 'old routine' when it came to speaking to and relating with his people. One day, around 2000 years ago, he decided to break with tradition and enter the world as a human being and took on himself all the associated frailties. Choosing to give up his comfort and routine... 'Mild he lays his glory by, / Born that man no more may die: / Born to raise the son of earth, / Born to give them second birth. / Hark! the herald angels sing, / "Glory to the new-born King!"

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and blessed 2019.

Kevin Rogers
High Street Baptist Church



People who love Tring

We live in a very special place. In the (almost thirty) years since FOTCH has been operating, the residents of our town have changed many times over, but the individuals share a common cause – they love Tring.

Tring in recent years has proved a really attractive destination for many people moving into the area. It remains the case that once people move here they find it hard to leave.

There is only one Tring

There is no other town called Tring in the English-speaking world. However, our unique nature is about more, much more, than just our name.

If you are already a member of the Friends of Tring Church Heritage we'd like to say 'Thank You'. If you are NOT yet a member or supporter of the Friends of Tring Church Heritage, we'd like to say, 'Please... will you join us?'

FOTCH is for EVERYONE

The Friends of Tring Church Heritage was set up to engage common cause for anyone who values having the historic building of St Peter & St Paul's Church in our community. FOTCH is for anyone who values Tring, whether a member of the Anglican church, one of the other Churches in the town or someone who values history and keeping 'the heart' of the town beating. That original aim has

not changed but maybe the way people engage with Friends' societies has.

Getting it right

In the beginning FOTCH encouraged people to become members. For a small fee each year, they received a welcome pack of all things St Peter & St Paul plus a twice-yearly newsletter both giving news and advance notice of events and celebrating events past. We continue with that idea of membership today but our new approach is to encourage active supporters, providing interesting events that people want to attend or be part of. As part of that, we need to use today's fast-moving communication systems to reach people as well as the tried and tested methods of past years.

Remembering our roots

At the same time as encouraging new people to value those things that make Tring 'Tring', we want to ensure that we look after those long-term members and friends who have done so much to make FOTCH effective and enjoyable since its beginning.

Without our committed members and activists, none of our most enjoyable events would have happened at all and FOTCH would not have been able to raise the money that has delivered the wide range of grants (the latest being for the brilliant new Church lighting system)

that have been made over the years.

Enjoying being together

One recent change is to alter the focus of our half-yearly lunches. Rather than using them mainly as a forum for planning new activities, we are making them events in themselves. The first of these took place on 14 October as an informal lunch and Quiz as well as the usual Hundred Club draw. The article from Martin and Carole Wells opposite tells its own story. It was a very enjoyable and laughter-filled occasion.

I very much hope that everyone will make a date for the next lunch which is on 10 February 2019 at 12.30pm when our new trustee Stephen Hearn will be inviting people to bring their 'table top treasures' so that they can be appraised and evaluated.

What we want most of all is to enjoy and celebrate the company of the people of Tring, so that committed members know how much they are appreciated and new people are made welcome. Please join us so we can make it work together.

Grahame Senior
FOTCH Honorary President



Being in community



Harvest Festival Sunday at St Peter & St Paul's in Tring was truly a day of treats – the generosity, talents and warmth of our community freely offered and heartily enjoyed.

FOTCH (Friends of Tring Church Heritage) exists to make the most of our Church building for the benefit of the whole community of our town. With this purpose FOTCH and Tring Choral Society have given generous grants for new state-of-the-art lighting in the Church, which has transformed the interior so that we no longer have to sit 'amid th' encircling gloom', and the FOTCH social lunch party in Tring Parish Hall richly rewarded the effort put in by members to support the Church. An excellent buffet with wine was served at which Barry Child's moreish pies disappeared rapidly and the lovely

cakey puddings with cream filled up any remaining corners.

Then came the Brilliant Brains Quiz: do you remember what famous English writer died on the day that President Kennedy was assassinated? (C.S.Lewis); or what item of decimal currency was introduced eighteen months ahead of decimalisation? (50p); could you estimate the total number of walnuts (from Helen Dunford's tree in Icknield Way) in a large glass jar? You would have scored well (or at least better than our table!).

After lunch and quiz came music

in the newly-lit Church. The monthly 'Piano & More...' concerts organised by Anna Le Hair are always of a very high standard and on Harvest Sunday, our Church Organist & Choirmaster Cliff Brown played a fascinating collection of short, modern, very attractive pieces, alternating between our lovely, restored Bechstein piano and the Church organ.

A big thank-you to everyone whose work and skill contributed to this marvellous day. It was pouring with rain. Who cared?

Carole & Martin Wells,
St Peter & St Paul



Bite but no Bach



Regulars at St Peter & St Paul will be used to just glimpsing Cliff Brown, our talented director of music, and very rarely hearing him speak. So we had a particular treat on a soggy

Sunday in October when Cliff shed his robes and was the solo artiste for the regular Piano & More concert, playing an eclectic mixture of piano and organ pieces. Cliff says he decided to be different, not play a single piece of Bach (who composed perhaps 400 organ works), and instead to play a modern repertoire, from Boellmann (born in 1862) to Gjeilo (born in 1978).

While a couple of pieces were familiar (Einaudi's Le Onde, and a prelude on 'Londonderry Air'), nearly all were new to the audience, but engaging and carefully picked to demonstrate the

range of capabilities of our magnificent organ, and now our impressive (refurbished) grand piano. Alongside the music we appreciated Cliff's pithy introductions to the composers, who also included Andrew Moore, a Roman Catholic priest and monk, and Noel Rawsthorne, for many years the music director at Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.

It's hard to pick a favourite from such an appealing programme, but I'd like to hear Rawsthorne's Gospel Fanfare again; perhaps we can persuade Huw Bellis to let us be especially exuberant one Sunday. If you missed our concert, or would like a taste again, look for Ola Gjeilo's Stone Rose album on Spotify or elsewhere. We all missed Anna Le Hair, whose inspiration and persistence have launched and sustained this popular series of concerts; Anna had a professional engagement in Hythe.

The Piano & More series continues, with a special Christmas celebration on

Sunday 16 December, and then a New Year concert on Sunday 13 January 2019 with Rebecca Whiteman joining Anna for a programme of cello and piano music including Beethoven and Saint-Saens. The concerts all start at 3.00pm, last about an hour, and are followed by refreshments.

John Whiteman, St Peter & St Paul



A sweet Christmas



In Provence, on 24 December, to celebrate Christmas, we usually put thirteen desserts on the table. The pagan traditions and religious customs are, of course, intertwined. Why thirteen?

Because these desserts represent the last supper of Christ and the twelve apostles.

So what are these desserts? Of course, there are some variations between cities and families, but overall the thirteen desserts consist of:

- * Pompe à l'huile, which is a brioche made from olive oil and orange blossom
- * Black nougat and white nougat

both made from honey and generously garnished with whole almonds

* Four dried fruits called the four beggars (dried raisins, walnuts or hazelnuts, dried figs and almonds) which represent the four beggar orders: Dominicans, Augustines, Franciscans and Carmelites

* Dates, remembering the flight to Egypt

* Oreillettes, thin and crispy doughnuts or Calissons, a confectionery made of a fine paste of candied melon and almonds ground together and formed in a shuttle shape

* Some fresh seasonal fruits (oranges, raisins)

* Fruit paste (quince)

* Vin Cuit, a sweet, fortified wine

Displayed on the table as in Provence



or gathered in a Christmas pudding as in England, whatever the country or the culture, Christmas sweets are always a good opportunity to share and be sweet to one another! What sweeter thing can there be than the fulfilment of a promise, the promise of a Saviour, Jesus, human and divine.

Diane Le Pargneux, Corpus Christi

impact
SIGNS
getting your message across

Plaques for all Occasions
Maintenance Free Stainless Steel
Traditional Brass

Signs and plaques of all sizes available quickly, efficiently and made to your requirements

01296 488902
info@impactsignsolutions.co.uk
www.impactsignsolutions.co.uk

Computer & Printer Repairs & Support
Friendly, patient and expert help with all your computing needs.

barry@childassociates.co.uk

Barry Child
Child Associates
01442 826092
07879 497704
No call out fee in Tring



St Kilda's Dental Practice
93 High Street,
Tring, Herts, HP23 4AB
Tel: Tring (01442) 826565

J. P. Norris B.D.S. (Lond)
Miss E. N. Parsons B.D.S. (Lon)
LDS RCS (Eng)

MORRIS
LUBRICANTS

JET
DISTRIBUTOR

BARTON
PETROLEUM
www.bartonpetroleum.co.uk

Your first call for Fuel & Lubricants...

iROCK
performance

ALUMINIUM & STEEL WELDING!!!

**OIL SERVICE TYRES
3D WHEEL ALIGNMENT
VEHICLE MAINTENANCE
SPORTS EXHAUSTS
PERFORMANCE UPGRADES
ALLOY WHEELS TUNING
MOT TRACK DAY PREP
DRIFT CAR SET-UPS**

**3 Quarry Court, Quarry Road,
Pitstone Green Business Park,
Pitstone LU7 9GW**
Opening hours Mon - Fri from 9.00 - 6.00
Saturdays by appointment
01296 661171 / 07954 302974

BMW M SPECIALIST

www.irockperformance.co.uk
Please follow us on Facebook







Friend to the rich and famous...



Before my 5th birthday, my mother and I would walk to Romford (Essex) cattle market most Wednesdays. It was full of stalls of everything you would want.

I loved standing on the rails of the pens full of sheep and cows, and listening to the auctioneer selling the animals. Once a bull jumped the weighing area, and the cry went up 'bull loose, bull loose'. Everyone hid wherever they could and it seemed a long time before we knew we could come out again.

On these days Ras Prince Monolulu, came to the market. His cry was 'I got an 'Orse' and he was tall (well, he was to me) and I was frightened by his dress. He was a horse-racing tipster, and something of an institution on the British Racing Scene from 1920, until his death in 1965. He had a large wooden chair which I thought was his throne, and he sat and beckoned children to come to him. I think I just clung to my mum. She was also a little scared, but we did stand and watch him every time he was in the market. He said he was a Prince, so we believed him, but since discovered he was Peter Carl Mackay, who married Nellie Adams in 1931.

Some time ago we lived at the other end of Hertfordshire. At that time Tottenham Hotspurs training ground was close by, and several footballers from that team and other London teams lived there as it was easy to get to their home matches. We regularly saw Pat Jennings, goalie, who had his hair cut at the same barbers as the male members of our family (remember his lovely wavy hair?); Mike England, Welsh Manager in later years, whose son was at school with our son, and yes he did play football very well; Ray Clemence, another goalie, whose daughter Sarah swam in the same swimming club with our daughter. When Ozzie Ardiles came to this country, his wife was brought along to Mothers and Toddlers to help her settle here, which she found very difficult. On Wednesdays I often reached the zebra crossing on the way to collect my children from school just as Alan Ball from Arsenal was driving to his mid-week match, and he stopped for me. His

red hair was very recognisable. He was also the youngest member of the English team in 1966 who won the World Cup.

One more footballer was Georgie Best. When he lived in Marlow he would kick a ball around with his son Calum in the park beside the Thames. It was impossible to miss that soft Irish accent.

Moving on to rugby, our son Duncan needed to have treatment for a knee problem. We had an appointment, and were waiting to be called. Ah, now it's our turn, I thought. We went into the consulting room and there was J.P.R. Williams or rather Dr J.P.R. Williams. Was I tongue tied? Oh yes, just for a second or two. I think I just didn't expect to see him in that context, and then remembered why I was there. I concentrated on the subject, but kicked myself that I didn't think of a rugby thing to say at all. (The Editor's husband is jealous - our second son is named James Peter Reynolds partly so his initials are JPR...)

On to a different sport, many of you know that I used to organise children's parties. I did an average of five a week, though I do wonder how I managed that - you have so much more energy when younger. I had a phone call from an Anne Redgrave to book a party for her daughter, Natalie. I phoned a couple of days before the date to get the names of the guests so I could make them name badges: much easier for me to call them by name, and nicer for them; and also to get the address. Anne said the name of the house was Casitas and there were blades on the name sign. With a gulp, and louder than normal, I said 'Oh, that Redgrave!' Casitas is the name of the lake where Steve and Anne met, when they were both rowing in the Olympics.

Steve Redgrave was at the party and wow, he filled the room, with arms like Michelin man. Anne is also very tall, but Steve's mum who was there is very small. You probably know Dr Anne Redgrave is the doctor for the rowing team, and at that time was running a sports clinic. Steve kept going to the fridge to get a Mars bar, being scolded by Anne who warned him he was having too much sugar and would become diabetic. Steve felt he wore it off with his training but he should have listened to Dr Anne, as in later years that is just what happened. To bring this story up to date, Sir Steve and Lady Anne are off to China to manage the Chinese rowing team. Natalie is now a doctor and is rowing. She vowed she would never follow either parent in her career. A woman can change her mind!

I have also had the pleasure of meeting the lovely Damon Hill, former Formula 1 World Champion. He was a friend of a friend, and they were passing, and so knocked to see if there was a cup of tea available. Damon was one of the nicest guys I have ever met. At the time he was racing motor bikes, part of Barry Sheene's team. Life had been difficult for Damon and the family after his Father Graham was killed in an air crash. Damon took over as the 'man of the family' in his teens, sorting out many problems.

Then finally there was Johnny Herbert, Formula 1 driver, who had previously raced with our elder son Malcolm in Karting. Please don't think of it as go karts, at 80 miles an hour with only 4 inches off the ground, it is no child's game!

Pam Russell, St Peter & St Paul



Success and failure



The whole question of success and failure is a fascinating subject. Not so long ago another two year groups got their GCSE or A level results. Some of the 'successes' were published but tellingly it was only their As and A*s. Some of those students were more delighted with lower marks in other subjects because here they had done better than they had hoped. There will also have been many for whom more 'mediocre' results were

a cause for great joy and some who had seemingly 'excellent' results which were received with a sense of failure.

Coping with failure is definitely an issue for our schools. Tring School has for some years identified it as a real issue with students, and recently at a primary school governing body, a teacher spoke openly and passionately about how, within their own family situation, the parents try to do everything possible to shield the children from problems and difficulties they have, not wanting to admit that we cannot do everything and we sometimes cannot cope.

I am sure many families would agree that there is a thin veneer of success and if we scratch below the surface there is a desperate paddling, trying to keep afloat. As governors we were led to wonder whether as a society we would be better acknowledging our failures, and if this would be good for our children. The school has a mantra 'mistakes are good' because we can learn from them.

Those of us who are followers of Christ are asked hard questions about what we think success looks like.

Huw Bellis, Tring Team

Tring's loss, a gain for Walton-on-the-Naze

On a wet and blustery Saturday in September, a few of us from New Mill Baptist Church set off for Walton-on-the-Naze. We arrived safely at Homelands Free Church and met up again with Andrew and Kate Openshaw at their new spiritual home.

Having been warmly greeted and welcomed by members of the church, we enjoyed a lovely service led by the Baptist Regional Minister, Beth Powney.

Brian Wood from Homelands related to the full-capacity congregation how the church felt led to call Andrew to take up the post as their minister. Andrew confirmed the events and his own call



from God to the new mission.

The short but powerful sermon, based on the loaves and fishes, was

given by Reverend Beth Allison-Glenney. The service ended with the rousing hymn 'To God Be the Glory'.

God was glorified throughout this beautiful service and the sincere witness from the Homelands congregation. It was another lovely testament to this lively church when one of the members told me that they had been praying for our safe journey due to the awful weather. Their prayers were answered.

