# Seek



# January 2023

The Church and Parish of St Mark Cambridge www.stmarksnewnham.org

# The Vicar's Letter



As one year moves into a new one, I wonder what you think of when you look back over 2022. There were some great joys — the Platinum Jubilee of our long serving queen, the Lionesses' victory in the Euros. There were some great sadnesses — the death of our queen, the invasion of

Ukraine. And there were some unexpected moments – not least 40-degree heat in July and sub-zero temperatures and heavy snow in Cambridge just five months later. And I expect most of us look back at more personal moments of joy, sorrow and surprise.

One of the great joys of being a Vicar is catching a glimpse of God in different ways and places, from the beauty and majesty of our church buildings, built to give God glory; to the worship, in all its forms, that takes place within them. But also beyond the walls of these beautiful buildings, in the stories of faith and hope that people tell me; in the smiles and tears of families who have lost loved ones; in the joyful celebration of those seeking marriage or baptism in the church; in the creativity and passion of so many that I meet in the wonderful city; in the love, kindness and generosity of people.

God is a god of surprises and he is often to be found in unexpected places – we have just celebrated Christmas, the arrival more than two thousand years ago of the Christ child. Not to a palace, not into royalty and wealth and privilege but to a young ordinary couple, in a feeding trough of a borrowed dwelling. I wonder if the nativity story is so familiar to us, brought out and retold

each year, that we have forgotten what a wonderful, amazing tale it is – and that it is not just for Christmas! That story of God coming to us, of seeking us out and becoming like us, of being found in the most surprising of places and in the reality of human life, is a truth that holds always. God is with us.

In just a couple of months we will begin to mark a different Christian festival, Easter. A different story to Christmas, in many ways a harder one, but we see the same message. God is still with us, in surprising and astonishing ways, including the bleak cross of Good Friday but also in meals with friends, on hillsides and in cities, with a few or with the many, over years, decades, centuries and millennia - and now, in the lives and experiences and hearts of many, many ordinary people who are trying to live in the light of God's love and to follow Jesus and to share His love with others.

So as you come to pack away the Christmas decorations this week, if you haven't already done so, why not just pause and reflect again on the incarnation, the truth of God with us. You might even keep one of your Christmas decorations out, that as you go on through the year, as Winter moves to Spring, you might glance at it and remember that Christmas message that is for always. God is with us, each of us, in times of joy and excitement but also in times of sadness and struggle. I hope he surprises you this new year.

Rachel

The Revd Rachel Rosborough rachelrosborough@hotmail.com

# Charity of the Month 2022

The total donations paid over by St Mark's in the 11 months to November 2022 was £10,323 compared to £11,424 in the 11 months to November 2021.

In addition to this, we donated £4,868 to the Ukraine Appeal from our Autumn Fair and the appeal we held earlier in the year.

This is a truly magnificent achievement and makes the job of treasurer so rewarding.

Stuart Lingard

# **CCHP**: Charity of the Month

For the last few years St Mark's has made CCHP, the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, it's January Charity of the Month. We are doing so again this year and below Judith Barwise brings us up to date with the project.

This is just a short update on where we are as we come into the New Year.

First, I would like to start by thanking each of you for your support, prayers, donations and time in supporting us and our Guests. We are volunteerled and supported, with over 200 different individuals joining us last winter and over 120 new volunteers this winter. We simply could not do this without you. With the cost of living on the rise and the difficulties felt by families across Cambridge, we saw the number of homeless rough sleepers double in the autumn and, as winter approached, there was a push to ensure everyone would find a safe space.

At the beginning of November, we opened the doors at Crossways, a 20-bed hostel, set up to take individuals from November to the end of February. When new arrivals come to an end we will spend March working to settle those who have been housed. At the beginning of the Winter Season we welcomed over 120 new volunteers to our training sessions and they are to be included in our rotas to support our Guests and cook the evening meals. It is always such a pleasure to welcome back our volunteers and feel the project come to life. This was a new initiative to CCHP, having always previously started at the beginning of December.

To aid the smooth running of the project, we took the decision to reintroduce the paid role of Project Co-ordinator, which we had funded prior to the pandemic. We were thrilled to welcome Keeley to CCHP for the first half of the Winter Season. This role is essential to us, for supporting volunteers and ensuring the rotas are complete.

By the time we entered December, and the cold weather had set in, every bed in Crossways was full and we were working hard to fill every shift on the rotas. An enormous **Thank you** to every single volunteer who took a few hours out of their week to support our Guests and help us to provide a safe, warm and welcoming environment. This is everything we work to achieve everywhere we work. SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) was called with the cold weather and this allowed for individuals to be housed in hotels, the Victoria Project and elsewhere as well as at Crossways. This is essential to ensure Guests have a safe space during the coldest weather.

