



KINGS NORTON
TEAM PARISH

THE MAGAZINE
FOR CHURCH & COMMUNITY

December 2015

£1



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Nativity And Children's Christmas Party

**Saturday 19th December
2pm
St Nicolas' Church, Kings Norton**

Party £2 per child

All welcome at Nativity.
Come along, dress up and join in!



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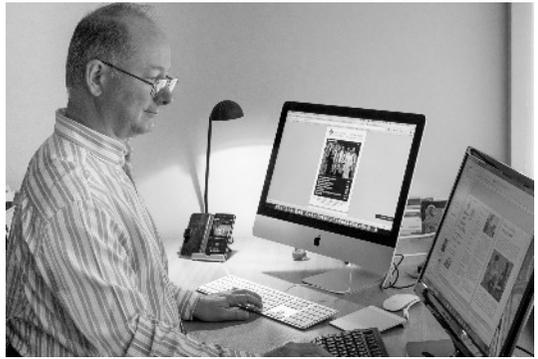
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Please submit text in an editable
format, preferably plain text or
MS Word. Printed material
entrusted to the Parish Office
should be sealed and marked for
the attention of The Editor.

Submission Deadlines

Items for inclusion in the January
2016 edition must reach the
Editor by midnight on **Friday 11th
December**.

Items for inclusion in the
February 2016 edition must
reach the Editor by midnight on
Friday 15th January.



What makes a Parish Magazine worth reading? I suppose it depends on your expectations. If you're looking for a Kings Norton version of *Worcestershire Life*, you're going to be disappointed. We don't have the staff and it's not what we're here for.

The clue is in the word "parish". If you look back through our archives, you will find that, for most of its existence, this magazine has been preoccupied almost exclusively with church affairs. It has been the channel through which the church talks to the local community about its life. That is our first priority and will continue to be so.

However, a great deal of good work has been done in Kings Norton in recent years to "take the walls off" the church and to make it more open and welcoming (see, for example, the article on p.18). That has led to a greater emphasis in church life on social justice, which happens to be a recurrent theme in this issue. It has meant, too, that we have sought out articles about other aspects of Kings Norton life, from its history to its celebrities, from its amenities to its festivities. We have made a good start, but there is much more we could do in this regard. As ever, what holds us back is a lack of informed writing. **Could you be the person who helps us to move forward ?**

The Editor

FROM A READER

Love is Central

During this period of waiting for the appointment of our next Rector we have invited Kings Norton's four Readers, known in some parts of the Church of England as Licensed Lay Ministers, to use these pages to make themselves better known and to give us some insight into their thinking. This month, it's the turn of Mandy Butler, seen on the right in this photo with Fay Fearon, a fellow Reader, whom we look forward to featuring next month.



I have been a Reader for 12 years, serving a city centre church, a hospital chaplaincy and Kings Norton Team Parish. These three places have offered different challenges and needs,

and I feel blessed to have worked with a diverse range of people and situations. I was licensed by Bishop John Sentamu in Birmingham Cathedral. I remember Bishop

Sentamu playing his bongos, and having to navigate my way through a group of Morris dancers and a horse to get into the cathedral grounds, maybe signs telling me to expect the unexpected.

I have so many treasured memories, a few include being re-licensed at the Bishop's Palace, praying with women at the Women's Hospital, leading a laying-on-of-hands team, taking school children around church and of course leading services with the most wonderful of people and communities. I love being a Reader and I feel blessed by this church community.

I have a husband, Quentin, and 2 daughters, Lily who is 16 and Amelia who is 13. Lily has just started catering college and is a fantastic cook. Amelia is an expert on *One Direction*, and both are beautiful young ladies who bless my husband's and my life immensely.

I have a background in arts and counselling. I currently manage an arts curriculum and have taught in colleges and schools for

the past 22 years. 2 weeks ago I finally completed an MA in Education that took much, much longer than anticipated!

I love gardening and visiting wild places and woodlands. I like climbing hills, swimming and yoga. I visit *National Trust* properties with family and friends. I enjoy painting, felting, watching live music and baking cakes. I want to get back into photography, where the wonderfully talented and creative Crystal

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Hughes has been teaching me how to use a digital camera.

Jesus' teachings on love are important to me : love is patient, love is kind. Love your neighbour as yourself. Love one another. Love is a healer. Love is peace. Quentin and I were married to

the hymn *Such Love*. How privileged we are to know Jesus, as Jesus is pure love.