We at New Mill Baptist Church look forward to hearing how God continues to bless Andrew, Kate and the family at Homelands Free Church.

Julie Harris, New Mill Baptist Church



A new home in Lymington

Many of you will know that Roger and Audrey Bennett made the decision to go to live near their family in Lymington, during August after forty years in Tring. They had found a place, a few weeks before, that Audrey, in particular, loved, and where they had already met people from the local church. (And Roger said, 'As long as Audrey's happy, so am I.')

Unfortunately, Audrey had a fall and ended up in hospital recovering from a broken leg. Gradually, they and the family came to a realisation that when she was ready to be discharged, she and Roger would not be able to manage at home in Tring. So, the decision was taken to move straight away to their chosen home – Linden House in New Street, Lymington.

They were both sad to leave Tring with all its memories and dear friends, but it was a practical decision that was brought forward in a hurry, though it ended up feeling like the right time for them. They were both so grateful to Huw Bellis for a lovely service of blessing for them, and for their house, as they were taking their leave of it.

One of their concerns was that they would lose touch with friends here. We assured them that there was no law against them returning to visit – and that friends would soon be visiting them. Within a few weeks, we were due to spend some time in Devon, and decided we would make good on our promise, and call in on them in Hampshire.

We found them in good spirits, settling well, and happy to be together again. And we were very impressed with their new home. The lounges are welcoming, with a variety of facilities to help residents socialise and feel at home. Roger has already been asked to sing on occasions. And, if they can't make it to Church, there are regular services held at Linden House. In their own rooms, they have many items of their own furniture (originally built by Roger himself) and there are pictures and special mementoes in pride of place. The family were still transporting things from Tring, so we were able to help by taking some in our car – notably Roger's music books and clothes for the Autumn wardrobe, as the cooler weather arrived.

It was a beautiful day when we visited, and they showed us around the garden. A shed-come-greenhouse has been identified as somewhere that Roger can set up his woodworking tools, and there are areas to sit and just enjoy the garden. Unless you're Audrey, of course, who has already been helping plant up some raised beds with vegetables!

Because their move ended up being quite hurried, they were unable to see some people to say goodbye. They would love to see visitors and hear news from Tring, if friends are down that way. They were particularly excited (but not surprised) to hear that Kelly and Sam had announced their engagement!

And, as Christmas approaches, their thoughts will undoubtedly be drawn to the many times they were very involved in festivities here.

They wanted us to give their love and pass on their news to everyone.

If you are going to visit, you can arrange this direct with Linden House. In addition, you might like to contact the family, via a member of the Tring Parish Ministry Team, so that they can make sure that Roger & Audrey will not be out on that day.

**Anne & Malcolm Nobbs
St Peter & St Paul**

I first met Roger and Audrey when attending All Saints, Long Marston when our sons were very small. They were great supporters of all the village churches, whether singing, being Church Warden, attendance at weekday events or cycling for the annual Bike 'n' Hike. They were great friends to many in Tring and are sadly missed.

The Editor



Thank you!

There is kindness in abundance in Tring and it has been truly heartwarming to all our family to have been on the receiving end of this human gift over the past few months. The words 'thank you' seem so inadequate and I am sure, knowing many of the kind people that have touched our lives, a thank you may not be needed.

However, Audrey, Roger, Jeremy, Graham and I want to express our heartfelt gratitude. You know who you are and rest assured, within our own local communities, we will be passing these acts of kindness on. Thank you from us all.

Jeremy Bennett, Judith Jones & Graham Bennett



Quality Care for a Better Life

Sunrise is dedicated to championing the delivery of high quality, personalised care. Our team is devoted to ensuring that individual care needs are catered for. From assisted living to dementia care and independent living – we have everything covered.

The bespoke care programmes and state-of-the-art facilities allow residents to continue to lead fulfilling, independent lives, all in the comfort and security of a supportive and compassionate environment. A home that feels just like their own.

We host weekly talks, parties, live music and much more. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Join us as a **Resident For a Day** on the **third Thursday of every month**. Please call **01923 603660** to book your place or for details of our other events.



31 August 2018

Sunrise of Chorleywood
High View, Chorleywood,
Rickmansworth,
Hertfordshire WD3 5TQ
SunriseChorleywood.co.uk



Prison and the elderly

I am elderly. I have never been to prison, but back in May 2016 I was hospitalised with peritonitis; my appendix had burst but without the usual symptoms. I had a short spell on life support and intensive care, followed by an extended period of treatment and recuperation both in and out of hospital. There were later hospital stays to deal with collateral damage. I have come to realise how easy it is to become institutionalised.

Once admitted to hospital you become part of a system. You pass responsibility for your life and welfare to someone else. It is like a return to childhood. As an in-patient you have a bed-space, comparable to a cell but with curtains instead of walls. I was with people I didn't know. They were adult and there was quite an age range. Some were disturbed, some were aggressive but most were elderly and passive. I shared facilities, and learned to fit in with the routine. I stayed until the medical staff deemed me fit for release.

The NHS is a steadily growing business for handling the medical ills of society. Could HMP (the prison system) be following a similar path for the social ills?

Rory Stewart MP is the current government minister responsible for prisons and is taking a very positive line to deal with serious problems in prison administration and operation. He reports to our MP, David Gauke, the Justice Secretary. Rory has set himself a target of a year to deal with the most pressing issues.

Getting more punitive would be expensive. I suggest that a possible target here is a significant reduction in the number of those incarcerated, in particular the elderly. It is a sad comment on our politics, but it seems that there are votes to be gained by promising to send more people to prison for longer periods of time.

There are people who have a vested interest in maintaining the current system. These include the police, prison officers, probation officers, lawyers, the CPS and the judiciary. Their employment depends on maintaining a system of 'justice' that seems to have basically changed little over my lifetime. Ever more criminal legislation and few repeals means that potential constraints on our behaviour steadily increase. Implementing those new laws brings

work to the administrators listed and increases jail population and cost.

Take the UK population at 60 million (half female/half male) and the current jail population at 80,000 men and 5,000 women – your chances of ending up in jail are currently 1 in 400 for a man and 1 in 6,000 for a woman. Notably, the imprisonment rate in Germany is about half ours. Ireland, France and Italy also have lower rates.

One performance criterion is money. I have taken the current operating cost of confinement overall at £70,000 per inmate a year. If we can reduce the prison population by 15,000 then we notionally 'save' over £1 billion a year. These numbers are crude estimates but give us yardsticks to work with. Even after reducing imprisonment numbers by that 15,000, by European standards our imprisonment rates would still be high.

The prisoners that most concern us are the violent ones, but there is a number of ageing prisoners who offer little or no physical threat to prison staff or society. As suggested previously, long-term involvement in any organisation or activity 'institutionalises' people and age softens personal behaviour. Prison increases dependency and very few people can resist it.

When I was working overseas in the 1960s, I returned to the UK periodically on leave. One thing I remember was how much everyday things changed over my periods of absence. Extend this to ten years or more and for a vulnerable individual the thought of a direct return to society can be frightening.

Many Comment readers are elderly. Try to imagine yourself in prison. Your lifestyle is dictated by others and you have little free choice. Your health may be deteriorating, your social circle is made up of fellow inmates and you may be estranged from family and old friends. What happens if/when you are released?

If it costs £70,000 a year (around £6,000 a month) to keep you inside, how much would it be outside? My guess is that if we can initially reduce your existing cost by half, we will be doing well (to £3,000 a month). This is the order of charge for a reasonable quality care home place. This should reduce with time as most ex-prisoners adjust and move on.

I started with a notional operational saving of £1 billion a year. Half that is

still an attractive thought and the prison capital budget (new-build and renovation) would also fall. Any such change would take some years to implement, but would it take us in a desirable direction? What is the 'Christian' way to see this? What should David and Rory do?

National Service finished in 1960. If you were 18 years old then, you are around 76 now. It served a number of purposes and it gave a shape to young men's lives when uncertainty and misbehaviour was often at its greatest. Could it be used to reduce imprisonment numbers both now and later? My suggestion is to set the period of service at a year and apply it equally to men and women: a universal 'gap year'?

Bill Bradford, St Peter & St Paul



Benedicite!

Please put Saturday 2 February 2019 in your diary for a musical treat. Richard Grylls is bringing his special brand of musical extravaganza to St Peter & St Paul via an all-day music-making workshop, ending with a concert which includes something for everyone.

If you can sing and sight-read reasonably well, then please contact Richard to find out more about the day and how you can take part at Richard.grylls@btinternet.com.

If concert-going is more your style, then please join us at 5.30pm for a super selection of music, ranging from Gabrieli to Percy Grainger, via Vaughan Williams.

Entry is free with a retiring collection for FOTCH (the Friends of Tring Church Heritage).

Vivianne Child, St Peter & St Paul



Pursued by a bear?

A world's first summit, a record-breaking endurance expedition and a plastic problem that won't go away...

I never planned on being an environmentalist: the whole thing seemed too surreal, too big, too intangible – although if I'm being entirely honest, maybe the key reason is it was all just too inconvenient. I am Tom Reynolds and I had always planned to be me: a pilot and an adventurer: someone who was quite happy assuming that somewhere somebody was working on it. Surely someone must be fixing our problem with recycling? Surely someone is fixing our planet? So long as I put my plastic in the right bin surely the bigger issues are 'SEP' – someone else's problem.

Next year a colleague and I are attempting a record-breaking 400-mile journey across North East Greenland on skis. En route we shall attempt to summit two mountains that have never previously been climbed. It was while planning the expedition that I was shocked to discover that the Greenland Sea is one of the most plastically-polluted seas on planet earth – the majority of which comes from Western Europe. Suddenly I could no longer ignore the problem (no matter how many plastic bottles I put in the correct bin). This isn't someone else's problem – and worse – there's still so little political will to create change. I have no excuse anymore; this is my problem.

I'm here to tell you about the specifics of the 'Greenland problem,' our expedition (which I'm really excited



about!) the environmental campaign we have started named 'Plastic Relief' and how you can get involved; it is our firm belief that together we can make a big difference.

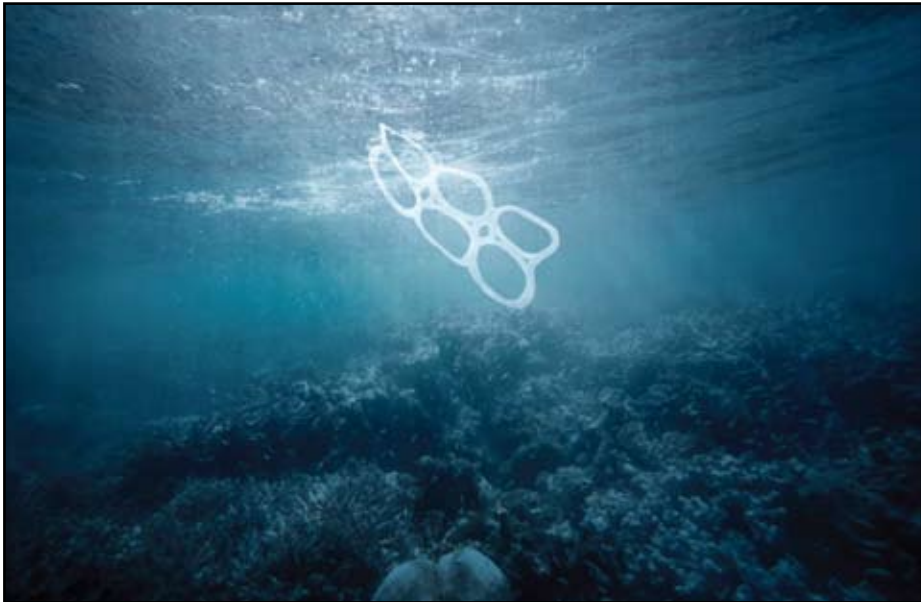
By now it should come as no surprise to any of us the incredible harm that our use of plastic is having on the environment. The world's oceans are littered with trillions of pieces of plastic – bottles, bags, toys, fishing nets and more, mostly in tiny particles – and now this seaborne junk is making its way into the Arctic.

In researching Greenland, I came across a landmark study published in Science Advances. What I learnt was that a group of researchers from the University of Cádiz in Spain and several other institutions show that a major ocean current is carrying bits of plastic, mainly from the North Atlantic (from

our Western European shores), to the Greenland and Barents seas, and leaving them there – in surface waters, in sea ice and possibly on the ocean floor.

Because climate change is already shrinking the Arctic sea ice cover, more human activity in this still-isolated part of the world is increasingly likely as navigation becomes easier. As a result, plastic pollution, which has grown significantly around the world since 1980, could spread more widely in the Arctic in decades to come.

So that's the problem: our pollution reaches Greenland and stays there. It is our hope that through the interest in our expedition (and the documentary that we're filming whilst there), our subsequent environmental campaign, and through communities getting involved, that we can create real and lasting change.

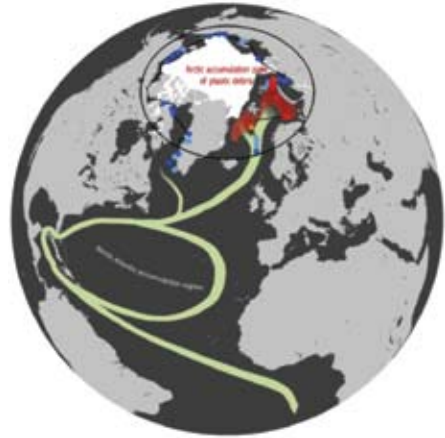


The expedition

Our expedition takes us some 400 miles over forty days unsupported across North East Greenland pulling ski-sleds weighing 125kg. (The fun thing is we will be making those sleds out of plastic that we collect on various beach cleans over the coming months!) *The editor is hoping this plastic junk will not be housed in her home!* We will be entirely isolated for the duration and will attempt two first summits of previously unclimbed mountains en route (over 800 people stand atop Everest every year). We will be burning 10,000kcal a day – equivalent to more than two marathons – but only have enough space to carry 8,000kcal per day... Daily threats will include winds up to 100mph, temperatures below -30c and the ever-present threat of entering polar bear territory. This is the toughest challenge we've ever undertaken.

The campaign

Titled 'Plastic Relief' our campaign aims to reduce the amount of single-use plastic consumed in the UK: through education and the release of a documentary about poisoning and pollution in the Arctic seas. As part of this we are selling reusable coffee cups that help raise money for charity and



help offset our expedition costs. They retail for £10 (less than the identical model sold by John Lewis) and all profits go to good causes – £2 to our charities and £5 to funding our expedition and documentary costs. Our additional charity partners are Aerobility and Surfers Against Sewage, both of whom's wonderful work forms the basis of educational talks we are conducting in schools and to communities across the country. If you think there's room for us to do a talk at your child's school or in your local community/sports club/living room(!) then please be in touch.

How to support us

- Donate to our campaign and

- expedition costs: <http://www.gofundme.com/plastic-relief>
- If you're a business owner why not be one of our leading corporate sponsors? [Http://www.plasticrelief.com/get-involved](http://www.plasticrelief.com/get-involved)
 - Buy a cup from us! We can arrange for cups to be delivered to you in any local Church by my beautiful assistant/mum Annette Reynolds. (Alternatively cup orders of five or more can be posted. Get in touch – they make great stocking fillers too!)
 - Learn more: <http://www.plasticrelief.com>
 - Instagram: @averybritishadventure
 - Get in touch with us: about your own waste-reducing initiatives. We can publicise them on our blog and other social media. See the links above or email me direct tomreynolds396@gmail.com
 - Request a talk/fundraising event in your local school/community
 - Anything else: there are so many ways you can help support us and we welcome them all; please don't hesitate to be in touch with your own suggestions.

