

CHURCH NEWS AND VIEWS

Reverend Canon Barbara's letter

“One More Step Along The World I Go”

These are the opening words of a familiar hymn that is often sung at baptisms and weddings. As we progress through life we face many different “steps along the way”, some joyful, some challenging and some sad. Moving on to a different phase in our lives can feel quite scary, because we can often feel unsure in new situations. As a parish priest, I feel that it is a great privilege to be alongside people through the various changes in their life.

At the end of this school summer term many young people will be moving on to another school, leaving school or finishing their education. Here at Knightlow School in Draycote Benefice, there will be a special end of term service when our benefice will give a bible to each year six leaver. It is always a joy to be part of this service, to bless each child who is leaving, and to be part of their transition to secondary school knowing that they are well prepared for this next step in their life.

I write this letter on the day that some of the young people in our benefice are being confirmed. This is a significant day in the life of these young Christians as they make for themselves the promises that their godparents made for them when they were baptised.

Marriage is another significant “step along the world” and it is a particular privilege and a great joy to prepare couples for marriage and to be part of their special day.

Bereavement is of course a sad change in our lives and in our villages we are fortunate that there are usually many friends to support those who have been bereaved.

During these times of change in our lives it is important to realise that God is there with each one of us, we might not always be aware of his presence, but He is always there walking alongside us in our times of joy as well as in our times of sadness and loss.

Please remember that I and others in our churches are always available to pray for you and support you at all stages of your life. Our churches are your churches and are open to all, whether you come to services or not. Please do contact me or another church member if you feel we could help you in any way.

With love and prayers,

Barbara

Revd. Canon Barbara Clutton 01788 810372 or 07808 137550 or barbaraclutton@gilberthouse.co.uk
Please feel free to contact me anytime. However Friday is my day off, so if you need help on this day,

St. Leonard's News and Notices from Dick and Karen

At our annual meeting Karen and I were re-elected as churchwardens for another year. Angela and Eira both resigned from the PCC and we recorded our thanks to both of them for their hard work over many years as Rota and Minuting Secretaries respectively. All other PCC members were re-elected. If you feel you could contribute in some way to the work of the PCC this year we would be delighted to hear from you.

Thanks to Liz and Mel we have a new Electoral Roll. It is an open roll and if you want your name added please have a word with either of them.

We are making painfully slow progress with the provision of a disabled toilet. We are now being encouraged by the Diocesan Advisory Committee to go and look at other external options around the Diocese, after which we will make a decision on our preferred way forward.

We are going to miss Geoffrey's Johnstone's regular church mowing around the rota of our committed volunteers. Why does the grass grow so fast? David Hawkes has agreed to take on some grass cutting for us, for which we are very grateful. Our thanks also go to Jan and Hugh at the Old Rectory who have agreed to store the mower and strimmer, and Paula Taylor who has offered to help with reminders.

Dick

Reviews, People and Places

Altar Guild AGM and Thank You Supper 24th April

17 of us gathered at Jacky Hart's home for our AGM followed by a very tasty supper. The AGM, led by Eira, was short, sweet and uncontroversial so we had plenty of time for supper and catching up with each other. All of last year's committee agreed to stand again so there were no embarrassing silences waiting for someone to offer their services.

Jackie Westcott was warmly thanked, in her absence, for her loyal work with the church linen and hangings.

Then the real business of the evening began! What a spread Jacky had prepared for us: lasagne, chicken, quiche and various salads followed by some delicious puddings. Our food was, of course, accompanied by wine or juice.

This supper is our way of saying thank you to all our members for the generous time and care that you give to keeping St. Leonard's clean and beautiful.

Thank you very much to Jacky who welcomed us into her home. We had a very sociable evening as well as a delicious meal - oh, and we did the AGM business too!