In love and service,

Mandy Butler

OCTOBER 2015

BAPTISMS

- 4th Oct Holly Jessica Duddy
11th Oct Ritchie Graham William Fall
Ireland Frances Kelly Marie Fall
18th Oct Baxter Alexander George Stables
Melody Katie-Rose Pritchard

"BAPTISM marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love. "

The Baptism Service, Common Worship

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Christmas Services 2015

At St Nicolas' Church

Sunday 6th Dec at 10.30 a.m. : **Parade and Toy Service** for St Nicolastide

*Please bring new gifts suitable for children of any age for
The SWEET Project to distribute*

Saturday 19th Dec at 2.00 p.m. : **"Come & Join in" Nativity**

with children's Christmas Party following

Sunday 20th Dec at 4.00 p.m. : **Nine Lessons and Carols**

(No 6.00 p.m. service)

Christmas Eve

5.00 p.m. : **Crib Service**

11.30 p.m. : **Midnight Communion**

Christmas Day

9.00 a.m. : **Holy Communion**

10.30 a.m. : **Christmas Communion**

Sunday 27th Dec

9.00 a.m. : **No Service**

10.30 a.m. : **United Parish Communion**

6.00 p.m. : **Evening Worship**

Sunday 10th Jan at 10.30 a.m. : **Christingle Service**

Hawkesley at Hawkesley Church Centre

Sunday 13th Dec at 10.30 a.m. : **Christingle Service**

Sunday 20th Dec at 10.30 a.m. : **Carol Service**

Christmas Eve at 11.30 p.m. : **Midnight Communion**

News of the SWEET Project

Ageing Better



AGEING
BETTER IN
BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham has won Big Lottery funding of £6million to help make the city a place where older people are valued, supported and have a continuing contribution to make.

Over the next six months The SWEET Project will be supporting this by becoming a mini hub to promote, develop and support the Ageing Better Networks and related activities.

The main aim of the initiative is to reduce isolation by changing, improving and supporting services for local people at a neighbourhood level.

The first step is to gather expressions of interest from anyone who would like to get involved in setting up Ageing Better Networks to develop and shape services and activities for the older population.

The Ageing Better Networks are groups of people who will help stay in touch with and look out for older people in their area. They offer simple, practical local support and involvement opportunities for older people. This might be as simple as just stopping by to make a cup of tea and have a chat, helping with the shopping or changing the occasional light bulb. Ageing Better Networks can work with older people in their area to help start entirely new activities or services that older people want but currently have no access to. The project can help with modest financial support for these new activities.

We would love to hear from anyone interested in becoming involved and they can do so by completing a form which can be obtained by telephoning Deb Groves on 0121 458 2270. To find out more about the work of the SWEET Project, visit their website at www.sweetproject.co.uk.



OCTOBER 2015 FUNERALS

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John ch.3 v.16)

6th Oct	Glenville George Yardley	81	SN.Bu.CY
9th Oct	Joseph Barrington Osborne	70	SN.Cr.PB
16th Oct	Josephine Bull	93	SN
19th Oct	Beryl Bailey	85	Cr.RH
21st Oct	Fred Raxster	84	Cr.LH
29th Oct	Patricia Anne Talbot	82	SN.Bu.WP

SN : Service at St Nicolas' Church, **Cr** : Cremation, **Bu** : Burial,
In : Ashes interred, **BE** : Brandwood End, **CY** : Churchyard,
KN : Kings Norton Cemetery, **LH** : Lodge Hill, **PB** : Perry Barr, **RH** : Robin Hood,
RD : Redditch, **SC** : Sutton Coldfield, **WI** : Witton, **WP** : Westall Park,
WY : Wythall, **YD** : Yardley

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Letter to a Grandchild

My dear Grandchild,

By the time this letter is of interest to you I expect I shall no longer be around. What sort of a planet will I have left behind? Or, what's more to the point, what sort of a world will you be able to pass on to your children and grandchildren?

There are times when I fear for you. Already the seas and the forests are under threat. Island and coastal communities are disappearing and the poorest farmers are unable to cope with unpredictable weather. I hear the scientists predict temperatures rising, droughts, floods and hurricanes, with large parts of the world becoming uninhabitable by the time you get to my age. That's if we carry on burning coal, gas and oil, putting too much carbon into the atmosphere.

But we don't have to do it. There is another way. And I have seen it start. My neighbours' house is so well-insulated they hardly need any heating at all. There are solar panels in the wilds of Africa or flood-plains of Bangladesh, giving light and power, charging radios and mobiles, where there has never been a grid. So much can be done over the internet now that I hope we won't need to travel unnecessarily. Our world can stay wonderful. But it won't be unless we act.

Yes I mean my generation because yours may be too late. I don't want your grandchildren saying to you: "Why did they let the world come to this?"

I wonder what you will write when you're as old as me?

Your Grandfather



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Time to Act

So, fellow Grandparents, what can we do? As William Wilberforce wrote: "*You may choose to look away but you can never say again that you did not know.*" So, join with others, tell your friends, get involved with at least one of the following:

1. Lobby your MP so that he or she understands the need to act now for the future for our grandchildren. Online contact is easy and immediate at www.writetothem.com. By letter, it's just *House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA*
2. Get something going at Church. Start a discussion based on the Church of England's climate change document, *Shrinking the Footprint*. You can find it at www.shrinkingthefootprint.org
3. Read Birmingham Diocese's resources on our partnership with Malawi, where this year a gift of £85 bought enough solar power for a whole class of schoolchildren to do their homework after dark.
4. Join *Pray and Fast for the Climate* on December 1st. And of course, think more about making lifestyle changes. Substitute one regular car journey with walking or taking the bus; eat one less meat meal per week; change to a green energy supplier; plan a UK holiday rather than one that involves flying.

Well done, Grandparents!

