

The Ashcroft Times

24th—30th January 2021 www.ashcroftchurch.org.uk



Church Office (*answerphone*): 01285 640292 / email: office@ashcroftchurch.org.uk

Ashcroft Dial-a-Service (Updates weekly at 12 noon on Sundays): 01285 706705

Methodist Freephone Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514 / News: 0808 281 2478

Watch our weekly service online via Facebook, YouTube or via the Online Church link at www.ashcroftchurch.org.uk



Flickering candles in the night

In the early 1980s, the BBC published “Come & Praise”, a songbook to accompany its primary school radio (!) assemblies. Ground breaking in its time – although sometimes lampooned since – it contained modern and traditional songs and choruses and works by more contemporary writers such as Sydney Carter and Jan Struther.

The book also began to embrace the idea of multi-ethnic Britain with the inclusion of, among others, “Flickering Candles”, a song beloved by primary teachers in a hurry for its footnote: Suitable for Christmas, Hannukah and Diwali. Result! This morning’s worship sorted.

But the song does contain eternal truths, recognised by all people at all times.

“Tell a story from the past; Celebrate in song,

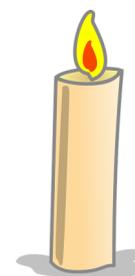
Those who changed despair to hope, And defeated wrong.

Flickering candles in the night, Darkness turning into light”

We invite you to join us if you wish, at 7pm on Friday in lighting a candle/tea light/ putting on a reading lamp and just stopping to reflect for a few minutes on the prayer items in the newsletter and joining your prayers and thoughts with others in our fellowship. (Don’t worry if 7pm doesn’t work for you – God isn’t a timekeeper!)

Flickering candles in the night – darkness is turning into light.

Sue Dearsley



If you would like to contribute a Friday Night—Light reflection, please contact Sue.

Typos in this church magazine

Some of you have noticed a few typos in this magazine now and then. To improve this for the New Year I am now using a new set of rules for editing:

1. Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat.)
6. Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.

8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.

9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.

10. No sentence fragments.

11. Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.

12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.

13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.

14. One should NEVER generalise.

15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.

(Taken from 'The Parish Pump')

Beware Covid 19 Scams

It is good to hear that many have now received their first vaccination. The following information has been sent out from a Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator, PC 2201 Nick Westmacott. "There is a scam regarding the coronavirus vaccine which is sent by text message. The text is made to look like it comes from the NHS and states 'we have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine' and advises you to follow a link to apply. Remember the vaccine is free of charge. You do not have to supply any bank details to get it. You will be contacted by phone or in writing by your surgery when you are eligible.



Happy Birthday to You!

Happy Birthday to Maurice, who is 91 on the 24th. If it's your birthday this week then we're sending you our best wishes and hope you have a lovely day. Let us know if you have a birthday coming up so we can celebrate with you!

Wordsearch

The Christmas story carries on into the New Year, with Epiphany and the arrival of the Wise Men, led by the Star in the East. Through the eyes of faith, they saw Messiah in that small baby, and worshipped him, giving gifts that foresaw his life and work. All the words in the word search are related to this: Epiphany; Wise Men; Camels; Baby Jesus; Star; Herod; Worship; Gold; Frankincense; Myrrh; New; Resolutions; Bills; Work; Study; Running; Gym.

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

The joy of a garden

by Anna Colledge

I was chatting on the phone to a lady in the congregation the other day and mentioned we still couldn't meet up in church. She was sad, of course, but said she felt she was in God's church when she walked through woodland and looked up at the soaring trees and listened to the singing of the birds. We all know what a comfort the natural world is to us all and my mind went to a poem that still gives me great pleasure when I see it – and I do mean see it! When the girls were young we spent many holidays in a place near Scarborough which was opposite a hotel garden. Over the years the garden, which had looked rather forlorn, was carefully tended and restored. At the entrance to it is a board with a poem on it. I have stopped by that board and read it year after year as we go back to visit the area. It fills me with joy every time.

My Garden

A GARDEN is a lovesome thing, God wot!

Rose plot,

Fringed pool,

Ferned grot—

The veriest school

Of peace ; and yet the fool

Contends that God is not—

Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?

Nay, but I have a sign;

'Tis very sure God walks in mine

T E Brown



I have since researched Thomas Edward Brown (5 May 1830 – 29 October 1897), commonly referred to as T. E. Brown. He was a late-Victorian scholar, schoolmaster, poet, and theologian from the Isle of Man. He was headmaster at the Crypt school Gloucester and then moved to Clifton College near Bristol where he remained until he retired. He returned to the Isle Of Man and continued writing many poems which incorporated the Manx dialect, as a result of which he became known as the Manx national poet. His long narrative poems are well worth a read but it is the short poem My Garden which so captured my imagination .

Gardens are indeed wonderful places and I have created anagrams of a few garden creatures, friend and foe, that you may have come across in yours...

