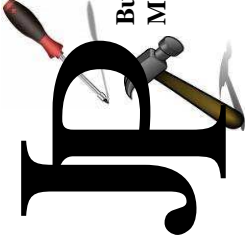




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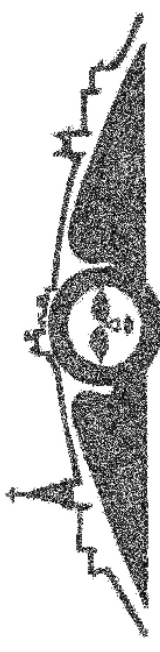
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THE BELVOIR ANGEL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NINE CHURCHES OF THE BELVOIR TEAM BENEFICE



“This Lent may we reflect on the greatest gift from God - His Son Jesus Christ, who paid the price for our sin.”



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FEBRUARY 2010 50p

BISHOP TIM'S REQUEST • LENT - A TIME TO PRAY • WHO WAS ST VALENTINE?



THE BELVOIR TEAM

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Comment

One of the appointed collects for the 1st Sunday in Lent, 21 February reads:-

*Heavenly Father,
your Son battled with the powers of darkness,
and grew closer to you in the desert:
help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and
prayer that we may witness to you saving love
in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

This sets the scene for the period of Lent. During this time some Christians will stop having something they enjoy, sweets, chocolates, cakes, wine and various other things.

Some will give up doing things that they enjoy in their leisure times. Others will join specially prepared courses for the period of Lent. Some will quietly reflect over their relationship with God and his influence over their lives. Others will seek to draw nearer to God in prayer and Bible study either alone or in groups. Whilst some people of course will just carry on with their lives.

Whatever you decide to do, may God richly bless you during this special time.

Revd Pauline

Contents

Features

7 Bishop Tim's Request

To hold the people of Haiti in our prayers following the devastating earthquake.

20 Lent

A good time to pray

21 St Valentine's Day

Who was St Valentine and why do we send cards?

Regulars

1 Thoughts on the Wing

2 Parish Reports

12 List of Services

15 Prayer Page

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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 (see details above).

**COPY DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH BELVOIR ANGEL
PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES BY 11 FEBRUARY**

— Maximum of 250 words. —

See inside front cover for contact details.

Did Guthlac pass this way?

The church at Stathern is dedicated to St Guthlac, a local Midlands saint who died in AD714. Guthlac was a Saxon, and Stathern is a Norman word, softened from the original Saxon, probably meaning "staked hern" or the corner of ground enclosed by stakes to keep out the deer and wild boars. The village used to be called "Stat-n" by the locals but with population changes this pronunciation is rarely heard nowadays.

Guthlac, the son of a nobleman, became a fearless fighter earning himself a bad reputation and for nine years he and his gang pillaged the countryside over a wide area. At the age of 24 he realised that he was doing wrong so he became a monk at Repton in Derbyshire. After two years he decided to live the life of a hermit in some lonely place where nothing would come between God and himself.

He chose Croyland (now Crowland) in south Lincolnshire, which was in those days fen, marshes and bogs with tree-covered islets. Devils were reputed to inhabit this fever-ridden unpopulated area. Guthlac lived for 15 years in a cell as a hermit and his fame spread due to his long striving in prayer for forgiveness and for his ability to teach everyone who visited. After his death the great Abbey of Croyland was built, part of which is still in use as Crowland parish church. The ruined abbey and present church are certainly worth a visit.

There are 11 churches in England dedicated to St Guthlac, mainly in the East Midlands and Lincolnshire, but not exclusively. If you look on a map, Stathern lies in a nearly direct easterly line from Repton to Crowland, so it is indeed possible that Guthlac came this way in AD 699. He probably travelling on the old Roman roads and the salt routes and stopped here a short while, his name living on when the first Saxon church was built and a stone cross erected as a sign of the faith. You can see the remains of the interlace pattern of the cross in the external foundations of the north wall of the present church.

Just to the east of us is the village of Branston where the church is also dedicated to St Guthlac, and, also Little Ponton's church and Market Deeping, further away. Perhaps these places also plot the journey of Guthlac to Crowland. In the 17th century Stathern parish owned a strip of land, probably about half an acre, at Crowland, and so maintained a direct connection with the great Abbey and hence with St Guthlac. Today we remember him in our chancel east window, complete with dragon at his feet and scourge in hand indicating how sternly he punished himself for his early wrongdoing.

Roger Hawkins
(Reference Revd Ernest Pierson
The Story of St Guthlac Stathern pub 1905)

PRICE, COST, VALUE, WORTH?

Are they the same thing...

expressed in different ways?