Tom Reynolds
Ex Long Marston and Tring Schools

Shop Local Day

Christmas shopping on your local High Street!

Christmas Bake Off
Contact trish@tringtogether.org.uk for your recipe

Tring Farmers' Market
from 9am

Win a Goodie Bag*

Christmas Fair at the Silk Mill Business Park
12noon - 5pm

Saturday 8th December
Tring's independent retailers welcome you all day to indulge in endless Christmas shopping.

Follow your local retailers on Twitter. **@LoveTringRetail**

Visit us at Tring Farmers' Market from 9am

* Win a Goodie Bag packed with the best from Tring's independent retailers

TRING CHARITIES
(Registered Charity No 207805)

ALMSHOUSES IN TRING

From time to time, one and two-bedroom bungalows become available to let, for people who currently live in Aldbury, Long Marston, Marsworth, Pitstone, Puttenham, Tring, Wigginton or Wilstone.

Applicants, one of whom must be aged 55 or over, must not own their own home or have savings in excess of £16,000.

The average weekly maintenance contribution (equivalent to 'rent' for housing benefit purposes) is £96 for a one bedroom property and £115 for a two bedroom property.

If you would like to be considered for the Waiting List, please telephone Elaine Winter, Secretary to the Trustees, on 01442 827913 (weekday office hours only), for an application form or email info@tringcharities.co.uk

BEECHWOOD
FINE FOODS

The Spirit of Christmas

Gifts for all your family and friends



42 Frogmore Street | Tring | HP23 5AU | 01442 828812
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK www.beechwoodfinefoods.com

A locum-ing we will go...



As a curate earning £400 a year plus a marriage allowance of £50 in addition, we just about managed! But the thought of Jenny and I going on holiday abroad was a joke.

In 1964 the chance came to do the first of what became many holiday locums in the diocese of Europe. Few people realise the tentacles of the CofE reach all over the continent and we have enjoyed many holidays in which I prayed with a dying man in Barcelona, married a couple from Oldham in the garden of a yacht club in Majorca, and where we were privileged to meet people in need and people who were there as being retired or just on holiday. The CofE does not end at Dover!

There was usually no pay but a free house and often a car was provided and travel expenses there and back. But the first experience was a 5-star operation! We were asked to go to San Remo on the South Italian coast to look after the small resident congregation and numbers of visitors. We were put up in the Villa Verde, a pensione, which had originally been the home of the English poet, Edward Lear.

The Villa Verde had beautiful gardens, full of palm trees and exotic flowers, and we were given half board, and a spacious bedroom. Luxury indeed. I was preparing my sermon for Sunday when the phone rang. It was the Commander of a US submarine which had arrived at the port and he wanted to bring the crew



to a Church parade on the Sunday. He then invited us to dinner on board and sent a motorboat to collect us. And we were piped on board – an unexpected honour for a humble curate! The meal was excellent but it was the first time I had ever drunk iced tea – all American navy ships are 'dry'. But the company and the food more than made up for no alcohol. Sunday came and twenty-four American sailors in full uniform arrived at Church and we all sang 'Eternal Father strong to save' with real meaning.

One other interesting thing: we met two young Italian nurses at the Villa Verde on holiday and they were fascinated to know that the CofE had married clergy. They heartily approved, not least because after a few glasses of wine they confided in us that they had both been propositioned by the younger RC priests in their parish in Milan.

The next episode of this locum-ing saga will be about our stay the following year at St Jean de Luz and Biarritz, not so 5-star but very interesting nonetheless.

Ian Ogilvie, Tring Team

A dizzying proposal

Maurice proposed to me on the top tower of Lincoln Cathedral in 1945 after we climbed 365 steps to get there. (It is now closed to the public.) We met in Hastings in August 1945, just after VJ Day. He was then in the army, the 6th Airborne Division, stationed at Lydd on Romney Marsh. I was on holiday there and it was no less than a 'pick up'!

On 14 November Maurice had his 21st birthday party in Lincoln where he announced his forthcoming marriage. We were married at St Margaret's Church in Barking, Essex in August 1946, the day after my 21st birthday.

We have two sons: Tony (who lives a few doors away in Wilstone) and Michael who lives in Moscow; four grandchildren: Stewart and Holly, Gregory and Isabelle; and four great grandchildren: Cameron and Elvy, Stella and Dominic.

We have been married for seventy-two very happy years.

Joan Stedman, St Cross, Wilstone



Graham Blake
soft furnishing

- Loose covers
- Curtains
- Re-Upholstery
- Tracks & Poles

For personal, helpful service,
please call

Tel: 01844 261769

Mob: 07802 213381

grahamblake123@btconnect.com

www.grahamblake.com

TEN YEAR GUARANTEE



THE OLD PASTURES
LUXURY ACCOMMODATION FOR DOGS
Icknield Farm, Icknield Way, Tring, Herts HP23 4JX

Luxury heated accommodation for your dog
Only 8 large kennels giving your dog the extra care and attention they deserve. All dogs are walked twice a day.
Holiday homes for small animals.
DOG GROOMING
BATHING, CLIPPING, TRIMMING, NAILS AND EARS.
WEEKEND APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE. EASY WALK IN,
NON-SLIP SHOWER IDEAL FOR OLDER AND BIGGER DOGS.
WE CAN CATER FOR ANY SIZE DOG. EASY PARKING.

Mrs. D. Little

PET SITTERS

WHILST YOU'RE AT WORK, ON HOLIDAY OR DURING ILLNESS, WE WILL COME & VISIT YOUR PET IN YOUR HOME.
ALL TYPES OF ANIMALS.
MEMBER OF N.A.R.P.
FULLY INSURED.

01442 824856

Understanding grief



Grief is a strange thing – you cannot predict how it will affect you or when. There is no timeline, no instruction manual, and it is not something for which we ever want to prepare. We can read about the five or seven stages of grief; we can post memories of others on thousands of websites, yet nothing can prepare us for the actual experience.

I would also say that we do all we

can to avoid thinking about it until it is a part of our lives. We hold services that we want to call celebrations of life rather than funerals; we know that many of us do not prepare for death; and those who are bereaved say that friends and family still do not know what to say.

Jason Watkins, the actor whose daughter died of sepsis at the age of 2, said that the trauma goes, but the pain remains. Living with pain means accepting that we can experience many emotions at once, that we can be laughing but still feeling loss. We know that we need to carry on with ordinary

life, however hard that is, and that there are also times when we collapse and there is nothing wrong with that.

At the beginning of November we held All Souls services in Tring's Parish Church, an important part of our remembering as it reminds us that our grief and loss and love and faith are all tied up together. It was a time to remember, to grieve, to smile and to pray.

May those who have died rest in peace and rise in glory.

Jane Banister, Tring Team

Forty plus years of Tring memories

In 1970 my husband, Godfrey, was advised to move from his Nottingham Office to London, necessitating a move from a small Derbyshire village, and I was told by several well-meaning villagers who had known me and my family all my life that we would find it hard to settle near London.

Age 20 something I was determined to prove that I would make a new life with two young daughters. Godfrey first took me to Hemel Hempstead. I stood on The Marlowes and said, 'This is the most godless place on earth' and so we moved further along the Euston line to find Tring; I never looked back.

The house we chose had sadly been neglected as the previous owners had concentrated on caring for their disabled son, but we were lucky in that my father was an architect and gave us ideas as to how we could improve it. With the help of the Scales brothers, who 'lived' with us for nearly ten months, we made a home that I loved for over forty years.

Monica Smith lived next door and was the ideal neighbour, making us welcome and introducing us to several useful contacts. Many Comment readers may remember her as she worked as parish secretary for Revd Donald Howells. After showing me the way around the locality, she drove me to playgroup at Drayton Beauchamp and arranged a coffee morning to introduce me to about twelve young mothers and their offspring. Monica then stepped back politely and left us to find our own way, which we did not find difficult in a town as friendly as Tring. When I had a tummy bug, she came in, told me to sleep it off and she took the two girls to play with her two boys until Daddy returned from work. I soon recovered knowing that the girls were in her good care.

Following the premature death of my sister aged 29 in 1969, I had lost my faith as I could not understand why my loving parents should be so punished. Visits from Donald Howells and curate Michael Webb helped considerably and I was encouraged to attend Church services at St Peter & St Paul, take the children to Sunday School and join Young Wives, which in the 1970s, under the leadership of Maggie Wareham, was very active.

Our elder daughter, who will be 50 in January, remembers Sue Tarbox very

well and finds it amazing that she has only recently retired. I wonder how many Sunday Schools have the long service record given by Mary Haywood, Sandra Luddington and Sue Tarbox.

When we left Derbyshire, we had to leave behind chickens, ducks and four geese as we could not afford a field near Tring. I was very pleased to discover Dunsley Farm so conveniently close across Pound Meadow and would push Katy in the pushchair to watch the chickens and ducks. Over the years I enjoyed many chats with Mrs Marks and still buy my eggs from Dunsley whenever possible. I have not found any better eggs anywhere and have used them to make hundreds of cakes for church events, the Children's Society and elderly friends. In later years it was



very quick to cycle on my faithful steed, previously used by Godfrey's mother to buy eggs and all greengrocery. Sad to say I hardly use my bike now as the lanes here are too narrow.

Working at Graces from 1980 I became friendly with the retail manager, John Cockerill, and he and his wife Pam invited me to join them for Sunday lunch when Godfrey was away for Territorial Army duties. In the evening we would attend Evensong at St Cross.

Neighbours make such a huge difference to one's enjoyment of life and one could not wish for kinder neighbours than David and Margaret Gittins. David gave me assistance trying to start the lawn mower and I received many cheery waves from Margaret as she dashed off doing another good deed and during the summer we would chat and put the world to rights while both picking

our fresh garden produce. Oh, for those happy days. David, Godfrey and David Banyard, neighbour to David and Margaret on the western side, retired about the same time, so I decided to invite them, including Jane, for a meal to celebrate their 'new' lives. Several years later we continued to share meals together and always had a good evening with lots of laughter.

How my life has changed! A friend from our French group frequently said to me 'Aren't you going to miss all your friends?' I thought it would be easy, but at our age it is not so easy to make new friends. Margaret Wilson said to me, unfortunately too late, that 'one should not move after 70'. How right she is – but I am learning the hard way. A friend from Tring visited one day and said, 'You have a lovely view from the kitchen window'. I retorted 'But my friends are not in that view.'

I gave up too much in one go, leaving a lovely home that we had developed as we wished and as funds allowed. Godfrey rebuilt the patio; we (well, I passed the appropriate screw) built the fitted wardrobes and he replaced the outdated tiled fireplace in the lounge with a stone one. I left regular employment, working with people whom I respected, and moved to a new area four days later, and am now bored with mundane household duties.

So many good memories: the course at Aldbury led by Jo Wetherall and Didier when I first met Alison Bickerton, to whom I am grateful for taking on delivery to my Comment subscribers; all the friends at FOTCH – who but Grahame Senior could have established such a successful group, and his genuine belief that everything will work out well if we all contribute and keep smiling, just as Kate Stratford did for many years with all her duties.

I miss Beavers (swimming exercises for those who have a need) on Tuesday lunchtimes, assisting people less able than myself, and made many good friends there.

Gilbert's mother, Mrs Marjorie Grace, suggested that I could become a School governor. I did not know very much about the duties but in thirty years on the governing body of Dundale School I improved my knowledge and hope I contributed for the benefit to the pupils. I certainly found the duty very rewarding.

Memories include Mrs Reader who made superb shortbread, Kay Rodwell and all her schooling advice, the Friday morning market, the Farmers market and Mrs Stupples, meeting Joan Cherry and collecting sugar papers for her when we are on holiday. Who can forget Janet Ridgway with her enthusiastic welcome, sometimes at the Church door but equally enthusiastic in Waitrose. Now when shopping I am told that 'We don't stock that at this branch'.

Beyond the deepening shadow

Tring town has done a beautiful thing.

The ladies of the Yarn Bombing Group have, through their intricate and appropriate arrangements from tower to benches, from one end of the High Street to the other, brought us poppies! The red poppy, the poignant symbol of those who fell in the two world wars of the twentieth century: this is right and proper. The purple poppy, remembering the animals that fell – they have such loyalty to man, especially in adversity: this is right and proper. The white poppy, for peace. We all yearn for a lasting peace: this is right and proper.

As the shadows may be deepening over this last century of wars, to remember is our responsibility. We must ensure justice and truth before we can have a genuine peace.

Yet the Dragon does not sleep long before he breathes out of his fiery lungs chaos, fear and fury and the blood and tears of war – different, but the same as all wars. Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and other places we don't talk about. Many have fallen, not maybe as many as in the past – technology has helped in some ways. Squaddies are no longer 'cannon fodder' but the under 21s still take the biggest hit in death numbers and life-changing and life-damaging injuries, visible and invisible wounds.

We don't need to remember these people as they are not in the far away past: THEY ARE HERE NOW, AT THIS PRESENT TIME. They are here among us as we go about our lives. They don't look much different from us unless they have a noticable wound. Many need help. Many fall through the net, because actually there is no net, only maybe a fragile net of words, that do nothing to support the dead weight of the injured who are, when they come home, overwhelmed in 'civvy street', totally unsupported by words, directions, websites, but no care, no treatment.

I could not have written this without years of friendly and efficient computer assistance from Barry Child. If only he could still pop in when passing on his way to Tring School. Godfrey was always full of praise for Vivianne who worked efficiently for FOTCH while he was treasurer. He also enjoyed Monday morning with Phillip Lawrence, counting the donations from Sunday, and equally enjoyed Friday morning with John Luddington gardening in the churchyard.

On Sunday mornings I can see Huw Bellis or Jane Banister in front of the altar. You are never far from my thoughts.

Moving to be close to grandchildren comes at a heavy cost; fortunately we have two thoughtful daughters who offer help and keep us cheerful in spirit and assist with all the changing I.T. demands of the 21st century.

Judith Orrell, ex-St Peter & St Paul

There are military charitable organisations – Combat Stress and Help for Heroes, but they are charities and have waiting lists for treatment. There is no treatment, no care designated for Service Personnel in the NHS. Advice yes, but no designated treatment.

Finding help is a hit-and-miss affair

MILITARY COVENANT

Soldiers will be called upon to make personal sacrifices – including the ultimate sacrifice – in the service of the Nation. In putting the needs of the Nation and the Army before their own, they forgo some of the rights enjoyed by those outside the Armed Forces. In return, British Soldiers must be able to always expect fair treatment, to be valued and respected as individuals and that they (and their families) will be sustained and rewarded by commensurate terms and conditions of service.

and takes persistence and resilience which are not easy if you are clinically depressed (but as yet don't know it), have a drink problem, have a drug problem, have family problems, maybe have become homeless, or are in prison. You are hardly likely to have organised, and may miss, appointments, turn up on

the wrong day or at the wrong time. Of course, if you miss an NHS appointment, you are wiped from the system and need to start again! This sort of persistence is not available in the sorely depleted resources of an ex-army veteran who has any of the above problems.

I will end with a quotation from the Sunday Times, 4 November 2018, by Lieutenant-Colonel Quentin Naylor who was in Iraq.

'We fought shoulder to shoulder, taking the fight to the enemy, day after day, night after night. It was relentless, and we got on average four hours' sleep a night. But we were B Company, 2 Rifles, the strongest and most tightknit company in the brigade. We looked after each other; we laughed; we made light of horrific circumstances. We loved each other.'

