

December 2013

Sunday 1st December

9.30 am Holy Communion
11.00 am Advent Praise

Advent Sunday

Swilland
Otley

Sunday 8th December

9.30 am Gift Service
11.00 am Holy Communion BCP

Advent 2

Clopton
Otley

Sunday 15th December

9.30 am Holy Communion
11.00 am Carol Service

Advent 3

Otley
Swilland

Saturday 21st December

10.00 to 12 Messy Church and crib service rehearsal

Otley

Sunday 22nd December

11.00 am Holy Communion with carols
6.30 pm Carol Service
6.30 pm Carol Service

Advent 4

Clopton
Ashbocking
Otley

Tuesday 24th December

4.30pm Crib Service
6.00pm Carol Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Eve

Otley
Clopton
Otley

Wednesday 25th December

9.30am Holy Communion
11.00am Christmas Praise followed by Holy Communion

Christmas Day

Swilland
Ashbocking

Sunday 29th December

8.00 am Holy Communion
11.00 am Benefice Service

Christmas 1

Grundisburgh
Burgh

Sunday 5th January

9.30 am Holy Communion
11.00 am Family Service

Epiphany

Swilland
Otley

Sunday 12th January

9.30 am Holy Communion
11.00 am Morning Praise

Baptism of Christ

Clopton
Otley

**WE WISH YOU A THOUGHTFUL ADVENT, A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS,
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING
THIS WONDERFUL SEASON WITH YOU.**

Other Services in the Benefice

(Every Weds. at 10.30am Holy Communion at Culpho)

December 1st

Grundisburgh

8.00am Holy Communion BCP

11.00am Toy Service

Hasketon

9.30am Toy Service

Burgh

9.30am Holy Communion

Boulge

11.00am Holy Communion

December 8th

Grundisburgh

8.00am Holy Communion BCP

11.00am Par Euch

Hasketon

9.30am Par Euch

Boulge

11.00am Morning Prayer

December 15th

Grundisburgh

8.00am Holy Communion

11.00am Morning Prayer

Hasketon

9.30am Morning Prayer

Burgh

9.30am Family Holy Communion

Boulge 11.00am Holy Communion

December 22nd

Grundisburgh

8.00am Holy Communion

7.00pm Carol Service

Hasketon

5.30pm Carol Service

Burgh

9.30am Morning Prayer

Boulge 11.00am Holy Communion

December 20th Boulge 7.00 pm Carol Service

December 24th/25th

Grundisburgh

4.30pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Hasketon

3.00pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Burgh

6.00pm Carol Service

9.30am Family HC

Boulge 11.00am BCP Holy Communion

Sunday & Christmas Eve/Day Bible Readings

1st December Advent Sunday

Is 2:1-5, Ps 122, Roms 13:11-14 Matt 24:36-44

8th December : Advent 2

Is 11:1-10, Ps 72:1-7, Roms 15:4-13 Matt 3:1-12

15th December : Advent 3

Is 35:1-10, Ps 146:5-10, James 5:7-10, Matt 11:2-11

22nd December : Advent 4

Is 7:10-16, Ps 80:1-7, Roms 1:1-7 Matt 1:18-25

24th and 25th December:- Christmas Eve/Day

Is 9:2-7, Lk 2:1-14 (15-20) or Hebs 1:1-14, Jn 1:1-14

29th December : Christmas 1

Is 63:7-9, Matt 2:13-23

Letter from Catherine Beaumont

Christmas: Let's prepare for the celebration.

I enjoy the anticipation for Christmas. The Christian season of Advent is from 1 December to 24 December and Advent means 'coming', so we wait for the coming of Jesus. My children, despite being teenagers, still want Advent calendars and I love having an Advent candle to count down the days. I know that Christmas can feel pressured as we try and remember everything we need to buy and prepare, but I invite you all to take some time each day to think about its spiritual significance. Delia Smith's book, 'A Feast for Advent', gives us not recipes but readings for each day of Advent. I also recommend the website '**sacred space.ie**' which has a daily reading, prayer and reflection. It only takes 5 minutes.