1. Glus

4. Trebtuylf

7. Lowdoesuo

10. Broni

2. Mowr

5. Dipsre

8. Dipha

3. Gedogheh

6. Nipeog

9. Sumoe

Someone to talk to

If during this lockdown you feel in need of somebody to speak to in confidence, or need some urgent practical help, then please contact any of the following people:

Rev Wendy 01285 653655

wendyatdorcan@gmail.com

Ros 01285 239054

rosburnip1@gmail.com

Glynis 01285 671208

glynisracknell@hotmail.co.uk

Zoom meeting details for Sunday Service

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://zoom.us/j/92927268101?](https://zoom.us/j/92927268101?pwd=L2kza0NidWRQSHphb3JzNjVpVmFBQT09)

[pwd=L2kza0NidWRQSHphb3JzNjVpVmFBQT09](https://zoom.us/j/92927268101?pwd=L2kza0NidWRQSHphb3JzNjVpVmFBQT09)

or dial 0330 088 5830 (local rate charges apply)

Meeting ID: 929 2726 8101

Passcode: 834415

Foodbank

Foodbank are short of household cleaning items and loo rolls. The depot at the Baptist Church is open to receive items Monday to Thursday mornings, 9—10am and Monday and Thursday evenings 4.30pm—5.30pm.

Remember in your prayers:

Please remember Judith Hoan and her family, as they grieve for John. Losing someone now is made even more difficult by the rules re funerals. John's funeral is on Tuesday 26th January. Please hold Judith and her family in your prayers on that day

The family of Carol Symons whose funeral was on Monday 18th at Chesterton.

Please pray for Dora.

Regular Events & Reminders

Coffee and Catchup

Tuesdays from 10.15am

Visit www.ashcroftchurch.org.uk/coffeeandchat Password: Ash@Croft7

Bible Study Fortnightly on Thursdays

Contact David Cracknell for more information.

Sunday Services from 10.30am

This weeks service will be available on YouTube from 2pm. The recordings can be supplied on CD or DVD if you are not online. Please ask Anton if you would like one.

24th January 2021

Preacher: Rev. Wendy Tucker

31st January 2021

Preacher: Rev. Wendy Tucker

Traidcraft: Contact Kate Jopp

All We Can: Contact Ros Burnip

Ashcroft Ladies Zoom—Contact Anna Colledge

The Thursday Murder Club book (reviewed on 10th Jan) is being broadcast on Radio 4 as an abridged audio book. Haydn Gwynne will be narrating the book daily, starting on 25th January at 12.06pm (repeated at 10.45pm) and will also be available on BBC sounds app. Each of the 10 episodes is cut into a bitesize chunk 14 minutes long.



THE METHODIST CIRCUIT OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

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January 2021

To Churches in the Gloucestershire Circuit.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Most of the churches in the Circuit are now closed for public worship. The current lockdown regulations make it clear that we should stay at home and only leave our homes for essential reasons. Unlike last March the regulations now allow places of worship to remain open for services if certain strict conditions are met. This includes the prohibition of any form of social interaction or mingling between people before and after services.

Although we can open our buildings for worship that does not mean that we must. One of the ways we can choose to help reduce the spread of the more virulent form of the COVID-19 virus and help to protect others in the wider community is close public worship. To do this, with all the difficulties it presents, is an expression of solidarity with those who have been told to close their businesses and places of work and leisure.

With the support of the Circuit COVID-19 action group I am urging churches to remain closed for public worship and not to reopen before the current regulations are relaxed. The legal responsibility for deciding to reopen lies with the Church Council or Trustees in the Ecumenical Partnerships and no church should reopen before the COVID-19 risk assessment has been reviewed by the Church Council/Trustees and they are confident that the risk assessment can be fully and securely implemented. I am asking that Church Councils/Trustees should give the COVID-19 Action Group an assurance about this before reopening. Any proposal to reopen while the current regulations are in force will need to be justified.

One of the greatest concerns about the long-term effect of the pandemic is its effect on mental health. People are experiencing the effects of loneliness, isolation and anxiety. Sadly, we are not able to help people with this through the opportunities for fellowship and meeting that go alongside public worship. We can help in other ways and I am grateful to all those people, including Pastoral Visitors, who pick up the phone or write a note of encouragement to keep in touch with people who are struggling.

We will continue to produce resources that you can use at home so you can be fed spiritually. Printed services are available to be posted as well as services that can be found on the internet. For those who have the technology many churches are holding Zoom services.

We all know that there is light and hope that this crisis will come to an end. Three effective vaccines have been produced more quickly than has happened with any other virus. These will take time to roll out and those who are able to receive it soon will still need to help those who may have to wait months by continuing to stick to the lockdown regulations. From the perspective of Christian faith, we live by the conviction that God is with us and will lead us through death to resurrection.

With every blessing and best wishes for 2021,

Revd John Hellyer