This pride in dealing with adversity together and the brotherly love is evident; but all that is lost when they are medically discharged and left to sink or swim in a world that doesn't appear to appreciate them or even know who they are... 'Oh, I thought a Veteran was an old man'!

It is right and proper that we find ways of caring for and raising the official profile of these people who are among us now.

Tricia Apps, Corpus Christi



Cupboard clearing for DENS

Tring Crafters

Thank you for sorting out your cupboards, drawers, boxes and even a complete room, of your Craft & Art items. We took almost a car load to the DENS HUB in Hemel Hempstead.



Karen from DENS, who runs the Craft & Art Workshops said ‘Many thanks for bringing it all over to us, and please pass on our thanks to everyone who donated. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for photos of the creations our service users will be making from it all.’



Christmas food collections

TESCOS generously top-up the cash value on everything donated by 20%. OCADO (the online supermarket) provides fresh food and meat to clients who can collect Foodbank parcels from the main warehouse, and for meals at the Elms (Dens hostel).

Furniture Warehouse

This provides furniture to DENS service users. Any surplus is sold to the public. Maybe you have furniture, electrical items or crockery in good order? Dens will collect, though a donation of £10 will help with running costs. Phone 01442 800269 or email: retail@dens.org.uk to see if your item is suitable.



Sponsored Sleep Out

This takes place at Hemel Hempstead School, from 9.00pm Friday 7 December until 7.00am Saturday 8 December. Do sponsor our young or not-so-young people.

If you would like any more information, please contact us or see www.DENS.org.uk.

Pam & Clive Russell
St Peter & St Paul

Parish magazine December 1918



Frederick Edward Clarke, East Surrey Regt., was wounded in October 1917 at Passchendaele Ridge, and invalided home, and eventually died from pneumonia in Horton Hospital, Epsom on 7 November. He was buried in Tring Cemetery on 13 November. He formerly was a member of the Tring Town Band.

Herbert James Gates, Lce-Cpl, Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, was killed in action on 2 November. His Lieutenant, writing to his parents, says: ‘It is with great regret that I have to inform you of the death of your son, who was killed in action by a shell after a successful attack on some German positions during the early hours of the morning. Our Company had reached its objective and had taken several hundred prisoners, when the Germans started shelling us, and one of the shells killed your son.’ This is the second son Mr & Mrs. Gates have lost, and another has been missing since August. They have our deepest sympathy.

Sidney Haystaff, 87th Batt. Canadian Grenadier Guards, was killed in action

in France on 5 November. He had made his home in Canada for the last fifteen years, but returned to fight for his country in February last. He was a member of our CLB in Mr Boswall’s days, and a very vigorous member too, for he took part in most of the famous displays of those historic times, and, no doubt, found soldiering came easier to him through the discipline he learnt in our Club Room. As a boy he also sang in the choir at the Little Church.

Walter Rance, Lce. Cpl., Queen’s Royal West Surreys, was killed during the big offensive in Italy on the 30 October. He joined up two years ago, and served for six months in France, where he was wounded, and then for twelve months in Italy. In former days he was a member of the MCA and of our local Fire Brigade. His Lieutenant writes, ‘It is with the deepest sympathy and regret that I have to tell you that your husband was killed in action. A few minutes after we came into action on that morning your husband was struck by a shell, while lying alongside me, and you will be comforted to know that he could have suffered no pain, as he died within a couple of minutes.’

Sidney James Randall, 44th Battn. Canadian Infantry, died in the General

Hospital, Rouen, on 12 November as the result of severe shrapnel wounds. He joined up in Canada twelve months ago, and went to France last August. As a lad he was a member of the YMCA in Tring, and is affectionately remembered by those who knew him here.

Charles Sidney Stevens, Royal Suffolk Regt., was also killed on 2 November. For many years he was a member of our CLB and rose to be instructor, and was among those who worked hardest to make his Company the most efficient in the Diocese. His Lieut., writing to Mr and Mrs Stevens, says, ‘He was killed early in the morning and his injuries were such that death was instantaneous. He was buried next morning in the Belgian Communal Cemetery, and a Cross has been erected over his grave.’

Just as we go to press we hear that Arthur Lovell, Machine Gun Corps, Norfolk Regiment, has died of malarial fever at Alexandria. He had been in the Army for nearly three-and-a-half years, and for the greater part of that time he was with the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. He was a general favourite with those who knew him, and his parents, who have now lost two sons, have our very real sympathy.



your own
home care

putting the nursing back into care

Outstanding care provided for you in the comfort and privacy of your own home by caring, kind and compassionate staff who are handpicked for their commitment and passion for excellent care. Safety, kindness and gentleness are our core values.

With a fast-growing reputation for excellence in service delivery, we are your trusted local provider of home care. We are independent, family owned and managed.

To talk to us about your care requirements, or if you would like to work for us, please call: Helen Yates RGN on 01442 843064 or email admin@yourownhomecare.co.uk

www.yourownhomecare.co.uk





Poppies fall for the fallen



During November you will have seen the efforts of the Poppy Team in and around St Peter & St Paul's Church. It was the culmination of a couple of years of dreaming and planning and in reality, went far beyond our wildest dreams.

Rewind about two years ago when we started out: we had an idea that about 3,000 poppies would make a really good installation on the Church tower. However, as time went by and so many had asked for the pattern, and poppies were promised by many individuals and groups, our plans were hastily adapted to incorporate them all. So as well as the tower weeping with the blood of the soldiers, our plans developed to include some lower level displays in the churchyard; the archway into the Church and the gates next to the war memorial, which were decorated first for the War Memorial rededication in June.

As we knitted and sewed, we became interested in the individual men from Tring who didn't come back, and their stories: many were baptised or married in St Peter & St Paul's and lived in roads near ours. We felt it was important to tell their story in the displays both within the poppy displays and also in folders. In June we labelled over 150 poppies with the names of all on our War Memorial and these were taken out to the memorial and laid there



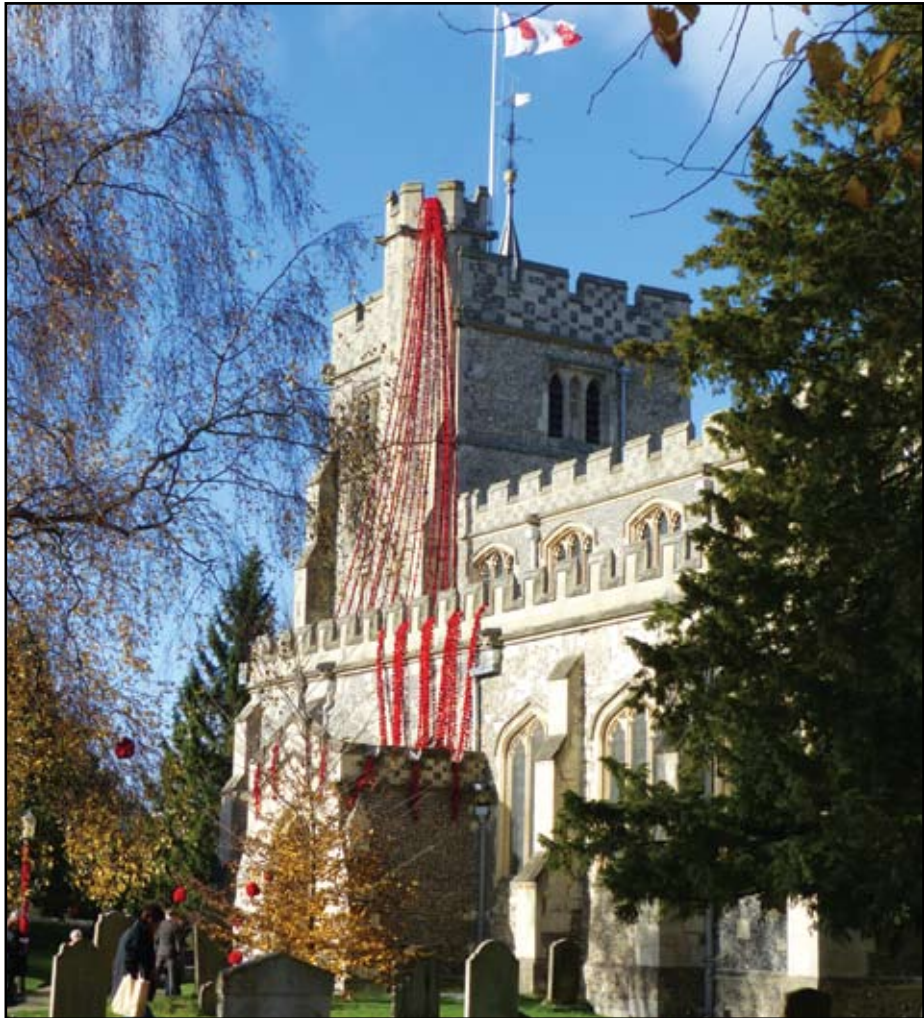
by the congregation, many being put against their inscribed names. That made a deep personal connection with many people, so we repeated the labels on the end of pew ends which have been studied by our visitors and names searched for, a welcome connection again.

A hundred poppies were knitted by a former teacher of David Barnsdale, who died in the Afghanistan conflict in 2010, and were falling around his memorial cross in the Church. We had a



prayer cross where people could write a prayer or the name of a family member on a label on a poppy. As more poppies came in, wreaths and pom-poms were made and a beautiful display of falling poppies on the screen at the back of the Church was constructed. The three gates near the tower were adorned. Five hundred poppies arrived a week before installation, so a panic poppy afternoon of stitching gave us the lamppost covering and more pom-poms!

Numbers mean a lot to us, in



particular the number 117, the number of names on Tring's War Memorial of men lost during WWI: 107, plus nine men who are not named on the memorial whom we believe should have been, (see the November issue of Comment) plus one for the unknown warrior or for an unnamed soldier whom we wanted to remember. So, 117 fractured poppy patchworks were hung in the Church porch, each hoop embroidered with the name of the serviceman remembered.

There were 117 poppies laid in the lady chapel altar for the 'In Flanders Fields' display, and it was the number of labelled strands in the pew ends.

To the best of our counting, there were 10,654 red poppies in and around the Church and churchyard with more than 216 contributors, mostly knitters, sewers or crocheters, with some donating wool, buttons and money. The oldest knitter was 98 years young! A fantastic community effort!



We are indebted to the church for allowing us to display it, to 'the roof team' who helped put up the high stuff, and to our husbands for their support, both practical and for their forbearance!

We have been overwhelmed by the response from people: comments like 'brilliant display', 'amazing' and 'fantastic' have been wonderfully received; and 'a very moving tribute to the fallen all those years ago' has encompassed the feelings we wanted to portray in the installation. A hand-written note to us says, 'Thank you so much for making the centenary of World War I a very special memory and a very fitting tribute to those who lost their lives'. It was our pleasure and our privilege to do it for those men and their families.

Janet Goodyer, St Peter & St Paul



Born in a stable?



I once made the grave error of describing myself as 'English' in front of my Aunt Peg from Cardiff. She was rather like Bertie Wooster's Aunt Dahlia, a lovely, generous person, but not to be crossed. 'You are not English,' she told me quite firmly, brushing my objection aside when I pointed out that I was born in Kent. 'Your father was born in Barry, your grandfather in Pembroke, your middle name is Owen and you support Wales at rugby. You are Welsh. Jesus was born in a stable, but that didn't make him a horse.' Which clearly clinched the argument for her. But was he?

What should be taken as historical and what is a later addition in the Nativity stories is a subject which divides New Testament scholars and I don't intend to attempt to solve that problem in fewer than 900 words, but I thought it would be interesting to look at two aspects of the nativity story as told by Christmas cards and what is actually in the Gospels.

The stable

The idea that Jesus was born in stable comes from Luke 2:7 where we read in the KJV 'And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn'. From this comes the idea, popular in school nativity plays, of an innkeeper who sends Mary, Joseph and the donkey to his stable as all his rooms have been booked already via Lastminute.com. (Other websites are available.) I did hear this once; the narrator's tongue was very firmly in his cheek – never get a teacher started on nativity plays as they can go on for hours.

That the inn was full, and the Holy Family was put in the stable might be the case, but there is no mention of the word 'stable' in the text. It might also be that Jesus was born in a very poor dwelling where animals shared the house with the family. That he was placed in a manger was not uncommon amongst poor people, just as in many working-class homes 100 years ago in Britain, a baby was placed in the (removed) big bottom drawer of a chest of drawers – because they could not afford a cradle.

A tradition going back to St Justin (100-165AD) says that Jesus was born in a cave – a place where animals were often kept. If you go to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the supposed site of the event itself, there is a very ornate shrine – built into a cave. Another theory is that he was born in the open courtyard of the full inn.

We do not know for certain, but what all these alternatives point to is that the birth of Jesus took place in poverty. Anne Atkins of 'Thought for the Day' has tried to claim Jesus for the middle-classes, but when Jesus was presented in the Temple in Jerusalem, his parents made the smaller offering for their child permitted for the poor of the land. Wherever Jesus was born, it appears it was in poverty and soon after he became a refugee fleeing from a despot.

The three kings

When I was a classroom teacher I used to give a trick question to classes: 'How many kings are there in the Nativity story?'



The answer normally given was three. The correct answer is, of course, two. King Herod and the one in the manger. Matthew chapter two begins, 'Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, where is he

that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.' No mention of kings there whatsoever or that there were three of them; but a little later in the text we learn of their three rather odd gifts. The idea that they were kings developed centuries later. There could be two or, according to one ancient tradition, twelve visitors. There could have been fifteen.

The form of the Greek tells us that at least one was male but there could have been a woman amongst them. The Greek word used for the wise men (or possibly wise men and wise women) is *magoi* often rendered into English as Magi. The New Testament experts do not agree on who these people are, but they are thought to be non-Jewish religious astrologers. One theory is that they were Zoroastrian astrologer-priests. Zoroastrianism is a fascinating religion. Its most famous son known in England was probably Freddie Mercury of the glam-rock band 'Queen'. I know of local Zoroastrians who are convinced the wise men were Zoroastrian priests. They could well be right, and Matthew seems to be showing that Jesus is for all the world and not just for Jews (and I would add, not just for Christians).

This leads to the big question: should we ban 'Three kings from Persian lands afar'. Probably not. I do think 'We three Kings of Orient are' is not suitable for use in Church, but I do think it is highly suitable for our Christmas visit to Tring Brewery (other breweries are available, but they don't serve Side Pocket).

Jon Reynolds, Tring Team

Jane Ducklin
OSTEOPATH

Pain relief from back, neck and joint problems.

18 Christchurch Road, Tring HP23 4EE

Tel: 01442 890073 Mob: 07973 188420

Highly qualified and registered with the General Osteopathic Council

Osteopathic Care for all the Family

Serving Tring since 1995

Christmassy Cinnamon Catherine Wheels



I love the aroma of Christmas. The smell of a real Christmas tree, mulled wine and the spices used in Christmas baking – ginger, nutmeg and cinnamon. Especially cinnamon.

I go a bit mad with scented candles and room sprays to make my house smell especially lovely at this time of year and after seeing a bottle of mulled wine scented loo cleaner at my son's home recently even my bathroom will smell Christmassy as soon as I can buy a bottle too.

But nothing beats the smell of fresh Christmassy baking. These more-ish treats would make a perfect Christmas morning breakfast. Indulgent but not too filling. After all, you have to leave room for that enormous lunch!