The story of Jesus' birth is so amazing: it is a story of God made ordinary, becoming a child for us. Jesus was born in a stable into an ordinary family who suffered like us. His family had to flee danger soon after he was born, but Joseph, Mary and Jesus took care of each other as families do, in amongst the danger. It is a story of hope for goodness in a difficult environment, the triumph of human relatedness and love over a dark and unkind world. From this we have evolved rituals and customs about being with people that we love, bringing gifts, being charitable to others and offering prayers for the world and for our own protection.

When Christmas is over, we may feel disappointed and sad (or even relieved!), but remember we can celebrate the 'gift' of Jesus every day. To do so enriches our lives as we live in gratitude for that gift and for all the blessings that God has given us. What is that gift of Jesus? It is of comfort and hope – for all of us -when we face difficulties, it is of care and love in an uncaring world. Week by week, day by day, we can thank God for the hope and love He brings.

Join us in singing of carols and celebrating Jesus' birth in any of the many Christmas services - you will be most welcome. He came for

all of us: the weary and the energetic, the broken hearted and the happy, the young, the old and all in-between. To appreciate this in amongst the presents, cards and food makes Christmas more significant. John Betjeman puts it beautifully in his poem 'Christmas'.

No love that in a family dwells
No caroling in frosty air
Nor all the steeple shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives today in bread and wine.

Revd. Catherine Beaumont

Prayer for the month

God of time & eternity, be with me in new beginnings - when I am vulnerable & afraid, protect & enfold me. God of heaven & earth, be with me in the continuing - when I am pressured & frustrated, let me go forward in confidence & strength. God of joy & sorrow, be with me in the endings - when I need closure & cannot let go, bring me peace & fulfillment. Lord, have mercy on our beginnings & save us from the love of novelty alone. Christ, have mercy on our continuings, that we may patiently bear the setbacks along the way. Lord, have mercy on our endings that at the last we may come into your presence rejoicing. Holy Trinity, give us vision, focus & purpose in our beginnings, continuings & endings, for you are the Alpha & Omega of all things.

T.Garley

100 Years 100 Treasures

You will have read about this in November's East Anglican. It is a glossy, full-colour book celebrating our magnificent churches and their treasures and produced to mark the centenary of the diocese next year. It features 'treasure' from every period, from the Anglo-Saxons to the present day. The concept of pilgrims and visitors

touring parishes to discover these remarkable treasures ties in neatly with the centenary theme of 'Pilgrims in Time'. Swilland and Burgh are both included.

If you buy the book through your parish, then your church will receive £2 of the cover price of £5. A donation will also go to our link diocese of Kagera in Uganda. Samples are available at the back of each church along with details of how to order.

Benefice Diary of Events

Nov 30th Christmas Draw at **Otley Village Hall** 10.30am

Dec 1st 6.30pm 'Ad-Venture' - a lively, contemporary look at Advent, through music, song and picture **Grundisburgh**

Dec 2nd Beyond Alpha at **Hasketon Village Hall** from 10:30 - 12:00.

The Kingdom Parables - What did they mean to the original listeners? What meaning do they have for us? So what is the Kingdom? Enquiries: Paul 738474 or paulwiffen222@btinternet.com.

Dec 4th 10.15am SWAPSHOP at **Grundisburgh Parish Room**- refreshments, conversation, opportunity to swap books- magazines- food- or just talk

Dec 4th 7.30pm churchwardens at the **Parish Room** in **Grundisburgh**

Dec 6th 10.30-11.30 Ashbocking Christmas coffee morning at **The Crockery Barn Cafe, Ashbocking**.

Dec 6th "Upbeat" Christmas Concert in **Grundisburgh Church**

Dec 7th Coffee morning **Grundisburgh Parish Rooms** 10.30 to 12 noon

Dec 7th **Grundisburgh Parish Room** – Christmas Activity afternoon for under 11s- an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping without the children!