We are old, sometimes wise and maybe a bit richer in time or cash. And we will have an answer when our grandchild asks us, "*What did you do to save the world?*"

(Written by a group of local Anglicans, *Birmingham Climate Action Group*. For further information please contact Diane Littler at dlittler2.0@gmail.com)

Churches Together

I was recently sent a very funny photograph by a friend. At first sight, it wasn't apparent why she had sent it, as it seemed to be of a road junction in the middle of somewhere rural; but the instruction "enlarge the photo of the signpost to see the joke" immediately under the heading of "churches together?" took my attention and I obeyed.

I found a wonderful challenge to all things ecumenical. Turning to his left, the traveller was sent towards the United Reformed Church as well as to a village called Newchurch, whilst heading due south led them to the Anglican Church. With a bit of work, I found the likely junction, a crossing of unclassified roads near Offa's Dyke, very close to Cwmmau Farmhouse National Trust property and about 5 miles north of Hay-on-Wye.

The same evening, I went to a meeting of *Churches Together in B30* of which we are the "country

cousins", having some of our parish in B30, although the majority is in B38 and B14.

As well as sharing what our various churches were doing, and simply making contact with each other, we were introduced to the 2016 material for the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. Traditionally, this is observed from 18th to 25th January, although some areas observe it at Pentecost.

Churches Together in B30 stick with the traditional pattern, and usually have a service mid-week on the Wednesday. This year, it is again at Bournville United Reformed Church and will take place during the morning of the 20th January.

The theme of the service this year is *Salt of the Earth*, using several Bible passages (in particular, 1 Peter 2: 9-10 and Matthew 5: 1-16). The service comes in the middle of a week of

Bible studies prepared by the Christians of Latvia. Each year has a different country involved in the preparation of the resources and each day is prepared by a different denomination to showcase the rich mix that is modern-day Christian Latvia.

I know little of the resources, having never been to one of the services before, but as I explore the printed and web resources further, I get the sense that it is broadly similar to Women's World Day of Prayer (March 4th 2.00 p.m. at Cotteridge Church or 7.00 p.m. at St Nicolas'): worshipping,

praying and enjoying fellowship with those of other denominations who live locally.

The *B30 Foodbank* has been a great example of how local Christians of different denominations are working together very successfully, as well as finding out more about each other's churches. Trying out one of these combined services is another way of doing this and widening your circle of Christian friends and contacts, as well as widening theirs.

Sylvia Fox

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A Living Wage?

The first week in November was *Living Wage Week*; but what is the Living Wage? Why does it matter? What is *Living Wage Week* about?

The modern *UK Living Wage Campaign* was launched in 2001. The founders were parents in the East End of London, who wanted to remain in work, but found that despite working two or more minimum wage jobs they were struggling to make ends meet and were left with no time for family and community life. Low pay poverty is not restricted to London and the *Living Wage* campaign has since grown into a national movement.

The Living Wage is an hourly rate set independently and updated annually. It is calculated according to the basic cost of living using the “Minimum Income Standard” for the UK. Decisions about what to include in this standard are set by the public; it is a social consensus about what people need to make ends meet. The Living Wage should not be confused with the “National Living Wage” introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in July 2015, which is a revised minimum wage.

The UK rate is set annually by the



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Living Wage Foundation and calculated by the *Centre for Research in Social Policy* at Loughborough University. There are two rates: one for London and one outside London. This year the Living Wage rate is £8.25 per hour outside London.

Living Wage Week is about raising awareness. The launch event at KPMG had representatives from approximately 30 different institutions covering the public, private and voluntary sectors. Companies shared stories of how paying the Living Wage had benefitted them despite increased labour costs and how the impact had snowballed through the supply chain. The highlight of the event was to hear testimony from a mother whose life had been transformed by

being paid the Living Wage. She is now able to buy things and shop in places like ASDA that most of us would take for granted.

So what does this mean to us? Perhaps you are struggling on low pay yourself. Jesus taught us that we should look after the poorest and most vulnerable among us. So please do talk about the Living Wage, raise its profile and support businesses that are living wage accredited employers which include Morrisons, Lidl, Aldi, IKEA, British Gas, Barclays, Lloyds, Birmingham City Council. (for a full list see www.livingwage.org.uk). I will ensure that you informed about local actions so that you can get involved.

Caz Hague

(Methodist Minister)

KINGS NORTON History Society

The Society's last meeting of 2015 will be our Christmas meeting on Monday 14th December when a member of the Society, Bill Dargue, will give a talk on "Castle Bromwich". The doors of Saint Nicolas' Place open at 7.00 p.m. and the talk will start at 7.30 p.m. Visitors are always welcome at the Society's meetings.

Claire Simpson, Chairman.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM DONALD AND ANNETTE SAMPSON

It is a wise practice amongst clergy to withdraw from a Parish or Circuit when duties have been ended, at least for a time. Annette & I only return to Kings Norton for the Farmers' Market. The above being stated we do not forget our friends in the Parish, especially those at Hawkesley.

We wish all of you an enriching Advent and Christmas experience of true joy.

