

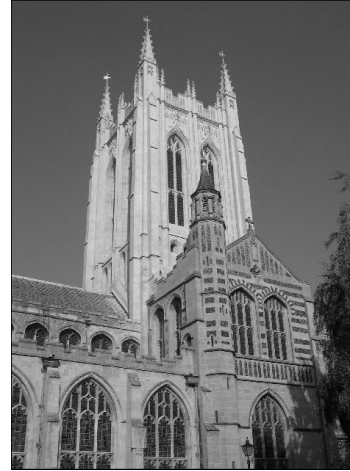
CHURCH NEWS AND VIEWS

Summer visits to special places of worship

St. Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St. Edmunds

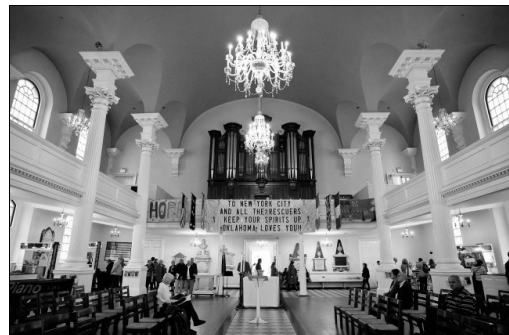
Bryan and I visited this cathedral church in Bury St. Edmunds over the summer. If you are ever in Suffolk, it is well worth a visit. It is a very uplifting building with a mixture of old and new styles. The long, high nave was begun in 1503 and the tower built centuries later in 2005, with its magnificent new interior vaulted ceiling completed in 2010.

Liz Tompkins



St. Paul's Chapel at Ground Zero, New York

On our recent visit to New York, Aileen and I were drawn into St Paul's Chapel in Manhattan, a small church close to Ground Zero.



When the twin towers of the World Trade Centre collapsed on 11th September in 2001, this nearby church was amazingly undamaged. It swiftly became a temporary sanctuary for firemen and other relief workers as well as survivors

of the terrorist attack. In the days following 9/11 some 5000 volunteers, with various skills, turned up to help. It became an inspiring example of people acting on God's call for us to love our neighbours. Being inside this chapel a few days before the anniversary of 9/11 was a very humbling and moving experience. It feels such a haven of peace and security.

Dick Withington

A letter from Rev Barbara

The baptisms and weddings which I have had the privilege to conduct recently have led me think about promises that we make in our lives. At a child's baptism, parents and godparents promise, on behalf of the child, to help her/him to grow within the church's family. In a marriage service a couple promise before God to love each other until death parts them. For both of these major commitments, we take time to talk through the issues with the people concerned in preparation for a baptism or marriage in church. I am always happy to offer a wedding blessing or a thanksgiving service for a child if this is more appropriate.

Please pray for all who are taking on new commitments or changes in their lives, whether through baptism, marriage, redundancy, or leaving home for the first time.

The onset of autumn with the nights drawing in can seem a long and lonely time for those who are recently bereaved. Our Remembering Service at Stretton Church, on Sunday 3rd November at 3pm is a service to recollect all those who we love but see no longer. Please let us know if you would like a particular person to be named.

There will be another change in the benefice after Christmas. As many of you know, I will be retiring from my work in the benefice and my last service will be on Sunday January 26th 2014. I have found this a very difficult decision to make. Sometimes we know that decisions, although hard to make, are right and also that, because a decision is hard, it doesn't make it less right.

Thinking about the changes in our lives, I am reminded of the first verse of a familiar hymn: *Through all the changing scenes of life in trouble and in joy,*

The praises of my God shall still my heart and tongue employ.

We should take note of these words. It always seems easier to find God in times of joy but can often feel that he is far away in times of trouble. We need to remember that our God is a loving God and he is always there for us: but sometimes we are the ones that find it hard to realise this fact.

With love and prayers

Barbara.

Please feel free to contact Barbara anytime if you would like to talk to her. Friday is her day off, however, so if you need help on this day, please contact Dick or Karen. Our details are on p.8 of Church News.

St. Leonard's news and updates from Dick and Karen

Reverend Canon Barbara

You will have just read about Barbara's decision to retire from her parish work after almost 7 years here. She will leave with our thanks for everything she has done for us in Birdingbury and with our love and best wishes for a long and healthy retirement. As a consequence we will be without a Priest - in - Charge (in *interregnum*) for some time in 2014. So we, as a church community, must together share the responsibility of keeping St Leonard's up and running.