Alongside our work at Crossways, we also continue to fund the role of Bishop's Officer for Homeless, the Chaplain to the Homeless, the Revd Sophie Young. This is a pastoral care role, with Revd Sophie providing invaluable time with our homeless brothers and sisters with addiction support, prayer and individual support where needed. She is an advocate for those rough sleepers who need support in meetings, or support in facing group environments which can be intimidating.

The final aspect this winter is our continuing and unwavering support for anyone without access to public funding, or NRPFs. These individuals are housed in hotels for short periods of time, for example over a long weekend, until the council can support them, or until we can find them longer term support.

I usually finish with a thank you. This year, we need your support more than ever. We never take it for granted and I remain thankful for all that you give. However, I do have some sad news to share. This is a prayer for a gentleman who joined us at the beginning of last winter at Crossways, and who we were able to support over the summer thanks to your donations. He found employment and was rewarded with a place that we funded at Cyrenians. He died peacefully in a warm room, surrounded by support, on the 11th October 2022. I give thanks for the community he had in the last year of his life, and I pray that we continue to fight for those souls who are out on the streets this winter. I pray that as times get tougher, we always remember that we are here to bear witness to Christ and make a difference to those who have less than ourselves.

Thank you for all that you give. We remain committed to serving our homeless brothers and sisters and we are grateful that you have joined us on this mission.

"I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was a stranger and you made me welcome."

Matthew 25 35

#### **Judith Barwise**

In other news, we continue to look for volunteers who wish to take on an administrative role on our Ops Committee, as well as anyone interested in joining our Trustee Board

# Bible Reading Fellowship Notes



This is a reminder that in early February I shall be renewing our church-rate subscription with the Bible Reading Fellowship, who produce a number of publications to "sustain people in their daily journey with the Bible". Subscription rates apply from May 2023.

For busy people the most accessible of these is probably *New Daylight*. Each issue provides four months of daily Bible readings and comment, with a team of regular contributors drawn from a range of church backgrounds and covering a varied selection of Old and New Testament biblical themes, characters and seasonal readings. Each issue contains nine topics of fortnightly readings and is published three times a year in January, May and September. Available in regular and large-print editions, a single regular copy costs £4.95, the large print edition £6.25. By taking out the church-rate subscription from May 2023, you get a valuable

saving of three issues for £14.85 postage free for the regular edition, and £18.25 for the large-print version, whereas an individual subscription costs £18.30 and the large-print version £22.50

Another publication *Guidelines*, also at £4.95 for a single copy and £14.85 for an annual subscription, is aimed primarily for Today's Ministry and Mission,

Owing to Covid restrictions I have not left samples of New Daylight and Guidelines in the Narthex, but, as usual, am very happy to supply you with some past issues on application.

If you have any questions or would like to find out more, please do get in touch or contact me on email tinahelenwilson@gmail.com or call Cambridge 366988.

You can find out more about BRF on their websites: brfonline.org.uk and biblereadingnotes.org.uk.

I shall be asking current subscribers if they are happy to continue with their subscriptions.

**Tina Wilson** 

# Connie Hammond

Our mother died on the 3rd November 2022 at the great age of 101. We are grateful that she died peacefully at home surrounded by her family and in no pain, having only been unwell over the previous six days. Like the Queen she died from frailty of old age.

Yet her life was interesting. She was born on 6 June 1921 at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands where her father worked as an administrator. She grew up in the Falklands enjoying an idyllic childhood often spent outside horse riding. Just before the outbreak of the second world war the family returned to Britain and settled initially in Slough where mum started work in the Midland Bank, partly in the local branch but also commuting to the City. With many men away on military service, the war provided opportunities for promotion and she rose to become chief clerk.

After the war the family moved to Willesborough, a village close to Ashford in Kent and it was there that mum met Peter, then the curate at the parish church. They were married on 17 September 1955 and enjoyed 67 happy years together. Our father served as priest in a number of parishes in the Canterbury Diocese and mum became what would now be seen as a traditional vicar's wife, organising social events, counselling people in difficulty and dealing with correspondence.

In 1983 our parents bought a house in Hardwick Street, Cambridge and retired here permanently in 1989. They chose Cambridge not for any family connections but as a lovely city with plenty to do, close but not too close to London where we both worked. It proved a wise decision. It was not a complete retirement as shortly after dad was invited to act as priest in charge of the parish of Great Eversden and Little Eversden a few miles west of Cambridge. Our parents went every Sunday to take the morning service and usually during the week to visit parishioners. They greatly enjoyed being attached to the parish. The only drawback was that this arrangement prevented them from getting involved in the life of St Mark's as much as they would have liked.

