

THE BELVOIR ANGEL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NINE CHURCHES OF THE BELVOIR TEAM BENEFICE

PLEASE NOTE

**BENEFICE
OFFICE
RE-OPENS**

MONDAY 5 JANUARY
9.30am

**WEEK FOR
CHRISTIAN
UNITY**

**UNITED
SERVICE**

7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 21 January
at Bottesford
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A time for reflecting on our experiences

JANUARY 2009

40p

THE BLUE ROBE • CHRISTMAS MEMORY • FAITH GROUP • SAYING GOODBYE



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A Happy New Year

We welcome you to this, *your* new sized Belvoir Angel magazine.

Our thanks go to both Marion Cole and Judith Wells for all their hard work as editors, bringing the Benefice-wide 'Belvoir Angel' broadsheet into every parish.

It is our intention, with your support, to provide you with a magazine which informs and entertains. We aim to do this with your help.

By letting us know about events and activities which are planned, or have recently taken place in your parish, we can make the 'Belvoir Angel' a really vibrant magazine.

Peter Briant, John Milner
Editors

Editorial / Deadlines

Articles for inclusion should be restricted to 250 words maximum, to ensure a fair distribution of the magazine space.

Copy for next month's magazine to be sent to Mrs Judith Wells at the Benefice Office (see inside back cover for contact details) before the 15th of this month.

THE BELVOIR TEAM

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BENEFICE OFFICE OPENING HOURS

The Benefice Office is open Monday to Thursday 9am to 2.30pm
if you are unable to contact Mrs Judith Wells out of office hours,
there is an answerphone facility.

FROM THE REGISTERS

BAPTISM

HOSE December 14 Charles Thomas Simpson

FUNERAL

HARBY December 1 Albert Wicks (84)

Faith Group

EXPLORING THE PATHWAYS TO GOD

Kelly Robinson and Nicola Robinson started a Christian group for women about three years ago. My daughter Kate introduced in to this group before she went of to Australia and I am glad she did. We are a group of women, some with children and others not, from a variety of Christian churches, or none, who meet to grow in our faith. We encourage confidentiality and mutual support without watering down the Christian Message as we learn together. Two ladies have become committed Christian through our group. We have run an Alpha course and a Freedom in Christ Course but we have also looked at Ephesians, Exodus,

and how to be secure women. At the moment we are exploring the pathways to God, realising we are all wonderfully different. We meet on Monday mornings during school term time. We share the role of providing a house to meet in so check the web or the office for the latest venue. Once a month on a Monday evening we meet for extra prayer and discussion so that those with children can be more attentive and we can pray more for each other and our Christian presence in our community. In the School Holidays events for families are arranged so we can still keep in touch with each other and our

children can enjoy being with other Christian families.

Naturally we have tea and cake and each term a shared lunch. We go out together to Christian events such as women's days in Lincoln and Harrogate and to Vine Yard and Talbot Street Christian Centre events as opportunities to learn, worship and to be ministered too (prayed for).

Any woman is most welcome to join us regularly or even occasionally. If you can't do Monday mornings you are still encouraged to join us on our days out.

Contact *Glenda Gibson on 01949 845 106 for details.*

Poroaki

The beginning of a New Year is traditionally a time for new years resolutions and reflecting on the past year. As we prepare to return to New Zealand we are reflecting on the very special year in our lives spent living in Bottesford and, for me, working in the Vale of Belvoir Benefice. The day we arrived Graeme and I were warmly welcomed to Walnut Road by Stuart and Penny, Judith and Derek and Sheila Collett and we have continued to feel welcomed by so many and even forgiven our strange accents.

Although based in Bottesford initially, I have been able to explore more of the Vale in the last five months and again have appreciated the warm welcome that I have received everywhere. I have also realised that every village church is different not only in architecture and history but in the combination of people that make up the church community. A church without a congregation is an empty cold church, however when there is a group of people committed to being 'church' in their community and where the gospel is lived, the church is alive and the stranger will find warmth and acceptance.