A tree standing in a South American forest has a certain value, arrived at from calculating the costs of planting and managing the tree, and reflects the open market price. When it has matured and is felled its value may increase or decrease, according to the demand for timber on a world market. When the tree is converted into lumber and transported down river to the port, for shipping to the most profitable country, its value will have changed again. Once loaded aboard a ship, with many other pieces of timber, the load will be valued for insurance purposes, and it may already have been forward sold, traded by unseen commodity market traders. The difference between the cost of growing and converting the tree into 'prepared lumber' has added value to the material, from a living plant to a unit of construction. Every stage will incur costs, which are undertaken because they add to the anticipated price that will be achieved when each trade takes place.

Once aboard the ship and at sea, the timber has a certain value, but when a storm hits the ship and the lashings are torn and the bulks of timber break lose and are cast into the sea, the cargo is lost, and the cargo has no value, its worthless. However, when a sailor is washed overboard in the storm and is likely to drown, he clings to the bulk of timber, which saves his life. The bulk of timber has value to that sailor, beyond price, for it brings life! When the sailor is washed ashore, he discards the timber as worthless.

When that bulk of timber is built in the form of the cross on which Jesus died for us, so that we should have life, what price can we put on his life? At what cost did Jesus die for the world? Can we put a value on His death? Do we discard Jesus' sacrifice as having worth or not?

This Lent may we reflect on the greatest gift from God-His Son Jesus Christ, who paid the price for our sin, it cost him his life, because He valued and found us worthy, and He loved us sufficiently to die for us, that we should, by faith, have life in this world and that to come.

Revd Fred Connell

St Mary the Virgin Bottesford

The Ven. Richard Atkinson, Archdeacon of Leicester, joined us on Christmas Eve for our Family Carol Service and Midnight Mass.



Despite the snow, both these and our other services over the Christmas period were well attended.

At our Epiphany 'Come and Praise' on 3 January we followed the journey of the Wise Men, with help from the children, and learnt about the meaning of the gifts they presented to Jesus.

We begin the season of Lent at St Mary's with a service of Holy Communion at 7.30 pm on Ash Wednesday, which will be led by Canon Alan Haydock.

Judith Wells

■ Around the Vale

Dove Cottage Tea Room

Monday – Friday 10.30am – 3.30pm
 Saturday – Sunday 10.30am – 4.00pm
 From £1 - £4.50
 A wide variety of hot and cold snacks including soup and a roll, sandwiches, cakes and scones
 Tea/coffee

Hose Village Hall

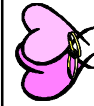
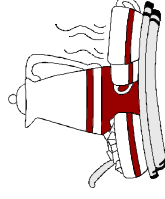
2nd Thursday of each month - 12.15pm
 £3.00
 Soup and roll
 Jacket/boiled potato and salad
 Selection of puddings
 Tea/coffee

Harby Village Hall

1st Wednesday of each month - 12noon
 £2.00
 Home made soup and bread
 Ploughman's cheese or ham salad
 Fresh homemade cakes
 Tea/coffee
 Raffle for church funds

Muston - The Old School

Every Tuesday - 10.30am to 12noon
 Home made cakes
 Tea/coffee and a friendly chat



The Marriage Preparation Course

The Marriage Preparation Course is a series of five sessions designed to help engaged couples develop strong foundations for a healthy marriage that will last a lifetime. This is a very relaxed course and there is no group discussion.

We plan to run The Marriage Preparation Course in the Vale of Belvoir on Saturday evenings from 27 February to 27 March. Please contact Rachel Kane on 07868 237 050 for further details or see The Marriage Preparation Course Website on harbycf.org.uk for more information.

A couple of quotes from a local couple who recently attended.....

"Because we have two young children, the Marriage Course highlighted the need for us to actually spend time together, as a couple, each week – alone without outside distractions!"

"The Marriage Course taught us how to listen to and respond to each other's needs."

Richard Barnes

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Used Stamps urgently needed for LOROS fund-raising

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Please send as many stamps as you can to:

Mr M Pritchard, 107 Avebury Avenue, Leicester, LE4 0HF

Bottesford Mothers' Union

Due to the inclement weather our AGM was cancelled last month and will now be held at 2.30 pm on Wednesday 3 February in St Mary's church. Following this there will be a flower arranging demonstration by Collette McCormack at 3 pm. Visitors are welcome to join us for the latter part of our meeting. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Judith Wells

FAITH ON THE WING

Clawson Christians Together

You may well have heard of 'Clawson Christians Together', a group of people from the Anglican, Baptist and Methodist churches respectively, working together within the village to promote Christian festivals and activities. If anyone would like more physical involvement they would be more than welcome. I am happy to give more information to anyone interested in any way. For details contact Sally Anne Shouler 01664 822 698

First Friday Prayer Group

The First Friday Prayer Group will meet at St. Mary's, Bottesford on 5 February at 9 am in the Lady Chapel. Contact Glenda Gibson 01949 845 106

Vale Study Groups

Barkstone Forge Ahead
Fortnightly on Thursday evenings at 8 pm at the home of Mike and Pam Chaldecott, The Old Forge, Chapel Street, Barkstone 01949 844 167 for details.

