

SIX PARISHES NEWSLETTER



for
 St Giles' Church. Badger
 St Milburga's Church. Beckbury
 St Andrew's Church. Ryton

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Rota of Services in the 6 Parishes –February 2017

Sunday	Badger	Beckbury	Ryton	Kemberton	Stockton	Sutton Maddock
Jan 29 th			9.30am Communion KH (new)		11am Plough Service KH	
Feb 5 th	9.30am Communion KH (trad)	9.30am Matins TD				11am Communion KH (trad)
Feb 12 th			9.30am Morning Worship KH	11am Communion KH (new)		
Feb 19 th	9.30am Matins TD	9.30am Communion KH (new)				11am Morning Worship KH
Feb 26 th			9.30am Communion KH (trad)	11am Morning Worship KH		

KH – Revd Keith Hodson:

TD – Tina Dalton

PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings
 It is the Lord who rises with healing in his wings;
 When comforts are declining, he grants the soul again
 A season of clear shining to cheer it after rain.

Amen

Contributions for next month's newsletter to either –

David Tooth at Havenside, Beckbury – 01952 750324. Email - david.tooth2@btinternet.com

Or Ruth Ferguson at Tarltons, Beckbury – 01952 750267 not later than 14th of this month, please.



FROM THE RECTORY

Dear friends,

As I write this in the third week in January, it is a damp grey “murky” week without any glimpses of the sun or patches of blue sky (*not even enough to make a pair of sailor’s breeches* as my parents in Warwickshire used to say). And the month “February fill dyke” – another Warwickshire saying? – is still to come. So there may be more grey clouds and drizzle ahead.

But with the cloud comes milder weather, and now that we are past the winter solstice in December, the days are getting a little longer as the weeks go by. Snowdrops are already showing in some of our church yards. They used to be called *Candlemas bells* as they flower around the feast of Candlemas on 2nd February, and are one of the first signs of spring: indeed in the old Celtic calendar 1st February was the first day of spring.

With this present mild weather some of our local song birds are beginning to sing. Thomas Hardy, a rather pessimistic poet and novelist who died in 1928, wrote *The Darkling Thrush* describing a drab dismal winter scene (*and winter’s dregs made desolate the weakening eye of day*) where he is suddenly surprised.

*At once a voice arose among the bleak twigs overhead
in a full-hearted evensong of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small, in blast-beruffled plume,
had chosen thus to fling his soul upon the growing gloom.*

This stark contrast of the bird’s joyful song and the bleak landscape makes Hardy wonder what is beyond and unseen that makes the thrush burst into song.

*So little cause for carolings of such ecstatic sound
was written on terrestrial things afar or nigh around,
that I could think there trembled through his happy good-night air
some blessed Hope, whereof he knew... ..and I was unaware.*

St Paul had difficult dark times in his life, but wrote

*We do not lose heart;
We look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen.
For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

Paul’s experience of God gave him reason for faith that, even in the most difficult of situations, the ultimate reality was good and creative for those who follow Christ. That reality was hard to see on Good Friday, but Easter was only three days away.

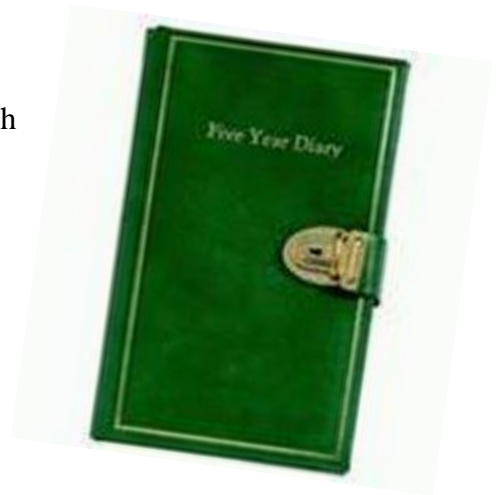
There are plenty of things which depress us, including this winter drabness. But let’s learn to look to the things of God which are unseen and eternal, and also to sing cheerfully like Thomas Hardy’s thrush.

With Celtic spring wishes

Keith Hodson

DIARY DATES FOR February

Sunday 29 nd January	11am	Plough Service at Stockton Church
Wednesday 1 st Feb.	7.30pm	Beckbury Parish Council meet in Beckbury Village Hall
Tuesday 14 th	12noon	Friendship Club late Christmas Party in Beckbury Village Hall
Wednesday 1 st March	6.30pm	Ash Wednesday Communion Service at Beckbury Church



CHURCH NEWS

Christmas Wreaths and flowers on church yard graves should be removed by Candlemas (February 2nd). Our church yard volunteer teams will assist with this where families are unable to visit till the spring.

St Andrew's Church Shifnal mark '**Candlemas**' on 29th January with a Taize style service at 6pm in candlelight.

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday** on 1st March. There will be a communion service at 6.30pm at Beckbury Church.