Ingredients

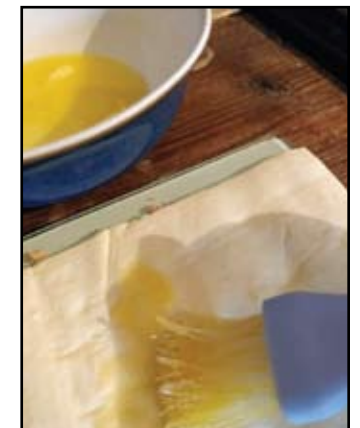
320g Sheet of Puff Pastry
25g Butter
75g Soft Brown Sugar
1/2 tsp Ground Cinnamon
50g Sultanas

It's a very simple recipe – you simply mix soft brown sugar with sultanas and that all important cinnamon, add that mix to puff pastry then roll it up, chop into Catherine wheel shapes and bake.

I cheat a little by using shop-bought pre-rolled puff pastry so simply unroll the pastry sheet, brush it with melted butter, spread the cinnamon, sugar and dried fruit over and roll it up starting at the long edge. You could do all of this on Christmas Eve then wrap the pastry roll in clingfilm and refrigerate, ready to be sliced and baked on Christmas morning. They only take 8-10 minutes to cook at 190 degrees C so you could be making a nice cuppa while they are in the oven. Then I slice at around 10-12mm intervals and put them on baking trays with room to spread.

Imagine how amazing your house will smell while they are baking! I guarantee they won't last long.

Afra Willmore, St John the Baptist, Aldbury

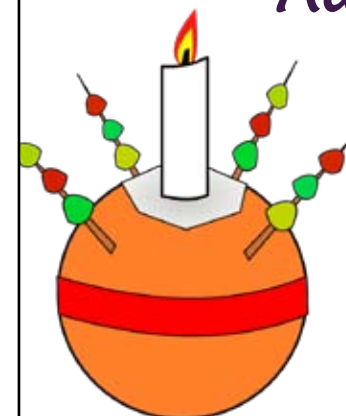


TRING TEAM
PARISH
Living God's Love

Christingle Service
for all the Family

Sunday 2nd December
10.00am in Aldbury Church
3.00pm in Tring Church

All Welcome



The Children's Society
making childhood better

People not Borders

Like many similar groups, People not Borders began in the autumn of 2015 when people in the UK became aware that refugees were drowning in the Mediterranean. Thanks to Facebook, two young mums in Berkhamsted shared their concern and desire to help, met and raised money with coffee mornings.

Now we await charitable status – a very long wait.

Initially we collected food, clothes and toiletries for Calais, but soon we were sending items donated by local supporters to Turkey, Syria and Greece too. Now we have two collection boxes where people can leave anything on our appeal lists at any time – at St Peter's Church on Berkhamsted High Street and St Mary's, Northchurch.

We are currently asking for new items for Smiley Bags for children in Syria and for tents, sleeping bags and clothes for refugees sleeping in forests and on streets in France this winter. While we

are enormously grateful for the support of many churches and schools, we have no religious or political affiliation but believe in one human family. All female, we are very few – which ensures efficiency – and different as we are, we love each other very much! But we work closely with other groups and were part of the #Boots1000 campaign last winter – to put boots on 1000 refugees' feet – and of this summer's Love4Lesvos campaign.

Two of our trustees went out to Lesbos in May, arriving at the same time as two more boats. Two of us have been to France to deliver aid ourselves and met the remarkable volunteers whose efforts are regularly undermined, but whose resilience, they say, is nothing to that of the refugees they help.

Our other focus is fundraising, which started with coffee mornings but soon became more ambitious. With the proceeds of our first concert we bought



medical equipment for a hospital in Syria – at a time when bombings were forcing hospitals underground, so we really didn't know how long that equipment

might survive. After two sponsored sleep-outs, we were able to buy tents and sleeping bags for France – not knowing how long it might be before they were confiscated and destroyed by the French police. Last year we bought furniture and equipment for a new school on Lesbos for refugee children.

Then in September 2017 we launched a fundraising and empathy-developing picture book exploring what it means to be a young refugee, and it's raised over £2,500 so far. You can buy a copy – a great Christmas present – at the Way Inn Bookshop or Café Epicure in Berkhamsted, or online at: <https://www.suehamptonauthor.co.uk/product/i-am-me/>. We built a whole touring exhibition around the textile illustrations by Paula Watkins from Hemel, and photographs by Syrian refugee Abdulazez Dukhan of children in camps in Greece and Turkey. Just recently we learned that our little book, published by TSL in Rickmansworth, is a finalist in the People's Book Prize – and we'd love it to win at the awards ceremony next May.

In January we were delighted to meet Lord Dubs, once a Kindertransport refugee and now a tireless campaigner for refugee rights, when he came to present prizes in a competition we ran, inviting writers young and old to imagine what it means to be a refugee. We have boxed up food packs for France, Baby Boxes for Syria (kits for a mum/mum-to-be), and art boxes for children on Lesbos decorated by local adults and children for Refugee Week last June. This year we also celebrated the contributions of refugees to this country by joining with our friends in Herts Welcomes Syrian Families to invite supporters to a Syrian supper, with food cooked by friends from the Syrian families in Dacorum. Everyone was spellbound and moved when one of them shared his story.

The refugee crisis is huge and growing, with 64 million people now displaced, but that is no reason to give up on desperate people fleeing war, oppression and climate change. We do what we can, with the help of local people who care. Anyone who would like



to support us might like to look at our website <https://www.peoplenotborders.org> or our Facebook page, where you will find details of our current appeals. We are always delighted to give presentations about our work, for adults or in schools.

Sue Hampton
Berkhamsted Quaker Meeting House

Child refugees

For the latest information on 'Child refugees' following the article in the November edition of Comment, please [google safepassage.org.uk/get-involved](http://google.safepassage.org.uk/get-involved).

Leslie Barker, St Peter & St Paul



Private Charles Miller

If you find yourself passing by the cemetery gates at New Mill Baptist Church take a few moments to seek out a peaceful spot in the far left-hand corner. There you will see, as close to the original burial spot as possible, a fitting marker to the young Tring man who died a year after he was invalided out of World War I.

After the war, the people of Tring were determined that the bravery of Private Charles Miller would be respectfully remembered on the town's War Memorial.

One hundred years after the end of WWI a simple wooden cross has been planted in the cemetery to show once again where this soldier was once

buried. On Sunday 11 November, Tring and towns all over Great Britain fittingly commemorated all those who took part in that war, those who died and those who limped home.

It was decided that a service would be held to pay tribute to the memory of Private Charles Miller after Armistice Day. Members of the local British Legion expressed a keen interest to recognise the cross for him with all due honours. The service will be held at New Mill Baptist Church on Sunday 9 December and all are welcome to join us at 10.30am. There will be refreshments afterwards.

Julie Harris
New Mill Baptist Church



The future of the CofE – concerns



Having looked at the last fifty years of the church in the previous Men's Society; meeting we decided to look at its future in our October meeting. Nine members met, including Mike who said that he could still move his hip without pain. Jeremy reported on the Bike 'n' Hike Run which raises money for the upkeep of redundant Church buildings. Our discussion related almost entirely to the Church of England, focusing on the Tring Team.

Jeremy began the discussion with the changes made at St Mary's, Puttenham. As asked for by the Bishop, there are now weekly services, and the Taizé service appears to be successful (it has only just begun) under Malcolm Nobbs's leadership. However, this will inevitably lead to more work for the clergy.

There are also likely to be more redundant historic Churches as parishes are amalgamated due to a shortage of clergy. This is not the case here as the Tring Team has five posts, as well as several retired priests who help. However, the church in general, and as seen at St P&P, will also rely on retired church members. While it is good that people live longer and are more able to contribute, there is a generation gap approaching of 60-70 year olds to take over.

We discussed the reasons for the lack of leaders for children's and youth work, particularly as the Sunday School

at St P&P had recently closed down. One reason was thought to be the generation gap with no one to take over from those retiring. Another telling reason is that men are afraid of being unfairly or maliciously accused of abusing children. My thoughts were to remember the ordeal Cliff Richard underwent.

The conclusion was that humanly speaking we were pessimistic. However, if we believe the church is in God's hands and that he will act, does that mean we need do nothing? No, we must be concerned and go forward seeking God's will, though leaving its outworking in his hands. So spiritually we can be optimistic.

Clive mentioned that the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, the UK's first black Archbishop, had announced his retirement for June 2020. This could lead the way to the first female archbishop; contenders could be the Bishops of London and Gloucester.

The Tring Parish Men's Society meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the Half Moon in Wilstone at 7.30pm. Meals are available, and all men are invited. For further information contact John Hawkes on 01442 824199.

Leslie Barker, St Peter & St Paul



The future of the CofE – celebrating the good!



Throughout November, Tring Parish Church has been really busy every day. People have been flocking in to see the amazing art installation 'Poppies fall for the fallen'. I suspect

the question is: would there have been as many people if it had been in any other public space, or was there something about combining the art with the sacred which attracted people?

The great events of human history are still best marked with a spiritual dimension. I have no idea how we would have marked the 100th Anniversary of the end of World War I if there was no room for acknowledging human sinfulness and no place for the hope of God's redemption. The church still clearly has a place within society.

However, that church is also clearly changing. Some of the ways that we used to do things will have to come to an end. A particularly faithful group of people are all ageing (and dying) and yet there are huge signs of hope as well. Millennials are the most bemoaned-

about group in society and yet studies show that young people are open to asking spiritual questions, and a majority believe in prayer; which is maybe why the church is so popular with its poppies.

I think there are some very positive signs of hope in Tring Parish Church. In recent months TAYA (Tring Anglican Young Adults) has developed a new form of mission – growing the congregation by having babies – and we are delighted to have three new members of the congregation (it would have been four if Eszter hadn't moved back to Hungary) and two couples from TAYA have got engaged. Over the last twenty years of

ministry confirmation has always been a key part of what we do. However, never can I remember when we have had confirmations in successive years. People might say we always used to, but not in my memory. Last year nine members of the Tring Team Parish were confirmed and this year another four members of Youth Café and five adults were confirmed; and others are interested for next year too!

God is very clearly still at work in the world, and if we are God's church, our duty is to help people recognise that presence in their own time.

Huw Bellis, Tring Team



An amazing journey to freedom

There is always too much to read! As a result, books sometimes sit by the side of my bed for months before they get read and often I am disappointed that I didn't pick them up earlier. 'The Girl from Aleppo', by Nujeen Mustafa with Christina Lamb, was certainly one of those.

For many of us, I suspect, refugees come with a single face. Tired, dirty, carrying their worldly possessions in a single bag, living in tents, uncertain of the future. If we think about it, we know that each refugee is a person with their own history, their own story to tell, but somehow it's easier to lump them into one. 'The Girl from Aleppo' does not allow us to do that, not in any kind of accusatory way, but simply by one girl, telling her individual story, with no sense of self-pity, but instead a real sense of hope marked by the quotation given at the beginning of the book – 'I see Earth! It is so beautiful' (Yuri Gagarin, first man in space, 1961).

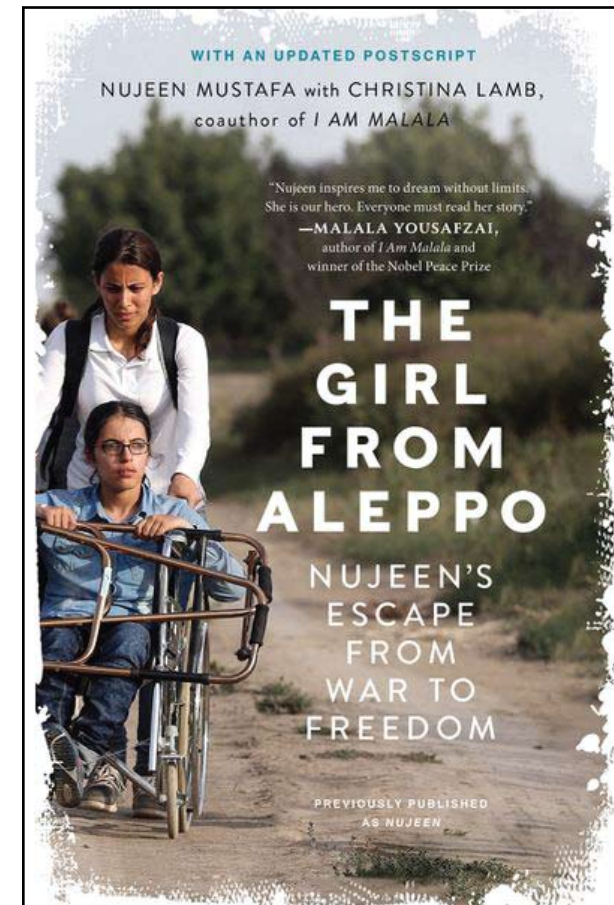
Nujeen was born in Northern Syria in 1999 and is a Kurd. She also has cerebral palsy and is unable to walk. As a result she spent much of her time in Syria in their apartment watching TV. And it was by watching TV, particularly the American series 'Days of our Lives', that Nujeen learned English. When she was 4 the family moved to Aleppo, but then came the war. Violence and kidnappings increased and the family knew that they had to leave.

So began Nujeen's journey across Europe. From Syria, across Turkey and then across the sea on an inflatable dinghy to Lesbos (or Lesvos) the same day that another dinghy carrying Aylan Kurdi was tossed over, killing Aylan and ten other passengers and leading to a photo which I'm sure many of us remember and that shocked the world.

It was as they arrived in Greece that Nujeen's English skills came into use and throughout her journey, Nujeen often acted as the translator for her family and for other refugees.

In Lesbos Nujeen had her first experience of a refugee camp and her impressions are telling: 'The main

refugee camp in Lesbos is called Moria. We were shocked when we saw it. It was a former military base and looked like a prison with high walls and barbed wire. And there were so many people. A camp official wrote numbers on our wrists with marker pens and took us to a hut crowded with other refugees.



The place was filthy and many people seemed to be ill, coughing or suffering from stomach problems. When we saw the bathroom and toilet it was not appropriate for me – there was nothing for a disabled person to hold on to.'

Until this point Nujeen had been travelling with members of her extended family, but knowing that they could travel faster without her and fearing that the border to Macedonia was about to be closed, they moved on, leaving Nujeen and her sister, Nasrine, to navigate the rest of the journey to Germany where their brother already lived and where they hoped they would find a welcome and a new home. It might seem that that would make Nujeen feel abandoned, but actually she relates this in a very accepting way and begins to talk about some of the excitement of being two sisters making an incredible journey

together. We often think of the hardships of the refugees' journey, but I was struck by how Nujeen also talks of the frustration of it, as they passed

through and near various places that she had seen on television or read about and would have loved to visit. As they enter Serbia for example, she writes: 'I stared out of the window. Another country, another language, another country, none of which we would get to know.'

Nujeen and her sister do get to Germany and start a new life. Throughout the book she comments occasionally on the political situation, giving insights that we may not get from the news headlines. She writes for example, 'I was very upset that world leaders like President Obama and Theresa May did nothing. Does it matter to the world that thousands of Syrians are being killed or not? It made me really cross. It's no good just wringing their hands and doing nothing. These powerful people need to take responsibility and do their homework. It's not maths, it's saving lives. I made my best effort to follow Nujeen's Rules

and think positively but it's very hard.'

But politics is not the main focus, instead it is the amazing journey that Nujeen and her sister, along with many, many others made and her continued optimism. She writes, 'Sometimes I think I am being over-positive. But when you think of all the madness happening in the world and how much melancholy and you try to be the only candle, that's not a bad thing, right?'