Bottesford Study Group
Every Tuesday at 7.30 pm
Contact Kathy Strickland 01949 845 302 for details of venue.

Vale Faith Group
Every Monday morning at 9.30 for 10 at 1 Jays Close, Bottesford.
Contact Nicola 01949 843 636



St Guthlac Stathern

The annual 'Christmas Cracker' activity, organised by the Events Committee, on Monday 14 December in the Stathern War Memorial Institute.

This again was ably led by Alec Johns and 'Twelve to the Bar' singing group. The evening consisted of a variety of carols both with all of us singing and some carols being beautifully sung by the singing group.

Various children from the local school entertained us with both their own singing and playing of favourite carols and readings. Nearly seventy adults and children came along and afterwards they all enjoyed the light refreshments. We were pleased that Revd Fred was able to be there and he spoke briefly at the end on the real meaning of Christmas. Thanks are due to Sally Fagan for organising the evening and to her team of helpers in providing the delightful refreshments.

Our Carol Service led by Revd Gillian was held on Sunday 29 December. The candle lit church was beautifully decorated that was such a welcoming sight as we walked through the door, glad to escape the snow shower outside. More than sixty people braved the wintry weather to listen to the traditional readings, plus three carefully chosen poems and together enjoyed singing the much loved familiar carols. The Three Kings successfully journeyed around the church and finally arrived at the crib during this service.

Thanks go to all those who came along and especially to those who had worked so hard to decorate the church and plan such a memorable Carol Service.

Epiphany was the theme for our Family Service taken by Revd Pauline on Sunday 3 January, as this date was the closest to 6 January. We were few in number, probably due to the Arctic weather conditions outside. We had a most enjoyable service singing carols based on the Three Kings, which we had not had the opportunity to sing at Christmas.

Various members took part in the service. I enjoyed reading "the legend of the Spider's Web" a lovely story previously unknown to me. It is said that the tradition of hanging tinsel on our Christmas Trees comes from this legend. Our grateful thanks goes to Mary Briant who planned a most enjoyable service.

Margery Leyland

St Michael and All Angels Hose



Christmas began early in Hose as we had our Church lunch one week earlier than the normal 2nd week in the month.

The school hosted their Christmas Fair in Church on Friday 11 December. The next week, preparations and rehearsals began for the School Nativity service which took place in Church on Wednesday 16th and the following day the flower arrangers arrived with glorious Christmas arrangements.

On Friday 18th, The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols was taken by Revd Fred Connell, with The Vale Choir in attendance which was led by David Cox. As usual it was a happy affair and the service was followed with refreshments of mince pies and mulled wine.

The PCC had decided for the collection to go to The Rainbows Children's Hospice, and as there were not so many at the Carol Service it was decided to include the following Christmas service's collections in this total.

This included the 8.30am Holy Communion on Sunday 20th (where we had a congregation of four including Revd Fred,) and the Midnight Communion on Christmas Eve. We managed to raise a total of £177.60p. A big thank you to everyone who attended and contributed to this amount.

The Midnight Mass was very special, with everyone arriving in drizzle and towards the end of the service, huge snow flakes were silently falling past the windows and as the service came to an end, and the door opened on to an early white Christmas morning, there was over 2" of snow and still falling, it was very magical.

Georgina Fletcher

The Society of Framland Ringers

Their next meeting will be on Saturday 6 March at St Mary's, Harby from 7 - 8.30 pm. All ringers are welcome .

Ken Brockway

St Valentine's Day 14 February

There are two confusing things about this day of romance and anonymous love-cards strewn with lace, cupids and ribbon: firstly, there seems to have been two different Valentines in the 4th century - one a priest martyred on the Flaminian Way, under the emperor Claudius, the other a bishop of Terni martyred at Rome. And neither seems to have had any clear connection with lovers or courting couples.

