

# *The Four Parishes News Magazine*

BECKLEY  
FOREST HILL  
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY  
STANTON St JOHN



Sky between Stanton St John and Forest Hill, November 2022

*December 2022/January 2023*

## The editor writes:



Looking back over the past year it is hard to remember what life was like last December. For one thing, the endless months of the Covid pandemic have merged into a sort of vague continuum in my mind and I'm sure I am not the only one who finds it hard to distinguish between the different phases of lockdown in 2020 and 2021. For another, it is really hard to remember that this time last year most of us had no inkling of the devastating situation that was about to unfold in Ukraine.

Putting the magazine together this month has been especially challenging because there seems to be a lot going on in our Four Parishes. After two years of relative inactivity, there is an understandable desire to re-instate old community events and invent new ones. But, as an organiser myself, I can't help noticing that attendance and commitment are well below pre-Covid levels. This is a real pity, because we all need art or sport or external social interaction of some kind in our lives to balance out the daily demands of work and home.

2022 has been a difficult year for many and it seems likely that there will be plenty of challenges in the year ahead. I hope everyone has an opportunity for rest and refreshment during the holiday period and I look forward to being back with you again in February 2023.

*Julia Stutfield*

All contributions to this magazine are the sole responsibility of the author and do not imply or represent any official editorial view or endorsement.

### Our cover photo ...

*was taken by Anneli Nilsson from Stanton St John. Anneli writes:*

I took these photos this morning while dog walking in Stanton St John. The views look towards Forest Hill.

**If you have taken a photo which you think might be suitable for the cover of the next magazine, please email it to [4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com)**

## Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

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*We welcome contributions for future issues, but please get in touch with the editorial team beforehand at [4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com) to discuss any piece you'd like to write. Contributors typically live in the Four Parishes, or have a strong personal connection to the area. The editors reserve the right to reject any submitted content at any stage of the editorial process.*

*Recent issues of the magazine are available to view online at [www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine).*

**The closing date for the February 2023 issue is 15 January 2023**

**To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA  
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**News or notices for the individual 'Village pages' should be sent to:**

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<b>Stanton St John</b>	Sue Baker 01865 351449 <a href="mailto:susanjbaker24@gmail.com">susanjbaker24@gmail.com</a>

## Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John. Anthea is supported by a team of voluntary clergy, lay ministers and churchwardens, whose details are listed below.

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#### Stanton St John

Vacant at present

The Four Parishes News Magazine has 10 issues per year and is distributed free of charge to approximately 850 addresses in Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley, Stanton St John and Beckley. It is funded by advertising revenue, which is used to cover the printing costs. We are dependent on volunteers to assemble the content, book and invoice the advertisers, compile and edit the magazine, collect it from the printers and distribute it throughout the four parishes.

**Editor: Julia Stutfield**

**Assistant Editors: Jonathan Barker  
Anthea Beresford**

## Church Services in the Four Parishes, December 2022

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
<b>4 December</b> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</i>	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion	<b>11am</b> Morning Prayer
	<b>4pm - Children's Service at St Nicolas. See page 26 for details</b>			
	<b>6pm - Taizé Service via Zoom</b>			
<b>11 December</b> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</i>		<b>9.30am</b> Morning Prayer	<b>9.30am</b> Morning Prayer	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion
	<b>11am - Benefice Zoom Service</b>			
	<b>4pm - Children's Christmas Party at Stanton Village Hall. See pages 13 and 15 for more information.</b>			
	<b>6pm</b> Choral Evensong			
<b>14 December</b> <i>(Wednesday)</i>	<b>7pm - 'Looking for the Light' at Horton-cum-Studley. See page 7 for more information</b>			
<b>18 December</b> <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</i>	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion			
		<b>6pm</b> Carol Service	<b>6pm</b> Carol Service	<b>3pm</b> Carol Service
<b>20 December</b> <i>(Tuesday)</i>	<b>7pm</b> Carol Service			
<b>21 December</b> <i>(Wednesday)</i>	<b>7pm - Benefice Carol Service on Zoom</b>			
<b>24 December</b> <i>Christmas Eve</i>	<b>4pm</b> Crib Service	<b>4pm</b> Crib Service	<b>4pm</b> Messy Crib Service	<b>4pm</b> Crib Service
	<b>11pm</b> Holy Communion at Stanton		<b>11pm</b> Holy Communion at Beckley	
<b>25 December</b> <i>Christmas Day</i>	<b>10am</b> Holy Communion at Forest Hill		<b>10am</b> Holy Communion at Horton	

## Church Services in the Four Parishes, January 2023

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
<b>1 January</b> <i>Naming and Circumcision of Jesus</i>	<b>11am</b> Benefice Service of Holy Communion at Horton-cum-Studley			
<b>8 January</b> <i>The Epiphany</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Holy Communion
	<b>11am - Benefice Zoom Service</b>			
	<b>4pm - Messy Church at Stanton Village Hall</b>			
	<b>6pm - Epiphany Carol Service at Forest Hill</b>			
<b>15 January</b> <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</i>	11am BCP Morning Prayer	9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am BCP Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	<b>6pm - Iona Service at Beckley</b>			
<b>22 January</b> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany</i>	<b>10am</b> Benefice Holy Communion Service at Stanton			
	<b>3pm - Family Church does Forest Church Bernwood Forest, Oakley Road, OX33 1BJ (meet at car park)</b>			
<b>29 January</b> <i>Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)</i>		9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Morning Prayer	11am Morning Prayer
	<b>4pm Candlemas</b>			
	<b>6pm - Church without Walls in Stanton St John Village Hall</b>			

Please check the website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk) for any updates. If you are not on the church mailing list and would like an invitation to a Zoom service or a regular reminder of weekly services, please email Anthea: [anthea@fourparishes.org.uk](mailto:anthea@fourparishes.org.uk).

## Notes on Christmas and New Year Services

(A summary of all Christmas services and other events in the Four Parishes can be found on the back cover of this magazine).

### St Nicolas Children's Service with Christingle, Sunday 4 December

This Benefice Children's Service is preceded by a Christingle-making workshop in Forest Hill Village Hall. See page 26 for details.

### Looking for the Light, Wednesday 14 December

This service is an opportunity for quiet reflection in the lead up to Christmas. There are four short Bible readings and reflections, a short time of silence between each for us to gather our thoughts, two carols and some short prayers. It is aimed at everyone, but especially for those for which Christmas is a difficult time.

Generally, Christmas is seen as a season of joy, celebration and happiness. But thinking about my own experiences, through talking to others over the years, Christmas can be a time of pain and of darkness. Some may be facing Christmas alone as the result of a broken relationship, which Christmas brings to the fore. Some may be facing Christmas for the first time without a loved one who has died in the year, and there is a special person shaped hole which is even bigger than we have previously noticed, and we dread the empty chair at the dinner table. Or we may be facing Christmas for the umpteenth time without a loved one we lost some years ago, or because we have no-one to share Christmas with as usual. So, at this time especially, we are looking for light in the darkness of our situation or our personal pain, or simply a quiet oasis in the busyness of the season. The service lasts around 35-40 minutes.

