

REACHING OUT

from the Cockfield Benefice



Church of England Parish Churches serving the villages of:
Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St George w Lt Whelnetham,
Bradfield Combust, Cockfield, Felsham, Gedding, Gt
Whelnetham & Stanningfield

December 2024/January 2025
Issue 122

From the Rector's desk:

Can you believe that it is nearly the end of 2024! It must be an age thing - when I was a child the time between Guy Fawkes night and Christmas Day seemed interminably long. Now it goes so quickly that I can hardly draw breath as we plunge into Advent - anticipating the birth of Jesus Christ - God as human being. A vulnerable baby born into a time of political unrest to a very young girl, newly married to a carpenter.

We have an amazing list of services that are on offer this December to help us remember and to celebrate this remarkable event, and may I invite you to come along and join us in singing the familiar carols (as well as some popular Christmas songs), to drink mulled wine and to eat

mince pies, to share fellowship and friendship with one another, and to pray for our local communities.

We need to pray - these last few weeks have been quite challenging with our Archbishop resigning after the Makin report was published. Bishop Martin wrote to all clergy in our diocese very soon after the resignation, and in his letter, he wrote:

'...Our first concern, support and prayers must now and always be for the victims of this and all abuse. It will be hard for most to imagine the effect of the horrors perpetrated on so many by Smyth, and then the compounded suffering of not being heard. Please hold all victims in your prayers.'

I agree wholeheartedly with this statement, and may I assure you that we work hard in this benefice to ensure that our churches are safe places for everyone. I am very grateful to the Churchwardens, PCC members, Ministry Team and others who undergo mandatory training and uphold the Church of England's Safeguarding Standards, and I am very grateful to our Benefice Safeguarding Officer, Andy Price, for all he does in facilitating training and in supporting me. If you have any questions on safeguarding in your local situation, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Your local church is there for YOU - and it is always great to see the building used outside Sunday morning worship. We recently held a craft fair at Cockfield St Peter's, and it was great to see the space being used for a community event. So please do get in touch if you have any questions or comments about what we can do in these beautiful buildings.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for reading 'Reaching Out' every month, and for your contribution to the life of the Church in our benefice. It would be lovely to see you at our Thanksgiving Communion Service on Sunday 1st December at Bradfield St George at 10.30am, so that I can thank people personally for all they do both in financial terms and for the time and talent they give to our churches.

I have some good news for you. We are going to be joined by a new Assistant Curate next year (full time) following the ordinations at Petertide (end of June). Her name is Fiona Malby, and she is currently training for ordination through a non-residential training course at St Augustine's College of Theology. Fiona will be moving with her family to be with us, and you will hear more from Fiona in the new year. In the meantime, do please pray for Fiona and her three children as she enters the last 6 months of her training.

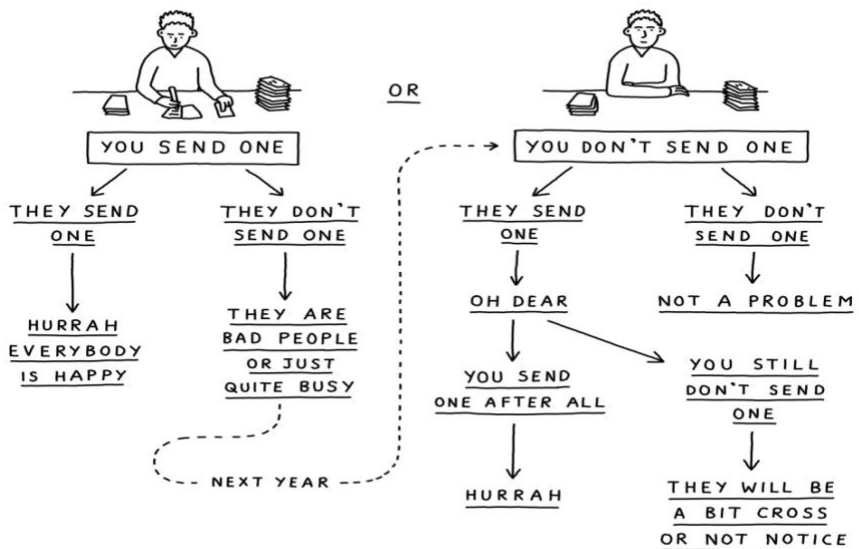
May you have a fruitful Advent and a wonderful Christmas, and may the God of peace bless you and those you love.