So why has Valentine become the patron saint of romantic love? By Chaucer's time the link was assumed to be because on these saints' day -14 February - the birds are supposed to pair. Or perhaps the custom of seeking a partner on St Valentine's Day is a surviving scrap of the old Roman Lupercalia festival, which took place in the middle of February. One of the Roman gods honoured during this Festival was Pan, the god of nature. Another was Juno, the goddess of women and marriage. During the Lupercalia it was a popular custom for young men to draw the name of a young unmarried woman from a name-box. The two would then be partners or 'sweethearts' during the time of the celebrations. Even modern Valentine decorations bear an ancient symbol of love - Roman cupids with their bows and love-arrows. There are no churches in England dedicated to Valentine, but since 1835 the Carmelite church in Dublin has claimed his relics.

The very first Valentine card - a legend

The Roman Emperor Claudius II needed soldiers. He suspected that marriage made men want to stay at home instead of fighting wars, so he outlawed marriage. A kind-hearted young priest named Valentine felt sorry for all the couples who wanted to marry, but couldn't. So secretly he married as many couples as he could - until the Emperor found out and condemned him to death. While he was in prison waiting execution, Valentine showed love and compassion to everyone around him, including his jailer. The jailer had a young daughter who was blind, but through Valentine's prayers, she was healed. Just before his death in Rome on 14 February, he wrote her a farewell message signed 'From your Valentine.' So the very first Valentine card was not between lovers, but between a priest about to die, and a little girl, healed through his prayers.

Lent - a good time to pray

Lent is traditionally a time when Christians take stock of themselves spiritually . They set aside extra time for prayer. So there you are, tentatively wanting to pray... Here are some helpful things to remember as you settle down to it:

People have been praying since Adam had a grandson named Enosh. At least the Bible tells us in Genesis 4:26 that it was during his days when "men began to call on the name of the Lord". They have been doing it ever since. People have been answered by God since Genesis, too. But if you want to read some beautiful prayers – and answers to them, browse through the Psalms. Again and again the psalmist writes: "the Lord heard my cry".

So – what do you need to bring to prayer? Just the tiniest amount of faith that God is even there.... Jesus assures us that even faith as big as a tiny mustard seed will be effective.

What gives you the right to come before Almighty God? Jesus does. The Bible is clear that "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ". (1 Tim 2:5)

The Bible makes clear that God does not stand on ceremony – he wants our personal, spontaneous prayers. Jesus was very matter of fact about it: "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:6) The Bible assures us that prayer will bring us good things: "we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need". (Hebrews 4:16)

Above all, prayer must be made with a pure heart. "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." (Psalm 66:18) That simply means that if you know you are doing something wrong, and intend to keep right on doing it, don't waste your time praying.

St Mary the Virgin Harby



The New Year started with the now traditional "Bellingring" where many villagers, and a few visitors met to enjoy a hot drink and biscuits and the opportunity to chime the bells.

It was a wonderful gathering enabling us to relax and enjoy each others company, with many of the conversations recalling the very successful Christmas Tree festival (and ways of making it even better next year), the carol service with the Vale Choir, and the two very well attended family services which took place over the Christmas period. It was only during these conversations that I discovered that Harby had had a "White Christmas" – many of the youngsters arriving at church on Christmas Day on sledges!

A congregation of about twenty attended the first 8.30am communion of the year. We are so grateful to Revd Gillian for scraping the snow off her car and braving the icy roads from Stathem in order to officiate.

Our next social event, which is not to be missed, is the: Shrove Tuesday Supper 7.00pm for 7.30pm on 16 February in the village hall. Tickets at £8 are now available from either Christine Booth (861 287) and Gill Clark (861 211).

Our hope for 2010 is that even more people will find Harby church a relaxed and welcoming place, as well as one of beauty, peace and tranquillity.

Elizabeth Jones

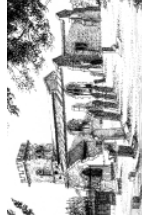
"From out of the mouth's of babes ..."

A school teacher was finishing a lesson on the joys of discovery and the importance of curiosity.

"After all," she declared, "Where would we be today," she asked, "if no one had ever been curious?"

One child quietly spoke up from the back of the room.
"In the garden of Eden?"

St Peter Redmile



Christmas week proved to be an extra special time in Redmile.

We held our first tree dressing event in the Church with 14 Christmas trees having been decorated by local families. On Monday 21st our children enjoy a party in the church with a surprise visit from Santa Clause. Later thirty of us faced the snow and freezing conditions carol singing around the village collecting much-appreciated donations for the Church. The next day St Peters screened the film 'ELF' to an audience of over 80 parents and children.

On Christmas Eve the Church was full with around 150 people many of whom were standing for our Carol Service. Maureen Baker on the organ, the Vale Choir, our local musicians – Julian and Andy, and a stirring address by Revd Fred Connell all came together to give us a beautiful and spiritual start to Christmas.