### New Year's Day: time of the Benefice Service of Holy Communion

The benefice service will be held in Horton-cum-Studley on Sunday 1 January, but it will be **at 11am and NOT the usual 10am** of benefice services. We thought you might appreciate the extra hour in case you were up late seeing in the New Year!

### Candlemas Service, Sunday 29 January

Music and readings in our beautiful candlelight church, celebrating the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and his acknowledgement by the aged Simeon in the words of the *Nunc Dimittis*.

## A letter from Anthea

Hi everyone,



If we are home on my day off, one of Bertie's favourite walks is along the Oxford Canal, as not only does he get a lovely run, he also gets to have a swim. I am not sure which he likes the most! And obviously a happy Bertie makes for a happy me!

Last time we went we were later than usual. It had been a delightful autumnal day, and the sun was just beginning to go down. This made for even more beautiful reflections on the water than usual. But we did not have long before it would be dark!

As always, Bertie put his mind to finding a stick for me to throw in the water for him to retrieve, not of course remembering that we had to get to the part where he could actually get out again having got into the water! As I walked along, I took in the reflections in the water, which made me think about looking at our reflections too. I noticed how in places the water was completely still, and the light perfect, so the reflections looked perfect too. There were other places where the reflections were distorted: by a fish surfacing; or a group of ducks swimming, causing ripples; or a canal boat gliding slowly past, completely obliterating the reflection for a while, until the ripples in the water gradually died away, leaving the clear reflection once more; or on the river, where fallen branches caused a small current, distorting the reflection.

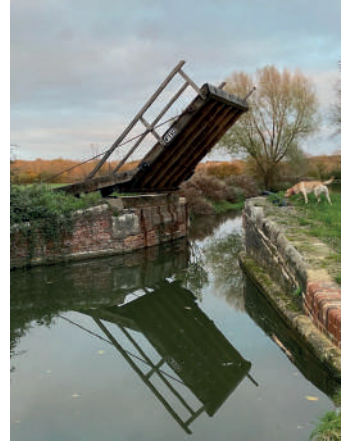


As I marvelled at the beauty of the reflections of nature in the water, my thoughts turned again to seeing my own reflection in a mirror - something I am never keen on! I am sure I am not on my own in this. I know there are some who love gazing in the mirror, but I am sure many others are not. It is interesting how we can look at other reflections and see the beauty, and



yet, as we look at ourselves, rather than looking for the good, we often see only our faults. This is completely contrary to the way God looks at us. He looks at us as a perfect parent looks at their child: with love, with wonder, with joy. There may be rough edges to smooth off - after all, none of us is perfect, but God looks on us with pure love.

We are all a 'work in progress'! We all have things that need to change over time, but often we should be kinder and gentler with ourselves. Interestingly someone said to me the other day how we need to learn to love ourselves, and then we might be better at loving others! That was an interesting observation. After all, as we are called to love our neighbours as ourselves, if we do not love ourselves, we will not be very good at loving others. But that is not a selfish love. It is a love where we look and see the beauty of our colour, our shape, our movement - just as I looked at the beauty of the countryside, reflected in the canal.



As we prepare for Advent, Christmas and the New Year, may we look on ourselves more kindly, as if we are looking at others - seeing the good, whilst recognising any rough edges that need smoothing down.

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas, and very best wishes for the New Year ahead, remembering that whatever we are facing in our lives, we are never alone.

Please do get in touch if you need someone to talk to. Take great care and God bless you and your loved ones.

*Anthea*

*The Reverend Anthea Beresford is Vicar of the Church of The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Beckley, St Nicolas Church in Forest Hill, St Barnabas Church in Horton-cum-Studley, and St John the Baptist Church in Stanton St John.*

## CHURCH MATTERS

### Church opening

All the churches in the benefice are open daily:

Beckley: 10am-6pm

Forest Hill, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John: 10am-4pm

### Remembrance Sunday



Acts of Remembrance and Remembrance Sunday Services took place on Sunday 13 November around the Benefice, as they did in towns and villages up and down the country, and further afield. It was a beautiful sunny day - apparently the warmest on record for Remembrance Sunday, and there were a good number of people paying their respects at each of the events, remembering the sacrifice of others. The individual fallen soldiers from our parishes were each remembered by name, and crosses and wreaths were laid in their memories. Each year it is striking to hear the long list of names for such small villages - young men lost, never to return home. Thanks to all those who read the names, led the services, played the organ, piano, recorder, trumpet and bugle, and for those who decorated the churches so beautifully, and made sure the churchyards looked their best for the day.

The day was rounded off with a concert in Forest Hill, titled 'Far from Home', which featured local musicians singing and playing, poetry readings, and audience participation in singing well known wartime songs. It was particularly poignant hearing a number of war poems written by Ukrainian poets. Thank you to all those who made the evening possible.

### Advent challenge and beyond

You may recall from the November magazine that for our Advent challenge this year, I suggested we read the Gospel of Matthew. You might have started this on 27 November, the first Sunday of Advent. If so, do keep going, reading a chapter a day, and you will finish on Christmas Eve. This is a great way to help us have the whole of the Gospel message fresh in our minds, as

we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the light of the world, the Word made flesh, Emmanuel, God with us, on Christmas Day. I think we can then give ourselves a little break over Christmas! I suggest for January we read two books: Judges: 21 chapters, and Ezra: 10 chapters, giving us a nice convenient chapter a day to read for January. Please do let me know how you get on.

### Private devotion during Advent

Here is a reminder of the two books I suggested you might like to read during Advent. There are of course many others that might appeal.

Alongside the reading of the Gospel of Matthew, you may like to read: *Advent for Everyone: A Journey Through Matthew* by Tom Wright. The other is *The Meaning is in the Waiting: The Spirit of Advent* by Paula Gooder.

### Ongoing midweek activities on Zoom

We are continuing Morning and Evening Prayer and the Benefice Book Group on Zoom as detailed. Please do get in touch with Anthea for invitations if you wish to be included.

	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Morning Prayer at 9am		√		√
Evening Prayer at 6pm	√		√	
Benefice Book Group at 7.30pm			√	

Please note that there will be a break over the Christmas/New Year period after Morning Prayer on 23 December. Everything will start again on 10 January.

### Book Group

Having had a short break between books, the Book Group starts meeting again in Advent, starting on 1 December to read *The Meaning is in the Waiting: The Spirit of Advent* by Paula Gooder. It meets virtually by Zoom on a Thursday evening at 7.30pm for an hour.

In January, beginning 12 January, we will be starting our next new book: *God's biker: motorcycles and misfits* by Sean Stillman.

So these are great times to join us if you have not been before. Please do get in touch with Anthea if you would like to come along virtually. All are welcome.

## Diary dates for children and family church activities

Please refer to the list of church services on page 5 for further details, including start times. More information about these activities can be found at [www.fourparishes.org.uk/children-and-families](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk/children-and-families).

Please always look out for email updates.

Children's Service at St Nicolas	Messy Church	Family Church
4 December		
11 December Joint Christmas Party (see facing page)		
	8 January	22 January
5 February	12 February	26 February
5 March	12 March	26 March

## Children's autumn craft workshops



The second of Betty Dye's autumn craft workshops for children took place in Beckley Church on Remembrance Day (Friday 11 November). After a great deal of drawing, cutting, gluing and pinning, glittering medals and poppies were produced. Once again, the children enjoyed the activities and the parents had time for a good catch-up. The photos show some of the activity and outcomes.