Dec 9th Knit and Stitch 10.00 am-12.00 noon, **Burgh School Room**

Dec 12th Tiddlywinks in **Grundisburgh Church** 2.30pm

Dec. 18th at 2.30pm Carlford Network Group in the **Grundisburgh Parish Room**. The theme will be "Christmas Around the World".

Money for the Philippines

Otley Church raised £220 at the November coffee-morning and the service on 17th, which will go to Oxfam as it tries to get food and medicine to those who have suffered. If you want to donate too, you can go to Otley Post Office and contribute cash which will be sent off. Or you can go online to Just Giving, email@justgiving.ccemails.com.

CHURCH TIMES 2014

January's edition will arrive later than in other months – contributions to Amy and me by 28th December please. You will notice some changes to the magazine. It will no longer include the diocesan insert "East Anglican". This is available online at www.cofesuffolk.org and hard copies will be put at the back of each church for anyone who would like to take one.

Instead of the "East Anglican", you will find "Grapevine", an insert that is being distributed throughout the eight churches of the benefice. It will contain service times, details of forthcoming church events, the letter from one of the ministry team, and benefice news.

Ashbocking, Clopton, Otley and Swilland church councils agreed that "Church Times" should contain more than churchy things. They feel that it should be a place for community news from the four villages, so, whoever you are, please continue to send us material and to read the magazine. The price for the year (£7) and advertising rates will remain unchanged. Thank you for your support in 2013 and thank you to Gipping Press, our contributors, distributors and advertisers.

James Hall

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

ASHBOCKING

We have now moved to our new service schedule, holding one service a month. The service will usually be held at 11:00am on the second Sunday of the month, unless there is a special service, in which case the date/time may change. Please keep an eye on the service schedule in the front of this magazine or on the noticeboards in the village and church.

Our harvest festival was held on September 29th. We were joined by friends from other parishes in the benefice as well as the choir from Grundisburgh. After the service, we were treated to some wonderful cakes to go with our teas/coffees. Thank you to all who contributed and especially to Brenda who led the decorating of the church – it looked incredible.

I am very pleased to report that we now have a striking set of purple altar frontal and falls, kindly donated by the Ellis and Leggett families, in memory of Mrs Freda Leggett. The frontal and falls will be mounted during advent and will be dedicated during our carols by candlelight service, which will be held on Sunday 22nd December at 6:30 pm. We do hope you will be able to join us for what has always been a wonderful service, which, as usual, will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies!

Our Christmas Day service will be at 11:00 and we look forward to welcoming members of the parish and visiting families. Our first service of the New Year will be at 11:00 on Sunday 12th January – Plough Sunday.

Our Christmas coffee morning is going to be held on Friday Dec 6th 10.30 to 11.30 at The Crockery Barn Café, Ashbocking. Hope you can join us!

Duncan Bray

CLOPTON

Clopton Ladies Group will meet at the village hall at 8pm on 5th December for a social evening. Everyone is welcome - please bring a plate of food to share.

The annual gift service is on Sunday 8th December at 9.30 am. New or nearly new toys, books and games or new toiletries will be taken to the Ormiston Trust in Ipswich after the service. They do an enormous amount of good work with families in need and our gifts are really appreciated as Christmas can be a very difficult time for these families. Come and join us for this short service followed by refreshments.

The Clopton coffee-morning in December is extra-special, so come and enjoy meeting other Clopton people between 10am and noon in the village hall on December 18th. It will be hosted by Anne Pryke and Della Hughes, who will make sure we all enter into the festive spirit!

At 6 o'clock on Christmas Eve we have our annual carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies. The carols have been chosen by people at the coffee-morning and we promise that the church will be warm.

We have now had two taster sessions for bell ringers and more are planned. Ring David Stanford on 01394 384017 if you are interested in learning to ring or just want the experience of ringing a bell.

The funeral took place on November 8th of Roy Compton, a long time resident of Clopton. The service was taken by Catherine Beaumont, and Roy's many friends and colleagues filled the church. A shortened version of the eulogies will be in the Grundisburgh News and the full version will be in Grundisburgh post office for people to read.