After an incredibly successful night being warmly entertained by 'The Opera Dudes' during the big freeze early January, our thoughts turn to our next Centre Stage event. On Thursday 11 February, 'Travelling by Tuba' will be running a workshop at Redmile Primary school during the day before performing at St Peters Church at 7pm. Music from classical to jazz, humorous anecdotes and informative chat. Tickets: Adults £8/ Concessions £5 / Family £20. Contact Louise George on 843789 to book.

Louise George

CONFIRMATION 2010

Calling all young people and adults who would like to be confirmed

We hope to start preparation classes in the next few weeks. This year's Confirmation Service will be held on 22 April. If you would like more details, or wish to book a place, then please contact Judith Wells at the Benefice Office on 01949 842 859

ST JAMES THE LEAST OF ALL

On why pews are better than chairs

The Rectory
St. James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

While it was good to see you when you visited us last Sunday, your casual suggestion to our churchwardens that chairs would be far more comfortable than our pews was not well received. You must remember that significant numbers in any congregation firmly believe that the more uncomfortable they are, the holier they must be. Pews, generally designed several centuries ago when legs were shorter and bottoms smaller, are conducive neither to comfort nor sleep - although Colonel Marchington achieves the latter unerringly every Sunday within minutes of arrival.

At least with pews, parishioners can make some pretence at kneeling, adopting that peculiar crouch only ever seen in church life. Attempt that with chairs and you are assured of sending the one in front sliding across the floor with a shriek any banshee would be proud of. Chairs may be all very well in your own church, so you can create space for the delights of liturgical dance and baby clinics, but we prefer something more immovable. Little Miss Thripp has, over the years, created something of a nest where she sits, quietly bringing in cushions, travelling rugs and her own supply of books and peppermints – although we did have to draw the line at the primus stove, since it

encouraged Major Hoare to install a drinks cabinet in his pew. Pews, unlike rows of chairs, also create territorial behaviour. If a visitor should sit in a pew where regulars have sat for the last 50 years, it is regarded as if it were the invasion of Poland. One innocent family once chose the pew where generations of the P Smith family have sat since dinosaurs roamed the land. The P Smiths had no intention of ceding territory peacefully and so for the whole of Mattins, one pew which should have held 6 people sat 9. When they stood to sing, the line exploded into the aisles on both sides, returning to their compressed state, necessitating staggered shallow breathing, when re-seated.

I will concede, however, that we made one mistake some years ago when the pews were re-varnished without having been fully cleaned first. The result is that every time the congregation stands, the organ is drowned out by the sound of tearing, while coats and jackets reluctantly part company with wood.

No, your congregation may relax in the luxury of padded chairs, but we will stoutly maintain our holy discomfort.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

MUSIC ON THE WING

From Russia with Song

No, this not the latest James Bond film but an invitation for you to make a note in your diaries about our first International Concert to be held in St. Guthlac's Church on Sunday 25 April.

A group called 'Hermitage' consists of five professional male singers from St. Petersburg, Russia will be singing both Russian Orthodox Church music and Russian folk music in their own language.

There will be reserved seating at £12 Adults/£7 children with unrestricted view, and seating £10 Adults/£6 children with a restricted view. Ticket prices will include light refreshments. Following the concert come and meet the Russians at a light buffet supper in the Stathern War Memorial Institute with tickets costing £5 each.

This will be a concert that anyone who appreciates superb choral singing at the highest level will certainly not want to miss.

For tickets phone 01949 869 448 to make a booking, when it is confirmed, payment to be sent within 3 days to: -
Hermitage 8, Valebrook Road, Stathern, LE14 4EB.

Cheques should be made payable to St. Guthlac's PCC.

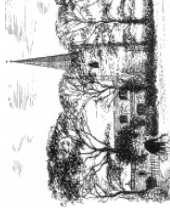
Peter Briant

FROM THE REGISTERS

FUNERALS

BOTTESFORD	15 Jan	Vera Mellor (89)
	21 Jan	Kenneth Jones (88)
HARBY	19 Jan	Paul Stiebjahn (90)
LONG CLAWSON	12 Jan	Matlida May Brewin (91)
STATHERN	2 Dec	Janet Christine Hall (76)
	8 Jan	Justine Michelle Derry (40)

St Peter and St Paul Barkestone



Thank you from Barkestone PCC

A huge thank you to everyone in Barkestone who donated to our 2009 Christmas Appeal, the total of which, at the time of writing, is approaching £1000. This will be put to very good use with our exciting plans to renovate the interior of the church in 2010. In addition, thank you to our team of volunteers who braved the elements to deliver and then collect the appeal envelopes.