**On Friday 2 December at 3.30pm in Beckley Church, we invite you to join us for the Christmas Workshop** which will be dedicated to making angels and baubles of every size imaginable. Please do come and join us and be part of the fun!

**There are only 15 places available this time, so please book in by emailing Betty beforehand at [betty.dye10@gmail.com](mailto:betty.dye10@gmail.com). Thank you.**

## Children's Christmas Party 11 December 4pm Stanton Village Hall

The Children's Benefice Service, Messy Church and Family Church are jointly hosting a Christmas party. **All are welcome, whether you have attended the Children's Church activities before or not.** There will be party games, Christmas crafts, music and nibbles. We really hope you will come along and join the fun!

**Dress code: please feel free to dress up as your favourite nativity character or wear your favourite party clothes!**

It would be really helpful, if you are planning to come along, if you could let us know, so we make sure there is enough food and craft activity provisions. Please email Laura at [mamancoton@gmail.com](mailto:mamancoton@gmail.com) or Anthea at [anthea@fourparishes.org.uk](mailto:anthea@fourparishes.org.uk).

**Please note: children must be accompanied by an adult.**

## Home Group Study on Romans

The study group looking at the Book of Romans is continuing on a Monday afternoon at 2pm at Studley Farm House, Horton-cum-Studley. The book of Romans is a hefty tome which takes some unpacking! The group is taking a break over Christmas. The last meeting before Christmas is on 5 December, and it starts up again on 16 January. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Annie Payne by email at [anniefpayne@gmail.com](mailto:anniefpayne@gmail.com). All are welcome.

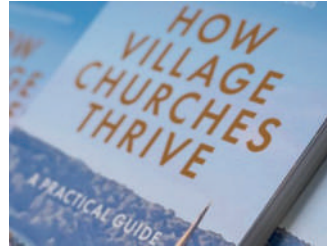
## Prayers for Peace

As the war continues in Ukraine, we continue to pray for peace. We meet for 15 minutes at 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays in December and January across the benefice as follows:

Beckley	7, 17 December	4, 14 January
Forest Hill	10, 28 December	7, 25 January
Horton-cum-Studley	14, 24 December	11, 21 January
Stanton St John	3, 21, 31 December	18, 28 January

## How Village Churches Thrive

'How Village Churches Thrive' is a new resource book published by Church House Publishing and is being promoted and used by the Diocese of Oxford to give ideas, and to help conversations, in rural church communities like ours, as we look to what we might do to help our village churches thrive.



There is currently a 'Diocese of Oxford monthly read-along' on Zoom, which if you are interested you can register for and see further information at [oxford.anglican.org/news/how-village-churches-thrive](https://oxford.anglican.org/news/how-village-churches-thrive)

The book has many practical ideas, while recognising that there are limited numbers of people in villages like ours with the time and energy to do a lot, especially post Covid.

We are hoping to run a Benefice Lent course in the new year based on this book, and the ideas in it, where we can deepen the conversation in our own context. When we meet we will be discussing chapters with intriguing titles like *Extending a Warm Welcome*, *Celebrating Our Heritage* and *Making the Most of Life Events*. Copies of the book will be available to order beforehand to everyone that lets us know they are planning to come. Each chapter is quite short, full of practical suggestions for us to consider.

We will meet 7.30-9pm each Wednesday during Lent (so 1 to 29 March), but don't worry if you cannot come every Wednesday, as each evening will be stand alone. We will be in a warm village hall with refreshments provided. If you are interested in joining us, please do get in touch with Anthea or Hugh Lee.

\* \* \* \* \*

## GENERAL

### Flowers for Ukraine



A big thank you to everyone who has bought flowers from me this year - between us, we have raised £1000 for DEC Ukraine. A special thank you to my most regular customer, who most weeks bought bouquets to give to friends.

I will be back next year with more beautiful blooms, beginning with tulips in April. If you want to see what I'm growing and planning for the upcoming seasons you can follow my exploits on Instagram at [@smallspaceflowers](https://www.instagram.com/smallspaceflowers).

*Catherine Rye - Stanton St John*

### Have your say: response letter

John Hazell from Stanton St John wrote to us after reading last month's article about Thames Water. John's letter is reproduced below.

*Following on from the article in the last magazine, submitted by David Radford and Stephanie Kitchen. I would like to express my appreciation of their succinct expression, and accurate summary of my own long held sentiments. I also think they could easily be applied to all of our nationalised public services.*

*By coincidence, 'Private Eye' ran an article that week on privatised water companies, their performances and the salaries of their COE's... Thames Water was the worst performing with their Chief Exec. receiving in excess of £2m... Yes, that's Two Million pounds, per annum.*

*During the last year 1 trillion litres\* of water were lost overall through leaks.*

*Good job we still [at the time of writing] have a hose pipe ban in place!*

*\*Source: 'Private Eye' issue 1582 23 Sept - 8 Oct 2022*

If you would like an opportunity to comment further or to 'Have your Say' on a completely different subject, please send us an article by 15 January.



## 'Feeding Birds in Winter'

by Lyn Ebbs

'A little hungry robin chirruped on the twigs of the leafless cherry tree... having crumbled a morsel of roll, I was tugging at the sash to put out the crumbs on the window-sill, ...I wanted the bird to be secure of its bread.' This vivid little sketch from 'Jane Eyre' is confirmation that the impulse to feed birds in winter is not a recent one.

Siskin - Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)

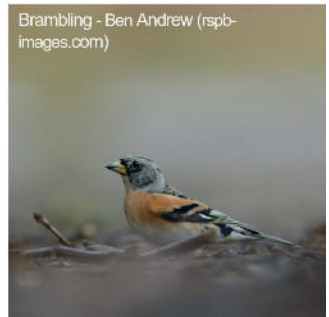


We've moved on a long way from feeding scraps though and the bird food industry is now big business. But there are many leftovers that your garden birds will appreciate. Crumbled bread is suitable in small quantities and brown bread is better than white. Don't make it the only foodstuff you leave out though as it lacks protein and fat.

We may aim to cut down on food waste but it is hard not to over-cater at Christmas. Pastry, cooked or uncooked, is excellent for birds - especially if it has been made with real fats - so keep the offcuts from mince pie making or crumble up a stale one. Dried fruits, such as raisins, sultanas and currants are particularly enjoyed by blackbirds, song thrushes and robins so maybe put a few aside to share after making Christmas cakes or puddings.

Apples, pears and other fruit, including bruised and part rotten ones, cut up, are very popular with all thrushes, tits and starlings, (but discard fruits that are actually mouldy). Cold roast potatoes, baked potatoes (cold and opened up), and even mashed potatoes with added real fats are all suitable food for birds.

Brambling - Ben Andrew (rspb-images.com)



There are also some items that you should definitely not put out for birds. Fat from cooking is bad for them. The problem being that meat juices blend with the fat and, when set, has a consistency making it prone to smearing, not good for birds' feathers. Never put out salted food on the bird table, and never add salt to bird baths to keep water ice-free in the winter.