I am aware of the uncertainty regarding the vacancies for clergy and while the clergy do provide leadership and care, the church is not the Rector or the Vicar and is only as strong as the people who form the church in each village. There is so much to be thankful for and I hope the growth, energy and welcome that we have experienced will be there for others. Being Christian is not only about the words we say in our services but in the way we live. Jesus demonstrated who he was along with the stories he told about God's love.

We leave with memories of very caring and committed people, lots of photos and experiences. Some of what is taken for granted or maybe seen as a burden is still wondrous for others. I don't think I will ever forget the experience of worshipping in churches that are older than human habitation in New Zealand. May you be renewed and richly blessed in your journey of faith in the coming year.

Thank you for having us to stay in your place and giving us so much. I hope we can return the welcome if you visit New Zealand.

Arohanui (big love)

Revd Lois and Revd Graeme Warburton

Retirement Announcement

By the Revd Stuart Foster, Rector of the Benefice of the Belvoir Parishes

The past three years have been exciting for Bottesford and the Vale of Belvoir and in terms of mission and ministry initiatives, maintenance and care of our historic buildings, financial viability and the development of lay ministry we have good reason to be thankful to God.

With such a positive foundation having been laid, this is a good time for me (on health grounds) to retire and leave it to my successor to capitalise upon this foundational work. On Easter Sunday (April 12) next year, I will take my last service in Bottesford and formally retire from stipendiary ministry at the end of April.

Subject to advice from my GP I intend to return to light duties in Bottesford from Christmas Day.

NEWS ON THE WING

St Mary the Virgin Harby

Bishop Tim opened the festivities . . .

A Christmas Tree Festival organised by Anne Dames, based on the theme of Christmas Carols, was held from Friday 12 December to Tuesday 16 December.

The Preview Evening was held on Friday 12 December, when the Bishop of Leicester, the Rt. Revd Tim Stevens, opened the festivities. This was a Cheese and Wine evening with optional fancy dress with the theme of "Carol Singers".

The Vale Choir sang Christmas carols and some more light hearted entertainment

for the 100 people who came.

The Festival was sponsored by Long Clawson Dairy, Mainline Mouldings, RES Tractors and Harby School. Special thanks are due to members of the Christmas Tree Festival Team, all contributors and Mr Stoker.

Watchnight Service

Thursday 1 January - 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Ring in the New Year. Donations towards church funds.

Leslie Cram



Five months in blue robe No. 28 with the The Vale Choir

Here, in the Vale of Belvoir, stayed a girl from a flat country called the Netherlands. Singing is her passion; therefore she was willing to begin a new adventure and joined the Vale Choir. Religion is not a stranger for her, because she lived in a city with 27 churches, all of a different background. Most of them believing in one God.

People consider the Dutch to be brilliant with languages. Well, we try our best. In a way we have to, because we're just a small pond with a few frogs (Kikkerlandje). That's how the Dutch call their country. Some of us aim for a better use of English and go abroad to explore a different world. My journey has led me from

Rijssen, a small city in the eastern part of the Netherlands. We prefer to call it the Netherlands, not Holland. Holland is just the collection name for two countries. Now I have stayed for five months in Harby, enjoying the simple life of the countryside. I can still remember my first Wednesday night, preparing myself for choir. A member of the choir stood on our doorstep and walked with me to the church. Our choir-master introduced me to the choir and to an awful lot of heavy books. During this first practice it dawned on me I would have a hard time coping with the songs. Reading the lyrics, pronouncing the words, reading the notes and singing a decent tune all at the same time! Luckily the choir has strong soprano voices to help me through difficult songs. My biggest achievement has to be learning the Lord's Prayer by heart. My aim was to attend as many services as possible. I thoroughly

enjoyed the weddings; I had a hard time singing at the Remembrance service and funerals, but most of all I loved singing with the choir.

My favourite song has to be: 'Be Still my soul.' It starts off softly, but in the end we burst into a beautiful ensemble. As a matter of fact, I have dealt with a lot of gorgeous songs, which I hope to introduce in my choir.

Be still, my soul,

The Lord is on your side.

Bear patiently, the cross of grief or pain.

Leave to your God, to order and provide.

In every change He faithful will remain.