With very best wishes and much Christian love,

Donald and Annette Sampson

OCTOBER 2015

MARRIAGES & BLESSINGS

3rd Oct	Robert Alexander Wood & Lisa Jane Louise Took	Wedding
8th Oct	Alan & Susan Clements	Blessing
10th Oct	Christopher James & Jayne Louise Evans	Wedding
10th Oct	Dimitrios & Victoria Jane Doxianidis	Blessing
16th Oct	Barry & Hazel Thomas	Blessing
17th Oct	Jonathan Jeffery Oldhams & Rachael Emma Boothby	Wedding

The Christmas Challenge

This year Kings Norton Team Parish is once again running a Christmas Challenge to collect gifts for families enduring hardship across South Birmingham.

The gifts will be distributed via The SWEET Project and are given to adults and children. Gifts can be anything, toys, books, “smellies”, hats, scarves, jigsaws, stationery, Christmas treats, etc. and they don't have to be new as long as they are in excellent condition.

Gifts need to arrive by the Toy Service on **Sunday 6th December**.

Advent Calendars

We are also collecting Advent calendars which will be distributed by the SWEET Project and the B30 Foodbank.

Calendars need to arrive by **27th November**.

Donations for either project can be dropped off to any of our three churches (St Nicolas', Immanuel or Hawkesley) or via the church office in St Nicolas' Place.

Please note that everything is distributed freely and without any agenda.

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OPEN CHURCH OPENS DOORS

Despite being desperate to find a parking space on The Green on a dull, mild November day we were prepared in good time to welcome all comers into the historic church of St. Nicolas'. Cups and saucers out, drinks and biscuits at the ready, cake cut - NO-ONE! Then, as the peace echoed around the beauty of the place, suddenly the door opened and an influx of folks arrived. We were in business!

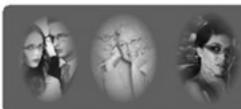
The regular Bible study group settled down over hot drinks with Pauline Weaver, our Children's Worker, to consider prayer and praying, some visitors wandered around and regulars arrived to share a drink and a natter. Just before 11.00 a.m. the Reverend Jane Platt led us out to the Lych Gate to commemorate the two minute silence on Remembrance Day. Weak sunshine warmed up the small crowd of about twenty as we

stood respectfully while the clock chimed.

Some new people came back in with us afterwards for a drink and a chat. It was a joy and a privilege to welcome them in the spirit of Open Church, to meet friends and visitors old and new over a brew, *"to share God's peace and promise [...] a safe place for prayer and healing, where sorrow and joy are held in God's store."* For some, it is an easier way to come through the church door than attending more formal services.

More volunteers are always needed to help us offer welcome and refreshment to steward the church on Wednesday mornings and, of course, simply to enjoy a cuppa and a chat in a busy life. We'd love to see you one Wednesday.

Thelma Mitchell



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JARS OF CHANGE ... AGAIN



...but this time for The Leprosy Mission, which is also the charity that our giant card will support. It should be arriving in St Nicolas' Church on or close to Advent Sunday.

Please see if you can fill a jar with small change during Advent, and help us to see how many donkeys we can fund this year.

Two years ago we raised enough to fund one donkey and cart, plus a second donkey. What will we raise this year?

Why Donkeys?

In many rural Indian areas, the arrival of a donkey in a household is a life-changing moment. Goods can be carried to market safely and the seller can have a secure ride back without burdening numbed, leprosy-affected feet with too much walking and the risk of undetected injury on hard tracks. The manure can be used in the vegetable garden, thus improving the yield of essential food stuffs and saleable produce.

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The Church in the Parish

We are a Church of England Team Parish in partnership with the Methodist Church, serving all in Kings Norton through St Nicolas Parish Church and Hawkesley and Immanuel District Churches.

**We believe that the church in Kings Norton exists
To be a worshipping transforming partnership in Christ
To live out God's radical hospitality for all
To be equipped for work in God's world**

St Nicolas' Parish Church

on The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU

Sunday	9.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.30 am	Holy Communion (with "Oasis" for 7's-11's)
2 nd Sunday	10.30 am	Parade Service (Morning Worship) for all ages
	4 pm	Holy Baptism (1 st and 3 rd Sundays of the month)
	6 pm	Evening Worship (see below)

Every Sunday evening we offer prayer, music and quiet for all. 1st Sunday: Taizé Prayer, 2nd Sunday: Holy Communion with Prayer for Healing, 3rd Sunday: Night Prayer (Compline) and Reflection, 4th/5th Sundays: Evening Prayer or Evensong (B.C.P.).

Mon & Weds	9 am	Morning Prayer
Thursday	11 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Hawkesley Church (Anglican & Methodist)

at Hawkesley Academy on the corner of Shannon Road and Old Partway, Kings Norton, B38 9TR

Sunday	10.30am	Worship and Children's Activities (5-11's)
		1 st & 3 rd Sundays Holy Communion
		2 nd & 4 th Sundays Morning Worship
Tuesday	10am	Hawkesley Coffee Morning (every two weeks)

Immanuel Church

at Saint Nicolas' Place, 81 The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU

Sunday	10.30am	Worship (with "Oasis" for those at Primary School)
1 st & 3 rd Sundays		Holy Communion;
2 nd Sunday		Joint service with either St Nicolas or Hawkesley
4 th Sunday		All-Age Worship

Open Church

Visit, pray, light a candle or share conversation over coffee as you wish.

