

CHURCH ALIVE



St. John the Baptist
Midsomer Norton
January 2023
Price 50p

THE PARISH OF MIDSOMER NORTON WITH CLANDOWN

Vicar

The Revd: Guy Scott

The Vicarage, 42 Priory Close
Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HZ

Tel: 412904

Email: vicarmsnstjohns@gmail.com

Assistant Curate

Revd: Philip Hopper

Tel: 07596 759 584

Email: curatemsnstjohns@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

Liz Casson

Tel: 411216

Email: msnparishoffice@gmail.com

Churchwardens

Mrs Beth Davies

20 Priory Close
Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HZ

Tel: 418787

Email: emdavies20@btinternet.com

Mrs Hilary Denning

87 Nelson Ward Drive
Radstock, BA3 3FS

Tel: 07828 550006

Email: hilaryjohn87@gmail.com

SERVICES

SUNDAY

8am Said Eucharist

10 a.m. Parish Eucharist

WEEKDAYS

Eucharist is celebrated on a Tuesday at 12 noon.

Baptisms, Weddings etc. by arrangement with the Vicar.

Communion at home for those unable to attend church it is easily arranged with the Vicar.

Safeguarding

Who should you talk to if you observe or are told about Safeguarding concerns?

Ann Munton, Parish Safeguarding Officer Tel: 01749 588917

Email: midsomernortonsafeguarding@gmail.com

Diocesan safeguarding manager: Ben Goodhind, Tel: 07834 514842

Email: ben.goodhind@bathwells.anglican.org



Church Alive
The Parish Magazine of
Midsomer Norton with Clandown
Volume 807 Number 1

CHRISTMAS FAYRE THANK YOU

A big Thank you to all who supported the Christmas Fayre in any way on the 3rd of December. It was a very productive morning and a lovely social event. The total raised from the event was £1,171:60.

Thank you all
Heather

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CHILDRENS HOSPICE SOUTH WEST.

Please can you save the stamps from your Christmas card envelopes and deposit them in the box at the back of church. The money raised from the stamps helps to further the work of the hospice.

The box is also kept in church all year round for you to deposit your used stamps.

Thank you



Reflection from the Vicarage



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year to you all, and I hope you all had a joyful Christmas.

No sooner are we into the New Year, than we find ourselves having reached the twelfth day of Christmas and then the Feast of the Epiphany. What a wonderful feast the Epiphany is; intriguing foreign astrologers, following a star, and offering precious gifts to a baby of humble birth laid in a manger. The Epiphany is rich in symbolism and meaning, when all our senses can be awakened as we come to worship God, and not forgetting the poignant hymns that are sung.

One obvious and important theme is the offering of gifts, of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. The first is a royal gift: the child is 'born king'. The second is a priestly gift: frankincense was offered in the Temple at the altar of incense. Myrrh sounds a note of future suffering, because it was used to anoint the dead. King, priest, prophet: gifts foretelling the future of Mary and Joseph's child. These gifts given in adoration show an outpouring of unconditional generosity in response to God's generosity and love as revealed in the Christ Child.

An important question for us all, is how do we as a community of faith and as individuals respond to God's overwhelming and generous love to us. Will we respond as the Magi from the East did with open and generous hearts? What we offer, whether in time, talents or treasure will shine like the star and show our commitment to God and our faith in Him.

I fully appreciate that currently we are facing a cost of living crisis and overwhelming energy costs. As a Community of Faith, we face the same rising bills and so your P.C.C. is keeping a close eye on our church finances.

Now the outlook isn't bleak, but we need to be aware of possible problems ahead. If we carry on as we are, and don't look again at our stewardship and giving, then the pot from which we can balance our accounts will become empty!

I am very aware that these times of economic constraint are difficult for many and as we venture into a new year, we will assess our own situation and make decisions in the light of our commitments. May I ask you to consider your response to God's overwhelming generosity to us, as revealed at the Epiphany, with open minds and generous hearts, just as the Magi have shown.

I leave you with a possible new year's resolution; to reflect upon God's generosity and pray that we will respond in some way.

Yours in Christ,
Guy.

FROM THE PARISH PUMP

25th January – time for haggis and bagpipes!