Sharon

Rev Canon Sharon Potter
Rector, Cockfield Benefice

revsharon2@gmail.com, tel: 01284 828599 or 07825 086063

CHRISTMAS CARDS



CartoonChurch.com

Want to share some good news?

To submit an article for Reaching Out, please send it to Rev Canon Sharon Potter at revsharon2@gmail.com, or drop a hard copy to The Rectory, Howe Lane, Cockfield, IP30 0HA by 20th of the month for the next month's issue. You can contact Canon Sharon on 01284 828599 or 0782 086063.

Our Assistant Priest, Rev Richard Stainer can be contacted via email at richard.stainer14@gmail.com or tel: 01284 388175.

Poppy Appeal 2024

Cockfield Church contributed £528 towards the village's overall total of £703.05 this year towards the Royal British Legion's annual appeal. Pat Hipwell sold poppies that she had knitted, and proceeds from these contributed £114 to the Cockfield Church total. So well done and thank you to everyone who supported this year's appeal.



Village Friends *(our over 65's friendship group)*

The December Village Friends meeting will take place on **Thursday 12 December** at Felsham Village Hall at **12.30pm** for our annual **Christmas Lunch**. Booking is essential, so if you'd like to



come, please do get in contact with us. This year we have a harpist and flute player to entertain us, and the normal roast dinner with all the trimmings! Everyone is welcome, and the lunch is free.

Please let Susan Metcalf or Canon Sharon know if you'd like transport. Contact Susan at st.metcalf@btinternet.com, or telephone 01284 828581 or 07925 867221 or Canon Sharon on 01284 828599 or 07825 086063, revsharon2@gmail.com.



Big Green Challenge for December

Climate change presents significant challenges to agriculture in the Sub-Saharan African region and across Africa generally. Smallholder farmers are adopting various

adaptation strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Rain-fed agricultural areas, which account for approximately 95% of the region's food production, are particularly vulnerable to droughts and unpredictable rainfall patterns. Therefore, it is crucial to transform the African agricultural sector, which is largely dominated by smallholder farmers, to better withstand the challenges posed by climate change. The problem is that rainfall has become increasingly unreliable and so rainy seasons sometimes come early, or late, or not at all. In 2018 in Kagera, Tanzania, the big rainy season came early and so farmers planted their crops. Then the rains stopped after about a week and everything dried up. This meant that many went hungry as they had used their seeds to no effect. Farmers are also finding that their crops are more susceptible to pests and diseases because of the warmer weather. These affect yields and can have devastating effects on farmers' incomes and their ability to feed their families.

As global temperatures rise, and rainfall becomes more unpredictable there needs to be more done to mitigate the effects of these changes. We can help:

- CCMP (Church and Community Mobilisation Process) in Kagera, our link diocese, is working with local farmers to mitigate the effects of climate change. New water tanks, foot pumps and tree planting make a real difference to farmers' livelihoods.
- Christian Aid is working with farmers in Ethiopia and elsewhere to put in pipelines from springs and storage tanks with pumps to ensure a year-round water supply.
- Other aid agencies are responding to droughts by bringing in emergency aid when it is needed.

This Christmas could you give a gift to an agency or to Kagera (gift form on the diocesan website) to ensure more families have enough to eat this coming year? In 2025 could your church hold a climate crisis service and donate money to one of the above to enable mitigations to take place in rural parishes in Africa?

