

CHURCH NEWS AND VIEWS

Churchwardens news from Karen and Dick

We tried two different activities over the summer, both of which involved taking church out of our church! The first was a joint service initiative with our friends in Frankton; one service in July at Birdingbury and a service in August in Frankton. Both services were well attended so I expect we shall consider the same next summer. The second was when we met in Davenport Cottage garden (well, in a tent to avoid the downpour) on August 23rd for singing and tea. Calling it 'Your favourite hymns', we sang several verses of around 12 hymns, ranging from a stirring rendition of 'Jerusalem' to 'Make me a channel of your peace' and even a hymn sung to the tune of 'Land of hope and glory'. It was a very nice afternoon together.

Recently we were surprised and delighted to receive a bequest from our Reader, Elizabeth Kirk, who died last year. She, very generously, left a sum to each of the churches in the benefice specifically for the purchase of portable audio visual equipment to support our worship. This was a wonderful gesture by Elizabeth which will help us to fulfil our mission in local villages and enable us to be more creative and innovative. She also left an individual bequest to each church in our Draycote group. We continue to miss her wise and gifted ministry.

Plans for a WC and server unit are progressing. Our architect is working with us to produce specific plans which will then go to tender. Whilst we have been blessed with Elizabeth's bequest, we will need to create fund raising plans to bring these projects to fruition. We recently had our five-yearly building inspection and, thankfully, can report that there is minimal work required. This is a relief!

Our group Remembering service is on Sunday 1 November at 3pm at All Saint's, Stretton. We will remember all those in our benefice who have died during the past 12 months, together with any others whose names have been brought to our attention. If you would like a name/s read out then please add the details to the sheet in the back of church during October. After the service there will be refreshments in the village hall. The following Sunday, 8th November, we remember those who lost their lives fighting for our country in our annual Remembrance Service, starting at 10.15 in church and moving on to the War Memorial in good time for the 2 minutes' silence at 11.00.

We still have no parish priest 20 months on after Rev Barbara's retirement. This is a very long time, even by Church of England standards! Many people are working exceedingly hard to continue with our mission and ministry and we thank you all for your support. We hope to be in a position to advertise for a priest within the next few weeks, and are praying that God will nudge the right person in our direction.

OCTOBER and NOVEMBER SERVICES in Draycote Benefice Churches

Date	Place	Time	Service	Readings
Sun 4 Oct	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Holy Communion Evening Worship	
Sun 11 Oct	Stretton	10.30 am	Benefice Family Communion (hosted by Birdingbury)	<i>Hebrews Ch.4 vv 12 - end</i> <i>Mark Ch.10 vv 17 - 31</i>
Sun 18 Oct	Birdingbury Bourton Frankton Stretton	10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Morning Praise Morning Praise Morning Praise	<i>Hebrews Ch.5 vv 1 - 10</i> <i>Mark Ch.10 vv 35 - 45</i>
Sat 24 Oct	Stretton Village Hall	3.45 pm	'Celebrate@4'	
Sun 25 Oct	Birdingbury	10.30 pm 6.00 pm	Morning Praise Holy Communion	<i>Hebrews Ch.7 vv 23 - end</i> <i>Mark Ch.10 vv 46 - end</i>
Sun 1 Nov All Saints Day	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 10.30 am 3.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Holy Communion Remembering Service	
Sun 8 Nov Remembrance Sunday	Bourton Birdingbury Stretton	10.30 am 10.15 am 10.30 am	Remembrance HC Remembrance Service Remembrance Service	<i>Hebrews Ch.9 vv 24 - end</i> <i>Mark Ch.1 vv 14 - 20</i>
Sun 15 Nov	Birdingbury Bourton Frankton Stretton	10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Morning Praise Morning Praise Morning Praise	<i>Hebrews Ch.10</i> <i>vv 11 - 14 and 19 - 25</i> <i>Mark Ch.13 vv 1 - 8</i>
Sun 22 Nov	Birdingbury Stretton	10.30 am 6.00 pm	Morning Praise Holy Communion	<i>Revelation Ch.1 vv 4b - 8</i> <i>John Ch.18 vv 33 - 37</i>
Sat 28 Nov	Stretton Village Hall	3.45 pm	'Celebrate@4'	
Sun 29 Nov Advent Sunday	Birdingbury	10.30 am	Benefice Communion (preceded by walk from Frankton)	<i>1 Thessalonians Ch.3</i> <i>vv 9 - end</i> <i>Luke Ch.21 vv 25 - 36</i>