He died 'lang syne' – long ago, back in 1796, but the Scottish poet Robert Burns is still remembered each January, over many a 'Burns Night' supper of cockaleekie soup, haggis, neeps and tatties - and whisky. Scots and other Burns lovers throughout the world, from Canada to the USA to Russia, still celebrate the poems this most beloved of Scots poets wrote so long ago.

Burns wrote about ordinary things – food, love, death, friendship, and disappointment. We still quote him: 'the best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men'. And at the end of our lives, we can use his 'Prayer, in Prospect of Death': 'Thou art good; and Goodness still/Delighteth to forgive'. Indeed, the Bible promises that if we put our trust in God, He will forgive us and give us new life in Him.

A good thought at the beginning of a New Year!

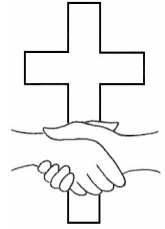
December LADIES GROUP MEETING

Our December meeting was a Christmas Social at Kay Harvey's house. Nibbles were provided by Kay and we all brought our own drink.

Margaret provided a quiz (one we originally did in 2000!)

Not many of us did the original and if we did couldn't remember all the answers! It certainly got the mind working, but great fun trying to figure out the correct answers, particularly the ones which included some mathematics!

Our January meeting will be a talk by Rob Broughton on his trip to the Austrian Tyrol & Oberammergau. This will be hosted at the home of Ann Munton.



A NEW PATRON OF SOMERSET DAY

Bishop Michael has become a patron of Somerset Day, a day of celebration of all things Somerset which is celebrated each year on the second Saturday in May.



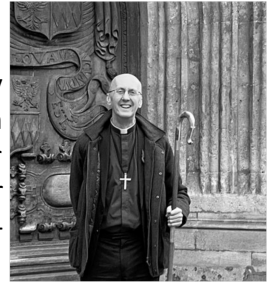
Commenting on becoming a Patron, Bishop Michael said "I'm thrilled to be here in Somerset and to be able to see and celebrate so many different aspects of our life together. Somerset Day is a brilliant way for us to give thanks for so much that's good in our county. I'm very much looking forward to supporting its work".

Bishop Michael will be patron alongside existing Somerset Day Patrons, including Bishop Ruth and Michael Eavis.



Are you looking out for Jesus?

In January, our churches enter the season of Epiphany which my dictionary defines as 'a moment of sudden and great revelation or realization'. I wonder what your epiphanies have been? When have you seen things for the first time? Experienced the penny dropping? Understood things in a new way?



In our churches, the readings for the Sundays of January are all about moments that revealed who Jesus is. The arrival of the wise men showed that Jesus is for everyone, not just the people of Israel. Jesus's baptism revealed his relationship with his Father and the Holy Spirit. The production at Cana of enough top-quality red plonk to take several baths in made clear the abundance of God's love for us. The end of the Epiphany season, the feast of Candlemas (actually 2 February), marks the moment when Jesus was seen as 'God's salvation for all peoples' (Luke 2: 31).

The challenge with epiphanies is whether we're looking out for them. If our eyes are wide shut, we don't see an awful lot. Sometimes we need to stand in a different place to spot things we haven't perceived before. So the question I'd like to ask you as our new year begins is 'Where and when are you looking out for the Jesus who has been revealed to us?'

A practical step you might take to help you on your way is to sign up to be part of the 'Everyday Faith' events that will be happening around our diocese from 29 January until 4 February. The aim of these events is to help us look at our faith afresh and see things anew from some different perspectives.

I'm going to be taking part in the Everyday Faith events and they're going to be great. As we enter a new year, why not come and join me? After all, an invitation to an epiphany isn't something that comes your way every day!

A very Happy New Year to you all,
Bishop Michael

Ring for the King.

For centuries church bells have sounded, calling people to worship, in celebration of special occasions, in remembrance and to mark special events. At Christmas time we are reminded of the importance of bell ringing in these familiar quotes...

"Let steeple bells be swungen",

"and the bells were ringing out for Christmas Day"

"Up! Good Christian folk, and listen how the merry church bells ring, and from steeple bid good people Come adore the new born King"

"There are angels singing, there the bells are ringing.."

"And all the bells on earth shall ring.."

"Hark! How the bells, sweet silver bells all seem to say 'throw cares away.."