Flowers for December
Cleaning for December

Doris Main
Sue Emmerson
Beryl Birchmore

OTLEY

The Remembrance Day service was held at the War Memorial on a cold and sunny autumn day. Clare led the solemn service, Peter Rogerson read the roll of honour, during which schoolchildren from Otley planted a poppy cross for each of the forty names, and Brian Childs read the lesson. The Exhortation was spoken by Aubrey James (ex Marine Commandos) and the Kohima Epitaph by Lieut.Col. Geoffrey Mason (ex Queen's Royal Surrey Regt.). Last Post and Reveille were sounded by James Symington, a trumpeter from the Ipswich Hospital Band, who is going to study at Kneller Hall, the Army School of Music. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the Parish Council, St Mary's Church, the 1st Otley Scout Group, The Royal British Legion, the Bowls Club, the Friendship Club, and the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. The Scouts and Cubs were on parade and they lowered their banners as a mark of respect during the two-minute silence. Helen Jay led the music, playing the keyboard, with Olivia Bullock on flute and James Symington on trumpet, and Mike Bullock provided the public address system. It was an impressive service in the centre of the village, as part of the national Remembrance, and thank you to everybody who took part. We don't yet know the final result of the Poppy Appeal, but it will be over £700, and Victoria Hook would like to thank all of her poppy-sellers.

We were glad to welcome a group of youngsters, boys and girls, from the Suffolk Guild of Bellringers, to the church in November. The visit was organised by a boy of 17 and it is encouraging to know that some young people are enthusiastic to take on bell-ringing.

Gardening Club will be meeting on 2nd December when Rebecca Upson, who grew up in Otley, will be speaking about 'Fauna and Flora of the Falkland Islands'. Rebecca spent four years there working for Falklands Conservation, which is linked to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, and she is now at Kew working on the same project.

The next monthly coffee-morning will be held on Thursday, 12th December at 16 Spring Park, the home of the Upsons. As the church's contribution to the Age UK Suffolk 65 Challenge for Team Otley (see below), we shall be having bring-and-buy book stalls at the next few coffee-mornings, starting with this one, so unwanted books in good condition will be welcome. I will take any that don't sell to Oxfam.

The Scouts Christmas Bingo will be held in the village hall at 7.30pm on 19th December. This is a ticket-only event. Tickets can be obtained from Scout Leaders or from the village shop, costing £1 each. The Scouts will also again be delivering Christmas cards, but - please note - only to addresses within the village of Otley. The cost will be 20p per card and you will find the Scouts postbox inside the shop.

Many congratulations to Edward and Heather Wilkins who were married at Culford church at the beginning of November. We wish them a long and happy life together.

We wish all of our readers a very Happy Christmas. Details of all the Christmas services can be found at the front of the magazine, and carol-singing around the village will take place on Tuesday 17th December leaving Spring Park at 7 p.m. This year the collection will be for Families in Need (FIND).

Rose Rogerson

Village diary

1st Dec. "A Christmas Carol" puppet show by Micawber Theatre Co, Callum Hale and friends

2nd Dec. Gardening Club - 'Fauna and Flora of the Falkland Islands'

5th Dec. Friendship Club - Christmas Dinner 12.0 noon

5th Dec. Under 5s - Clairvoyant Evening

7th Dec. School Bazaar 11.30am - 1.30pm in the school

7th Dec. Community Council - Christmas Dinner Dance

18th Dec. FFY Christmas Party

19th Dec. Friendship Club - Christmas Tea Party 2.0pm

19th Dec. Scouts - Christmas Bingo

Church flowers:

Advent/Christmas everyone

Church cleaning:

David and Tess Papworth/Brian and Karin Upson

Brasses:

Betty David

Otley Church Sidepersons Rota

December 1st 11.00am Advent Praise

Ruthie Bullock

December 8th 11.00am BCP communion

Betty David

December 15th 9.30am Holy Communion

Pauline Crowley

December 22nd 6.30pm Carol Service

Churchwardens

December 24th 4.30pm Crib Service

Pauline Crowley

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Churchwardens

1st Otley Scout Group

What have we been up to? Well, the Cubs had a lovely weekend camp at Bury St Edmunds in June. Scouts went to MOOT V in August, a County camp for Scouts & Guides, held at Bentwaters. They stayed for a week and everyone had a fabulous time. Our Group camp was early October at Hallowtree (Ipswich) and the Beavers & Cubs were also involved in the "Treemendous" day where they planted trees and seeds to contribute to the camp site.