Remember to keep your garden birds fit, healthy and disease-free by keeping feeders, bird tables and bird baths squeaky clean.

This month's images are of some birds that we might see over the winter though not necessarily in our gardens. Siskins, looking like small dainty greenfinches, usually show up towards the end of winter. Their food likes are similar to goldfinches' but they also enjoy the tiny, cone-like fruits on alder trees, which in winter open up to release their seeds.



Blackcap © Lyn Ebbs

Blackcaps are summer migrants that are rewriting the field guides by staying on, or arriving as winter visitors from mainland Europe. They will appreciate any fruit that you put out and, despite their size, can be determined defenders of a food source they take a liking to.

Whether we see many bramblings is dependent on how good the food supply is at home. If there is a shortage of beech mast in southern Scandinavia, or if the snow is too heavy for birds to feed, huge numbers can move here, feeding mainly on nuts, seeds and berries. You might be lucky enough to spot one among chaffinches in your garden or among the flocks of small birds that feed alongside the hide at Otmoor in winter.

One species that always causes excitement among birdwatchers is another occasional winter visitor, the waxwing. They attract notice when they appear, often in roadside trees or in supermarket car parks. This particular one was photographed in Marston Road!



Waxwing © Reg Cox

Two dates for your 2023 diaries: Peter Barker is talking about Otmoor to RSPB Oxford Local Group at Sandhills School on 12 January at 7.45pm. And the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch will take place over the weekend 27-29 January. Help find out how our garden birds are faring by counting the birds in your garden. What will you see in an hour?

*Lyn Ebbs has lived in Stanton St John for 34 years and has been volunteering at the RSPB Otmoor Reserve at Otmoor Lane, Beckley, since 2009.*

## ‘Knowing our Neighbours’: Marie Bradley



There can't be many people in the Four Parishes who have spent five years training the Duke of Edinburgh's polo ponies at Windsor castle and worked for the NHS in Oxford as a VD contact tracer. One person who did both things, and a lot more besides, is Marie Bradley who lives in Forest Hill and for the last 23 years has also worked as a consultant child psychotherapist.

Marie was born in 1945 on the west coast of Scotland but didn't stay long. Her father was a Flight Sergeant in the Royal Air Force and the family went to Egypt and then to Germany for four years. Germany was still then in ruins and Marie recalls playing in the street with German kids. "We'd chase and capture them, enacting death and destruction, though with no losers. This is how kids make sense of a traumatised society. For me it triggered an interest in psychology that I've had all my life." Spending her childhood in the British colonies and being the oldest of eight children, two of whom died, also had a profound effect on the course of her life.

In the 1950s the family moved to Malta and here she discovered horses and riding in the stables run by Herbie Moore, an Equerry to Prince Philip. After her O-levels he told Marie he might have a small job for her. "I was 15 years old and only looked about 10, but nonetheless was sent to England and an interview at Buckingham Palace. I was handed some jodhpurs and told to ride around a school whilst being watched from a balcony above. 'You'll do', they said, 'wait here', picked up the phone and rang Windsor Castle.

On my first day at work someone shouted: 'Sir's coming!' Terrified I ran into the tack room and hid behind a pile of polo sticks, not realising that my feet were showing. I heard someone come in. 'Well, well, what do we have here?' It was Prince Philip. 'Mmmorning Sir', I stuttered. 'Welcome to the team', he said, and that was that".

At Windsor Castle Marie worked directly for the Prince and was responsible for three horses: schooling, riding out every day around the Great Park and to the polo fields. "He was a very nice boss and charming. The team lived in a flat in the castle, with a lovely housekeeper but only ventured further for the annual servants' ball!

The experience opened Marie's eyes to a world and people she'd never encountered before - educated and interesting people - and the potential of what you could do with your life. In the mid 1960's Marie volunteered in the local hospital and decided then to train as a nurse. "I had few entry requirements, but I did have unusual experience, and a reference from my employer - the Duke of Edinburgh - I was accepted!"

After training at Guys Hospital Marie specialised in dialysis and transplantation. It was right at the beginning of that kind of medicine and was very exciting. For two years she taught patients how to use dialysis machines at home. "If you are teaching people to use new and complicated equipment that keeps them alive you encounter a lot of anxiety and a lot of courage and this work deepened my interest in psychology."

With these experiences Marie travelled to South Africa, Botswana and Rhodesia. In Cape Town she got a job at the Groote Schuur Hospital where pioneering work in transplantation was happening. In South Africa Marie did a degree in psychology and social anthropology, returning to Oxford for family reasons. There she took a job as a Contact Tracer in the VD clinic in Oxford in 1976 which proved fascinating and moving. "Here we began to encounter unusual and resistant diseases which were the precursors to the AIDS epidemic."

Wanting to understand more of the human side of such trauma. Marie then did an MSc at Jesus College Oxford in Social Psychology, Social Policy and Social Work, going on to become a Social Worker with children and families in Oxfordshire. This eventually led to her training at the Tavistock Clinic as a child psychotherapist. She worked in the NHS in central London and continues now in Oxford.

"Key moments in my life have coloured what became important to me," Marie says. "Being a child of the armed forces, always on the move, experiencing other cultures all contributed to my abiding interest in how early experience colours life. I have had many wonderful opportunities and some difficult times too, but a rich and full life"

Marie now trains and supervises young psychotherapists. Six grandchildren, two dogs and playing the clarinet in a wonderful band continue to bring joy.

*Jonathan Barker*

We know this winter will be a challenging time for residents across Oxfordshire. As a county council, we've introduced a number of initiatives to help local people - particularly the vulnerable - as they face the combination of inflation and the rising cost of energy. More information about these can be found at <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cost-of-living-help/>

But on a practical level, we recognise that for many, it's hard to know where to turn - and they need support in knowing whether they need local, county or even national advice. We're working with city and district councils to help signpost residents - so they can access the services and organisations that can help.

On our dedicated cost of living page <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/living> residents can find out the latest national and county advice and the organisations that can help, as well as information on key district and city support.

### The Ox-Cam Arc by another name?

News in an earlier Four Parishes Magazine of the demise of the Ox-Cam Arc was premature. During her brief spell at the helm, Prime Minister Liz Truss said that she would fund in full East-West Rail and it was even rumoured that the entire Arc project was to receive a boost in the September mini budget.

What the new administration under Prime Minister Sunak will make of the Arc remains to be seen. Michael Gove's return to the Department for Levelling Up and the predicted shortage of Government funding for any Ministry activity suggests bleak prospects for the Arc. Two Oxfordshire District Councils, South Oxfordshire (SODC) and Vale of White Horse (VOWH), have officially withdrawn from the key Arc Leadership Group, with VOWH Leader Emily Smith, stating "we cannot justify continuing to spend money and time on a project that does not guarantee tangible benefit to our residents."

Visit [stopthearc.org/](http://stopthearc.org/) for all the latest news and updates.