October and November St. Leonard's happenings

Saturday 24th October 12.30 —2.00 pm Church Café Italiano

Please put this date in your diary. See Birdsong for more details

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Sunday 29 November: A Pilgrimage Walk to St. Leonard's

There will be a pilgrimage walk from Frankton church to Birdingbury church as our small contribution to much larger and longer pilgrimages from all over Europe converging on Paris for the start of the critical UN Climate Change talks.

The walk, will start from Frankton church at 9.15am, walking mostly by footpath to St Leonard's and arriving in good time for bacon butties and coffee before the service at 10.30am. It is just over 1 mile and mostly downhill!

We are very pleased to welcome Revd Hugh Priestner, Chaplain to University Hospital, Coventry to lead this service. Please come: have a sociable walk, reward yourself with a bacon sandwich and listen to an inspiring speaker.

October and November events in Draycote Benefice

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| Thurs 1 Oct | 2.30pm | Service and Tea, Bourton, Frankton Village Hall |
| Wed 14 Oct | 10.30am | Home Communion at The Birbury, host Valerie Smith |
| Thurs 29 Oct | 10.30am | Coffee and Chat in The Birbury |
| Thurs 5 Nov | 2.30pm | Service and Tea, Bourton, Frankton Village Hall |
| Wed 11 Nov | 10.30am | Home Communion at Jenny Hawes', Gables House, Back Lane |
| Thurs 26 Nov | 10.30am | Coffee and Chat in The Birbury |

Food for Thought: Responding to the Refugee Crisis

Some of the people coming to Europe at the moment are on a journey that they are literally dying to make. This crisis is about global fairness: we have so much; they have so little. This issue goes to the heart of the biblical commandment to love our neighbours. Archbishop Justin Welby said 'We must break down the barriers, welcome strangers and love them as ourselves'. Canon Giles Fraser wrote, 'This is what church is about rather than bring a museum piece for the few'. We would do

well to remember that Jesus was also a refugee.

Some of the rhetoric is, I believe, unhelpful. Statements such as ‘swamped’, ‘full to bursting’ and ‘the collapse of European civilisation’ are emotive and exaggerated. I disagree with the Prime Minister of Hungary when he says, ‘Europe has a Christian culture and we should therefore not admit Muslim refugees’. I don’t see Europe as a continent with a Christian culture and would not want to see my own faith defined in such terms. This crisis is humanitarian and we should not be making judgements on the basis of faith.

In the Middle East and Europe we are seeing the biggest mass movement of people since the 2nd World War. We have a collective problem which will not be solved by piecemeal approaches. At the very least we need a European plan but it would be wise both for the present and future to work instead for global solutions. Furthermore, if we fail to limit carbon emissions, the number of migrants fleeing north to escape unliveable conditions will be on a scale that makes current problems seem relatively insignificant.

Churchwardens in the Draycote Group have discussed what we can do as a benefice and we plan to make an initial donation of £1000 to the International Red Cross. We chose the IRC as it is a global organisation working both in the camps for millions of displaced persons in countries adjacent to Syria and also responding daily to changing needs throughout Southern Europe.

You may wish to contact your MP, Jeremy Wright (jeremy@jeremywright.org.uk), or work through the ecumenical group Hope for the Future (www.hftl.org.uk) who offer help with lobbying politicians.

Dick Withington

Please feel free to contact us, your churchwardens Dick or Karen, anytime if you would like to talk to us. If you would like to talk with a priest, we will happily put you in touch with one. Our contact details are below.

St. Leonard’s contact information

Priest in Charge	(vacancy)		
Churchwardens	Dick Withington	01926 632644	dick@special-time.co.uk
	Karen Armbrister	01926632030	karen.armbrister@btinternet.com
Parish Office	Wendy Driscoll (Tues 9—11 am and Thurs 1.30—2.30 pm)	01926 632370	draycotegroup@tiscali.co.uk
Ch. News Editor	Aileen Withington	01926 632644	awchurchnews@hotmail.co.uk