Aileen



Photo: Aileen

The funeral service for **Peter Shepherd** was held on 15th May at St. Leonard's, prior to cremation at Oakley Wood. Peter and Myrtle, who lived at High Mead, Marton Road for many years, enjoyed 68 years of married life together. Our sincere condolences to Myrtle and to John, Liz and the Marshall family.

Thank you and goodbye to **Jennifer and Geoffrey Johnstone** who have left Birdingbury after 17 years at Sundial House. They generously served St. Leonard's in many ways during their time here. Geoffrey has been a diligent churchyard 'mower-in-chief' and photographer of gravestones. Jennifer was Treasurer of the Altar Guild and a regular flower arranger. They have been excellent next-door neighbours to the church: keeping a watchful eye on security, offering toilet facilities, providing emergency supplies when we ran short of things - not forgetting being excellent bin monitors! Thank you both: we will miss you.

JUNE and JULY SERVICES in Draycote Benefice Churches and ROTA DUTIES for St. Leonard's, Birdingbury

Date	Place	Time	Service	Readings	Prayers	Server	Sidesperson	Refreshments	Flowers	Cleaning	Churchyard
Sun 2 June	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15am 11.00am 6.00pm	Holy Communion BCP Pet Service—Village Hall Holy Communion						Cynthia Rogers	Wendy Bringloe	French family
Sun 9 June	Birdingbury Stretton Bourton	9.15am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Morning Praise Holy Communion	Liz Ellis <i>Galatians ch1 vv1 –end</i> <i>Luke Ch7 vv 11-17</i>	Eira Owen	Karen Armbrister	Peter Law	Angie Sedgfield	Phyllis Spence	Liz Tompkins	
Sun 16 June	Bourton Birdingbury Frankton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning Praise Evening Worship	Aileen Withington <i>Galatians Ch2 vv 15—end</i> <i>Luke Ch7 Vv 36—Ch8 v 3</i>	Dick Withington	Jenny Hawes	Mel and Ian Palmer		Phyllis Spence	Liz Tompkins	Armbristers + Liz Ellis (Ch. Fete)
Sun 23 June	Stretton Birdingbury Princethorpe Frankton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Pet Service—Birbury Morning Worship Holy Communion	Matt Markham <i>Galatians Ch3 vv 23—end</i> <i>Luke Ch8 vv 26-39</i>	Rev. Barbara		Daphne Chippendale and Gaynor Davy	Karen Armbrister	Eira Owen	Lyn Tipton	
Sun 30 June	Bourton	10.00am	United Benefice Holy Communion						Eira Owen	Lyn Tipton	David Hawkes
Sun 7 July	Frankton Bourton	9.15 am 11.00 am	Holy Communion BCP Morning Praise						Ann Laverick	Xenia Munro	
Sun 14 July	Birdingbury Stretton Bourton	9.15 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Morning Praise Holy Communion	Bryan Tompkins <i>Colossians Ch1 vv 1 –14</i> <i>Luke Ch10 vv 25-37</i>	Rev. Barbara	Dick Withington	Liz Ellis	Peter and Sue Law	Barbara Munro	Xenia Munro	Rob Moor + Simon Whitfield (Country Show)
Sun 21 July	Bourton Birdingbury Frankton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning Praise Evening Worship	Aileen Withington <i>Colossians Ch1 vv 15-28</i> <i>Luke Ch10 vv 38-end</i>	Dick Withington	Jenny Hawes	Angie Sedgfield		Barbara Munro	Ros Murray	
Sun 28 July	Stretton Birdingbury Princethorpe Frankton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Morning Praise—Davenport Cottage Morning Worship Holy Communion	Liz Ellis <i>Colossians Ch2 vv 6-19</i> <i>Luke Ch11 vv 1-13</i>	Andrew Armbrister		Markham Family	Karen and Andrew Armbrister	Ann Laverick	Ros Murray	Davy family

Reviews, People and Places - continued

BENEFICE ROGATION SUNDAY at BONDON FARM 19th May



It is normally unheard of for Barbara to struggle to make herself heard during a service but recently there was an exception. She had competition from dozens of ewes and lambs which surrounded us during our annual Rogation Service in the sheep shed at Bondon Farm! This year we were joined by friends

from the other churches in our benefice.