These are just a few quotes from familiar Christmas carols and songs which paint a Christmas landscape in our minds. Church bells are such an important feature of this time of year, we can hardly imagine Christmas without them. However, the bell ringing world needs to train new ringers now to preserve this marvellous British tradition so that future generations can hear the bells on Christmas morning and on all the other important occasions across the year. There are about 6,000 sets of bells across the British Isles, totalling nearly 38,000 bells and only around 30,000 bell-ringers.



Ring for the King – An appeal to recruit more bell ringers in time for the Coronation.

2023 will feature a rare and important occasion in British life - the coronation of King Charles III. The bell ringing community is putting out an appeal to recruit more ringers, so they are trained in time to 'Ring for the King'.

As we establish a band of ringers, here at St. John the Baptist, we would like to play our part and train some new ringers for this important occasion, and we'd like you to consider joining us.

The importance of exercising both body and mind is often spelt out on T.V. and in the media and bell-ringing ticks all the boxes. As a ringer you join a U.K. wide community who will make you welcome wherever you go. And for the more adventurous there are many ringing communities in other countries like Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US.

If you would like to join us in the **Ring for the King**, or would like to know more about what is involved, please do ask a ringer on a Sunday morning, or ask me when we next meet.

With anticipation, Guy

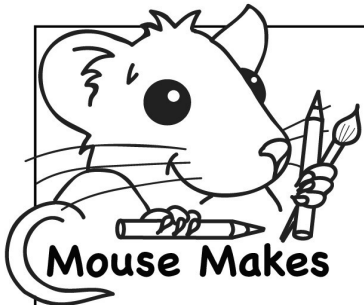
You can contact me on 01761 412904 or email:
vicarmsnstjohns@gmail.com

MANNA MAILING from the Diocese

Eco Award for Bath and Wells

The Diocese of Bath and Wells has received a bronze Eco Diocese award for its commitment to caring for creation. The award reflects the work undertaken by churches in all parts of the diocese to help take better care of God's world.

Bath and Wells Climate Justice & Environment Adviser, Sara Emmett said, "The Eco Diocese Award means that we have demonstrated our commitment and progress towards Creation Care and Net Zero Carbon as a diocese. In order to progress to a silver award we need to have 30% of churches with an award, 10% of which are silver, so this is our biggest challenge and one which we need everyone to commit to working towards."



A JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

When the **Magi** (wise men) came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

The _____

Why did they make the journey?

What did they follow to get there?

A _____

What did they see?

Read *Matthew 2:1-12*



Why did **Joseph** and **Mary** travel to **Bethlehem**?

Read *Luke 2:1-4*

When **Samuel** came to **Bethlehem** who sent him? Who did he go to see?
_____ and his sons.

Who had he come to anoint as king?

Read *1 Samuel 16:1-13*



Naomi and **Ruth** came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

_____ and why?

When did they arrive?

At the _____ harvest.

Read *Ruth 1:22*

E B A O F O O D K J E S S E S
M O A B A I J E I T J I A M E
R R M R A N O I N T O D M E A
U N J E S U S B G N U A U S S
T P B A R L E Y H A R V E S T
H G O D O S P F O O N I L I A
M A R Y B E H N Y M E D I A R
B E T H L E H E M I Y M A G I

The name **BETHLEHEM** means 'House of Bread'

Look up the Bible references to find the missing words, find them and these words below in the wordsearch

- JOURNEY
- BETHLEHEM • GOD
- JOSEPH • MARY
- JESUS • BORN
- MAGI • MESSIAH
- NAOMI • RUTH
- FOOD • HARVEST
- SAMUEL • ANOINT
- KING • BREAD



Update from Bishop Peter Hancock

Many people have asked after Bishop Peter since he retired due to ill health. He recently sent this short update to share with everyone.

“We have moved to Cranleigh in Surrey and have been busy during the past year with building work on our new home. One of the joys of living where we do means that we see much more of our family including our five grandchildren.

I have been made an Assistant Bishop in Guildford Diocese and enjoy taking services and confirmations and offering pastoral care and support to parish clergy.

We look back with gratitude and fondness for our time in Bath and Wells and are very grateful to everyone for your love, support and prayers especially during my treatment for leukaemia. It is hard to believe that it will soon be two years since I received my stem cell transplant and we continue to give thanks to the Lord and the amazing NHS for my recovery. Every day is a wonderful gift in which to praise God and to enjoy all the blessings he gives.