*David Rogers* [david.rogers@biology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:david.rogers@biology.ox.ac.uk)

## Christmas and New Year Bin Collections

South Oxfordshire District Council will not be sending out leaflets this year to inform residents of changes to bin collection day over the Christmas holidays. The Waste Collections Calendar can be downloaded from the SODC website <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/>.

## Macmillan Cancer Support, "Follow-the-Stars" Carol Concert Christ Church Cathedral, 9 December

A star-studded evening with readings by Kirsty Young, Toby Jones, Shaun Evans and Sally Phillips. These will be interspersed with spine-tingling music performed by Oxford's world-class vocal ensemble, the Oxford Bach Soloists, conducted by the award-winning Tom Hammond-Davies.

The Cathedral will be lit by candles creating a magical Christmas atmosphere. By joining us and being part of this glorious evening, you will help fundraise and support people living with cancer and their families to receive the physical, financial and emotional support they need.

100% of your donation will immediately go to Macmillan Cancer Support. BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW - <https://www.ticketsoxford.com/events/follow-the-stars-macmillan-carols-2>

The Benefice Children's Church, Messy Church & Family Church  
Warmly invite all families & children  
To a  
Christmas Party  
On Sunday 11th December  
4pm, Stanton Village Hall  
Party games, songs & food  
Dress code: nativity costume  
or party clothes  
RSVP: Laura or Anthea  
Mamancoton@gmail.com  
Anthea@fourparishes.org.uk

## BECKLEY

### Beckley Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 14**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

A summary of all Christmas services and events in the Four Parishes can be found on the back cover of this magazine.

### Remembrance Sunday

On Remembrance Sunday twenty people, including children, gathered in the churchyard for the Act of Remembrance, led by The Reverend Stephanie Bullock. The Roll of Honour was read out, and crosses in memory of those who lost their lives in the Great War were placed round the memorial tree. It was, as always, a deeply moving occasion, intensified by the bugle call of the Last Post and Reveille, beautifully played again by John Stradling. Afterwards the service of Morning Prayer continued in the church. We sang the National Anthem, for the King rather than the Queen for the first time for 70 years!

Betty Dye has sent us some personal reflections on the service:

*“Remembrance Sunday at Beckley church, 13th November at 11am: the music of the Last Post rises and falls, each note swelling and then dying away. Above are branches of the holly tree already festooned with red berries and above that the bluest of skies with tiny wisps of cloud. And then the words ‘For your tomorrow, we gave our today.’ The small but growing group around the scattered wooden crosses are silent. I have no relatives who have died as a result of war but the dreadful poignancy of those moments bring tears sliding down my cheeks. ‘We will remember them’; from the youngest in a pushchair to the very old, the feeling of respect and reverence is palpable. Of all the services held by the church this must be one of the most moving.”*

### Carols and Claret Sunday 18 December 6pm

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone to our wonderful celebration of Christmas with carols and readings by candlelight, followed by mulled wine and mince pies. *(continued on next page)*



The church may be chilly, so do wrap up well, and although the candlelight is beautiful, it can be difficult in some parts of the church to see to read the carol sheets, so do bring a torch if you wish. This year we will not be having a separate choir - the choir members will be among the congregation.

## Christmas Eve

Any parent or grandparent knows the way PRESSURE builds up for children on Christmas eve afternoon. If you are dreading that time, never fear: bring your little ones to the **Christmas Eve Messy Church** at Beckley Church from 3 to 4pm on 24 December, where they will be well entertained for an hour with a few carols, a short story time and a lot of running about. We will try to accommodate all ages. If anyone would like to lend a hand at this event please let me know, as I do not think I can manage on my own.

Betty Dye [betty.dye10@gmail.com](mailto:betty.dye10@gmail.com)

## Visiting Beckley Church

Don't forget that our church is open every day for everyone, and you are welcome to come in at any time, to look at the medieval wall paintings and the windows, and perhaps to pray, or just sit in peace and contemplation, and take in the particular atmosphere of tranquillity and sacredness.

Some comments from the Visitors' Book this year:

*Thank you for keeping this beautiful church open*

*So peaceful and unexpected*

*Thank you for this place of prayer and peace*

*A truly spiritual experience*

*Your church is amazing - God bless all*



### Children's Christmas Workshop



If you want to make an ANGEL and your very own designed CHRISTMAS TREE BAUBLE to take home, make sure you are in Beckley Church on

**Friday 2 December from 3.30pm until 4.30pm.**

Bring an adult with you. Only 15 places available this time, so you need to book a place by emailing me beforehand.

[betty.dye10@gmail.com](mailto:betty.dye10@gmail.com)

## Beckley and Area Community Benefit Society Ltd More than a Pub program. <https://bacbs.org/events>

Our programme has been expanding, and we have more and more people participating. In October we had a Sunday talk, a poetry evening, a coffee morning, a walk, and a pub quiz. Between now and Christmas there'll be most of these, plus a children's craft session and a bake-in. We hope there is something to suit everyone, but do please let us know if you think of something else we could be doing (and preferably that you could help with!).

Steve Hyde's talk at the end of October made some of the science and ethics of medical gene therapy both accessible and entertaining. Medical therapy is mostly aimed at rare diseases - rare because not very many people have them, but not at all rare when you know how many different rare diseases there are. Steve pointed out that most of us know someone with a rare, debilitating and often fatal disease, very often children. And also that most of us, unbeknown to us, have experienced a kind of gene therapy - the Covid vaccine. Steve's own research focuses on cystic fibrosis, and he was able to show us how gene therapy promises to revolutionise the treatment and prognosis of this horrible disease.

Most of our previous Sunday evening talks are recorded. Visit the BACBS website to find out how to watch a recording ([bacbs.org/events](https://bacbs.org/events)).

Upcoming talks (6.30pm on the last Sunday of the month: no talk in December)

### **Sunday 29 January, 6.30pm.**

*Eve bites back...An alternative History of English Literature.*

**Anna Beer** will talk about her book, placing the female contemporaries of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton centre stage in the history of English literature.



Anna is a British author who is particularly interested in the relationship between literature, politics and history. She is a Visiting Fellow at Kellogg College, University of Oxford.

*(continued on next page)*



### **Sunday 26 February, 6.30pm**

Michael Beverly *Walking on Water - how your joints work and why they get arthritis*

### **Sunday 26 March, 6.30pm**

Andy Carr on Placebos in medicine

### **Sunday 30 April, 6.30pm**

Anna Stevens on items from the Ashmolean

### **Family activities**

11 December, 6.30pm Christmas bake-in with Sapna - on Zoom!

### **Pub quiz**

7.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month in the bar at The Abingdon Arms.

### **Coffee mornings**

11am on the first Monday of every month. Come and join us at The Abingdon Arms for coffee, cake, and a chat.

## **Beckley & Stowood Parish Council**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 1 December at 8pm at Beckley Village Hall**. The meeting in January will be held on Thursday 12 January 2023 at 8pm at Beckley Village Hall. Any changes to the published meeting dates will be on the website [www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk](http://www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk).

The Clerk's email address is [clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk) and Parish Council information can be found on the website.

For information on Beckley Village Hall please see [www.beckleyvillagehall.org](http://www.beckleyvillagehall.org) and to enquire about a booking please contact Sarah Kearney, at [booking@beckleyvillagehall.org](mailto:booking@beckleyvillagehall.org).