What's on in January - around the Diocese

Waking the Women

Tuesday 7 January, 7.00pm - 8.30pm by Zoom

Women over the age of 40 are by far the biggest and the most active demographic in the Church of England. But while a huge proportion of any given congregation will likely have experienced menopause, it still remains largely unacknowledged, unspoken and unaddressed. Join Jayne who will be discussing her book *Waking the Women*, the menopause and the church with the Diocesan Advisor for Women's Ministry, the Revd Ali Miller, on Zoom. All are welcome to come and join the discussion. [Click here to register.](#)

Exploring the Old Testament

Earl Stonham Village Hall, Stowmarket IP14 5HJ

Wednesdays 22 January, 22 January, 29 January, 5 February, 12 February, 26 February, 5 March and 12 March 2025. Registration and coffee at 7.00pm, sessions 7.30 – 9.30pm. In many of our churches, where the weekly service may be some form of the Eucharist, the Old Testament nowadays is never read. And even where it is, it is often ignored. But it is the larger part of the Bible and has far more to say than the New Testament about things like the life cycle (birth, marriage, death), sickness and health, daily work, the environment, social justice, and so on. In other words, it relates to life as we know it on a day-by-day basis. Of course, there are some challenging bits which need also to be confronted in an honest manner, but they should not deflect us from the riches of what was, after all, Jesus' Bible. (Where did he get the first and great commandment ... and the second is like, namely this...?) In this short course, Hugh Williamson will try to open our eyes to some of this wealth by surveying in an engaging manner all the different types of material in the Old Testament, very much with an eye on how we can apply it in our own times in both church and society. To book your place on this course please [click here.](#)

Cockfield Benefice Services & Events December 2024

Sunday 1 December	10.30am Thanksgiving Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm Advent Christingle Service - Felsham
Sunday 8 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare 4pm Advent Carol Service - Stanningfield
Wednesday 11 December	7pm Community Carols - starting in the Village Hall Car Park, Cockfield and processing to the Church
Thursday 12 December	12.30-4pm Village Friends Christmas Lunch (booking required - contact Rev Canon Sharon for more details)
Sunday 15 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Felsham 6pm Carol Service - Cockfield
Monday 16 December	7pm Carols by Candlelight - Lt Whelnetham
Tuesday 17 December	7pm Carol Service - Gt Whelnetham
Wednesday 18 December	7pm Carol Service - Bradfield St Clare
Thursday 19 December	7pm Carol Service with the Tudor Rose Choir - Gedding
Thursday 19 December	7pm Carol Service - Bradfield St George
Sunday 22 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 24 December Christmas Eve	3pm Crib Service - Bradfield St Clare 9pm Holy Communion - Felsham 9pm Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 11.30pm Holy Communion - Cockfield
Wednesday 25 December Christmas Day	10am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 10am Holy Communion - Stanningfield
Sunday 29 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare

Morning Prayer will not be held at Cockfield on Tuesday 31 December.

Sunday 5 January Epiphany	9.30am Holy Communion - Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm SixtoSeven - Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 12 January Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1	10am Morning Prayer - Cockfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare 6pm Praise & Worship - Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 14 January	11am Holy Communion - Felsham (soup and sandwiches served at the Village Hall from 12 noon)
Thursday 16 January	2-4pm Village Friends at Felsham Village Hall (over 65s friendship group)
Sunday 19 January Epiphany 2	9.30am Morning Prayer - Stanningfield 10am Praise God Together - Felsham 10.30am Holy Communion - Cockfield 4pm Evening Prayer - Bradfield St Clare
Saturday 25 January	 <p>All children welcome accompanied by parent/carer(s) 3-5pm, venue tbc</p>
Sunday 26 January Epiphany 3	9.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together - Bradfield St George 10am Communion - Gedding
Sunday 2 February Presentation of Christ in the Temple	9.30am Holy Communion - Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm Six2Seven - Felsham Village Hall

A service of Celtic-style Morning Prayer is usually held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am.

Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at www.cockfieldbenefice.com