In recent years our parents became increasingly housebound and so were not seen out in Newnham. But many people have remembered seeing them walking into Cambridge which they did several times a week, mum wheeling a bike with a large basket for shopping though in later years they came back by bus.

We are grateful for the many cards and letters of sympathy we have received and thank everyone for their kind messages.

**Chris Hammond** Jane Rees

# To Make You Smile

My Anglo-Irish grandfather had two memorable sayings that we often repeat:

"If you can't be aisy, be as aisy as you can" [only he himself never was!]

"It'll never be better than it is now" [when encouraging someone to have a second helping]

He was also fond of quoting this poem with its reference to Matthew 5:45

"[he] sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust":

The rain it raineth on the just And also on the unjust fella;

But chiefly on the just, because

The unjust hath the just's umbrella.

**Charles Bowen** (1835 – 1894)

Which reminds me of another verse:

#### **Good and Clever**

If all the good people were clever,
And all clever people were good,
The world would be nicer than ever
We thought that it possibly could.
But somehow 'tis seldom or never
The two hit it off as they should,
The good are so harsh to the clever,
The clever, so rude to the good!
So friends, let it be our endeavour
To make each by each understood;

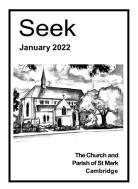
Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840 – 1932)

For few can be good, like the clever,

Or clever, so well as the good.

Many thanks to **Tina Wilson** for this month's contribution.

# SEEK for 2023



This is the opportunity to thank all our distributors who, month by month, ensure that over 200 copies of SEEK are circulated throughout the parish, and to thank, especially, Sue Wagner who coordinates this distribution.

It is a good time too to thank our printers, Chris and Barbara Wright, for their helpfulness and efficiency. We never cease to be amazed by how quickly they get Seek ready for publication.

Watch out for details1 about payment in our next issue.

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#### **Buried Treasure?**

I hope you've had a good Christmas and that you have recycled all that you can. In our neighbourhood there was a definite clanking of glass bottles when the blue recycling bins were being collected so no doubt a merry Christmas was had by all too!

At least we have recycling facilities now. Half a century ago things were definitely different. According to a newspaper article that I read, the toothbrush manufacturer, Jordon, surreptitiously dumped hundreds of thousands of defective toothbrushes in a forest in Norway. These have recently been discovered in deep pits. The toothbrushes are being examined to see if there has been any degradation by bacteria, fungi, worms or insects during the 50 years. If they were still recognisable, I don't think the organisms have done a very good job, do you?

Jordon has since moved to the UK, Cambridge in fact! The article said that the company is now encouraging its customers to return old toothbrushes with the possibility of recycling them.

So, I searched the internet for 'Jordon, Cambridge' to find their address. I thought that maybe I could go round there and pop a few old toothbrushes through their letterbox.

However, their website only suggested that we 'repurpose' old toothbrushes to clean around taps, toilet fittings etc. All I can say is that you would have to be very careful to keep them separate from the 'current' toothbrushes!

Another suggestion was that old toothbrushes could be coated with hair gel to smooth out flyaway hair. I was telling my husband about this and he thought that use might actually be a good idea. "When hair is thinning on top of your head like mine is, you need to keep every strand in place!"

Another suggestion on the website was that we could all conduct degradation experiments by sticking toothbrushes in the earth. I suppose they could be used as plant labels. Now wouldn't that be a sight when you looked out at your garden on a cold frosty January morning?

Getting more 'down to earth' the Prince and Princess of Wales have been to Boston to award the Earthshot Prizes. These are awarded to five winners



each year for their contribution to environmentalism. A prize of £1 million is given to each team in order for them to continue their environmental work. The five categories are....

- the restoration and protection of nature;
- air cleanliness;
- ocean revival;
- · waste-free living; and
- climate action

Well done Prince William and Sir David Attenborough! And the Princess of Wales too, for wearing a lovely green rented dress. Green indeed!

All of the finalists had great ideas but I was very impressed by one of the winners. The London start-up company Notpla won one of the awards for its biodegradable clear film made from seaweed. Its products include a coating for takeaway boxes in order for them to hold food and not get soggy. Plastic is often used for doing this but the Notpla membrane is compostable and biodegradable in weeks. In fact, they have produced more than a million boxes for 'JustEat' which also makes its tomato ketchup sachets with the film. Just think of all that plastic/foil waste that won't clutter up the landfill sites.

According to their website, Notpla are working on a film which dissolves in a saucepan of boiling water. Very useful for packaging things like noodles.

They have now produced a rigid plastic alternative from seaweed. I wonder if Jordon will take this up to make toothbrushes!

Although most of us won't end up being finalists for these awards it doesn't stop us from making a resolution to do our bit in at least one of the categories in the New Year..... for our own sakes and for that of Planet Earth.

Best wishes for 2023.