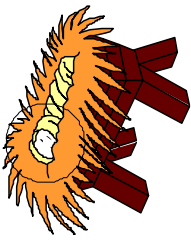
Be still, my soul,

Your best your heavenly friend,

Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

There comes a time when you have to say goodbye. I know that I will have to leave the blue robe no. 28 behind, but I also know the next one wearing that robe will cherish singing with the Vale Choir as much as I did. Thank you for helping me improving my vocal sounds, pronunciation and being there for me. I will remember you all whenever I sing a song!

Marina van den Houten



A Christmas Memory

As she wrapped a present for her daughter who again would not be spending Christmas with them, she smiled, remembering a conversation of long ago.

- 'What was the best thing about Christmas?'
- 'Oh, being an angel'
- 'You looked lovely'
- 'Yes, but it was the baby' (a real one)
- 'What about him?'
- 'He was so little, he couldn't help anyone'
- 'He did when he grew up'
- 'Yes, but not now'
- 'No'
- 'I knew the baby wanted us to help'

The Baby had a lot to answer for she thought. Her training finished, Helen would soon be off to a land where help was certainly needed, and Christmas unknown. Sighing, she put on her coat to go to church for the Nativity play, where tears and smiles would be unremarkable.

JB

St Peter Redmile



We are looking at raising sufficient funds . . .

A few months ago, members of the Parochial Church Council and people from the village, interested in supporting St Peter's Church, formed the 'Redmile Community Group'.

Since then several fundraising events have been held including Cheese Tasting, a Quiz with meal at the Peacock Inn, a Chocolate Night and an Open House, which have raised several hundred pounds and this has enabled us to carry out temporary repairs to the church roof. In the long term we are looking at raising sufficient funds and applying for grants to replace the whole of the roof of the South Aisle.

During December a group of us went Carol Singing around the village together and this was followed with a Champagne

and Canapé Evening at the end of December. In January the **big screen** comes to St Peter's. On Friday 9th January at 7pm, Centre Stage brings you the film *Mama Mia*. 'Sing-along' is optional. All ages welcome. Tickets cost £3.50 adults and £2.50 children. Contact Louise George on 01949 843 789 to book your tickets now.

Other events being planned include 'April in Paris' – a comedy by Rataat Theatre Co. on 17th May, Redmile Entertains, Spring Fling, Summer Vintage Fayre.

Watch out for further details in future Belvoir Angel issues.

Judith Wells

Godly Play

Godly Play is a tried and tested technique to share Bible stories with all ages of children (and adults!) in a fun and engaging way.

It can be used in many settings – Church, school and beyond – there is a website at www.godlyplay.org.uk

Janet Ingram, RE Advisor from Leicester Diocese has kindly offered to come and run an introductory session locally for us at Stonesby Chapel on Wednesday, 22 January 7.30pm.

Everyone is welcome to come and find out more.

To book a place please contact Shuna George on 01664 464 115.

A date to note in your diaries

On Saturday 21 February at 7.30pm St. Guthlac's will be holding a Quiz Night in the Plough Inn, Stathern.

Come either as a table of four or just come along yourself and make up a table. A raffle will be held with profits going towards the church general funds.

Please note: Tickets will not be on sale at the door, as we will need to be know precise numbers to assist with the catering.

Tickets at £7.50 per person, includes a plated supper, can be obtained by sending a s.a.e. to: Peter Briant, 8 Valebrook Road, Stathern LE14 4EB.

St Guthlac Stathern



It's been a busy time at Stathern this Christmastide.

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NEW WINGS

Worship Anew in 2009

lastSaturday@6 is a new initiative for prayer and worship in Bottesford. Meeting at 6 p.m. on the last Saturday of each month (alternating Prayer and Praise Meetings), this is an opportunity for exploring and expressing faith in an informal setting.

Organised by Churches Together in Bottesford, an open invitation is extended to all who wish to attend.

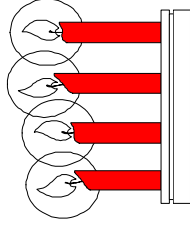
The first meeting at 6 p.m. on 31 January is in the Chapel on Devon Lane and will be a prayer meeting. February's meeting will also be in the Chapel and will be a time of praise and worship.