Christmas bin collection date changes can be found on the Beckley website. Garden waste collections are suspended over the holiday period to concentrate on Christmas waste collections. Collections resume in South Oxfordshire w/c 9 January 2023. For more information, please see the garden waste page on the SODC website.

## FOREST HILL

### News from St Nicolas Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 14**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

A summary of all Christmas services and events in the Four Parishes can be found on the back cover of this magazine.

### Plant and Produce Stall

Thank you to everyone who contributed and/or bought plants, jam and preserves and fresh garden produce from Jane Walker's Saturday stall outside Lyttleton, Main Street. The stall ran from April until October and raised £573.02p for St Nicolas Church.

### Remembrance Sunday

Over thirty people gathered at the War Memorial in the Cemetery to join in the Act of Remembrance, led by The Reverend Hugh Lee. The Last Post and The Reveille were beautifully played by Hannah Scott, who also accompanied the hymns, along with Julia Stutfield on tenor recorder. The names from the War Memorial were read by Peter Stutfield and Fleur Stanier, and Andrew Waite Brown, Chairman of Forest Hill Parish Council, laid a sustainable wreath, created by Forest Hill Flowers.

The evening concert in St Nicolas Church featured music from Naomi Hinks, Julie Osborne, Joe Burgess and Peter and Julia Stutfield, interspersed with some moving poetry readings, and community singing. A total of £232 was raised for DEC Ukraine and The Royal British Legion.

### St Nicolas Day Children's Service, Sunday 4 December

Meet at 2.45pm in Forest Hill Village Hall, to make a Christingle, then process with your candles to St Nicolas Church at 4pm for a short service with stories and songs, and a St Nicolas tradition - chocolate coins in your shoe!

Small noisy children are welcome, as well as older ones, but all must be accompanied by an adult. To find out more, contact Julia Stutfield on 07766 103427 or [julia.stutfield@gmail.com](mailto:julia.stutfield@gmail.com).

Christingle Workshop for Children,  
Forest Hill Village Hall

Sunday 4 December 2.45pm

For more information contact  
Julia Stutfield 07766 103427 or [julia.stutfield@gmail.com](mailto:julia.stutfield@gmail.com)  
or Jane Walker 01865 872399



### Decorating the Church for Christmas, Friday 23 December

We have a small group of regular helpers but we should love some younger people to join us, and perhaps help to decorate the Christmas tree. There are no flowers in church during Advent so there is always an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation when we come together to decorate the church for Christmas. Please get in touch with Jane Walker on 01865 872399 or [lyttleton@btinternet.com](mailto:lyttleton@btinternet.com) or just come along to St Nicolas Church at 10.30am. There is no need to bring anything as there will be plenty of greenery and flowers to go round and we have a box of decorations available.

### 2023 dates for your diary

#### Epiphany Carol Service, Sunday 8 January 6pm

A carefully chosen selection of readings and carols to celebrate the Feast of Epiphany and the journey to Bethlehem of the three wise men (also known as the Magi or the Three Kings).

#### Candlemas, Sunday 29 January 4pm

This beautiful candlelight service celebrates the presentation of Christ in the Temple, and his acknowledgement by the aged Simeon in the moving words of the *Nunc Dimittis*, which we sing every month at Choral Evensong. This year, the service is at the earlier time of 4pm, which we hope will be welcome.

May we wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year to follow.

## Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on **Thursday 15 December at 7pm in Forest Hill Village Hall.**

Current Agendas and Minutes are posted on the notice board outside the Village Hall. Archived Agendas and Minutes can be found on the website [www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover/index.asp](http://www.parish-council.com/foresthillwithshotover/index.asp).

You can contact the Clerk by email at [theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org](mailto:theclerk@foresthillwithshotover-pc.org) or telephone 0844 884 3328, between 9am and 5pm.

## Forest Hill Village Hall

If you would like to hire the village hall, please contact Dawn Dunbar either by email at [dunbardawn@ymail.com](mailto:dunbardawn@ymail.com) or on 07527 732050. The hall is hired out at a cost of £10 per hour.



## Carol Singing at Forest Hill Village Hall

Thursday 22 December 6pm

Come along to the village hall to sing or listen to your favourite carols and get in the mood for Christmas. Words and music will be provided and there are likely to be some seasonal refreshments as well! We may also be singing carols around the village so wrap up warmly and bring a torch, if you would like to do that too! Contact Julia Stutfield 07766 103427 or [julia.stutfield@gmail.com](mailto:julia.stutfield@gmail.com) with questions or offers of help.



# HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

## News from St Barnabas

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 14**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

A summary of all Christmas services and events in the Four Parishes can be found on the back cover of this magazine.

Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the Carol Service.

## Crib Service, Christmas Eve at 4pm

I am looking for children to help me at the Crib Service: some to bring up figures from the Christmas story, and some who are happy to read a short prayer or reading; you won't be alone as I will be with you! If you are happy to help please let me know. We have missed out on two years of Crib Services due to Covid, so let's make this one a huge success. Please get in touch with me (Lyn Whitaker) on 07795 550851 or [lyndawhitaker@btinternet.com](mailto:lyndawhitaker@btinternet.com).

## Coffee and Chat

We are starting monthly, coffee and chat mornings in the Church on the 2nd Saturday of each month, starting 10 December, 10am-noon. Do pop down to share an hour or so with neighbours. If you wish to give a donation to church funds, that would be wonderful, but these coffee mornings are intended to be more about meeting and keeping in touch than for raising money. The next coffee and chat will be Saturday 14 January, 10am-noon.

## Horton-cum-Studley Village Christmas Party

### Wednesday 21 December 7pm at the Millennium Village Hall

All welcome. Children's Christmas fancy dress competition - Carol singing and entertainments - MVH bar. For further details please contact Nick Mynheer on 01865 351340.

## Poppy Appeal 2022

The sum of £920.97 was collected around the Village of Horton-cum-Studley this year. Thanks go to those who collected and all who gave to the charity.

## Update on our Ukranian visitors



It has been some time since we updated the villages on our Ukrainian guests, many of whom have been here for 6+ months. Three families finally chose not to come to the UK.

With the support of Beckley and Wheatley Park schools all the children have local places and have been able to take advantage of the bus services.

Most, if not all, of the women of working age have work either locally or in Oxford. English lessons have continued for some in Barton, or courtesy of language schools offering places, or from people giving their time on a one-to-one basis. This has made an enormous difference to our mutual understanding and their confidence. Some now have their own transport.

Two families have returned to Ukraine by choice. Some have made, or are planning, return visits to be able to meet with family members just across the border from Poland. Three of the families have recently sought independence and moved into private rented accommodation. This was achieved with a significant amount of support from their host families, and also from the wider community who furnished the properties, moved furniture, or supplied needed items.

Thank you to all those who have contributed. We are also grateful to Michal Gogut, our Ukrainian link worker at Cherwell District Council, who organised a very useful meeting with plenty of time for Q & As for guests and hosts to understand more about the options and process for taking the step into rented property, especially for those families who want to share to reduce costs.