We open St Nicolas' Church as much as we can so that all may share God's peace and promise in a space where they have been found and trusted for centuries. There is a place for you within its story. Please pray that more will know it as a safe place for prayer and healing, where sorrow and joy are held in God's love. We welcome volunteers to share in our offering of welcome, refreshment and care through St Nicolas,' Hawkesley and Immanuel, to steward at St Nicolas' during Open Church and to care for our churchyard, flowers and brasses. Do ask.

Wednesday	10.00 am – 1.00 pm 6.30 pm – 9.00 pm : Candlelit Church with informal learning together at 8.00 pm. Quiet spaces, candles, conversation, creativity & music. Come and go as you like.
Thursday	6.30 pm – 8.00 pm for all Marriage and Baptism enquiries
Saturday	10.00 am – 12 noon for coffee, "Knit & Natter" & prayer. With Messy Church for all ages every 2nd Saturday (Market Day).

For Young Children

Bumps & Babies: for new and expectant parents, in St Nicolas' Church every Monday from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm. **Tiny Tots:** for 0-5's and their parents or carers every Thursday in term time at 9.00 am in St Nicolas' Church

Growing in Faith

We are exploring fresh ways for all to grow in faith, those making their very first step, those who have made many and those who are rediscovering God's love after times of change. Please ask in each church or see our website for details.

Help us to keep our Parish Church open for all

It costs around £800 each week to keep St Nicolas' Church open. We welcome all financial support through donations and especially through regular Planned Giving. Do ask for details and, if a taxpayer, ask how you can Gift Aid your offering.

Baptisms and Marriages

Please visit St Nicolas on Thursdays between 6.30 pm and 8.00 pm to ask any questions and arrange bookings with our clerks. One of the clergy is also present to help if there is a question over whether your service can be held in this parish.

More details at www.kingsnorton.org.uk

FAREWELL TO JOSEPHINE BULL

On Friday 16th October 2015, the family and friends of Josephine (José) Bull gathered at St Nicolas' Church to celebrate her life. For her many friends in Kings Norton, we are reprinting here part of a family tribute which was read at the funeral.

Today we are celebrating and thanking God for Mother's long and very full 93 years of life, and rejoicing that, because of her strong and real faith in Jesus Christ, she has now entered the next, most exciting adventure of her life, reunited for all eternity with Him and all other believers.

Born in Bloxwich, Walsall, in 1922, to George Richard and Elizabeth Wilcox, she grew up in the very difficult and impoverished years of the 1920s and 30s, as Britain recovered from the horrors and poverty of the First World War. For part of this time her father, an engineer by trade who had served in both the Royal and Merchant Navies, was unemployed. In order to support the family, her mother ran two small general stores, firstly in Bristol and then in Ward End, but in both instances, the inability of her customers to pay their bills forced her to close down.

Starting her education at Sladefield Infant School, at the age of eight, and by now living in Ward End, José went to Thornton Junior School, one of the very first open-air schools where doors and windows were fastened back in the belief that fresh air aided learning: great in summer, less so in winter! Not being able to afford to take up the place she gained at the Erdington High School for Girls, at 11, she went back to Sladefield School, before going on to the Aston Commercial School two years later to study economics, book-keeping, type-writing and other commercial

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subjects. Leaving ACS in 1937, she went to work for John Wilson & Sons, a Wholesale Grocer in Birmingham.

Two years later, on her 17th birthday, Hitler marched into Poland which explained why nobody wanted to celebrate with her, and two days later Neville Chamberlain announced England was again at war with Germany.

In 1941, she joined the WAAF and it was here that she met some of her closest friends. Stationed in the Records Office in Gloucester for most of her time, she had many wartime adventures. On one occasion, during an afternoon clifftop walk following a Christmas Day dinner of spam, she saved a girlfriend from falling over the cliffs near Heysham Head Castle. On another, having persuaded a number of elderly ladies from the hostel she was living in to take shelter under a large table, she thought she was going to die when the nextdoor butcher's shop received a direct hit. She also well remembered being woken up during the night of 6th June 1944 by the roar of aircraft flying low overhead in a black sky. It was the start of D-Day.

As the war ended, having passed an NCO's course, Corporal Wilcox was put in charge of a small section of girls allocating airmen courses, prior

to their applying for a Commission in the RAF. One day, on the 25th October 1945 to be precise, a certain Flying Officer Donald Bull, who had spent his war years navigating Lancaster bombers in Bomber Command, walked in to take overall charge of her section. Her first impression of this fair-haired officer was that he looked very young. They soon discovered they both lived in Birmingham and when he offered her a lift in his black Morris for the next weekend leave, she accepted without hesitation. On the Sunday, he met her at Kings Heath and took her back to camp. That was the start of their lifelong romance.

Mother was officially demobbed on 25th March 1946 and went back to work at Wilson's. Don's demob came through four months later in July and he went to work for his father's firm of butchers. On November 11th, Don took José to the West End, a well-known cinema in Birmingham and, having driven twice around the very large car park, stopped the car and asked her if she would like to be an Easter bride. She joyfully accepted and the rest, as they say, is history. They got married on Easter Monday, 7th April, 1947 at St. Margaret's, Ward End, and had (*Continued on page 38*)

THEY CAME FROM KINGS NORTON

Ronald Cartland M.P.

