

CHURCH NEWS AND VIEWS

The service for HM Queen's 90th Birthday

We arrived in good time for the church service where a crowd of people were either putting the finishing touches to the street party tea table or preparing for the service. Showers were forecast but sensible people had brought umbrellas and Mark Taylor's long-held stock of plastic ponchos finally came in useful.



Karen, assisted at times by Erin, led a gentle service based on the book 'The Servant Queen & the King she Serves', published as a tribute for the Queen's 90th Birthday. Short readings from the book gave an insight into how important the Queen's faith is to her and the strength and inspiration she draws from



it in her busy life. How many of us at 90 will still be working over 40 hours a week?

'I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings and to put my trust in God...I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian gospel.' Queen Elizabeth II, Christmas 2002



The readings and prayers were interspersed with singing joyful hymns. As the service progressed more and more people were drawn in and had to stand at the back as all seats were taken until by the end we were a group of some 70 people.

I agree with Karen's conclusion that even if you are not a royalist, I don't think anyone could dispute that the Queen's sense of duty and life of

service to our nation and Commonwealth has made her one of the most admired and respected people in the world. I'm sure I am not alone in believing that we owe her a debt of gratitude.

What better way to spend a Sunday afternoon; an alfresco church service shared with friends and neighbours followed by a delicious tea.

Leigh Sidaway

Here is Erin's memory of the service: 'I stood up with Karen and said "Thanks be to God". It was fun and a bit scary.'

Photos: Matt Markham

Churchwardens news and updates from Dick and Karen

A priest for Draycote Benefice

We remain energised and committed to our activities during our long interregnum. Soon we hope to be in a position to recruit a new Priest-in-Charge.

Updates on building work and plans for Harvest Festival are on other pages.

Racism. In the light of the recent rise in nationally reported racist behaviour in the UK, Draycote Benefice churchwardens have issued this position statement:

‘Your churchwardens condemn racism however it is expressed. There is only one race, the human race. We deplore the increased incidence of racist behaviour in Britain, during and after the EU Referendum.

As we try to live our lives in a Christ like way, we are reminded that the Bible tells us ‘All are created equally in the image and likeness of Christ’. God loves us all equally and with impartiality. If we behave in a prejudiced or discriminatory way we are turning away from the love God shows for all of us.

We pray that good will prevail over evil and that we will all feel able to challenge racism thoughtfully, appropriately and sensitively wherever we experience it.’

Dick and Karen

St. Leonard’s Church Fete - at The Club

The following lucky people won prizes in the Grand Fete Raffle 2016

£100	Mr A. Flint, Birdingbury
Half Case of Red Wine	Mr Bill Cowley, Birdingbury
Half Case of White Wine	Mr D. Wells, Long Lawford
£30 Sainsbury Voucher	Mr R. Davies, Birdingbury
Round of Golf for 4	Mrs J. Hart, Birdingbury
Voucher ‘Jason’s’ Meat	Mr K. Marshall, Birdingbury
£20 Voucher-The Friendly Inn	Ms X. Munro, Bilton
Breakfast for 2-Hill Top Farm	Mr & Mrs J. Price, Birdingbury
2 tickets for Spa Centre Cinema	Mr M. Kerry, Birdingbury
Voucher £10-Cheese on Green	Mr M. Carver-Smith, Long Itchington
Steam Genie Carpet Clean	Mr and Mrs B. Tompkins, Birdingbury
3 Bottles Wine	Mr B. Sunderland, Bourton

Message from Daphne Chippendale, Church Treasurer

St. Leonard's Church Fete held on a slightly damp Saturday, 25th June made a spectacular total of £1,474.34

Sincere thanks to everyone who donated goods, baked cakes, manned the stalls, decorated pretty tables in the lounge, provided the seating and tables and stacked everything away afterwards.

A special thank you to Mark and Karen at The Club for opening up the lounge for delicious cream teas and allowing us to have the stalls on the club forecourt.

But of course, thanks chiefly to all those who turned out on a cold wet day and raised such a wonderful amount.

Fete jottings from outside and inside The Club



Outside on the forecourt everything went swimmingly (excuse the pun) around 1pm when we were still setting up stalls. However, apart from some soggy second-hand books, it was only ourselves that got wet! The contents of the plant stall appreciated it though.