She closes the book with these words: 'In our porch we still have that old second-hand wheelchair that was too big and broken, the footrest tied on with wire, in which I bumped across Europe with Nasrine pushing. Sometimes I look at it and think, "Did we really do that?"'

**Rachael Hawkins
St Martha's Methodist Church**



Away in a Manger



There can be few Christmas services for children which do not include 'Away in a Manger'. It is simple, straightforward and well known.

Who wrote it? Interestingly

in the nineteenth century it was often attributed to Martin Luther. But there is no evidence for its being a translation from the German or being as old as the Reformation period. In at least one hymn book an author is named but in others the author is that prolific 'Anon'! There is a name attached to the tune and in the absence of certainty about the author of the words here are a few details about the composer, to whom some books attribute the words.

He is named as William James Kirkpatrick who was born in County Tyrone in Ireland in 1838 and died in 1921 in the USA. His parents emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1840, leaving William who was brought over later. His mother apparently gave birth to a daughter on the ship crossing the Atlantic.

William showed interest in music from an early age and went to study music and carpentry in Philadelphia. A versatile musician, he could play the cello, fife, flute, violin and organ. He sang in the choir and taught in the Sunday School at the local Methodist Episcopal Church. Then in 1858, with the help of a man called A.S.Jenkins, he published his first collection of hymns.

Three years later he married his first wife and, soon after, enlisted in the Pennsylvania Volunteers as Fife-Major

– but that was not for long. He returned to Philadelphia to earn his living as a carpenter. He also became lead organist for the Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal Church where he stayed for eleven years. During this time he met John R. Sweeney and they collaborated in a musical career which produced forty-nine books.

His wife died in 1879 and he gave up carpentry and devoted himself to church music. He married again and with his wife travelled the world. Kirkpatrick died on 20 September 1921. Apparently one night he told his wife that he had a tune running through his head and he wanted to write it down straightaway. She went to bed; he went to his study where he slumped over his desk and died.

The tune Cradle Song to the words of 'Away in a Manger' is the best known of those written by this prolific composer. Although so well known, it is a hymn with a lot of variations in the wording, and in some modern hymn books two versions are found. Some of the variations are just of a word or two e.g. 'wee head' for 'sweet head' or adding 'bright' before 'sky' to improve the metre. There are a lot of options for line 4 of verse 2. Here are few: 'And stay by my crib watching my lullaby' or 'And watch by me always and ever be nigh' or 'And watch o'er my bed while in slumber I lie'. And there are other variations on this theme!

The third verse was missing from the earliest known sources. It was claimed that it was written by Dr John T.McFarland in New York in 1905, but it had, in fact, appeared earlier.

As to the hymn itself we start with

Jesus in the manger, 'no crib for a bed' and 'asleep on the hay' as the stars look down on him. In some books there is an alternative second verse written by Michael Forster (born 1946): 'The cattle are lowing; / the baby awakes, / but little Lord Jesus / no crying he makes. / I love thee, Lord Jesus! / Look down from the sky, / and stay by my side / until morning is nigh.' Or 'The cattle are lowing; / they also adore / the little Lord Jesus / who lies in the straw. / I love you, Lord Jesus, / I know you are near / to love and protect me / till morning is near.'

Some people have taken exception to the words 'no crying he makes' on the grounds that if Jesus is truly human, he must have cried, as babies do! Theologians fear it falls into the heresy of Docetism which holds that Jesus only seemed to be fully human, but was not so in reality as he was essentially divine. The alternative verse avoids heresy and is true to human experience. Incidentally, the cattle are not in Luke's Gospel but come from the belief that Isaiah 1:3 is a prophecy of this event. We may also notice differences in the ending of verse 3. 'And fit us for heaven to live with thee there' becomes 'Prepare us for heaven to live with you there'.

There have been many other tunes (over forty) but the familiar one is Cradle Song. The first tune mentioned in the USA was called 'Home! Sweet Home!' So this familiar and much-loved carol, often sung round the crib by children and listened to and watched by family and friends, has a more chequered history than might be expected.

Martin Banister, St Albans Abbey

Room for hire at St Martha's

A new meeting space has become available for hire at St Martha's Methodist Church. Recent improvements to our Church have created a meeting space for up to seventy people, and this is now being made available for hire. Charges for hiring the meeting area will be £12 per hour, and this will also include the use of our new kitchen, full access toilet and baby-changing facilities. For further details or to make a booking, please phone Rosemary Berdinner on 01442 822305.

David Sands

St Martha's Methodist Church



Bumnotes



A big 'thank you' to anyone who supported the Bumnotes Concert on 16 October, organised by Tring Justice and Peace Group.

The Concert, featuring music from the 60s onwards, was held at Cheddington Village Hall and raised £1,249. This sum included the proceeds from the raffle and £200 donation from the Bumnotes.

Those brave people dancing the night away also enjoyed a shepherd's pie supper with apple strudel and cream to follow. The monies raised were split between the Pepper Foundation and Médecins Sans Frontières.

At the interval Michael Demidecki, Secretary of Justice and Peace Group, briefly spoke about the work of the Group and directed everyone to the photos on display at the back of the Hall. These photos showed some of our recent events. Robert Breakwell, Founder and Patron of the Pepper Foundation, spoke about the wonderful work of the Foundation and constant need for support.

The Bumnotes formed in 1984. All the Members were in the Round Table. After the first gig they were christened the Bumnotes and played at many Round Table events raising money for charity. Every penny they raise is given to local charities.

When the Group were booked to play at the local schools, they used an alternative name, Eternal Youth. I sometimes think that this should be their current name!



As the Bumnotes they have appeared all over this locality and journeyed to Blackpool and Essex. They have travelled to Mossbach in Southern Germany to perform for the Round Table there and were joined by a French Round Table so it was a truly international event.

The Bumnotes are still available for bookings... you have all been warned!

Mary Miles, Corpus Christi and Tring Justice and Peace



Who wants to be a volunteer?



When my mother was the age I am now, she was already housebound and largely bedbound, in constant pain and without much quality of life. She had not worked outside the home since what we then called ‘a breakdown’ and what we now call mental health issues. She was just a few years before her sudden death. I am still in employment and am trying not to think of retirement. I am hoping not to find myself any time soon in the same place my mother was: but if that were to be the case, what would I want to do with the time I have left? The TV programme with a similar name to this article asks a slightly different question. Have you ever wondered what you would do if you were a millionaire? How would you spend that money? Would you feel it a burden or a joy? Would you travel to all those places you hadn’t been or buy another house, car, yacht...? (I suspect you would need to be a multi-millionaire to do all those things today!) Perhaps you might treat it as an unexpected gift and find ways to help others with

the money – family, friends, church, community, charities. Whatever money we might have, we all have a certain amount of time, whether retired or not. Most of it seems to be taken up with work, inside and outside

Father of light, in whom is no change or shadow of turning, you give us every good and perfect gift and have brought us to birth by your word of truth: may we be a living sign of that kingdom where your whole creation will be made perfect in Jesus Christ our Lord.

the house; with family – children or parents – and with leisure activities if we are lucky. But how we spend the rest of the time we have is a matter of choice. I don’t know if I will have a long life or have just a few years left as my mother did. I do know that I need ‘purpose’; I want that time to count. Maybe it’s praying for someone, a phone call at just the right time, a visit to someone who is ill, taking someone out, joining a committee, running a stall, helping with someone’s garden, making jam or cakes (unlikely in my case!), cleaning the church guttering – someone has to!

When I visit charity shops in Tring I invariably find members of our various churches volunteering there. I know that the various activities run for those who are lonely or bereaved or isolated are also run by volunteers. Our churches and local charities are all supported by people – many, many people of all ages – who give up their time to take on tasks regularly, reliably and with commitment, not because they are paid to do so, or because they must, but because the job is there and someone must do it and they have time and a willing, generous heart. There are great rewards in volunteering, of course – the company of others, new friendships and a sense of purpose, of being useful, of ‘making a difference’, however small. So as 2018 becomes 2019 and resolutions are called for, how I use my time and make it count are high on my priority list. I am unlikely to do ‘great things’ but as I remember the charity Tearfund once saying, one person can’t change the world – but we might change the world for one person. And maybe, for some of us, that’s all we are called to do.

**Annette Reynolds
St Peter & St Paul**

Food and friends

On Thursday 11 October a dozen members and friends from Mother’s Union came to a bring-and-share lunch in my house at Lane End. Some drivers were brave enough to come up the winding lane with passing places only. We all enjoyed catching up with our latest news.

Vanda Emery, ex-St Peter & St Paul



Good mental health during the festive period



Christmas comes with a wide range of demands including financial, emotional and physical. This can lead to a particularly challenging time for people with mental health difficulties. Mental health problems do not discriminate with one in four people from all backgrounds experiencing a mental health difficulty every year in the UK. Christmas can be isolating; everyone can appear to be having a wonderful time, and this can trigger particularly distressing feelings. Mental health problems affect both men and women; however, we know that men are less likely to talk about things or seek help. As a result, many men feel alone and bottle up their feelings. 5,821 suicides were registered in the UK in 2017 and suicide is the biggest cause of death for males under 45. Spot the Signs and Save a Life is a suicide prevention campaign, helping to remove the stigma of talking openly about suicide. We know that one in five people experience suicidal thoughts in their life time so it is important to know that you are not alone if you are feeling this way and that having suicidal thoughts and feelings is nothing to be ashamed of. At Spot the Signs we want to challenge the stigma of mental health and suicide and do this by providing training courses and information on where to go if you or a loved one has suicidal thoughts. In 2018 alone, we will have provided our suicide prevention training to over 1,000 professionals in Hertfordshire.

Top Tips to help people at Christmas Talk
Do not be afraid to let people know that you are finding things difficult. People can be very supportive and together you may find solutions.

Relax and recharge
Remember that you are only human and can only do so much. Christmas can be very demanding and it is important to take some time for yourself to relax and recharge.



Exercise
It can be easy to spend lots of time indoors in the winter but exercise is great for our mental health. A walk in the country or a day trip can be a great way to get out and improve your mood.

Don’t believe the hype
It can be easy to be swept up by social media and adverts showing ‘the perfect’ Christmas. It is important to remember that people are only showing you the best parts and you don’t know what is going on behind the camera.

Give yourself a present
Make sure that you get yourself something this Christmas. Perhaps have a think about something that you would really like to do, no matter how small, and book a date to do this.

Seek professional help
If you are continually experiencing depression or anxiety, there are a range of organisations who can provide support in Hertfordshire.

Mind in Mid Herts
Supports individuals who are suffering from mental and emotional distress with Centres in Hertford, St Albans, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City. Telephone: 01727 865070 www.mindinmidherts.org.uk.

Herts Mind Network
Provides opportunities to manage wellbeing with Centres in Hemel, Watford, Ware, Waltham Cross. Telephone: 02037 273600 www.hertsmindnetwork.org.

The Wellbeing Team
Provides free CBT to anyone over the age of 16 in Hertfordshire experiencing common mental health difficulties such as anxiety and depression www.talkwellbeing.co.uk.

Single Point of Access (SPA)
Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) directs all Hertfordshire referrals for mental health services. Telephone: 8am-7pm 0300 777 0707 www.hpft.nhs.uk/get-help.

Samaritans
Free confidential support in a crisis 24 hours a day, every day. Telephone: 116 123 <https://www.samaritans.org>.

To find out more about Spot the Signs visit www.hpft.nhs.uk or follow us on Twitter @SpotSignSuicide.

**Emma Paisley
Spot the Signs and Save a Life Campaign**





Old Church House,
Tring
**Mummy and me
Ballet**
Thursday 9.30-10.00am

Preschool Ballet
Friday 2.15-2.45pm
Saturday 9.00-9.30am

Contact us for a free trial —
Email: admin@thechallisschoolofdance.co.uk
Facebook: facebook.com/challisdance
www.thechallisschoolofdance.co.uk

*Challis
School of Dance*

TringMarket Auctions

Antique and Fine Art Auctioneers and Valuers. Est. 1982



Our salerooms continue to attract a wide range of customers from throughout the UK and across the world and we deal with almost everything that comes out of your home whether 17th century or 21st century.

Visit our website and view the sale catalogues with accompanying illustrations, you will find us at www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk.

Look out for us on television - Flog It and Cash in the Attic are regular visitors, making the salerooms an exciting place to search for antique and quality home furnishings.

Buying or selling - we welcome your enquiries.

Valuations for Sale, Probate & Insurance Total and Part House Clearance Specialists Fine Art Sales and Fortnightly Sales of Antique Furniture and Collectables

BROOK STREET, TRING, HERTFORDSHIRE HP23 5EF
TELEPHONE: 01442 826446
www.tringmarketauctions.co.uk

HEIRS & GRACES DAY NURSERY

— TRING —

**BOOKING NOW FOR
AUTUMN 2019**

*"Teaching is good because all staff are enthusiastic and understand how to promote Children's learning and development."
Ofsted report 2019*

Florence House,
2 Christchurch Road,
Tring, HP23 4EE
01442 891818



www.heirsandgracesdaynursery.co.uk

DETAIL GARDENING & MAINTENANCE

Maintaining Your Properties Potential

01582 529429 | 07984 244494
✉: info@detailclean.co.uk

A local family business offering regular, occasional and one off gardening and maintenance services.

We can help with:

- Lawn Mowing • Hedge cutting • Weeding
- Garden Clearance • Fencing • Power Washing/ Sealing • Turfing • General Maintenance
- and much more

Contact us now for a free quote and to claim your 10% discount on our first visit!

 [facebook.com /DGMaintenance](https://facebook.com/DGMaintenance)



Housing development in Tring

A personal perspective

The tension around large scale development in Tring is an unfortunate reality that anyone who cares about our community is probably quite familiar with. The difficulties associated with this tension are also unfortunately complex. Most of us get the broad picture: Tring is a wonderful town, but partly because of this, house prices are so high that there is little hope of our children ever buying their first home in Tring. This provides a clear argument in favour of development and, taking on a wider national perspective, we also know that the country needs more housing.

But almost immediately we hear the counter arguments; and these are equally strong, normally starting with 'Why should Tring be responsible for meeting housing need, caused by "other factors" which aren't our responsibility?' These 'other factors' can be various, but here are some that you've probably heard: immigration, money laundering in the City pushing up London prices, divorce rates, lack of strategic thinking by government. Each of these factors can and should be debated, but those debates will not solve our collective problem which is to ensure that we have adequate housing stock for everyone.

So, assuming that we are not going to stick our heads in the sand and simply blame the 'other' let's think about what issues need to be resolved if we are going to begin to get comfortable with a developing Tring.

The Green Belt

I have an intrinsic love of all things Green but here I am passionate about the Green Belt because it represents a half-truth that desperately needs to be clarified both locally and nationally. No national politician, to my knowledge, has had the guts to say that we need to re-define the Green Belt. Pronouncements are made on the need to address the housing shortage and yet when the inevitable follow-on question comes: 'does that mean releasing Green Belt?' the answer is 'no'. In Tring, this is where the real choice has to be made as it is impossible to meet anything like housing need without releasing Green Belt.

Some argue this point and I would dearly love to be wrong on it (ie we can find brownfield sites in Tring) but this is what I understand to be the case given a

serious assessment of housing need. Any serious talk about further development in Tring will involve Green Belt release. But then what is the point of the Green Belt? Why go to the public at large with this notion of a Green Belt and then say, well, in fact, it can be sacrificed? People have every right to feel cheated by this part of the planning landscape. It turns out that the Green Belt is not what it says on the tin and unfortunately this is not being clearly communicated to the public at large. The Green Belt is not what it says on the tin for two reasons: legally and practically.