With my warmest greetings in the Lord,

Bishop Peter Hancock”



FROM THE PARISH PUMP

6th January: Epiphany

On 6th January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the Wise Men to the baby Jesus. But who were these Wise Men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were called kings - by a church father, Tertullian.

Another church father, Origen, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given.

Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things.

Since the 8th century, the Magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.



Date	Reader/Intercessions	Sides person
1st January	Beth Davies <i>Sally Curtis</i>	D Winter, J Winter
8th January	Hilary Denning <i>David Moore</i>	N Barnett P Clynes
15th January	Lesley Garvey <i>Heather Hill</i>	A Broadhurst, L Broadhurst
22nd January	Heather Hill <i>Jim Ballistone Thicke</i>	R Broughton, S Broughton
29th January	Les Martindale <i>Carol Moore</i>	A Fitch, L Hurst
If you have to swop or cannot do any of the dates, please can you let Beth or Hilary know. Thank you		

Coffee Rota	
1st January	Margaret Wilton, Kathy Sinkins
8th January	Hilary Denning, John Shears
15th January	Pat Clynes, Pat Marriot
22nd January	Lyn Powell
29th January	Lyn Hurst
If you swop or are unable to fulfil your rota, please can you let Margaret Small know. Thank you	



Magazine deadline for copy is the 14th of the month
 To: Mrs Linda Broadhurst, 43 Furlong Close, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2PR
 Telephone: 01761 415562 Email: stjohnsmagazine@aol.com

Parish Directory

		Telephone
Bible Reading Fellowship	Mrs Angela Fitch	413636
Choir Leader	Mr Geoff Miles	
Church Cleaning	Mrs Pat Clynes	412928
Church Hall Bookings	Mrs Carolyn Wroe	07591 557578
Coffee Rota	Mrs Margaret Small	411474
Electoral Roll Secretary	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	415562
Flower Rota		
Gift Aid Secretary	Mrs Kay Harvey	416050
Head Server	Mr John Norman	
St John's School	Mrs Danielle West-Gaul	412019
Ladies Group Leader	Mrs Kay Harvey	416050
Magazine Editor	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	415562
Magazine Distribution	Mrs Linda Broadhurst	07941 204179
Organist	Mrs Margaret Whatley	418072
PCC Secretary	Mrs Margaret Marshall	413895
PCC Treasurer	Mr John Shears	479033
PCC Vice Chairperson	Mrs Beth Davies	418787
	Mrs Hilary Denning	07828 550006
Safeguarding Person	Mrs Ann Munton	07895 038871
Tower Secretary	Mrs Margaret Marshall	413895

Church Organisations

The Choir practise on Fridays from 6:30 pm until 7:50 pm.

The Friendship Group: meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

The Ladies Group meets on the second Thursday of the month

The Society of Our Lady of Walsingham meets every 3rd Friday of the month at 11am for Said Mass and the Angelus. The Cell takes an annual Pilgrimage to Walsingham in September. A warm welcome is extended to all who would like to attend the service or join us on Pilgrimage.

Further details can be obtained from a member of the Clergy.

**You can stay in touch with us on our website: www.stjohnschurchmsn.org.uk
Twitter: [@StJohnMSN](https://twitter.com/StJohnMSN), on Facebook: [@StJohnMSN](https://www.facebook.com/StJohnMSN)
and on YouTube: [St John's MSN channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).**



January 2023

Sunday 1st

Tuesday 3rd

Friday 6th

2nd Sunday of Christmas

10:30am - 11:45am

Epiphany

Coffee in Church

Sunday 8th

Tuesday 10th

Thursday 12th

Saturday 14th

The Baptism of Christ

10:30am - 11:45am

14:30 - 16:30

19:30

Coffee in Church

St John's Friendship Group

Ladies Group

Magazine Copy Date

Sunday 15th

Tuesday 17th

Friday 20th

2nd Sunday of Epiphany

10:30 - 11:45

11:00

Coffee in Church

St John's cell of Our Lady
of Walsingham - Eucharist

Sunday 22nd

Tuesday 24th

Sunday 29th

Tuesday 31st

3rd Sunday of Epiphany

10:30 - 11:45

4th Sunday of Epiphany

10:30 - 11:45

Coffee in Church

Coffee in Church



This month's front cover was provided by your editor
A snowy Sunday morning in December 2022