Once again Wallace and Josie McCurdie hosted our special service of thanksgiving for the countryside. We were blessed with a warm sunny morning too. We heard from Wallace and Barbara about 'Life on The Farm' with all its ups and downs and heard their views about the ever controversial subject of Bovine TB and badgers. The offertory went to

The Farming Community Network which provides help and support to farmers and their families in time of crisis.

After the service we enjoyed refreshments in the sunshine looking out over the fields and watching the livestock - what a treat! Thank you so much Wallace, Josie and all at Bondon Farm, animals included.

Liz Ellis



Photos: Lesley Downham

Benefice events for June and July

Thurs 6th June	2.30pm	Service and Tea at B, F and D Village Hall
Sat 8th June	3.30 - 5.15pm	HBC Saturday See Karen for details
Wed 12th June	10.30am	Home Communion at Jacky's, Loen, Main St.
Thurs 8th July	2.30pm	Service and Tea at B, F and D Village Hall
Wed 10th July	10.30 am	Home Communion at The Birbury, Valerie Smith as host.
Sat 13th July	3.30 - 5.15pm	HBC Saturday See Karen for details

Hymns—Food for thought?

Hymns have been an integral part of Anglican worship for many years. Although they aren't essential, they serve to instruct, inform and hopefully enhance worship.

There are over 400 hymns in our own hymn book and, like most churches, we use comparatively few in our services. They are often chosen because of their familiarity and because we enjoy the tune to which they are set.

The content of the hymns we sing is important and fortunately the majority have meaningful and helpful verses. One might say that they are like mini sermons and can affect us quite deeply when real attention is given to them.

Some clergy agonise over sermon preparation every week and feel obliged to 'produce the goods' on every occasion. But why should this demand be made every week? We have four hymns, each tell their own story and present their own challenge (sometimes to the organist too!). They provide wisdom accumulated over many years. Much more use could be made of their content if instead of the sermon, we focussed on the hymn we have sung, or are about to sing, and shared our thoughts on its subject matter. It need be no more than 10 -15 minutes.

Why we take the offertory whilst singing a hymn is beyond me! It is the only part of Anglican worship which, in my opinion is demeaned. 'All to save time' so I am told. There are churches that allow for the offering to be placed on a plate as individuals come into church and the offerings later taken to the altar for blessing after singing a hymn. This causes no distraction and enhances worship both of the hymn and the offering.

I know that change is never welcome but without it, where would we be?

Bryan Tompkins

Bishop W. Walsham How (1823 -1897), the writer of hymns such as 'It is a thing most wonderful' and 'For all the saints who from their labours rest' said:

"A good hymn should be like a good prayer - simple, real, earnest, and reverent."

St. Leonard's weekend events - 22nd and 23rd June



St Leonard's Church Fete

Saturday June 22nd 2 – 5pm at church



Please come and join us for our annual fete in the Churchyard. There will be plants, books, tombola games, raffle, cakes and refreshments.

We would be very grateful for any donations – books, cakes, plants or garden items, tombola gifts of any size or raffle prizes either delivered to church on the day or we can collect beforehand if you phone Karen or Dick 632030 / 632644

Thank you for your support. We look forward to welcoming you.



Pet Service

Sunday June 23rd 11.00am outside

The Birbury

Bring your beloved pet to join in our very informal service which will take place outside The Club and Birbury. Come along, even if you don't have a pet, and enjoy the chaos! Refreshments will be served afterwards.

In the past we have had many animals coming along with 2 legs, 4 legs and sometimes no legs. It's noisy, fun and good to be involved.

Suitable for everyone – particularly animal lovers!

Contact information

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