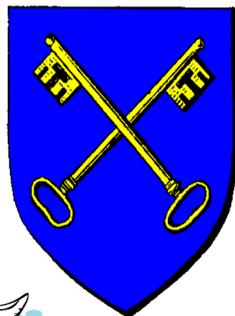


# St Peter's Church, Raunds

Newsletter No. 36

December  
2020



What a year 2020 has been! So many plans have been postponed or put on hold. St Peter's Church planned to celebrate it being 800 years old, but hopefully we can make 801 celebrations next year. However much good has been apparent. Community spirit and generosity has shone through. Some people have found it better working from home, and others spending time with their children during the first lockdown. Others have felt isolated, fearful and bewildered. This will be emphasised at Christmas so please remember those on their own, without family or family abroad, or who have lost close relatives and friends. We remember the family of Ellen and Roger Bird, who were both stalwarts of St Peter's Church.

There are some of our congregation who don't have access to the Internet so can't join in with the online services. A Christmas card or phone call would show they are not forgotten.

There are some services planned throughout the benefice, assuming regulations allow, including a Christingle service and a service on Christmas morning in St Peter's Church. Please contact Rev Jon for more details as there will be a booking system there is a Nativity Trail in the churchyard throughout December and an Advent Calendar with a difference online.

I wish you all a happy Christmas and look forward to meeting up in 2021.

Stay safe and keep the faith, Judy

Judy



## **St Peter's Newsletter**

I have been writing an "editorial" for 36 newsletters. It began during the interregnum to keep the congregation and others outside the church informed. Sue and Stephen have done a great job in putting it together but it is very dependent on the information we receive, which sometimes is very little!

Is the newsletter still needed? Do you read it? What would you like to see in it? We would love to have some feedback.

If travel restrictions are lifted, I hope to be away more, so maybe this is an opportunity for someone else to take over. Please contact Judy for offers or suggestions on [cawabs@aol.com](mailto:cawabs@aol.com) or 07840666385

Judy



Due to the lack of news and the limited number of submissions of articles, the decision has been taken that from the New Year, we will only be producing the Newsletter every other month.

Ed.



## Rev. Jon

Dear Friends

As I write this, I like you are uncertain about what will and will not be allowed to do this Advent and Christmas, so please keep an eye on our website, and Facebook page.

But whatever we are told over the coming days, it won't take away my love of Advent. I love its themes of hope and expectation, its call to stay awake and prepare. I love the vastness of the vision it holds out for our pondering- creation renewed and reconciled; justice, peace and mercy met together; and all flesh seeing God's salvation.

In this season I imagine our forebears, gathered together in the dark and cold around glowing firelight: singing and telling stories, dreaming and watching in the night. Advent stirs our hearts' longings, from the deeply personal to our yearnings for the whole human family and our planet itself.

What are you yearning for this Advent? The news is full of Covid-19, violence and greed, environmental devastation, and human cruelty. The demands of the holiday season often stir our personal griefs, losses and estrangements too. We pray, we work, and we hope for the coming anew of Emmanuel, God with us. We hope for the joy and wonder of Christmas, and the birth of love in our lives and our world.

What a gift it is to come together in our communities in this beautiful but sometimes difficult season- to watch and prepare, to sing and pray, to keep Advent in community. And then, what a gift to welcome Christ among us. For Christ comes, whether we are ready or not, whether our shopping is done, and our tree decorated, whether or not we are feeling the merriment of the season. Christ was born in a time of anxiety, oppression, and danger, to a poor family far from home. Christ is born among us, tender and vulnerable, in a world in need of a Saviour.

I do not know how the mystery happens, but by God's grace, it does. The incarnate Word, God with us, is born anew, and dwells among us,



## **Rev. Jon (cont)**

loving us immeasurably and inviting us to love with all our hearts. Christmas comes once more.

Advent and Christmas are lovely, and deeply meaningful as we worship, wait and celebrate together. We have planned for this season in two ways one as a virtual time of worship and celebration the other with some face to face worship and celebration in our churches, I pray that the latter may happen. But whatever happens this season, I hope you will receive it as a gift for your soul and join us as you are able.

*“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14*

Blessings of this holy season, Rev. Jon Rector



## **Friday Club**

We have not been able to meet, but we have had phone conversations to decide on our Christmas Giving, and have agreed to send £50 each to Cancer Research and our own church. There is now not much cash left, but hopefully we will catch up again in 2021!

Pat Stuart

## Ginny Pledger— Child & Family Worker

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well in these very strange and unusual times. At the time of writing this we are currently in our second lockdown of the year. This of course meant that any plans that we might have had for Harvest celebrations with the schools had to be cancelled for this year, everyone's safety and wellbeing had to come first, and rightly so. I do think though that when we can finally meet back up together in whatever form that might be, it will be all the more special. I must admit I am missing going into the schools and seeing all the children. It's always so much fun.