A Brilliant Career Ended at Dunkirk

Cartland is a familiar name for Kings Norton people. There's Cartland Road in Stirchley and, as many will remember, the incongruously art deco MacDonald's at the top of Parsons Hill was in its heyday a popular pub called the Cartland Arms.

For most of the 19th Century, the Cartlands were a leading Birmingham family, with a fortune based on a brassfounding company. They once owned substantial property in Kings Heath Park. Ronald Cartland was MP for Kings Norton from 1935 until he was killed in action at Dunkirk in the Second World War in 1940, at the age of just 33, the first British MP to die in the war.

Like so many others he was cut off in his prime, otherwise he could have risen to a place of great distinction in British politics. In his short career, he unerringly and often controversially chose the right path, and was a close supporter of Winston Churchill well before he became wartime Prime Minister.



After Ronald died, Winston called him "a man of noble spirit who spoke fearlessly for Britain". The future Prime Minister Anthony Eden said: "He had everything

before him and would have had a great part to play in the world after the war".

In case you're wondering, Ronald's family did include a sister who became one of the country's most famous faces, the novelist Barbara Cartland (right). She was born in Edgbaston in 1901, with Ronald following in 1907. They were very close throughout Ronald's life.

After financial setbacks, the family moved to rural Worcestershire, near Pershore, around 1910. In Pershore, Mary Cartland would take the young and impressionable Ronald on her trips to some of the more poverty-stricken areas, giving him a first-hand look at their problems. This was to give him a very unconventional political philosophy, especially for a Tory.

Ronald's father was killed just before the end of the First World War and the family, mother Mary, Barbara, Ronald and younger brother Anthony, moved to London. Ronald won a scholarship to the famous Surrey public school, Charterhouse. After he left school, Mary could not afford to send him to university, so Ronald went to work at the Conservative Party Central Office in London.



When Kings Norton's MP retired on health grounds in late 1933, Ronald was chosen as Conservative candidate. His family was obviously still highly regarded in Birmingham, because his candidature was supported by the Chamberlain family, for many years the most powerful family in the city. Ronald won the by-election in 1935, becoming at 28 one of the youngest MPs in the House.

Right from the start, Ronald made an impact. Influenced by his observations of the conditions in Pershore, he attacked the Tory government led by Stanley Baldwin for its failure to help the parts of the UK that were suffering

from poverty and high unemployment. He was in effect rebuking the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was none other than Neville Chamberlain (right), part of the family that had endorsed his candidature so positively!

But Ronald's most memorable, courageous and significant political actions related to the threat posed by Hitler. Before his election he and Barbara had visited Germany, where Ronald was appalled at the Nazis' persecution of the Jews. Once in Parliament, he regularly warned his fellow MPs of Hitler's determination to extend the German empire, predicting that war was inevitable.

After Chamberlain succeeded Baldwin as Prime Minister, Cartland caused fury within the Tory



leadership by arguing against the Government's policy of appeasing Nazi Germany. This caught the attention of other Tory dissident backbenchers, including Winston Churchill. Ronald never neglected his constituency: in 1938, he escorted Churchill on a memorable visit to the Austin factory at Longbridge, then producing aircraft.

He became famous for a speech that he gave to the house in August 1939, a few weeks before war was declared. Many MPs were outraged by Chamberlain's efforts to use parliamentary procedure to earn a vote of confidence, a strategy that prompted the young MP to stand up and attack the Prime Minister. His speech included what turned out to be prophetic words: "We are in a situation that within a month we may be going to fight and we may be going to die."

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His army career was equally meteoric. Having joined the Territorial Army in 1937, by 1940 he had already risen to the rank of Major, serving in the Royal Artillery. But on 30 May 1940, protecting British troops in the retreat to Dunkirk, he was killed. Even more tragically, it later emerged that his brother Anthony had been killed near Ypres on the previous day.

A memorial service was held for Ronald Cartland on 18 February 1941, at London's St-Martin-in-the-Fields Church. He is buried at Hotton War Cemetery, near Liège in Belgium. Barbara wrote a book about him, a loving and affectionate tribute, published in 1942.

Had Ronald survived, there's little doubt that Churchill would have found him an increasingly significant place within the Conservative party and who knows, within the wartime government.

There was another memorial service at home, held in St Nicolas' Church. The officiant was none other than the Rev Wilbert Awdry, soon to become famous as the author of the Thomas the Tank engine books, and then a curate at St Nicolas'.

Michael Kennedy



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Waiting for Christmas

The Thoughts of a Children's Worker

Advent is the season of waiting, a time of preparation for what is to come. In the same way that Lent is the time of waiting and preparation for Easter. But we tend to treat them differently.

Lent is a more serious time of reflection, study, prayer and silence. There is no celebration until Lent is over and Easter arrives. Outside of church circles Lent, with the exception of Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) passes most people by.

Advent and Christmas however seem to have become muddled together and Advent seems to have become as much of a time of celebration as Christmas itself : parties, nativities, decorations, carol services, the whole frenzy of Christmas.