WC Proposals

On advice from Coventry Diocese, some of the PCC have visited churches to look at detached external WC options. Progress still feels painfully slow. If you have any thoughts, then please contact us.

Christmas 2013

We are busy planning our Christmas activities which will include carol singing, a family 'Carols and Crib' service, midnight communion on Christmas Eve and family service on Christmas Day. We also intend to repeat the 'Posada' journey as last year. Please see Jenny's note in this issue of Birdsong if you would like to 'host' our nativity set for an evening during Advent.

Communion services

Dick told you last time about the new form of communion service which we are trying. The service sheet has been re-written to include a simpler style of spoken word, which we hope will make the service more suitable for all ages. Please try to join us on Sunday Oct 20th at 11 am and let us have your thoughts and comments.

Churchyard

We are very grateful to all those who have worked so hard in the churchyard all summer. The season finishes with a general tidy up of church and churchyard on Saturday 12th October from 10.00am. We could do with as much help as possible: as the saying goes, 'many hands make light work'. Tempting refreshments will be provided. Please bring with you any equipment which might be useful.

Karen and Dick

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

Date	Place	Time	Service	Readings	Prayers	Server	Sidesperson	Refreshments	Cleaning	Flowers	Churchyard
Sun 6 Oct	Frankton Bourton Princethorpe Stretton	9.15am 11.00am 3.00pm 6.00pm	Holy Communion BCP Harvest Festival Harvest Festival Holy Communion						Lesley Fleming	Val Elliot-Smith	Stuart family
Sun 13 Oct	Birdingbury Stretton Bourton	9.15am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Harvest festival Holy Communion	Liz Ellis <i>2 Timothy ch 2 vv8—15</i> <i>Luke ch 17 vv11—19</i>	Eira Owen	Andrew Armbrister	Gaynor Davy and Daphne Chippendale	Peter and Sue Law	Jasmine Coles	Val Elliot-Smith	<u>All hands on deck please for Autumn tidy up</u>
Sun 20 Oct	Bourton Birdingbury Frankton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Holy Communion Harvest Festival Evening Worship	Josie Price <i>2 Timothy ch 3 vv14 - end + Ch 4 vv1—5</i> <i>Luke ch 18 vv1—8</i>	Dick Withington	Jenny Hawes	Mel Palmer and Josie Price		Gaynor Davy	Liz Ellis	
Sun 27 Oct	Stretton Birdingbury Princethorpe Frankton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Morning Praise Morning Worship Holy Communion	Matt Markham <i>Romans ch 15 vv1-6</i> <i>Luke ch 4 vv16-24</i>			Matt Markham and family	Karen Armbrister	Mel Palmer	Liz Ellis	
Sun 3 Nov All Saints Day	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 11.00 am 3.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Morning Praise Remembering Service						Mel Palmer	Josie Price	
Sun 10 Nov Remembrance Sunday	Princethorpe Birdingbury Stretton Stretton Bourton	9.00 am 10.15am 10.45 am 12 noon 3.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Remembrance Service Remembrance Service at A45 War Memorial Bourton/Frankton Remembrance Service	Andrew Armbrister <i>2 Thessalonians ch 2 vv1-5 + 13—end</i> <i>Luke ch 20 vv 27-38</i>	Karen Armbrister		Liz Ellis		Liz Tompkins	Josie Price	
Sun 17 Nov	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>2 Thessalonians ch 3 vv6—13</i> <i>Luke ch 21 vv5—19</i>	Dick Withington	Dick Withington	Peter Law		Liz Tompkins	Angela Hanson	
Sun 24 Nov	Stretton Birdingbury Princethorpe Frankton	9.15 am 11.00 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion Morning Praise Morning Worship Holy Communion	Liz Ellis <i>Colossians ch 1 vv11— 20</i> <i>Luke ch 23 vv33-43</i>			Ian and Mel Palmer	Gaynor Davy	Lyn Tipton	Angela Hanson	

Reviews, People and Places

Harvest Festival

Harvest Festival was a very warm and enjoyable service conducted by Reverend Barbara. She spoke about the beauty and bounty of God's creation, but also warned about the great need for humanity to care better for this beautiful planet and not plunder its resources. Our harvest gifts of tinned and dried foods have been donated to local needs through Hope 4 and its sister charity, Rugby Food Bank.