We continue to be blessed by the support of many in the villages who help out with lifts (some on a very regular basis), who support with other forms of kindness, too numerous to mention, and the many organisations and individuals that have provided music lessons, tennis lessons, entertainment and much more at no or low cost.

The four parishes can be very proud of what they have achieved and the difference they have made to the lives of 18 Ukrainian families this year. At the same time the presence of these families has added to community life in schools, clubs, friendship groups and the wider village. Thank you to all of you who have played a part.

*Lisa Mynheer*

## Obituary

Some people reading this will remember Mark and Keith who used to run the Kings Arms pub prior to it becoming the Otmoor Lodge and will be saddened to hear that Keith passed away in November. Mark and Keith had spent the last few years in Brighton which is where the funeral will have taken place. Mark has asked Sara Mander that this news is shared with our village community.

## Parish Council news

Oxford County Council are holding a meeting on 17 November, at which the proposed 20 mph speed limited should be approved. The new speed limited should be in place early in 2023.

The PC would like to invite all Parishioners to the next Parish Council meeting, which will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 8 December. The PC will be providing mulled wine/soft drinks, and mince pies to all who attend. RSVP to Alexia the Parish Clerk if you wish to attend [hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com)



After the huge disappointment of having to cancel the race in June, the Otmoor Challenge committee are working really hard to put things in place to ensure we have a race next year. For the latest updates please continue to follow our website [www.otmoorchallenge.co.uk](http://www.otmoorchallenge.co.uk).

We are always looking for new volunteers to help and so please reach out if you could spare some time.

Best Wishes & Happy Holidays

*Nick Tribble (Chairman, OCA)*

[runners@otmoorchallenge.co.uk](mailto:runners@otmoorchallenge.co.uk)

## Horton-cum-Studley Gardening Club

With Hallowe'en behind us, the clocks turned back and Christmas lights appearing in the shops, there may seem little to look forward to (garden-wise) until the snowdrops appear. Making a plan for year-round colour is great fun, if a little daunting, given the huge range of possibilities available.

Doing your homework on soil type and preferred location for new plantings will perhaps narrow the choices a little. It's worth thinking about scent, too. A strategically-placed shrub (e.g. *Lonicera x purpusii* 'Winter Beauty', or *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Deben') near a door or window can bring a whiff of delight to the dullest winter's day. Heavenly bamboo (*nandina domestica*) is not actually a bamboo, but a non-invasive berberis, with fiery red and golden foliage and berries offering colour from autumn through to spring. Apparently, deer and rabbits steer clear of it too, which might be music to the ear of some gardeners.

Other shrubs are grown for their vibrant stems. *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire' dogwood does well in damp soil, as does *Salix alba britzensis* (Scarlet Willow), which can be coppiced to keep it to the size of a multi-stemmed shrub.

As a newbie gardener, getting spring bulbs into the ground in the late autumn, my biggest concern is how to keep squirrels and mice at bay. There are lots of tips out there, but I'm opting for a policy of 'safety-in-numbers', having taken advantage of some great online offers, and hope that enough make it through the winter to provide plenty of colour when Spring arrives.

**The Club Annual General Meeting takes place at the Millennium Hall at 8pm on 17 January** and we are hoping, not only to welcome new members, but also for a couple of people to join the Committee, so that we can ensure the Club enters the New Year in rude good health!

Very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to one and all.

*Melanie Jones, Chair*

Tel: 07766 708303, email: [mjcbt2013@gmail.com](mailto:mjcbt2013@gmail.com)



## Launton & Otmoor District Update

### The Local Plan

Local Plans are used to help decide on planning applications and other planning related decisions. In effect, they are the local guide to what can be built where, shaping infrastructure investments and determining the future pattern of development in the district. They are vitally important as they set out some rules for how the area develops, and crucially, how those plans will affect you as residents.

CDC is currently preparing the new Local Plan for Cherwell which will set out how the district should be developed over the next 15 years, in line with national policy and legislation. The consultation period for the plan will be 14 December - 8 February and the plan can change based on feedback from this. It is important to note that after this period it will not be possible to change the plan. More information is available on CDC's dedicated page at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/homepage/27/local-plans>

### Voter Identification - May 2023 Elections

Although things can change (and seem to do so with alarming frequency at the moment!) there is a current plan to require photo-based identification for the local elections in May 2023. Although that seems far away, you will need to have this in order to vote, so your polling card or just popping to the polling station will no longer be accepted. There is more information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/voter-identification-faqs>.

As mentioned, this is subject to change, but we feel making you aware of this, regardless of the political questions around it, is important so do keep an eye out for more information and we will advise you how to get a free ID card when we know the process if you don't have anything currently in the list.

### That's it!

Thank you for reading all the way to the bottom if you have! Please do get in touch on 01869 717712 or via email at [gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk) or [angus.patrick@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:angus.patrick@cherwell-dc.gov.uk).

## STANTON ST JOHN

### Stanton Church

Details of all church services and general church news can be found on **pages 5 - 14**. Any changes to the published schedule of services will be on our website [www.fourparishes.org.uk](http://www.fourparishes.org.uk).

A summary of all Christmas services and events in the Four Parishes can be found on the back cover of this magazine.

### Crib Service: Christmas Eve 24 December at 4pm

I am looking for children to help me at the Crib Service: some to bring up figures from the Christmas story, and some who are happy to read a short prayer or reading; you won't be alone, as I will be with you! If you are happy to help please let me know. We have missed out on two years of Crib Services due to Covid, so let's make this one a huge success. Please contact me (Anthea) on 01865 351839 or [anthea@fourparishes.org.uk](mailto:anthea@fourparishes.org.uk).

### Monthly Coffee Mornings in Stanton Village Hall

Come for tea, coffee and cake, 10.30am-12pm on the following dates! Everyone is welcome.

**7 December**

**11 January**

**8 February**

For further details, please contact Sue Baker 01865 351449 /Sarah Coyne 01865 358876.

## STANTON ST JOHN CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



**Friday 9 December at 6pm**  
**Millennium Green, Stanton St John**



Lighting of Tree and Carol Singing

Mulled Cider and Hot Dogs

Christmas Crafts Sale in Village Hall

**Hamper Raffle Tickets available in Village Shop (from 29 Nov)**

**CAROLS AT STANTON  
ST JOHN CHURCH  
10TH DEC 5PM - 6PM  
THE SHOTOVER SINGERS  
COME, SING, AND  
LISTEN TOGETHER**

WELL KNOWN CAROLS FOR YOU TO JOIN IN WITH AND  
GET INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.  
ADMISSION FREE  
DONATIONS TO CHURCH FUNDS GRATEFULLY RECEIVED  
FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT SUE BAKER  
SUSANBAKER24@GMAIL.COM



## Stanton St John WI

By the time this goes to print, we should be looking back with fond memories of our Centenary Party, and preparing for our next 100 years!

Our December meeting takes place on the second Tuesday of the month, to avoid too much happening close to Christmas. This year it falls on Tuesday 13 December. Our presentation/talk is by Gita Konschak who is a volunteer artist for the charity Supershoes. She will explain the ways in which they paint and gift shoes to Children fighting Cancer. As usual anyone who is interested in joining us for the talk may come along to the village hall at 7.30pm (we charge a nominal £4 to defray expenses).