Firstly legally: because there is wiggle room within the legislation for re-designation. The wording used is 'exceptional circumstances', and you would like to think that that means something like an earthquake or a war, but 'exceptional circumstances' are expected to legally be applied to areas around Tring, the 'exceptional circumstances' being, in summary, housing need.



Secondly, the Green Belt is not what it says on the tin in practice either. Large scale development in Tring is being driven by the national government requiring our local council to put together a local plan that meets housing need. Broadly speaking, Tring cannot meet that local need without sacrificing Green Belt. Rather than national government either exempting Green Belt or having a thought-through national re-designation, it is pushing the decision down to local councillors so that they can be seen as the 'bad people who sacrificed the Green Belt'. I find this frustrating as we can't meet contradictory government requirements to protect the Green Belt and provide housing need, though my instinct is to protect the Green Belt.

The local plan

Perhaps we could avoid all this by delaying the local plan? Well the reality is that the local plan is much delayed

already, and indeed there is a grave danger that we will soon be considered to have delayed it so much that developers will in effect obtain much stronger rights to develop where and when they want. Planning rules work that if you don't have a local plan then a developer can put in an application for pretty much anything. This is a worse case scenario but is a real consequence of not having a local plan in place.

In short, all of this matters very much if we as a community want to have any say over how Tring develops. Developers, despite their bad reputation, are generally responsible but understandably are primarily driven by financial motivation. To have them gain an upper hand in planning outcomes would be bad for Tring. Thinking carefully and thoughtfully about our local plan is probably not high on anyone's 'to do' list, but without it in place our town will seriously lose out.

Infrastructure

The general feeling around Tring is that development is going to be necessary but that with it must come a much more careful appraisal of the infrastructure requirements: schools, doctors and roads. There is a confidence gap between the community and our local council that exists because, regardless of the facts, local councils have not, in my opinion, been able to demonstrate robustly how these infrastructure challenges will be met. This is work in progress. On various points of detail, reports have been produced and statements made by officers of the council that indicate that appropriate infrastructure adjustments can be made. But the picture is not as clear as it could and should be; partly because the plans are at early 'in principle' stages. As more detailed plans emerge for housing, more robust scrutiny will be required. I am confident that the Town Council will do its bit to ensure that it does not approve of anything that does not meet the high infrastructure requirements that the people of Tring rightly expect. But it is worth remembering that the principal planning authority that will have the final say on the local plan is the Borough Council who will, understandably, need to take a balanced view over the whole of Dacorum.

Christopher Townsend, St Peter & St Paul and Tring Town Council

Last orders for ethanol, please



2019 will be my final year working in the field of substance misuse over a period of eighteen years with two charities covering the district authorities of St Albans, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield.

Out of all the substances that have affected the people I have worked with, one has stood out by being the most prevalent – ethanol (or alcohol to you and me).

To set the record straight, I became tee-total once I started driving. This was long before working in my current field. When I moved to Wilstone in 2011 I initially took part in Communion, but later stopped because I found that even a small sip of red wine had a negative effect on me in a physical sense.

I will not miss the smell of what I call 'rotten' alcohol. This is when I visit a property and smell the pungent odour of alcohol which is several days old and spilt down on the floor and onto furniture. Worse still is the smell of rotten alcohol on the clothes of the person.

The people, or 'clients', are from all walks of life from rough sleepers, to professional working people. It's just that alcohol is legal and socially acceptable for perceived enjoyment, satisfaction and a cure to 'hide away' from personal problems. Sadly, alcohol presents more issues rather than solving them. It is down to each individual to request help, although the likes of social services have a duty of care to help those affected by alcohol-related issues anyway.

Alcohol is essentially a depressant. When alcohol is added to a stimulant i.e. vodka and Red Bull, the alcohol

element hits the frontal lobe of the brain quite quickly. This makes the individual lose their inhibitions, making them more relaxed and perhaps wanting more alcohol too.

I work with two types of drinkers. First of all is the binge drinker. This is the person who would go through the working week without a drop of alcohol, but during the weekend would drink too much and too fast to the point of not remembering the weekend at all by the following Monday.

Then there is the full-blown alcoholic who (if they could) would drink/sip for pretty much all of the waking day. If they are somehow denied alcohol for a number of hours then the body will start going into withdrawal i.e. shaking and sweating. This is the body informing the brain that more alcohol is required. The longer the body is denied alcohol, the effect could be devastating, even fatal.

Across Hertfordshire and throughout Britain are men and women on waiting lists for alcohol detoxification treatment. This is in some cases followed by a period of rehabilitation in a specialist unit. Some may identify detoxification and rehabilitation for heroin users too. In a number of instances, alcohol and heroin are similar in terms of the physical addiction and the withdrawal symptoms.

In recent years I have come across working professionals who relax after work with a glass of wine. Then before they know it, the whole bottle is emptied. I always ask each individual to show me the size of the glass they are drinking from, as wine glasses are enormous now. A small standard wine glass is 125ml. In supermarkets there are glasses that range from 175ml up to 250ml.

As well as the wine drinkers, the most common alcohol beverages

consumed by clients are white cider, vodka and lager of varying degrees of strength. The battle is against a commodity that brings billions in revenue. Duty brings in substantial revenue to governments of course. It has been stated by commentators that a percentage of the revenue should be reinvested back to the NHS as medical services are fighting a constant battle with alcohol-related illnesses and injuries. It has also been stated that revenue from alcohol should be used for charities to go into schools to raise awareness of the effects of both alcohol and street drugs.

It is very pleasing to know from recent reports that the new millennials who have turned 18 are not drinking as much alcohol as the 18-year-olds of a decade earlier. This may be through a combination of making choices, being made aware or perhaps through personal experiences of witnessing the effects of alcohol on relatives or on society itself.

Maybe the new millennials could be referred as the 'café culture brigade'. It is refreshing to see college/university students filling cafés and coffee houses in the daytime rather than filling the pubs during a weekend evening. Pubs are doing their best to attract the coffee drinkers. Pubs still have a purpose as communities and are now adapting to attract coffee and food customers in order to survive as businesses.

As I am heading towards my final year as a substance-misuse worker, I hope that in the next ten to fifteen years the sensible effect from the new millennials will reflect in almost every general hospital in the country with a decrease of alcohol-related admissions and illnesses, especially liver disease and cancers.

I also hope the general health of Britain will compare more favourably against the rest of the western world. At present Britain is generally bottom or close to bottom of Europe-wide health league tables. I also hope that I will be able to visit my local pub in Wilstone a little more often in future too. I have only visited the pub twice in seven years, but I imagine that I will be there more regularly reading a book or newspapers with a hot cup of coffee. What a sobering thought!

Tony Bolt, St Cross, Wilstone



Week of prayer for Christian unity



At least once a year, Christians are reminded of Jesus' prayer for his disciples that 'they may be one so that the world may believe' (John 17:21). Hearts are touched, and Christians come together to pray for their unity. Congregations and parishes all over the world exchange preachers or arrange special ecumenical celebrations and prayer services. The event that touches off this special experience is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



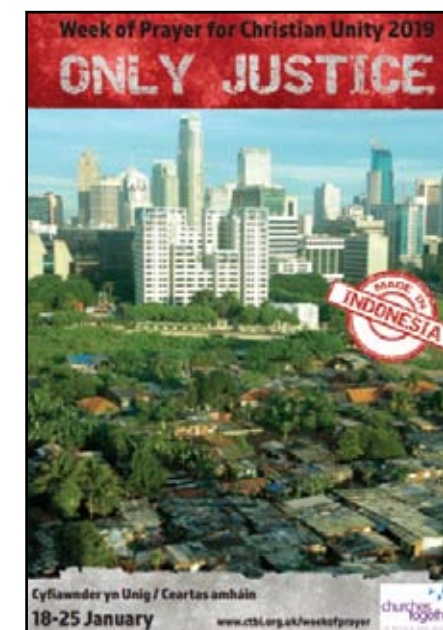
Traditionally the week of prayer is celebrated between 18-25 January, between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul. In the southern hemisphere, where January is a vacation time, churches often find other days to celebrate it, for example around Pentecost, which is also a symbolic date for unity.

This annual initiative from the World Council of Churches is disseminated through Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and taken up by local Churches Together groups. Locally, Churches Together in Tring have for many years focused on the need to pray for unity and have put on a variety of times of prayer during the eight days.

In Tring

In 2019, plans are still being finalized, but we plan to have lunch and short prayer sessions daily in each of the churches at 12 noon. Please look out for up-to-date information in the Churches in the new year. Lunch will either be a simple soup and bread, or if the Church has a café, the choice of something from their menu.

In the afternoon of Sunday 20 January at 3.30pm there will be a Taizé service at St Mary's Puttenham, to which all the churches are invited, and the theme of the service will be Christian Unity. This will be followed by tea and cake!



Please look for posters in the new year with more local information.

Indonesia

Resources for 2019 have been prepared by Christians from Indonesia, the largest country in South East Asia, made up of more than 17,000 islands, 1,340 different ethnic groups and over 740 local languages, united by one national language Bahasa Indonesia. With some 86% of its 260 million people estimated to be Muslim, it has the largest Islamic population of any country. About 10% of Indonesians are Christian. Indonesians have lived by the principle of gotong royong which is to live in 'solidarity and by collaboration', regarding all Indonesians as brothers and sisters.

But gotong royong sits ill at ease with the neo-liberal approach to economics that has led to economic growth, and corruption infecting politics and business, often with devastating effects on the environment. Meanwhile those who are supposed to promote justice and protect the weak fail to do so. As a consequence, a country rich in resources bears the burden of many people living in poverty. Particular



ethnic and religious groups are often associated with wealth in ways that have fed tensions.

The Christians of Indonesia found that the words of Deuteronomy, 'Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue...' (Deuteronomy 16:18-20) spoke powerfully to their situation.

Christian Aid

Each year Christian Aid provides the Go and Do action points for each of the daily reflections – linking into the important work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and advocacy of justice. More information about the Week of Prayer nationally can be found on the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland <https://ctbi.org.uk>.

Janet Goodyer, St Peter & St Paul

Parish registers

Baptisms

We welcome these children into our church family and pray for their parents and Godparents.



**Gabriel Wright
Olivia Turner**

Weddings

We offer our congratulations and prayers to these couples as they begin their married lives together.

Shane Mangan & Gaby Mansfield

Funerals

We thank God for the lives of the departed and pray for comfort for those who mourn.

**Graham Wayling 69
Audrey Joan Stedman 88
Gordon Walters 90
Stephen Halliday 72**

O little town of Bethlehem



Bethlehem is not so little now, and not so still and peaceful!

I recently read an article that reminded me of my trip to Bethlehem. I was travelling with friends and arrived in Tel Aviv airport a fair distance from Bethlehem. We were questioned and our bags were searched. When we answered saying we were going to Bethlehem to learn to paint icons, there was firstly an expression of puzzlement then exasperation – and so we were allowed to go!

The taxi knew where to go – up to the checkpoint but turn directly right just before it. We followed the wall and turned right into the Emmanuel Monastery – we had arrived!

It was truly an oasis of peace and tranquillity. We settled in and met the sisters (it was a convent rather than a monastery) who were French with the one German sister. Some of them were also doing the icon course.

The course was organised and run by Ian Knowles, an iconographer, who has been involved in the renovation of icons in Churches in the Middle East.

Our days were passed in a very comfortable silence. We prayed before beginning our work. Ian spoke most interestingly of his work and personal history.

We took breaks and visited various places of interest.

Naturally we visited the Church of the Nativity, which is the focus for the many coach loads of tourists! We also visited a school founded by Jean Vanier for children with intellectual disabilities – open to children of any religion. It was lovely to see how these children (up to 16 years) were loved and cared for. They had prepared a concert for the visit of Jean Vanier the previous week and one of the assistants told the story of how when their children were singing or dancing there were tears in the parents' eyes. As Muslim parents with disabled children they are looked down on so they often hide them away from prying eyes. To see their children happy and doing things they had never done before and in public overwhelmed them!

The lady who was head of the school

lived in a garage in the monastery garden!

We went into Jerusalem one day. We needed to go through a checkpoint to catch the bus into main Jerusalem. We set off and followed the crowd. The checkpoint was at the beginning of a subway so we queued up and people were friendly – they were Palestinian Christians, hoping to visit relatives in Jerusalem, who had noticed our crosses. The queue was moving very slowly but as we got closer to the place for showing passports, I noticed the young soldier walking up and down the gantry above with his automatic in hand. Every person was questioned – I could only understand the attitude and manner of speaking and it was not pleasant. As we arrived at the cubicle we got out our passports and a quick check and out into the fresh air – no questions, no attitude!

We caught the bus and had a very interesting day. Many different nationalities, groups dressed all in white, nuns, priests and ordinary tourists following flags or umbrellas – one needed to move fast to get out of their way as they didn't stop – it was very crowded.

We walked to the Mount of Olives and from there is an excellent panorama of Jerusalem. In the garden there are some ancient olive trees said to go back to the time of Jesus. We bussed back to Bethlehem and mentally prepared ourselves for the checkpoint – but there was no one there checking passports and interrogating, no guard patrolling the gantry above. We just walked through!

On another day we were working quietly as usual when one of the sisters came running in saying, 'You can see it,

you can see it!' She explained, as she brought us to a large window/balcony door, that if we looked to the horizon and the long ridge – that, she said, was where Moses stood when he first saw the Promised Land!

I made an icon of the face of Christ, as did everyone else. We took them to the chapel and set them out. They were all different. The Bishop came and blessed each and every icon and with holy oil he made a cross on each corner of the icon. He told us that our icon must go on a journey and be given away.

The theme of journeying brings us back to the Christmas story. We will be journeying through Advent, like Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, their tribal town. It would not have been easy or comfortable.

Can we get out of our comfort zones this Advent and make a reality check – what are we really doing? Why all the rush, the buying, the baking? And why are we doing it? We are showing our love and appreciation of our friends and our families and that's good and right: but is that what Christmas is about?

Or is it about a baby? Just a baby? A baby who is the one who rode on galaxies and flung stars into the heavens; who does his Father's will and wraps himself in soft baby skin and a heart that will thump continually till his death; whose vulnerability became his authority, whose humanity could heal the broken ones; whose divinity stilled the waves and fed thousands.

This is who we'll meet when we arrive at the stable. Nothing else is needed – except a gift for the 'baby' – our hearts.

Tricia Apps, Corpus Christi



7 December 2018

*A night under the stars -
the event in aid of homeless
people in Dacorum*



*Please sponsor the
Youth Café as they
sleep out under the
stars.
Please contact Huw
to offer.*

TAKE THE CHALLENGE!

Date: Friday 7 December 2018

Time: 9pm-7am

Place: Within the grounds of
Hemel Hempstead School

**Call us now for more information
or to register: 01442 800268**

Email: fundraising@DENS.org.uk; Visit: www.DENS.org.uk;
Charity No. 1097185



QUANTA

For the first time ever, this
year we'll have a silent
disco in the evening!