For further information contact:

Judith Wells 01949 842 859

Revd Lesley Taylor 01949 842 952 or

Daphne Cassidy 01949 843 100



Children's Fun Workshop St. Guthlac's

The Children's Fun Workshop will take place in church on Thursday 29 January 3.30 - 4.30pm when the theme will be *Candlemas*.

All children aged between 4 - 11 are very welcome.

Mothers are welcome to stay and help.

Mary Briant, Leader

TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Would like to be confirmed?

We are now taking names for 2009.

The Confirmation Service, led by Bishop Tim, will take place on 22nd April at St Mary's, Melton Mowbray at 7.30p.m.

Preparation classes begin in February and if you would like more details, or wish to book a place, please contact Judith Wells at the Benefice Office on 01949 842 859

Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families

**Bottesford
Mother's Union**

We are holding our **Annual General Meeting** on Wednesday 7 January at 2.00pm to which all members are invited to attend. At this meeting we will hear about last year's activities and our plans for the coming year.
On Saturday 31 January from 10.00am to 12.00 we shall be holding a **Coffee morning**. All are welcome.

Please support these events, which will take place in the Fuller Rooms, Bottesford

**Richard
Barnes**

Funeral Director

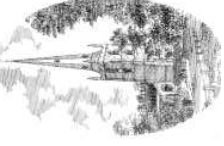
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giving us
time for the task
peace for the pathway
wisdom for the work
friends for the fireside
love to the last



**St Mary the Virgin
Bottesford**

At the time of writing December has already been a busy month with Advent services, school assemblies and combined events with Churches Together in Bottesford.

On 7 December we held our Christingle and Toy Service at St Mary's, attended by over 160 parents and children. This included 50 plus young people from the uninformed organisations in the village.

The day before, a group of us had spent the morning in church making the Christingles, aided by some of our 'Little Angels' who thought it much more fun to eat the dried fruit than put it on cocktail sticks.

The toys brought to the service by the children were passed on to Grantham Homestart in good time for distribution before Christmas.

Our Advent Carol Service, again well attended, took place that afternoon and was followed by the PCC's

annual 'Thank You' evening for our church volunteers.

On December 17 I was invited by school to a brass band concert, and in the afternoon Community carols, hosted by Churches Together, were held in the Village Hall. Here the primary school gave us a taste of what was to come the next day at their end of term performance in St Mary's. As usual the church was packed with families and friends for this popular service.

Churches Together met again for 'Sing Christmas' with Radio Leicester in the warmth of the Bull on Thursday 18 and was again well attended.

We now look forward to our Christmas Eve services and the celebration of Christmas Day itself.

Judith Wells

“**packed with families and friends**”

St Peter and St Paul Barkestone

Well-known landmark now flood-lit.

The needle-spire of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church in Barkestone-le-Vale has long dominated the landscape in the north east corner of the Vale of Belvoir - it will now be seen at night for miles around!

On Advent Sunday 30 November, a Festival of Light service led by the Framland Area Dean, the Revd Beverley Stark was held at the church, during which the floodlights were dedicated and switched on for the first time.

The pencil-beam lamps, a gift to the church, have been sponsored by residents Don and Sylvia Smart through their company Greigs Ltd.

The spire of the church is now bathed in a subdued light, with the gold cross at the top shining in the night sky.

In his introductory comments, Alan Reed, Churchwarden Emeritus, said it was a most appropriate time to flood-light the spire as major repairs to the tower, the

walkway and the roof had just been completed at a cost of over £100,000.

Reactions from residents have included "stunning" and "breath-taking." We hear regularly of people taking long routes home to catch different views of our new landmark even from the top of Stathern hill and above all, the flood-lit spire has created a talking point and has generated new interest in the church at this key time of year.

Mark Dennison

Belvoir Team Council

The Belvoir Team Council (BTC) will meet on Thursday 8 January at 7.30pm in the Function Room at the Plough Inn, Stathern. This meeting of the BTC is open to all churchwardens and treasurers. The agenda for this meeting was sent out to all members before Christmas.

Revd Simon Shouler has kindly agreed to chair this meeting due to the incapacity of Revd Stuart Foster.