Many of you will remember **Revd Aleck Melly** who was the vicar of Kemberton and Sutton Maddock, and then later also Stockton until 1988 when he retired but still continued to assist Revd David Chantrey in the newly formed Six Parishes. Revd Melly was a conscientious visitor in the three villages, and so is well remembered by his parishioners. He retired to Bridgnorth but for the past few years stayed at a nursing home in Ditton Priors.

CONDOLENCES

We extend our sympathies to the family of the late Robin Watson, aged 85, formerly of Norton, whose service was held on 6th January 2017 at Telford Crematorium.

We extend our sympathies to the family of the late Revd Aleck Melly, aged 92, formerly vicar of Kemberton, Sutton Maddock and Stockton, whose service was held on 30th January 2017 at Kemberton Church.

DEFIBRILLATOR CONTACTS

If some-one has collapsed and appears to be unconscious you should call one of the trained operators listed below. You should also dial 999 for an ambulance

Heather Thomas	01952 750334	Anne Evans	01952 750347
Di Rawthenstall	01952 750208	Roy Sutcliffe	01952 750358
Rick Cattell	01746 783942	Neil & Louise Dunn	01952 750413
Peter Gibbins	01952 750293		

SIX PARISHES FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our January visit to The Bell at Trysull was pronounced a success by the 23 members who went. Because of the numbers involved and the popularity of the venue we had to switch the organisation round to fill in the food waiting time, which meant that notices and raffle went first, followed by a “who are they” section when photos were passed around of some Beckbury residents about 45 years ago. It was quite surprising how difficult this was although everyone recognised Chris Lawton. The food arrived just after this so everyone tucked into lunch which was enjoyed by all.

Our good wishes for a speedy recovery go to Anne Hodgins who fell off a chair, badly bruising her back, we hope she is now feeling much better.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 14th February starting at 12 noon which will be our much delayed Christmas party. As usual will members kindly bring food to eat and share, and please can all gifts be gift wrapped and marked lady, gent or either. Children from Beckbury School will be entertaining us with some singing and music for the afternoon will be provided by Dave Towers on his keyboard. Anyone wishing to join us on this party occasion will be most welcome.

BECKBURY ALLOTMENTS

February tasks in the allotment

The weather in February is renowned for being a bit of a mixed bag. Swinging from grey, miserable days with persistent rain and sleet to bright, sunny ones that make you really want to get out in your allotment. The latter lures you into thinking winter is over.....beware!!

Provided the ground isn't frozen or water logged you can complete your winter digging and incorporate as much organic matter as you can. And if you are really raring to get started here are a few other jobs to be getting on with.

- Harvest the last your brassicas, parsnips, celeriac and swede to make a warming winter soup.
- Chit seed potatoes.
- Force rhubarb, covering crowns will stimulate them into producing early crops.
- Broad beans can be sown directly outside.
- Brussels, kohlrabi and sprouting broccoli can be sown under glass to plant out in April/May.
- Jerusalem artichokes – they can overshadow other crops so choose wisely where you position them.
- Lettuce to be harvested in May/June – sow indoors then thin seedlings and plant in cold frames in March.
- Tomatoes and cucumber – if you are growing plants for a greenhouse you can start off indoors to ensure germination. Use a heated propagator and maintain a minimum of 21c.
- Prune late autumn raspberries down to as low as possible.
- Cover soil with plastic sheeting or cloches to warm up for early sowing.
- Shallots and garlic – plant when soil begins to dry out.
- Spray trees and bushes with garlic compound to combat disease problems.
- Sort out your seeds. Maybe order something a little unusual.

I for one received my ‘Munchkin’ pumpkin seeds for growing over my arch this morning and got all excited about the coming growing season. It all starts with the humble seed.....

Heidi Pringle-Scott

There is half an allotment free if anyone out there fancies having a go at growing their own veg. Please contact Mark Spickernell (allotment Chairman) on 07870621720 for details.

UPDATE FROM CONNECTING SHROPSHIRE FOR BADGER, BECKBURY AND RYTON – JANUARY 2017.

Connecting Shropshire is a multi-million pound programme to bring fibre broadband to the parts of the Shropshire Council area where private companies are not going to provide it as part of their current commercial plans. To date, the programme has provided access to fibre broadband for many homes and businesses across a range of exchange areas, from Albrighton to Chirbury, and Chirk to Tenbury Wells. More than 58,000 premises are now within reach of the new network that we have built. The programme is due to complete by 2020.

To date, Connecting Shropshire has provided access to fibre broadband for around 170 premises in Beckbury and Ryton villages. Further work, expected to be completed this month, is projected to bring some premises in Badger within reach of a fibre broadband service.

Once fibre broadband is available in an area, people wanting to access the new network need to make the switch by upgrading to a fibre broadband package with their chosen internet service provider.



Parishioners can visit our website: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/when-and-where/> to check the availability of fibre broadband.

If fibre broadband is not available, there are alternatives that parishioners can use to improve their current broadband speed in the meantime, such as: 4G mobile, wireless or satellite broadband, see: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/alternative-broadband-solutions/>.

This month's Newsletter is kindly sponsored by

Mrs Vera George from Badger