I wonder why the two periods of waiting have become so different? We know both stories well, but Christmas is possibly the best known Christian story of all. Easter is not as commercial as Christmas but we still find Easter Eggs on sale on Boxing Day and Hot Cross Buns seem to be available all year round. However, this is nothing compared to the range and extent of Christmas paraphernalia that are available, it would seem, earlier and

earlier every year.

In the secular world, Christmas is a far bigger festival than Easter, perhaps because of its central message focusing on the joy and promise of the birth of a child. Easter, with its focus on a death on a cross, is less appealing to the masses, which is problematic as the message of hope in the Resurrection, central to Easter, is overlooked.

Now, don't get me wrong. I love Advent. The carols, the trip to the German market, the Christmas crafts and decorating the tree, all of it. But I think that we need to redress the balance.

The lovely Helen H posted on Facebook a link to an article entitled: *10 reasons Christmas was better in the 70s and 80s*. The article states that one of the reasons Christmas was better was related to the anticipation, the fact that the countdown to Christmas didn't start until December so that you were still excited by the time Christmas arrived. It goes on to say that there was nothing more festive than going through a catalogue and making a list



and that the time to get really excited was when the special double edition of the Radio Times arrived.

So how do we recapture that type of expectation? This Christmas we can all try and find time amongst the busyness of Advent and the preparations for Christmas by truly trying to prepare. By taking time to look at the story of Christmas again, to connect again with the waiting and the anticipation of Advent. The Wednesday morning Open Bible group will be using a book entitled *'Five Impossible Things to Believe Before Christmas'* by Kevin Scully to explore the story anew.

In our house we have some Advent

traditions. One is to put up a large star in the window. It is something that happens in many houses in Germany, Sweden and other parts of Europe to symbolise the star of Bethlehem that guided the Magi to the Baby Jesus. We also light an Advent candle every evening as we travel towards Christmas. The lights of Christmas, be they candles, stars or hundreds of Christmas lights, remind us of the hope that the birth of a baby brings. Perhaps we can try to recapture the Advent of our own childhoods, create traditions of our own and to try and capture that sense of waiting and anticipation for children today.

Pauline Weaver



Harry L Marks



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Italian Reflections

It is Saturday 7th November and as I sit in the warm Italian sun I can hear the hum of chainsaws at work and the banter of men working together.

I am in the village of Poggio di Loro in the Pratomagno Mountains, some 200 ft above sea level. The valley is completely obscured by a ceiling of mist and cloud, but here where I am the sky is blue and the sun is shining brilliantly.

The village is humming (literally) with activity as it prepares for tomorrow's *Festival of the 100 Logs*. It is the last festival of the year, before the onset

of the darker, colder days of winter.

The village is largely a holiday and weekend retreat for families who, for the most part, live in the larger towns and cities of the region, but a handful of older people live here all year round. Normally, at this time of year, the village is quiet and peaceful, but from yesterday evening it began to fill up as families arrived for tomorrow's festival. Today it is anything but quiet. There are voices talking excitedly in the only way that Italians can talk, catching up on family news. The



men are using a chain saw to chop a very large tree trunk into 5 or 6 pieces, about 1 meter high by 1 meter across. Each “log” is then hollowed out and then towed by tractor to its location in the village. Tomorrow it will be filled with twigs and smaller logs and a fire lit, which will burn as a brazier well into the evening. The communal square or “campino” is gradually filling up with tables and benches and the communal kitchen is being made ready for preparing the lunch which will feed over 200 people.

There seems to be no master plan and no allocation of jobs. People just turn up and get stuck in. They seem to know, from long years of doing it, just what is needed and what to do. There is a huge sense of community, lots of banter as people propose different ways of doing things, but a general feeling of goodwill and purpose. No one seems to mind when a conversation takes over from 'work' and activity slows. There is natural rhythm of work and rest that gets the job done with no one feeling put upon or exhausted.

It is a rhythm of life that the Church through the centuries has appreciated and practiced and is reflected in the ancient pattern of work interspersed with the daily offices. In much the same way the church bells of the villages around

Poggio still ring out the Angelus at noon and 4 pm, a signal to those working in the fields that it is time to stop for lunch or the end of the day, as I discovered for myself when I joined in the 'olive' harvest for 2 days. It was hugely satisfying to labour in the olive groves and I am looking forward to seeing the olives processed into oil that I can bring home.

Having a natural rhythm to life is important. IT helps to keep our minds and bodies in balance as the writer of Ecclesiastes ponders in that well known passage:

“For everything there is season, and a time for every matter under heaven; A time to be born and a time to die; A time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted.”

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-8)

Becoming very popular today is the practice called “mindfulness”. It is particularly helpful, so I believe, to those who suffer from bouts of anxiety as it helps the suffered to take their minds off the future (and thus off their anxieties surrounding the future) and to concentrate on the present. The effect is to calm the individual.

The writer of Ecclesiastes knew the



value of this too as he ponders the natural cycle of life, all of which is right for the season. Today, in our busy, overactive, world, it is easy to lose sight of the benefits of a rhythm to life of work, rest and play and to think that rest and play is a sign of

laziness. But if in the end the job is done satisfactorily and in the time frame needed, as I witnessed in Poggio today, it might be worth trying for ourselves.