The church looked very beautiful thanks to the time and skills of Eira and her Altar Guild volunteers.

Part of the service was the baptism of Fletcher Jacob Cunningham, the bonny son of Rachel and Adrian Cunningham. Rachel was baptised and brought up in Birdingbury. Fletcher was very well behaved as were all the many little children in the Church. Congratulations and a very warm welcome to Fletcher.

Daphne Chippendale

Mary Merrick

Sadly Mary has died, aged 85, after some months of ill health and many years of declining eyesight. She and Alan came to live at Avonlea on Marton Road in 1982. Alan died in 2000 and Mary managed her life since then with great determination.

She had a wonderful dry sense of humour and had many friends in the village. Our condolences to Michael and Andrew and their families. Her funeral at Oakley Wood was followed by a beautiful thanksgiving service in Birdingbury on 24th September.

REMEMBER: Church Café charity lunch on Sat 16th Nov 12—2 pm at St. Leonard's in aid of Hope4 in Rugby. Please bring any unwanted or ill-fitting coats or jackets for Hope4.

Benefice events for October and November

Thurs 3rd Oct 2.30pm **Service and Tea** at Bourton, F and D Village Hall

Wed 9th Oct **11.30am** **Home Communion** at Jenny Hawes', Gables House, Back Lane
(note change from usual start time)

Sat 12th Oct 3.30-5.15pm **HBC Saturday** (See Karen for details)

Thurs 7th Nov 2.30pm **Service and Tea** at Bourton, F and D Village Hall

Sat 9th Nov 3.30 - 5.15pm **HBC Saturday** (See Karen for details)

Wed 13th Nov 10.30 am **Home Communion** at The Birbury, hosted by Valerie Smith

St. Leonard's Church Bells: A man in the belfry

A couple of months ago, quite out of the blue, Dick had a telephone call from a Mr Chris Pickford asking if he could inspect the church bells. He is an archivist and researcher working on the new Pevsner Guide for Warwickshire and part of his remit to update the Birdingbury entry in this guide was to carry out an inspection of the current state of St. Leonard's bells.

Dick and Daphne, who happened to be in church at the time, were treated to Chris climbing up the old wooden ladder in the gallery into the bell chamber and ringing the smaller chiming bell; a sound not heard for some years. He talked them through what he was looking at and what changes there had been in the state of the bells since his last visit in 1974. He also added some new details to his previous piece about the church history and I noted with some pride that our 2009 Memorials booklet was referenced in his 2013 report.

As I was cataloguing the PCC minutes for the Church archive, I noticed that the subject of the restoring the bells has come up on average about once every decade! However the cost of restoration becomes more prohibitive with time.

As I didn't know much about our church bells, the information below which Chris sent to Dick was very enlightening. I had assumed that there was only one bell up in the cupola. How wrong I was! There will be some readers who already know all there is to know about them, so apologies if this applies to you.

In 1552 there were three bells, one of which was probably kept when the church was rebuilt in 1774-5 following a '*competent sum of money*' left for the purpose by Charles Biddulph who died in 1752. Now there is a single ringing bell as well as a small chiming bell.

The Newcombe 1615 ringing bell



This bell, which was cast in Leicester in 1615, is probably the work of Edward Newcombe. It is '*32½ inches*' in diameter and weighs '*6 cwt, 2 qrs, 0 lbs*'. '*The bell retains its canons but has not been quarter turned.*'

(Is there a campanologist out there who understands this terminology?)

This ringing bell has the letters 'ABD, CEF, G, HIK' stamped on it, in addition to the date 1615. (Notice that the 'E' is reversed for some reason).



The Pack and Chapman 1774 chiming bell



This bell was most likely cast by Pack and Chapman at the Whitechapel Foundry in London, who supplied a set of 10 new bells for the old Coventry Cathedral in the same year. This bell is '15¼ inches' wide and weighs '0 cwt. 3 qrs. 0 lbs'.

Many thanks to Chris Pickford for sending a copy of his report for our church records. The text in italics is taken from Chris's report on the Birdingbury bells, 23rd March 2013. We didn't know it at the time but he is the author of "The Steeple, Bells and Ringers of Coventry Cathedral" (1987) and is a well-respected national authority on bells and bell towers.

Aileen Withington

Rubbings: Chris Pickford

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