The New Year begins with our special Open Meeting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall on Tuesday 18 January. We welcome visitors who would be interested in "The Most Heroic Failure of Modern Times", an illustrated talk about Shackleton's Antarctic by Jeremy Holmes. A £4 fee to defray expenses includes refreshments.

Contact details: [stantonstjohnwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk](mailto:stantonstjohnwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk).

## Flowers for Ukraine

A big thank you to everyone who has bought flowers from me this year - between us, we have raised £1000 for DEC Ukraine. I will be back next year with more beautiful blooms, beginning with tulips in April. If you want to see what I'm growing and planning for the upcoming seasons you can follow me on Instagram at [@smallspaceflowers](https://www.instagram.com/smallspaceflowers).  
*Catherine Rye*

## Film Nights at Stanton St John Village Hall

On either side of Christmas, the Stanton St. John Film Club presents two successful 2022 sequels:

### *Saturday 10 December Downton Abbey - A New Era*



*The Crawley family goes on a grand journey to the South of France to uncover the mystery of the dowager countess's newly inherited villa.*

### *Saturday 21 January Fisherman's Friends - One and All*



*Sequel to the hit comedy feature inspired by the real exploits of a group of singing fishermen*

Both films will start at 7.45 pm but doors will be open from 7pm. Before and after the film, delicious cakes and drinks are available whilst the bar will serve wines, mulled wines (Dec) and infamous Fisherman's Friends' shots (Jan). Since only 60 seats are available in the Village Hall, please reserve your seats for the screening as soon as possible by emailing Sue Baker ([susanjbaker24@gmail.com](mailto:susanjbaker24@gmail.com)) or in Stanton Village Shop. Tickets at £5 (cash only) will be sold at the door. Any profits raised will be used to enhance the Village Hall for future screenings.

### *Monday 2 January 2023 Encanto - Special Matinee for children*



*Disney film about a Colombian teenage girl, who has to face the frustration of being the only member of her family without magical powers.*

**Doors open from 2.30pm. See next page for further details.**

### *Encanto - Special Matinee for children (further details)*

Doors will be open from 2.30pm with film start at 3pm. Cakes and soft drinks will be available. Children will need to be accompanied by an adult. Children may come dressed up as Encanto or as their favourite film characters. Prizes for the best costumes.

Tickets (cash only) are £1 for a child and £3 for an adult. Since only 60 seats are available in the Village Hall, please reserve your seats asap for the screening via Sue Baker ([susanjbaker24@gmail.com](mailto:susanjbaker24@gmail.com)) or in the Village Shop.

### Stanton St John Parish Council

**The next meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 19 December in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm.** Meeting dates for 2023 will be published soon.

#### Parking in the village

If you or any visitors to your home need to park a vehicle outside your entrance or driveway, please keep in mind that full access through our village roads should be possible at all times. The Village Hall car park is a good option if you need extra space for visiting vehicles.

Many residents will have seen the recent gentle reminder from our school bus driver, pointing out that there needs to be room to drive a coach through Middle Road and round the corner into Cox Lane every morning and afternoon on school days (8.30am and 3.35pm), to avoid the coach being forced onto the verges.

#### Parish Council mailing list

If you would like to receive Parish Council notices, meeting agendas and minutes by email, please send a brief message to the clerk at [stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com](mailto:stantonstjohnpc@gmail.com). These are also available on the website at <http://www.parish-council.com/stantonstjohn/>. The most recent are posted on the notice boards outside the shop and Village Hall too.

#### Christmas trees

Many thanks to all those involved in organising the lovely Christmas tree which should be in place on the Millennium Green by the time of publication. At the end of the festive season there will be a collection point coned off in the Village Hall car park as usual, where (real wood) Christmas trees can be left for recycling. Please look out for notices/emails with dates.

## January Village Shop Window

Have you got any interesting items in good condition that you don't want but others might want to buy? If so, please bring to the Village Shop when it reopens in January.

These will be displayed in the Village Shop window and sold to raise money for Stanton Church.

## A date for 2023

**NINEBARROW: Stanton Church, Saturday 25 March 2023, 7.30pm**



The Dorset folk duo, return to Stanton St John to perform songs inspired by the landscape and history of the British Isles. Tickets (£16) are now on sale at [www.ninebarrow.co.uk/gigs](http://www.ninebarrow.co.uk/gigs). Tickets will also be available from Stanton Village Shop nearer the time or by contacting me directly.

*Julian Money (01865 351829 or [julianmoney@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:julianmoney@hotmail.co.uk))*

\* \* \* \* \*

### A Prayer for Ukraine

*As the war grinds on with no apparent end in sight, we continue to offer prayers in all our churches for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine.*

God of peace and justice,  
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.  
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.  
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,  
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.  
We pray for those with power over war or peace,  
for wisdom, discernment and compassion to guide their decisions.  
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,  
that you would hold and protect them.  
We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.  
Amen



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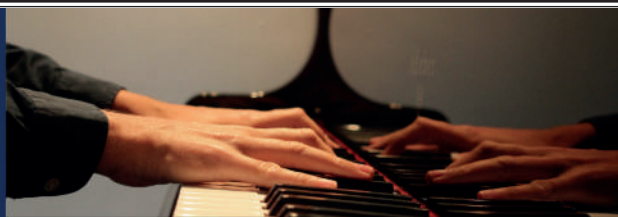
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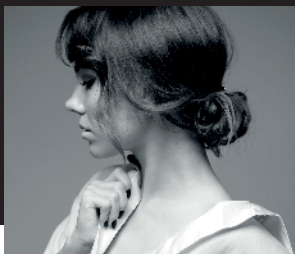
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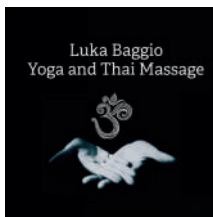
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## Christmas Services and Events in the Four Parishes



Date	Village	Event	Pages
2 Dec, 4pm	Beckley	Christmas Workshop for Children	12, 25
4 Dec, 2.45pm	Forest Hill	St Nicolas Christingle Workshop and Service	26
9 Dec, 6pm	Stanton	Christmas Lights	34
10 Dec, 5pm	Stanton	Christmas Carols with Shotover Singers	35
11 Dec, 4pm	Stanton	Benefice Children's Christmas Party	13
14 Dec, 7pm	Stanton	'Looking for the Light' Service	7
18 Dec, 3pm	Horton	Christmas Carol Service	
18 Dec, 6pm	Beckley	'Carols and Claret'	22, 23
18 Dec, 6pm	Stanton	Christmas Carol Service	
20 Dec, 7pm	Forest Hill	'Nine Lessons & Carols'	
21 Dec, 7pm	Zoom	Benefice Carol Service	
21 Dec, 7pm	Horton	Village Christmas Party	29
22 Dec, 6pm	Forest Hill	Village Hall Carol Singing	28
24 Dec, 4pm	All	Christmas Crib Services in all churches	23, 29, 34
24 Dec, 11pm	Stanton, Beckley	Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service	
25 Dec, 10am	Forest Hill, Horton	Christmas Morning Holy Communion Service	