Revd Jayne Crooks



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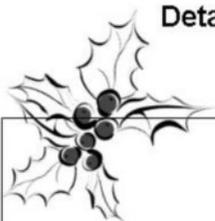
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Group tours can be booked at various times during the week.

Booking: Visit our website for details and photos of our facilities for weddings, family functions, corporate and community events and training. We offer a wide range of catering options too. You are welcome to view at a time to suit you. Call us on **0121 458 1223** to arrange a visit or email info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk.

Marriage and baptism enquiries are welcomed at St Nicolas' Church on Thursdays from 6.30pm to 8pm.

Activities

Saint Nicolas' Place is home to a wide range of activities every week including Uniformed Groups, Seniors' Club, Community Choir, Social Support Groups, Zumba, Rhythm Time, Slimming World, Dance and Fitness Groups, Kings Norton History Society, and heritage group events. We still have room for more. We are also developing rich local archive and study resources.

CONTACTS

If you cannot find what you are looking for here, you will probably find it on the parish website (www.kingsnorton.org.uk). Alternatively, please ask questions at services, during Open Church or at the Parish Office. Situated inside Saint Nicolas' Place on Kings Norton Green, it is open from Monday to Friday between 10 am and 1 pm.

81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU
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THE MINISTRY TEAM

Please note that, while the parish is without a Rector, authority is in the hands of the Churchwardens, Anne and Phil, and of the Area Dean, the Revd Melusi Sibanda. Our honorary assistant clergy, working part-time, are:

Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jane Platt
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Robin Mortimore
Methodist Minister	The Revd Caz Hague
Children's Work Development Worker	Pauline Weaver
Readers:	David Ash, Mandy Butler, Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman
Pastoral Care Team Co-ordinator	Anne Hughes

THE CHURCH WARDENS

St. Nicolas' Church	Anne Hughes & Phil Burton	
Hawkesley Church	Jim Clarke	0121 550 3455 or 07 939 838 086
Immanuel Church	Clare Dean	0121 459 6185

OTHER CONTACTS

Parish Administrator & P.C.C. Secretary	Judy Ash
Finance Officer	Catherine Dehghani
Regular Giving	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Church Facilities Manager	Sylvia Fox
Churchyard Care	Anne Hughes
Flower Arranging	Alison Blumer 0121 486 2837
Oasis (Sunday School) Tiny Tots & GPS	Pauline Weaver
Oasis (Sunday School) Immanuel	Nicky Moorcroft

MUSIC

Church music, choir training and handbells are overseen by Sylvia Fox (07 778 449 170). Choir practices are held on Fridays (tuition from 4.45 - 6.30 pm, juniors from 6.30 - 7.45 pm, adults from 8 - 9 pm). Handbell practices are held on Mondays (3.00-4.30 pm) and on some evenings. Please phone first to check.

Bell Ringing Julie Winterbourne 01 244 7171 julie18881@gmail.com

Practices for bell ringers are held on Tuesdays from 7.30 to 9.15 pm in the church tower.

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Brownies (188th Birmingham): Tuesdays 6.00-7.30 pm
Brownies: Thursdays 6.30 - 8.00 pm
Guides (247th Birmingham): Mondays 7.15-9.00 pm

Guides and Brownies

at Hawkesley Church Centre

Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm
Brownies (259th Birmingham): Wednesdays 6.30 pm
Guides (141st Birmingham): Thursdays 7.00 pm

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Beavers (6-8yrs): 5-6 pm Penny Hattersley 628 5694
Cubs (8-10½): 6.15-7.45pm Alan Haynes 07534 615489
Scouts (10½-15½): 8 pm

Hawkesley Church Primary Academy

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Headteacher: Mr Derek Higgins

(Continued from page 23) their reception at the Grand Hotel, Colemore Row.

By now Don was Managing Director of A.T.Austin Ltd., a small engineering company in Eckersall Road, Kings Norton where Josephine later joined him as Company Secretary. They set up home in Grovely Lane, Rednal, overlooking Cotton Park and it was here that Maxine was born on 7th April 1949, their second wedding anniversary.

After seven years at Rednal, Mother became pregnant again and, to be closer to the factory, they moved to 36 Meadow Hill Road, Kings Norton in April 1954. Her parents joined them and José lived here for the remaining 61 years of her life.

On 3rd July 1954 her second daughter, Beverley, was born and the family

began to put down roots in Kings Norton. She soon became a lifelong and committed member of the church family at St Nicolas'.

Like the daughter of another grocer, Josephine was always a staunch supporter of the Conservative Party, and when Don was asked to stand as member for Kings Norton on Birmingham City Council, she became his greatest supporter. He won the seat by 29 votes and subsequently represented Kings Norton as a City Councillor for 18 years, before being made an Honorary Alderman.

Mother was always very kind and generous, and the lives of many have been touched by her. We have all been enriched through knowing her and we will all miss her. Thank You, Lord, for her, and for all that she has, and will always mean to us.

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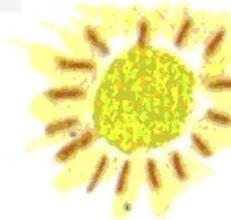

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