Just after half-term the Cubs went to Otley Church as part of their Faith Badge. Catherine Beaumont welcomed them by ringing the bell as they walked up the driveway in the dark. Once inside, they were shown round and all had the opportunity to try their hand at ringing a bell, climbing into the pulpit, and kneeling at the altar rail to sample some unconsecrated communion wafers. Catherine showed them her colourful stoles & explained the meanings of the symbols on them. Some of the Cubs had written & word processed some prayers, as part of their Faith & IT badges. They read them at the end of the visit.

Our regular bingo sessions held in the Scout Hut are growing in success (next one Nov 15th @ 7.30pm). The Christmas bingo is on December 19th and will be held in the village hall. The group will also organise the Christmas Post delivery. *Look out for the box in the Post Office- Otley Village deliveries only.*

The next Church Parade will be on 1st December @ Otley Church.

Brian Childs and Gerry Senior

Otley takes on the Challenge

Age UK (Suffolk) is celebrating its 65th Birthday. The charity has “challenged” businesses, groups & communities to support them and raise money any way they can, so **Otley** has taken on the challenge...

The village shop had already raised nearly £200 (from the famous *spaghetti jar* and selling cup-cakes) prior to the big launch on 2nd November, when the White Hart hosted a party with an afternoon of face painting, building the Best Guy, decorating biscuits and a tea. This was followed by a hot supper and live music from Clare Free - over £300 was raised from this event.

FFY are car-washing and the Under 5's are joining them to run a coffee-morning on November 24th starting @ 9.30am at the village hall. Nellie Sunaway is running the Norwich half marathon that day for Age UK (Suffolk) – good luck Nellie! The school, Scouts, Gym Club, church and Friendship Club all have ideas to help the village rise to the challenge. Look out for events to support. If you'd like to help please contact Penny at Otley Village Stores (890257).

Otley Primary School to form a formal federation with Witnesham Primary School

Since 2006 Otley and Witnesham schools have been working together and sharing their headteacher, an arrangement that has been working very well. However, schools' governance, financing and expectations have been rapidly changing in the last two or three years and unless schools evolve, there is a danger that they will be left behind and not benefit from the opportunities and benefits currently available. In addition, through its “Raising the Bar “ campaign, Suffolk County Council is trying to improve the relatively poor performance of Suffolk's schools when compared to the national picture. Whilst Otley is a good school, we cannot and will not be complacent. We always strive for improvements that will benefit the school and to ensure its long term viability and success. Forming partnerships with other schools is seen as the primary way of achieving this.

With all of this, and more in mind, the governing bodies of Otley and Witnesham have unanimously agreed to a federation of the two schools from 1 April 2014. This will build upon the current collaboration and is a formal legal process. The most obvious difference is that only one governing body will oversee the two schools from that date. We believe that the federation will make the governance and leadership of the schools

more efficient and effective. Pupils and staff will benefit and in the longer term budgetary and succession issues will be easier to resolve. 10% of Suffolk's 350 schools do not have a permanent headteacher.

I have agreed to become the Chair of the combined governing body and to oversee the transition period. It is our aim that the two schools will retain their own identities and it may well be that parents and pupils will see little change in the short term. Many of the changes will be behind the scenes. As part of the federation process, a six week consultation process with all relevant stakeholders will start in early 2014, but if you have any views, comments or general observations to make in the meantime please email me at ian.liddell2@btinternet.com.