By 2pm it was dry and the rest of the afternoon was enjoyed by all and sundry.

The Club Lounge morphed into Church Cafe for the afternoon. Wendy and Paula took turns to do the washing up in Mark's very tidy kitchen (We hope that we left your coloured cloths in the right piles, Mark!).

NB Gary is still holding on tight to his purchase from the cake stall and at the same time eating a scone!



Photos: Eira Owen

How did Eira manage to take these photographs when she had her pinny on serving strawberries and cream to the punters in the lounge all afternoon? Wonder woman!

Aileen Withington

CHRISTIAN AID 2016

I am pleased to be able to report that the Christian Aid collections for the Draycote Benefice this year amounted to £1492. We are most grateful to all those who gave so generously. We are particularly grateful to our valiant band of collectors who trudged the roads to deliver and collect the envelopes. Of the total benefice collection, Birdingbury donated £414.14 which is excellent. Special thanks must go to Daphne for her hard work in delivering and collecting the Birdingbury envelopes.

I would like to add this prayer from Bangladesh which I think says what we are about:

Oh Saviour Christ, in whose way of life lies the secret of all life and the hopes of all the people, we pray for quiet courage to meet this hour. We did not choose to be born or to live in such an age. But let its problems challenge us, its discoveries exhilarate us, its injustice anger us, its possibilities inspire us, and its vigour renew us. Amen

David and Mair Shaw

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Altar Guild Supper - plus a very brief and informal AGM



Photo: Eira Owen

On a lovely evening in June when the rain had taken a rest for a change, we gathered at Aileen's for the Altar Guild AGM.

The company was great and, as always, the food divine and some of us even had the chance to reminisce about our old school days at the same school!

Jacky Hart

It was a really enjoyable evening, assisted by the occasional glass of wine! I arrived slightly late to be greeted by the delicious aromas of home cooked lasagne and quiches and a host of friendly faces, some of whom I only seem to see once a year at the AGM. It was lovely to have a chance to catch up with a years' news in one sitting!

I especially loved Eira's thoughtful report which commenced with a prayer. She has the ability to make us feel that our efforts in the Altar Guild, though seemingly small, are appreciated by both by people in Birdingbury and also visitors from the near and far.

It was such a pleasure meeting up once again and then walking home in the Birdingbury summer twilight.

Jasmine Coles

AUGUST and SEPTEMBER 2016 SERVICES in Draycote Benefice

Date	Place	Time	Service	Readings
Sun 7 August	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Holy Communion Evening Worship	
Sun 14 August	Stretton	10.30 am	Benefice Communion	
Sun 21 August	Birdingbury Bourton Stretton Frankton	10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 11.00 am	Holy Communion Morning Praise Morning Praise Morning Praise	<i>Hebrews Ch12 vv 18 - end</i> <i>Luke Ch. 13 vv 10 - 17</i>
Sun 28 Aug	Birdingbury (outside The Club) Stretton	10.30 am 6.00 pm	Morning Praise Holy Communion	<i>Hebrews Ch. 13 vv 1-8 + 15-16</i> <i>Luke Ch. 14 vv 1 + 7-14</i>
Sun 4 Sept	Frankton Bourton Stretton	9.15 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	Holy Communion BCP Holy Communion Evening Worship	
Sun 11 Sept	Stretton	10.30 am	Benefice Communion	
Sun 18 Sept	Birdingbury Bourton Frankton Stretton	10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 10.30 am	Holy Communion Harvest Thanksgiving Morning Praise Morning Praise	<i>1 Timothy Ch. 2 vv 1 - 7</i> <i>Luke Ch. 16 vv 1 -13</i>
Sat 24 Sept	Birdingbury	3.45 pm	Celebrate@Harvest Bondon Farm, Birdingbury	
Sun 25 Sept	Birdingbury Stretton	10.30 am 6.00 pm	Morning Praise Holy Communion	<i>1 Timothy Ch. 6 vv 6 - 19</i> <i>Luke Ch. 16 vv 19 - end</i>

Food for thought

Thoughts while sheltering from the rain!