**Rosemary Ley** 

# The February Issue of SEEK

All contributions are welcome. Please send them by Sunday 15th January to Jane Plows at <u>janemp@virginmedia.com</u> (350120) or contact any member of the committee.

# **Directions for Singing**

These instructions on hymn singing appear in opening pages of the United Methodist Hymnal and were first included in the 1761 Select Hymns, a hymnbook for early Methodists. They were given by John Wesley, whose brother Charles was writing most of the new hymns that their followers were singing. Most early Methodist worship was in the open air. The preacher would usually have the only written copy of the hymn. He would sing out a line at a time and the crowd would repeat what they heard. It is strange for us to imagine all our favourite Charles Wesley hymns, many of which we can sing almost by heart, being experienced for the first time.

Much of the advice seems as relevant today as it was then.

That this part of Divine Worship may be the more acceptable to God, as well as the more profitable to yourself and others, be careful to observe the following directions.

- I. Learn these Tunes before you learn any others; afterwards learn as many as you please.
- II. Sing them exactly as they are printed here, without altering or mending them at all; and if you have learned to sing them otherwise, unlearn it as soon as you can.
- III. Sing All. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up and you will find a blessing.

- IV. Sing lustily and with good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead, or half asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be no more afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sung the songs of Satan.
- V. Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony; but strive to unite your voices together, so as to make one clear melodious sound.
- VI. Sing in Time: whatever time is sung, be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend closely to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can. And take care you sing not too slow. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from among us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.
- VII. Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your Heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve of here, and reward when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.

# A New Year: New Lights?

#### A brief update on the PCC meeting of the 15th November 2022

Paul Rackham's design for the complete renewal of our interior lighting was received, together with an estimate of its cost. The PCC decided to consult the Diocesan Advisory Committee first to find out whether any part of the design would be unacceptable to the Diocese.

The DAC responded quickly with a visit and advice that at this stage they had no objection to any part of the design, including the removal of the chandeliers. They suggested that we could usefully highlight the benefits of the design as

fully as we had described the issues we have with our current lighting.

The PCC will discuss the lighting again on the 24th January 2023. The choice of what to do about the design clearly lies with us. On a matter of such fundamental importance it is surely essential to present the design and its estimated costs to church members now and seek their comments. Those of us involved clearly hope the January PCC will agree to this.

#### **Alan Jones**

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# **Prayers for January**

O, God, this world is not enough. Without you I am incomplete. Thank you for sending your son, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Help me to share his unconditional love with others. Amen.

O gracious and holy Father, give us wisdom to perceive thee, intelligence to understand thee, diligence you seek thee, patience to wait for thee, eyes to behold thee, a heart to meditate upon thee, and a life to proclaim thee; though the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Prayer of St. Benedict* 

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me.

Christ on my right, Christ on my left.

Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,

Christ when I arise.

Excerpt from St Patrick's Breastplate

Almighty God, we entrust all who are dear to us to your never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that you are doing for them better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**BCP** 

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us we pray you, as you will, and always to your honour and glory, and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. *BCP* 

#### **Chosen by Marie Miller**



# **Cambridge City Foodbank**

#### Where You Can Donate this Month in Newnham and Grantchester

St Mark's Church – Drop it off in the Narthex on Sunday 8th January (<u>not</u> on the 1st January) or at 1 Millington Road or 19 Kings Road on Thursday 12th January 9am – 4pm (also the Grantchester Reading Room 9am – 3pm).

Gough Way – Every Tuesday morning 11-13.00 at the Gough Way island with the postbox (contact sarah.smalley@ntlworld.com for further details)

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# Services at St Mark's Church, Newnham in January

# Communion (BCP) at 8.00 am every Sunday

# **Sunday Services**

1st January at 11.15 am Joint Service at Grantchester

8th January at **9.30 am** Morning Worship and Junior Church

15th January at **9.30 am** Communion and Junior Church

22nd January at **9.30 am**Communion and Junior Church

29th January at **9.30 am** Communion

# **Tuesdays**

Communion (BCP) every Tuesday at 11.00 am

No Messy Church in January



# Regular Groups

#### **Monday Bible Study**

10:00am, alternate weeks – contact: Sue Wagner, 01223 563435

# **Tuesday and Thursday Home Groups**

7:30 pm, weekly – contact: Andrew Watts, <u>aa.watts@hotmail.co.uk</u> or Mike Thompson, <u>michaelangelot99@gmail.com</u>

#### **Prayer Meeting**

11.00 am every Friday at 10 Stukeley Close – contact: Anne Howie, 01223 356140

#### Choir

The choir normally sings on the first three Sundays of the month at our 9:30 am service. Rehearsals are 6:00 pm - 7:15 pm on the first and third Fridays of the month and from 9:00 am on Sundays.