Ian Liddell - Chair of Governors

Otley Parish Council

Following their decision to retire in March this year, Otley Parish Council would like to thank both Malcolm Smith and Geoff Cant for their involvement and service to the community. Both were long-serving members of the council who showed great dedication and many years of loyalty to the village. Malcolm is thanked for his outstanding leadership and direction as chairman over the last 13 years and Geoff Cant, having served for the past 30 years, was a great asset with his valued knowledge of Otley.

The council is now delighted to announce that the two vacancies were filled by Abigail Lord and Martin Liddell. Anthony Ling is the new chairperson.

Abigail grew up in Felixstowe and has now lived in Otley for 10 years. She is a teacher at Suffolk One sixth form centre where she enjoys teaching about the environment, our interaction with the planet and the politics that surround growth and development. She says "I became interested in becoming a councillor as I would like to take on a more active role within the community and support development in a sustainable way. I hope to be able to support the local community with projects for the future and continue to encourage active communication within the parish." Martin has lived in Otley for over 15 years. He is a chartered structural engineer and a director of MLM Consulting Engineers, a firm of 270 people with their head office in Ipswich. Martin says "I have worked in Ipswich for over 25 years after joining MLM as a graduate. In my free time

I enjoy sailing, and also assisting with the set-building for the Junior Otley Players. I decided to become a parish councillor to put something back into the superb community in which I live".

Otley Parish Council enjoys working closely with the public - residents, communities, businesses and voluntary organisations and would like to encourage its residents to participate in the decision-making and be engaged in the local democratic process to help create a more active and informed community. We hold 7 meetings a year and although these meetings concern themselves mainly with parish council business, all village residents are encouraged to attend, not only to observe the proceedings, but also to raise any questions and to suggest items for discussion at a future meeting. Our meetings are held on a Monday in the village hall and start at 7.30pm and are scheduled for 9th December, 20th January, 10th March, 19th May (AGM 7.00pm start), 14th July, 8th September, 20th October, 1st December.

Anyone who is unable to attend a meeting but would like to raise items for discussion should contact either me or one of our councillors :

Mr A Ling - Grange Farm, Helmingham Road (890787)

Mr R Ling - Grange House, Helmingham Road (890276)

Mr B Childs - Lime Tree Place, Helmingham Road (890573)

Mrs I Lincoln - Annerley House, Helmingham Road (890826)

Mrs J Vaughan - Abend House, Helmingham Road (890057)

Mr D Hook - Wood Farm, Helmingham Road (890122)

Mrs S Grant - Walnut Tree Farm, Ipswich Road (784223)

Mr M Liddell - Bay Tree Cottage, Chapel Road (890491)

Mrs A Lord - Rosemary Cottage, Chapel Road (890535)

Vanessa Osborne - Parish Clerk otleyparishclerk@btinternet.com 892180

From Alyson and Ian Chilvers

We would like to thank everyone who kindly contributed to the Barn Dance and the One Feather Project at Warrens Farm on 26 October. The One Feather Project provides music therapy to a young man, Aled Jones, who suffered a horrific road accident when he was a fifteen year old pupil at Debenham High School. Aled, now 28 years old, requires 24 hour care. Aled has always had a love of music and it was heart-warming to watch him demonstrate his skill at playing the sound beam. Everyone had great fun as we joined together in our 8's to "strip the willow" and "dosey doe" to the fine music of Stowfolk. There was a fantastic atmosphere and the

evening resulted with a tremendous profit of £1,225.00. Denny and Lou Jones, Aled's parents were extremely grateful for all the support and would like to thank everyone for a wonderful evening which they will remember for a long while to come.

The next event at the Barn at Warrens Farm will be a Burns Night in aid of Age UK Suffolk. This promises to be another fun-packed evening; tickets are limited so book early by phoning 737674 or email alysonchilvers@btinternet.com

Otley under Fives

We have been very busy this term with local walks around the village to see the animals, a visit to Otley Hall to see the peacocks, and to Otley church, where the children were able to ring the bells. Our summer outing was a trip to Framlingham castle where we were all brave and walked around the high castle walls.