*COVID-19 Community Work* – this vital work is continuing across our Benefice with the help of all the amazing volunteers. We really are building up some amazing friendships with people in our Benefice that we perhaps would have never met in “normal” circumstances. That is very special to see God at work in our communities in this way.

Assembly – St Peter's, Park Infants, Windmill, Stanwick & Ringstead Primary Schools – this week Rev. Jon, myself and Billy & Lilly looked at Harvest. We built a rainbow from fruit and talked about all the rainbows that people put in their windows to say thank you to key workers and NHS staff during the first lockdown and how the rainbow is a symbol of hope. We looked at Genesis Ch.8: v.22 to tie it all together.

Assembly – St Peter's, Park Infants, Windmill, Stanwick & Ringstead Primary Schools – our theme this week was Respect and Remembrance. We had a cross made up of knitted poppies. We looked at different things that we use to help us remember things and how poppies are used as a symbol to remind us of the sacrifices that people made for us today. We looked at 1 Corinthians Ch.11v.23-26 and we shared some poetry about war.

## **Ginny Pledger— Child & Family Worker (continued)**

Assembly – St Peter's & Ringstead Primary School – our theme this week was Love and the Lost Sheep. We did 2 experiments and discussed the outcome and why that happened. We then looked at Luke Ch.15 v.3.-7 and the story of the Lost Sheep and discussed why the shepherd would search for 1 sheep when he had 99 others. We then talked about God's love for us.

Nativity Trail – throughout the month of December there will be a Nativity Trail in each church yard. There will be a child friendly drawing and description of the Nativity story alongside a piece of scripture. This is for our communities to enjoy at their own leisure. We felt it was important to have something visible in all of our churches in such an uncertain time especially with churches not being open as much as they would normally be. Please do follow the Nativity Trail in your parish, you never know who you might end up having a conversation with and spreading the Good News.

Christingle Service – plans are currently underway to hold a Christingle service in St Peter's, St Laurence's & St Mary's churches. All Hallows will be having a different service. These will be all held at the same time to prevent people from going into different parishes and will operate on a booking system. The Christingles will be bagged up and isolated for 72 hours. On arrival, the congregation will collect a Christingle bag and then be escorted to their seats. Although this is not how we would like to host a Christingle Service we have to make sure that everyone is safe and that we are adhering to the rules. However, at the time of writing this we are assuming that churches will be allowed to re-open but should government guidance change then obviously our plans may change too.

That's about everything for now. Seeing as this newsletter is a double issue to cover December as well I will wish you all a happy, safe and peaceful Christmas now.

God bless, Ginny Pledger

Child & Family Worker – Raunds, Hargrave, Ringstead & Stanwick

## Raunds Foodbank

What a year this has been for the Foodbank! Our awareness has grown and several other initiatives have grown out of it. These include setting up Thrapston Foodbank, Holiday Hunger for families during the summer holidays and half-term, Uniform Bank for school uniform from the local schools and Winter Warmers for children's coats. Our profile has increased on social media through Facebook. We have been on Radio Northampton and have developed links with the East Northants Enterprise Centre.

The Community Cafe closed in March due to Covid-19. Sadly, we recently lost Sandra Still who had been a staunch supporter of the Foodbank and Cafe since it first opened, and also Brian Johnson who was renowned for his sponge cake. (We miss the homemade cakes so, if anyone would like to bake one for the volunteers on a Thursday morning, it would go down well!)

The generosity of our community continues, especially with Christmas coming. A local company has offered to buy the ingredients for Christmas dinner for a number of families. The Foodbank will be putting together Christmas hampers, and giving vouchers for Adams Apple. Also, we are receiving a regular donation from an individual, specifically to purchase fresh produce to add to food parcels.

We have been given a lot of toys and gifts such as toiletries, some of which we are selling to raise funds. We will be having a stall on Saturday December 5th from 10 till 12, so come and do your Christmas shopping in one place and help support those who are struggling.

I would like to thank all who have donated items, money and time, to the schools and businesses and Raunds Area Volunteers and wish you all a happy Christmas.

For further details see our Facebook page or email [enquiries@raundsfoodbank.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@raundsfoodbank.co.uk) or phone 01933 730160



## **Merry Christmas**

Just to wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Keep safe.

### **Future Newsletter Publications**

To ensure you receive future copies promptly you can opt to receive yours by email.

Simply register this preference along with your email address to:-  
[stephen\\_clements@btinternet.com](mailto:stephen_clements@btinternet.com)

### **February / March Newsletter**

**Just a quick reminder that the closing date for the next issue is Sunday 31st January.**

**This will be a double issue covering December and January**

**Please get your contributions in promptly.**