Run by Club Tropicana and
kindly sponsored by Quanta



Notices from the Tring Churches

ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH

SERVICES

Sunday 2 December 10.00am

David Morgan

Sunday 9 December 10.00am

Communion

Revd Rachael Hawkins

Sunday 16 December 10.00am

John Benson

Sunday 23 December
10.00am Carol Service

Revd Rachael Hawkins

Christmas Day 25 October
9.00am

Revd Rachael Hawkins

Sunday 30 December
10.00am Watchnight Service

John Watkins

Sunday 6 January 10.00am

Audrey Cox

Sunday 13 January 10.00am

Revd Brian Tebbutt

Sunday 20 January 10.00am

Communion

Revd Rachael Hawkins

Sunday 27 January 10.00am

John Benson

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

The services during Advent, 2-23 December, will once again feature the Advent Ring and candles. There will be our usual Sunday morning service on 30 December, led by John Watkins, with a watchnight theme for the New Year.

OCTAVE OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

There will be a week of prayer meetings, with the theme of Christian Unity, to take place in various Tring Churches, including St Martha's, during the week of 18-25 January 2019.

JEAN'S CAFÉ

Making use of our new kitchen facilities, Jean has started providing lunches at St Martha's every Tuesday (12.00 midday to 1.30pm) and afternoon teas on the

third Saturday of each month (3.00pm to 5.00pm). Everyone is welcome to drop in for soup (£3.00), lunch with pudding (£5.00 plus £3.00), tea or coffee, etc.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Ladies Friendship Club will meet again at St Martha's on Tuesday 4 December, when John Benson will speak on 'The Gift of Life'. In January, Friendship Club meets on Tuesday 8 January with a Games afternoon, including bring and buy.

HOUSE GROUPS

John and Jennifer's House Group meets for the last time in 2018 on Wednesday afternoon, 12 December, at 20 Verney Close.

NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH

SERVICES

2 December 10.30am

Morning Worship

Bob Little

9 December 10.30am

Morning Worship

David Norkett

16 December 10.30am

Morning Worship

Aubrey Dunford

16 December 4.30pm

Carols by Candlelight

Jeremy Jones

23 December 10.30am

Morning Worship

Steve Bream

25 December 10.30am

Christmas Day

Val Carr

30 December 10.30am

Morning Worship

David Nash

TRING COMMUNITY CHURCH

SERVICES

Every Sunday 10.30am

Nora Grace Hall

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH

SUNDAY MASS

Confession 5.15pm

& by appointment

Saturdays 6.00pm (Vigil)

Sundays 12.15pm with

Children's Liturgy

Coffee afterwards

WEEKDAY MASS

Mondays 10.00am

Thursdays 10.00am

Rosary Prayer group after

Mass

THURSDAYS

Christian Meditation Group

8.00pm in Sacristy

FRIDAYS

5.00-6.00pm Church Hall

SPOG (Small People of God)

Age 7 + onwards:

Tricia Apps

SATURDAYS

9.00-10.00am **Tricia Apps**

Sacramental Preparation

First Reconciliation and

Communion

SUNDAYS

2.00-3.00pm Power Hour

Group Years 7 – 9

JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP

Michael Demidecki

michaeldemidecki@gmail.

com

ROSARY PRAYER GROUP

Thursdays, after 10.00am

Mass

LADIES GROUP

Annabelle Halliday

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Viv Bryan, Helen Bojarski

SAFEGUARDING

Caroline Burmaster

tringsg1@rcdow.org.uk

Mary Miles

tringsg2@rcdow.org.uk

MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm

HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH



SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Service at 10.30am with

Junior Church and Crèche

SUNDAYS @ 7

First Sunday of the month at

7.00pm

ACTIVITY ROOM

Tuesdays 9.30-11.30am

Craft, stories, songs and

more! Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

COFFEE FOR A CAUSE

Tuesdays 10.30am – 12noon

Coffee in the foyer in aid of

BMS World Mission

TOTS

Wednesdays 9.30-11.30am

Baby play area, soft play,

trikes, scooters!

Suitable for 0 to 4yrs

GAMES AFTERNOON

Wednesdays 2.00-4.00pm

Traditional games, puzzles

and refreshments

PLAY CAFÉ

Thursdays 9.30-11.30am

Relax while the little ones

play

Suitable for 0 to 3yrs

FRIDAY CAFÉ

Fridays 12.00-1.30pm

Freshly cooked lunches

WHO LET THE DADS OUT

First Saturday of the month at

8.30am to 10.00am

Tring Team Anglican Churches

The Tring Team consists of five churches: St Peter & St Paul in Tring; All Saints, Long Marston; St Cross, Wilstone; St Mary's, Puttenham; and St John the Baptist, Aldbury.

This is the regular monthly pattern of services but there are some changes in December for Christmas services. Please see posters in Churches or visit www.tringteamparish.org.uk for up-to-date information.

1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury

10.00am All Age Communion Tring

10.00am Sunday Worship CW Long

Marston

10.00am Worship for All Aldbury

10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone

12.00 midday Baptisms Tring

12.00 midday Baptisms Aldbury

3.30pm Holy Communion Puttenham

2ND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion CW Tring

10.00am Holy Communion BCP Aldbury

10.00am Holy Communion Long

Marston

10.00am Sunday Worship Wilstone

10.00am Worship for All Tring

11.30am Holy Communion BCP Tring

3.30pm Evening Prayer Puttenham

6.00pm Evening Prayer Long Marston

3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring

10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring

10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone

10.00am Worship for All Long Marston

10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury

12.00 midday Baptisms Aldbury

3.30pm Taizé Puttenham

4.00pm Stick Sunday Service with tea

4TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring

10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring

10.00am Worship for All Wilstone

10.00am Holy Communion Aldbury

10.00am Holy Communion Long

Marston

3.30pm Evensong Puttenham

6.00pm Alternative Communion CW

Tring

5TH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

8.00am Holy Communion BCP Tring

10.00am Holy Communion CW Tring

10.00am Holy Communion Long

Marston

10.00am Holy Communion CW Wilstone

3.30pm Sunday Worship Puttenham

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Mondays 9.00am Morning Prayer Tring

Tuesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring

Tuesdays 9.15am Holy Communion CW

Tring

Wednesdays 8.30am Morning Prayer

Aldbury

Thursdays 10.00am Holy Communion

BCP Tring

Fridays 8.30am Morning Prayer Tring

Fourth Tuesday in the month 10.00am

Holy Communion Wilstone

DACORUM FOODBANK

Weekdays 10.00am St P&P

BABY SONG TIME

Mondays 11.00am St P&P in term time

YOUTH CAFÉ

Mondays in term time 3.30pm St P&P

Secondary School aged children meet

for toast, crisps, coke and chat.

MEDITATION

Thursdays 8.00pm Corpus Christi

COFFEE MORNINGS

Tuesdays 10.30am Aldbury

Tuesdays 10.30am Wilstone

Fridays 10.00am St P&P

Saturdays 10.00am St P&P

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP TAYA

First and third Thursdays 7.30pm St P&P

A discussion group for young adults

FIRST SATURDAY LUNCH

Saturday 1 December, 5 January

Tring Parish Hall

From 1.00pm for those who have been

bereaved to meet and eat with others.

Contact Margaret Oram for information

on 01442 824575.

BAPTISM PREPARATION

Second Sunday in the month 11.20am

St P&P Emmie Hobbs Room

AFTERNOON TEA

Fourth Tuesday in the month

2.00-3.30pm All Saints, Long Marston

BOOK GROUP

Fourth Sunday in the month 6.45pm

St P&P

CRAFT AND A CUPPA

Tuesdays 2.00pm, St P&P

CHRISTINGLE

Sunday 2 December St P&P

10.00am Aldbury

3.00pm St P&P

MEN'S SOCIETY

Wednesday 5 December 7.30pm

Half Moon, Wilstone

SLEEPOUT FOR DENS

Friday 7 December 9.00pm-7.00am

Hemel Hempstead School

LIGHT UP A LIFE

Sunday 9 December

4.00pm St P&P

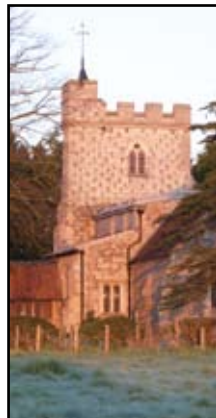
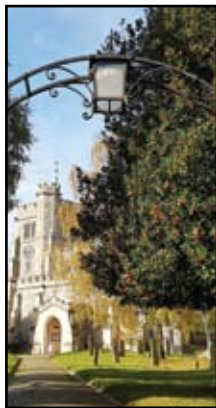
PIANO & MORE

Sunday 16 December 3.00pm St P&P

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Sunday 20 January St Mary's Puttenham

Taizé, tea and cake



Useful contacts

TRING TEAM PARISH
Team Rector
(Tring & Puttenham)

Rev Huw Bellis
2 The Limes, Station Road
01442 822170 or
07411 483229
huw@tringteamparish.org.uk
(Day off Thursday)

School Chaplaincy
and Team Vicar
(Aldbury, Tring School)
Rev Michelle Grace
Aldbury Vicarage
01442 851200
michelle@tringteamparish.org.uk
mgrace@tringschool.org
(Day off Friday)

School Chaplaincy
and Team Vicar
(Long Marston, Tring School)
Rev Jane Banister
01442 822170
jane@tringteamparish.org.uk
jbanister@tringschool.org

Associate Priest
(Wilstone)
Rev Didier Jaquet
didier@tringteamparish.org.uk
(Day off Saturday)

Diocesan Lay Minister
Mike Watkin
01442 890407

Parish Co-ordinators
Roy Hargreaves
01442 823624
roy.hargreaves@btinternet.com

Ted Oram
01442 824575
ted@oram-home.net

Church Wardens
Chris Hoare (Tring)
01442 822915

Ian Matthews (Tring)
01442 823327

Jane Brown (Aldbury)
01442 851396

Ray Willmore (Aldbury)
01442 825723

Christine Rutter (Puttenham)
01296 668337

Ken Martin (Wilstone)
01442 822894

Rev Jane Banister (Long
Marston)
01442 822170

Tring Team Administration
Administrator
Trish Dowden
admin@tringteamparish.org.uk

Janet Goodyer
pewsheets@tringteamparish.org.uk

Hall Bookings
Janet Goodyer
01442 824929
jjgoody@ntlworld.com
tringparishhall@hotmail.com

Hall Secretary
Barbara Anscombe
01442 828325
Bandb33@talktalk.net

Safeguarding
Jenny Scholes 01442 825276

**ST MARTHA'S
METHODIST CHURCH**
Minister
Rev Rachael Hawkins
01442 866324
rachael.hawkins@methodist.org.uk

Senior Steward
Rosemary Berdinner
01442 822305

**AKEMAN STREET
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Minister
Rev David Williams
01442 827881

Administrator
Emma Nash
01442 827881

**CORPUS CHRISTI
ROMAN CATHOLIC
CHURCH**
Parish Priest
Father David Burke
01442 863845
davidburke@rcdow.org.uk
www.rcdow.org.uk/tring

**HIGH STREET
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Minister
Vacancy

Assistant Minister
Kevin Rogers
km_rogers@outlook.com

Administration/facilities hire
admin@tringbaptistchurch.co.uk
01442 824054

**NEW MILL
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Minister
Vacancy

JUSTICE & PEACE GROUP
affiliated to
Churches Together in Tring
Secretary
Michael Demidecki
07887 980004
michaeldemidecki@gmail.com
www.justiceandpeacetring.org

OUR CHURCHES ONLINE
www.tringteamparish.org.uk
www.tringchurchmusic.org.uk
www.stmarthas-tring.org.uk
www.tringbaptistchurch.co.uk
www.newmillbaptist.org.uk
www.akemanstreet.org.uk
www.rcdow.org.uk/tring

SOCIAL NETWORKING



Tring Parish



@revhuw

COMMENT
Editor

Annette Reynolds
0845 8681333
07968 312161
comment.magazine@gmail.com

Distribution
David Whiting
01442 767403
davidswighting@aol.com

Treasurer
Chris Hoare 01442 822915

Advertising
Sue Mayhew
0845 8681333

Design
Doug Hewitt
Anno Domini Publishing

Please contact the Treasurer
if you would like to take a
subscription to Comment:
£10.00 for 10 issues each year.
Contact David Whiting if you
would like it posted.

Articles and photos for the
next edition should arrive with
the Editor no later than the 6th
of the previous month.

COMMENT DEADLINES

6 January
6 February
6 March
6 April
6 May
6 June
6 August
6 September
6 October
6 November

Crossword puzzle answers

From page 33

ANSWERS ACROSS

1. BORN IN A STABLE
8. BLANKET
9. REEVE
10. IRE
11. ANECDOTE
13. ASSIST
14. BETULA
17. FEARLESS
19. SEA
21. AURAL
22. COTTAGE
24. MARY AND JOSEPH

ANSWERS DOWN

1. BIBLICAL
2. READERS
3. IRK
4. ANTHEM
5. TIREDNESS
6. BLEST
7. EDEN
11. AUSTRALIA
12. NAZARETH
15. UPSTAGE
16. FENCED
18. ERROR
20. CALM
23. PAIR


the
Akeman

WARM UP THIS WINTER
SEASONAL MENU AVAILABLE NOW

WWW.THEAKEMAN.CO.UK | TEL. 01442 826027
9 AKEMAN STREET, TRING, HP23 6AA

Come and Celebrate Christmas in the Tring Churches



AKEMAN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 23rd December

10.30am All Age Carol Service
6.00pm Carols by Candlelight
followed by refreshments

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am Christmas Worship

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, LONG MARSTON

Christmas Eve 24th December

4.00pm Crib Service

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am All Age Communion

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH, LANGDON STREET

Sunday 23rd December

4.00pm Children's Nativity Play

Christmas Eve 24th December

11.30pm Christmas Carols

12.00am Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25th December

12.15pm The Nativity of Our Lord

HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 16th December

11.00am Children's Nativity
Service

Sunday 23rd December

5.00pm Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve 24th December

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am All Age Celebration
Service

NEW MILL BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 16th December

4.30pm Carols by Candlelight

Friday 21st December

6.30pm Carol Singing outside the
Church

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am Christmas Day Service

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S, WIGGINTON

Sunday 16th December

6.00pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve 24th December

3.00pm Crib Service

11.45pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25th December

10.30am Family Communion

ST CROSS, WILSTONE

Christmas Eve 24th December

7.00pm Lessons and Carols
Service followed by Mulled Wine
and Mince Pies

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am All Age Holy Communion

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, ALDBURY

Sunday 2nd December

10.00am Christingle Service

Sunday 23rd December

6.00pm Lessons & Carols
followed by mulled wine and
mince pies

Christmas Eve 24th December

4.00pm Crib Service

11.15pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25th December

10.00am All Age Holy Communion

ST MARTHA'S METHODIST CHURCH, PARK ROAD

Sunday 23rd December

10.00am Christmas Carol Service

Christmas Day 25th December

9.00am Christmas Day Service

ST MARY'S, PUTTENHAM

Sunday 16th December

3.30pm Lessons & Carols
followed by Puttenham Punch
and Mince Pies

Christmas Eve 24th December

9.00pm Midnight Mass (BCP)

ST PETER & ST PAUL'S PARISH CHURCH

Sunday 2nd December

3.00pm Christingle Service

Sunday 9th December

4.00pm Light Up a Life Service
with Rennie Grove Hospice

Sunday 23rd December

6.30pm Lessons & Carols by
Candlelight followed by Mulled
Wine and Mince Pies

Christmas Eve 24th December

2.00pm & 4.00pm Crib Services
11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 25th December

8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am All Age Holy Communion

WIGGINTON BAPTIST CHAPEL

Sunday 16th December

6.00pm Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Day 25th December

10.30am Family Service