Our fund raising programme will re-commence in March with a coffee morning in church and we can also confirm that the usual favourites (Cheese and Wine, Strawberries and Champagne and the Photographic Exhibition) will be repeated this year. We are also excited about a new fund raising venture – hopefully more on this very soon!

Please note that our service on 28 February will be Holy Communion at 10.30 a.m. during which Ella Metcalfe will be baptised by Revd Fred.

Mark Dennison

Bishop Tim asks for your prayers

"The news of the devastating earthquake in Haiti is profoundly shocking. As Christians we have a duty to show care and compassion to the frightened and desperate people of Haiti, many of whom are homeless and sleeping on the streets among the dead. I urge you to hold the people of Haiti in your prayers and encourage you to give generously to the DEC and Christian organisations appeals set up for the relief work."

Prayer for Haiti

*O God, our refuge and strength,
we hold before you the nation and people of Haiti,
and pray for healing in the midst of tragedy and devastation.*

*Give comfort to the homeless, the bereaved and the suffering,
courage to survivors, wisdom to those who seek to help,
and light to all who live in the shadow of death.*

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our rock and our salvation.

Amen

St Remigius Long Clawson



Snow was falling thickly just before 4.00 p.m. on Sunday 20 December for our Crib Service and it was doubtful that the children and their parents, alerted to the service by David and Heather Cox, would venture to church.

However, through the snowflakes came children, dressed as kings (3), an angel, Mary, Joseph, shepherds (2) and a sheep, as well as other children with their families. The costumed children acted out the Christmas Story as told by David and we all joined in the carols with Paul Willcock playing the organ.

The recital of the story we would all be celebrating on Christmas Day was very movingly brought to life by the children's performance and brought tears to some eyes. Afterwards everyone stayed to enjoy tea with homemade sausage rolls, Christmas biscuits and cakes and to look around the church, admiring the beautiful Christmas trees and lights.

A big thanks goes to Debbie Kay and to the school for issuing invitations to all the children. The response was very good, especially considering the frantic schedules in the run up to Christmas. Congratulations go too to all concerned for the superb school Christmas productions, which were thoroughly enjoyed by all who were able to watch.

The church was full for our Carol service on 21 December taken by Revd Simon Shouler. All the old, familiar carols were sung by the congregation, with the first verse of 'Once in Royal David's City' being sung by the youngest choir member of the Vale Choir, Nicole Swindler.

The Vale Choir sang two carols by Patrick Forbes and Hamish had written a little about his talented father on the service sheet. The readings, some biblical, some poetic, were read and performed by both members of the congregation and the Vale Choir.

Afterwards, in a very happy atmosphere, people stayed to talk to neighbours and introduce relatives and friends over delicious mince pies and mulled wine.

Janet Briggs

KIDS ON THE WING

YOUF

The Churches Together in Bottesford Youth Group, meets on the first and third Fridays of the month, between 7pm and 9pm at the Methodist Chapel, Devon Lane. Look out for **Youf** on the Bottesford website www.stmarysbottesford

Glenda Gibson

Children's Fun Workshop

The next St Guthlac's Children's Fun Workshop will be meeting on Thursday 4 February 3.30 to 4.30 pm in church. The theme of this workshop will be based on 'Working Together'. Parents are very welcome to stay and help.

Mary Briant

Little Angels

Our weekly group for Under 5's, their mums and carers meets every Tuesday at 10.30 am in St Mary's Church for coffee, chat and crafts. New members are always welcome.

On 2 February Phoenix Cards will be on sale and proceeds will be in aid of church funds.

Judith Wells



WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Women's World Day of Prayer is a global, ecumenical movement of informed prayer and prayerful action, organised and led by Christian women who call the faithful together on the first Friday in March each year to observe a common day of prayer and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service.

This year's service is written by the women of Cameroon and on Friday 5 March we shall be holding an ecumenical service in St Mary's, beginning at 2.30 pm. Our speaker will be Revd Pauline Jenkins of Stathern.

All are welcome to attend and refreshments will be served afterwards.

Judith Wells

Long Clawson Church of England Primary School

Early in the term Year 6 children ventured to North Wales for a week's residential educational visit. They experienced exciting challenges including canoeing across a lake, abseiling, and sleeping for a night in an exposed shelter on a mountain top!

In November Year 5 children set off to the Charnwood Forest area for a day's walking. The day gave us all time to reflect in beautiful surroundings, and to witness a wide variety of flora and fauna as well as a jay that put on a special display for the children. Our walk took in landmarks such as the Outwoods and Beacon Hill.