To speed the meeting's business any parish reports, from churchwardens, covering church events since our last meeting (4 September). Could treasurers please let me know how much of their Parish Share has been paid to the Diocese by the 31 December. All reports should all be sent to me by Sunday 4 January, at the latest please, for prior circulation.

Peter Briant, Clerk to the BTC

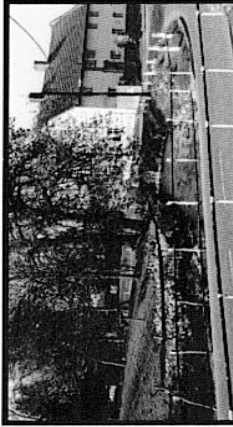
ON A WING AND A PRAYER

Following a star - following a dream

Almighty and everlasting God, who by the guidance of a star led the magi from eastern lands to adore the new-born king: we praise you for giving your son Jesus to be the light of the world, and for revealing in him your saving love for all mankind. Fill, we implore you, the world with your glory, and show yourself by the radiance of your light to all the nations. Guide us as we travel through life, so that we and all people may know Jesus as the true and living way, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

I've always loved Epiphany, for me it has always a warm golden glow of sheer generosity. Epiphany is about journeying in hope and faith – following a star – following a dream. It's also about bringing gifts, the prescient gifts that foretold the future of the baby the magi came to worship. The wise men probably set out on their journey because, as they studied the signs in the stars and pondered on the meaning of life, they had read a prophecy from Isaiah that had foretold that God's light and special favour was for the whole world, not just for the Jewish nation. In those days that was a new idea – that the world was one entity and that all parts of it were equally valued and loved by God. Nowadays, of course, we are deeply aware how interdependent all nations and communities are, especially in the light of the global economic crisis.

The magi found the child Jesus. They were not put off by the



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SNOW WHITE AND HOW MANY

Harby Harlequins' next fun-packed pantomime is Snow White and the Dwarfs (the number keeps changing every time the Dame counts them!).

Wednesday 28th January to Saturday 31st January at 7.30 in Harby Village Hall plus a Matinée at 2.00pm on Saturday 31st.

Tickets are £7.50 each or £4.00 for children under 16. Tickets for Senior Citizens are FREE on the Wednesday evening (please still pre-book them), and normal price at other performances. ALL tickets are £7.50 on the last night.

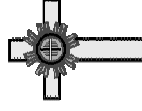
Our box office open on Friday 2nd January.
Please ring for tickets only between 10.00a.m. and 7.00p.m. on 01949 860713.

Hurry! Tickets sell out fast! This is absolutely the best panto in Harby in 2009!

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JANUARY SERVICES IN THE BELVOIR BENEFICE

	4 CHRISTMAS 2	11 EPIPHANY 1 BAPTISM OF CHRIST	18 EPIPHANY 2	25 EPIPHANY 3
8.30am		HOLY COMMUNION Bottesford Long Clawson	HOLY COMMUNION Muston Hose	HOLY COMMUNION Bottesford Stathern
10.30am	JOINT BENEFICE EUCHARIST Bottesford Farewell Service for Revds Lois & Graeme Warburton as they return to New Zealand	PARISH EUCHARIST Bottesford FAMILY SERVICE Barkestone FAMILY SERVICE Hose HOLY COMMUNION Stathern	PARISH EUCHARIST Bottesford FAMILY SERVICE Redmile FAMILY SERVICE Long Clawson	INFORMAL EUCHARIST Bottesford HOLY COMMUNION Long Clawson FAMILY SERVICE Harby SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT Plungar
4.00pm		EVENING PRAYER Muston	EVENING PRAYER Stathern	EVENING PRAYER Muston HOLY COMMUNION Barkestone EVENING PRAYER Hose
6.30pm	EVENING PRAYER Long Clawson	EVENING PRAYER Plungar HOLY COMMUNION Harby	EVENING PRAYER Plungar	

MIDWEEK SERVICES

Bottesford 9am Every Tuesday Holy Communion
 Plungar 10am Third Wednesday Holy Communion
 Belvoir Castle 7pm Third Tuesday Holy Communion

EPIPHANY SERVICE

Harby 7.30pm Tuesday 6 January Holy Communion