Whilst sheltering from a heavy storm on the Gower coast, I found myself wondering and pondering a dry stone wall which had stood there for over 200 years. It had been built from stones of all shapes and sizes picked up from the ground by hand and each carefully placed into the place that would give shape and strength to the wall.

Of the many stones that came together to form this perfect wall, there were 'facers stones', there were 'through stones', there were the 'caps' and then there 'fills' - the stones that make up the middle of the wall. This last group were stones of all sizes and shapes, some no bigger than a stone you could throw into a pond, but these are the very stones which are the heart of the wall, the strength of the wall. Without these 'fills' the wall would not last more than a few years at best.

As we reflect upon the world with its great turmoil in so many forms, it strikes me that the world is changing. What has changed? We have changed!

As I pondered the events near and far, the wall kept returning to my thoughts. Wherever we look seems to have become a place where personal prominence and influence have become all important, the only things that matter. We seem to have lost sight of the fact that civilisation was built on the contribution and commitment of all. But our own memories tell us differently: wherever we are in the wall, as long as we stand faithfully in the right place, the wall will remain. The trouble is that we don't want to be there any longer.

As our churches, and communities, wait with baited breath for a new incumbent, this picture of the dry stone wall might be a timely warning. Whom so ever comes, it is the commitment and contribution of each and every one that will make it a success or otherwise. Without that nothing will flourish. This is the world God made, and every attempt to have it otherwise, seems to make things far worse.

May God bless each one of us on our commitment and our place, whether it proves to be in the church or not.

David Shaw

If you would like to talk to a churchwarden, please feel free to contact Dick or Karen anytime. If you would like to talk with a priest, they will happily put you in touch with one.

St. Leonard's events in August and September

Harvest Festival

Harvest Festival weekend is September 24th and 25th. On Saturday evening there will be a Harvest supper in the Birbury and Club, jointly organised by a Church, Club and Birbury group (see further details in main bit of Birdsong). On Sunday morning there will be our annual Harvest Festival service in church at 10.30am. We look forward to welcoming as many people as possible to either or both of these events.

Regular events in Birdingbury

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|-----------------|---|
| Wed 10 August | 10.30 am Home Communion at Jennifer Johnstone's, 30 Almond Ave, Leamington. Call Jackie Westcott on 632494 if you need a lift |
| Thurs 25 August | NO Coffee and Chat |
| Wed 14 Sept | 10.30 am Home Communion at Jenny Hawes', Gables House, Back Lane |
| Thurs 29 Sept | 10.30 am Coffee and Chat in The Birbury |

About Coffee and Chat

I always look forward to helping out and catching up with friends at the Coffee and Chat mornings and I'd encourage anybody who would like to join us to pop along. There's always a warm welcome as well as coffee and cake for all.

Brenda Ansell

We always meet in The Birbury at 10.30 am on the last Thursday of the month - except for August.

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Graham Payne

The funeral of Graham Payne was held at St. Leonard's on July 4th, followed by burial in the churchyard. Graham is buried alongside his father, John. He will be sadly missed by his many relatives and friends.

Building Progress

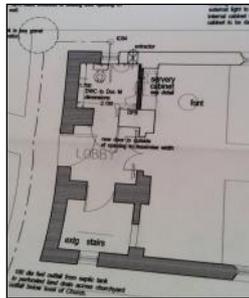
The builders are busy installing our long awaited cloakroom and kitchen servery. Thankfully, the county archaeologists found nothing of great significance which might have delayed the work. The exterior phase to install a septic tank and all the associated pipework is complete.

Work on the interior began slowly as it took some time to drill through the vestry wall facing the Hall wall: they discovered that the stonework is 4 feet thick! All the holes through it have now been completed. At the last on-site meeting, amongst other issues, we agreed a final layout for the servery. It looks as though the work will be completed by mid-August.

In due course we will be inviting you all to a celebration of the completion and provision of these long-awaited facilities.



Imagine WC and washbasin here



Plan



The kitchen sink and cupboard will be here

Dick and Karen

Queue for the loo anyone?

Photos: Aileen Withington

St. Leonard's contact information

Priest in Charge (vacancy)			
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