The whole school witnessed the 'Change for Life' show which reinforced important messages concerning healthy eating and lifestyle. Our oldest children took part in the 'DARE' programme which is intended to provide them with the skills necessary to make safe, informed lifestyle choices.

The Year 1 children visited Beaumanor Hall for a 'Gruffalo Day', a 'Hot Wax' workshop which investigated candle making and visits from the Mad Science group. Sporting activities included coaching sessions for tag rugby led by Leicester Tigers, FA Skills football, skipping workshop, netball and basketball coaching sessions.

Positively Pink Day saw the children arriving at school dressed in pink to raise money for Breast Cancer Awareness. Children in Need Day was very active, with class relays carrying Pudsey around the school grounds. It was calculated that Pudsey's laps aggregated almost 40km raising funds for the charity.

The Singing Club worked hard learning a wide range of songs; a highlight being their performance in Melton Market Place at the celebrations to switch on the town's Christmas lights.

Christmas celebrations included performances of 'Whoops a Daisy Angel' by the early years children and a whole school Carol Service packed St Remigius Church to the rafters.

The school staff were treated to an absolutely delicious full Christmas lunch, planned, cooked and prepared by the Yr 6 children using the Village Hall facilities. The PTA has worked hard organising children's discos, the Christmas Fayre, selling Christmas trees and the food for the children's parties.

Trevor Walker
Headteacher

Long Clawson (cont'd) Dates for Your Diaries

Sunday 7 February

VILLAGE THANKSGIVING 3.00 p.m.
In the Village Hall
This is a Clawson Christians Together activity.

Saturday 20 February

MEN'S BREAKFAST - 'On The Sands' Café 8.30 a.m.
Come along and hear a former Formula 1 Racing Driver talk about his role. Enjoy a full cooked breakfast along with some food for thought.
Limited tickets: Phone Glen on 822 854 or Eric on 822 140.
This is a CCT activity.

Wednesday 24 February

QUIET HOUR 10.00 a.m.
A time to think, pray, remember followed at 11.00 by coffee and a time to chat.
(Every 4th Wednesday of the month)

Sunday 28 February

'FOURTH SUNDAY' 3.00 p.m.
Craft activities, music and worship with a difference, for all ages.
In the Methodist Church Hall followed by 'Afternoon Tea'
This is a CCT activity.

St John the Baptist Muston



Muston Christingle Service, led by Peter Daniel, was well attended and we were pleased to welcome more children this year to receive their Christingle Oranges. Considering the bad weather we were not sure how it would be at the Carol Service. We need not have worried – the Church was full and the service, once again led by Peter, was made even better by our quintet of musicians – mostly from Muston who helped the carols swing along nicely. Four members of the Bottesford choir "braved the storm" to join us and mulled wine and mince pies helped keep the cold at bay.

Our next event will be Shrove Tuesday, 16 February, when we will have a Pancake Evening in the Old School.

Further events for the year will be published shortly after our next PCC in February. We now meet once a month at the Old School for Art Classes and although this has been going for only a short time, it is proving so popular that before long we might run out of chairs! The coffee morning has resumed every Tuesday following a break for Christmas and adverse weather conditions. As always this is a great success and much appreciated by all who attend.

John Ives

Signs & Symbols: Ashes

Many churches offer a service on Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent where ashes are used to mark each person's forehead with the sign of the cross – known as the Imposition of Ashes.

It's a strange feeling; first the grittiness when they are first placed, then a tingling sensation, then a time of self-consciousness of knowing they are there like a dirty smudge. Lastly comes the 'Decision'. Should I wipe them away before leaving the church or later?

But what is the point of it all? There are many references in the Bible to people using ashes as signs of either penitence or preparation for an important event (Jeremiah 6:26).

In certain church records, ashes are used for penitents by the 6th century, but it is not until the beginning of the eleventh century that the faithful took part in a ceremony on the Wednesday before Lent that included the imposition of ashes. It is only later that this came to be called Ash Wednesday.

At first clerics and men had ashes sprinkled on their heads while women had the sign of the cross made with ashes on their foreheads. In the 12th century the rule developed that the ashes were to be created by burning palm branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday – and in most churches this is still how they are made today.

Over the centuries the emphasis of meaning for the imposed ashes has changed, from a preparation for baptism, a renewal of baptismal vows, to an understanding of a community's preparation for the event of the Paschal mystery of rebirth at Easter.

As the priest says the traditional words over you, "*Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you will return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ. Amen.*"

What will you be focusing upon?