In our playgroup sessions we have been looking after our tadpoles; we saw them turn into frogs and then took them back to the pond on one of our walks. The children helped to plant vegetables and flowers and then looked after them by watering them and were keen to try the peas they had grown at snack time. On Thursdays the children attend regular assemblies at the school where they meet the teachers and join in with the stories and songs while familiarising themselves with the surroundings. On Tuesdays and Thursdays they join the school-children in their play area at break, making new friends.

We accept government funding and have a lunch club every day. Currently there are spaces available. For further information please contact Mel or Michelle on 07789468853 (term time only) or find us on Facebook or check out our new website www.otleyunderfives.co.uk

Michelle Boreham

SWILLAND

The quiz held on 2nd Nov at Newton Hall was a great success. We had 13 tables. Gill was our quizmaster and had set some really good questions. Thank you to Peter and Rossie Theobald for the use of their cafe at Newton Hall; we had several comments on what a good venue it was. We raised £305 for our Tower and Organ Fund.

The churchyard work-party on 9th Nov was a great success. It followed the high winds, so there was plenty to clear. Our thanks to Phil Hatch, Tommy Cain, Richard, Robert, Amanda, Patrick and Scott Stennett for all their work. The fallen branches were cleared and the brasses were cleaned in time for Remembrance Sunday, when we were privileged to welcome the local branch of the British Legion.

The Christmas draw is now imminent. All counterfoils and money should be returned to me by 4th Dec. We shall be pleased to receive gifts towards the prize list. Please bring them to me. The draw is at 1p.m. on Sat 7th Dec in Witnesham village Hall. There will be a cake and preserves stall, a book stall and a gift stall. Soup, filled rolls, mince pies, tea and coffee will be served from 12 noon. Do come and join us.

May I wish every a very Happy Christmas. Please join us for our family carol service on 15th Dec at 11 a.m. and our Christmas Day communion service at 9.30 a.m.

Ann Kent

Church Flowers

1st – 8th December

15th December

22nd December – 29th December

Gill Reidy(Advent Greenery only)

Carol Service – all help please

Jackie Williams

Rainfall – October

I do not expect any of us will forget October 2013 for a very long time. Our very dry summer came to an abrupt end with a total of 4.20 inches of rain - the wettest month since July 2012, when we had the same amount. The gale that occurred on the 28th and reached 78 mph at one point, caused many of us to lose both electricity and telephone. Partly this may have been because the leaves on many trees had not fallen as result of the rain at the beginning of the month. Despite the damage, it wasn't as bad as the 1987 gale when the high wind lasted longer and again the trees had not lost their leaves. Rainfall for the year has now reached 20.30 inches and we are on track for an average year's total.

Russell Ling

St NICHOLAS

Feast Day 6 December



St Nicholas was the bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, in the fourth century. Lots of stories are told of his kindness and generosity. He is the patron saint of Russia, children, scholars, merchants and sailors.

One legend tells of his secret gifts to three daughters from a poor family. It is said that he threw 3 purses of gold down the chimney where they landed in the girls' stockings which they had hung up to dry in front of the fire. This is supposed to be the origin of hanging up Christmas stockings.

Over time the name of St Nicholas changed to Sinterklass and thus to Santa Claus in the Christmas celebrations.

STOCKING DECORATIONS

You will need some felt, a needle and thread, fabric glue, ribbon and sequins or buttons for decoration.



Fold the felt in half and cut out two simple stocking shapes. Sew these together with a simple running stitch, leaving the top edge open. Sew a loop of ribbon to the top of the stocking.

Now you can decorate the stocking with scraps of felt, lace, buttons or sequins. Glue them on carefully and leave to dry. You could even try writing a name in glue and sprinkling on glitter to cover it.

This would be nice to give as a present with a little present or sweet inside or to hang on the Christmas tree as a decoration. You can make them any size you like.



How many presents can Santa fit into an empty stocking?

Only one, after that it is not empty any more.

Why is a foot a good Christmas present?

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