National Marriage Week – 8 to 14 February

Marriage Week UK celebrates the diversity and vibrancy of marriage as the basis for family life in the UK. It is timed to include Valentine's Day (8th –14th Feb 2010) and has been held every year since 1997.

Marriage remains incredibly popular – over 90% of young people in the UK aspire to be married at some point in the future, and the large majority will achieve this. Although many people fear that marriages don't last, two out of every three first marriages will last until one partner dies, and one in two second or subsequent marriages will also last a lifetime.

If you would like 25 ideas of how to strengthen the romance and love in your marriage, visit: www.marriage-week.org.uk/ and click on 'get involved'.

Son of Man, our Saviour, we remember that your sternest judgements were reserved for the religious people of your day, because they failed to live up to their profession.

Forbid it, Lord, that we, should come under the same condemnation.

Help us in this coming season of Lent to search our hearts and examine our lives and to have done with hypocrisy and pretence; that we may be what we seem to be, put our creed into practice, and bear witness that will honour you before men.

New Parish Prayers edited by Frank Colquhoun

*O God, our Help and Strength,
grant that when we are tempted, we
may resist the devil;
that when worried, we can cast
all our care upon you;
that when we are weary, we may seek
your rest and that in all things we
may live this day to your glory.*

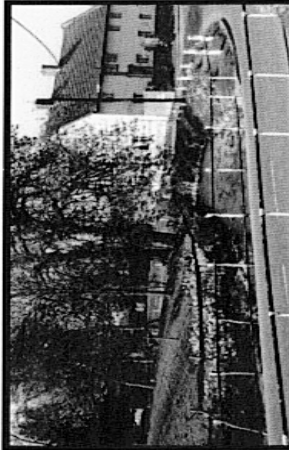
A Tapestry of Daily Prayer compiled by Patricia Newland

O Lord our God, long suffering and full of compassion,
Be present with us, as we enter upon this season of Lent.
May we be ready to recall our Saviour's sufferings and
To celebrate His triumph.

Grant us the aid of Thy Holy Spirit, that
As we acknowledge our sins and seek Thy pardon,
We may also be enabled to deny ourselves and
Be upheld in the hour of temptation.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

A BLESSING

*May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rain fall soft upon you fields,
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.*



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Barkstone, Plungar & Redmile Parish Council seek a Parish Clerk

- Applicants must be able to attend some day and evening meetings
- Be confident using a computer with emails and web
- Communicate in writing and verbally with electors, officials and elected representatives
- Administer the parish council including, calling meetings, writing minutes, maintaining financial records and ensuring all legal requirements are complied with.
- The clerk is paid on the nationally agreed pay scale £8.34 - £11.93 / hour for 208 hours / year
- The post holder will work from home except when attending meetings.
- Previous experience in this or a similar position will be an advantage but is not essential.

For more information contact Barkstone, Plungar & Redmile Parish Council
1 Main Street Redmile Nottingham NG13 0GA
or email parish.clerk@freeuk.com

FEBRUARY SERVICES IN THE BELVOIR BENEFICE

	7 2nd SUNDAY BEFORE LENT	14 SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE LENT	21 LENT 1	28 LENT 2
8.30am	HOLY COMMUNION Muston Harby	HOLY COMMUNION Bottesford Long Clawson	HOLY COMMUNION Muston Hose	HOLY COMMUNION Stathern Bottesford
10.30am	HOLY COMMUNION Plungar Redmile COME & PRAISE Bottesford FAMILY SERVICE Stathern	HOLY COMMUNION Stathern Bottesford Hose FAMILY SERVICE Barkestone Muston	HOLY COMMUNION Bottesford FAMILY SERVICE Redmile Long Clawson	HOLY COMMUNION Bottesford Long Clawson Barkestone FAMILY SERVICE Harby SUNDAY SUPPLEMENT Plungar
4.00pm	CHORAL EVENSONG Bottesford		EVENSONG Stathern	EVENSONG Muston Hose
6.30pm	EVENSONG Long Clawson	EVENSONG Plungar Harby	EVENSONG Plungar COMPLINE Harby	

MIDWEEK SERVICES			
Belvoir Castle Bottesford Long Clawson	7pm 9am 9.30am 10am	Third Tuesday Every Tuesday First Friday Fourth Wednesday	Holy Communion Holy Communion Morning Prayer Quiet Hour followed by coffee and chat Holy Communion Morning Prayer Stathern School Assembly All welcome
Plungar Stathern	10am 9.30am 9.30am	Third Wednesday Third Friday Last Friday	

Do you know someone (it might be yourself) who would like a home, hospital or pastoral visit, or wish to receive Holy Communion?

If so please contact Judith Wells at The Benefice Office
01949 852 859