

OAK HILL GROUP OF PARISHES

(Alderton, Gt. Washbourne,
Dumbleton & Wormington)

Vicar: Revd Julia Hook, The Rectory,
Alderton, Tewkesbury Glos. GL20 8NR
Tel: 01242 620636 [mobile 07715953076]
email: julia.hook@btinternet.com

DECEMBER 2022



Changed by love

Dear Friends

This year I've managed to find a few Christmas cards which carries the image of the Christ child – baby Jesus – in the arms of his mother, Mary, and one especially, I would probably describe as a 'sanitized' image of a fair-haired baby smiling contentedly, wrapped in a pristine white shawl. I am sure this is very far from the reality of the stable or out-building where Jesus was born and I think it would be unlikely that the baby had fair hair or that he was wrapped in a clean new shawl! However, what matters is the central truth, portrayed in this image and in a huge variety of different ways, that in the Christ child, God became one of us. Was born of a woman, like us. Lived his earthly life like us; experiencing joy and laughter, pain and sadness. With his birth the whole course of human history was changed and our lives are changed as well.

Perusing through the stock of a religious bookshop, amongst all the variety of Christmas material, I came across a simple book of poems entitled 'Surrender at the Crib'. It was designed and printed at St Mary's Abbey, West Malling in Kent. One poem, called 'The Onlooker', includes these lines:

*All a surrender had to make,
all a gift to receive and bring,
all met the Christ Child
and were changed.*

The poem speaks about all the different people and animals who made the journey to the Crib, who met God there in the little baby they saw lying in the manger, and whose lives were never the same again. At Christmas, the invitation is a very simple one; for each one of us to gather at the Crib. To bring ourselves as a gift and to meet the Christ Child and prepare to be changed. The poem continues;

*Pause, then, by the crib,
reflect if here lies a message
for your life.
Is there a star you need to follow?
A situation to be let go?
A gift waiting to be given?
A new perspective to be discovered?*

As we reflect upon and worship again the new-born king, what difference has his birth made to our lives? Is there a message there for us; something Jesus wants to say to us personally; wants us to know? Has his birth made a difference to our lives? Dare we hope that we will in some way be changed by our encounter with the God who shows his love to us in the little baby whose birth we celebrate? **'Emmanuel' – 'God with us.'**

As a church we send you our love through our News Letter. Prayers are a constant for each of you personally at this time as we think of the many challenges facing us and our world today. Through the coming of the Christ child – God with us - I believe there is hope for the future and hope in the midst of much that seems to be changing all around us.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Holy Advent, where you experience a time of 'spiritual alertness' to Jesus; a wonderfully blessed Christmas, and a New Year of feeling the warmth of God's love surrounding you. Love Julia x

ALDERTON

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY: over 70 people attended the short Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial to celebrate the soldiers who died serving our country. Their names were read out by Tom Cullimore and we were very pleased to have Pete Chandler's grandson, Dan, to play the bugle for the event.

CHRISTMAS FAIR: a reminder that the annual Christmas Fair will be held on **10th DECEMBER** 2.00pm - 4.00pm in the Village Hall. Attractions will include the following: a Grand Raffle (drawn at 4pm). Cake Stall and Delicatessen (donations welcome!), Tombola, Jams & Preserves & a Gift Stall, amongst others. Delicious refreshments will be available. Of course, Father Christmas will be there. Up until 3rd December, good quality items for the Gift Stall will be gratefully received by Sandy Keys, 11 Ellenor Drive. And If you would like to donate any raffle prizes these would be gratefully received by Nicki and Sheila at 10 Church Road.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE AND CHRISTINGLE: is on **Sunday, 11th December at 4pm.** It will be great to have the Church lit by candles and Christingle oranges and sing some well-loved carols. The collection will be for the Children's Society – a charity working for children with challenging issues.

CAROL SINGING and BLESSING OF THE CRIB: **Wednesday 21st December, at 5pm** outdoors if fine, inside if not! Come and sing your favourite carols and bring the children to set the scene for the Christmas story. Afterwards have a hot dog or mince pie, mulled wine or squash to get into the Christmas spirit!

CHRISTMAS EVE: Midnight Communion in Alderton at 11.30pm

CHRISTMAS DAY: Family Service at 10.30am

BISHOP'S VISIT: the re-arranged date for Bishop Rachel to visit our group of 4 Oak Hill Churches and take the service will be on Sunday 22nd January at 10.30am. Do come and join us and give her a good welcome. Bishop Rachel's first career was as a Speech and Language Therapist then she trained as a Priest and worked in London. She was ordained as the first female Bishop. She is the Bishop responsible for HM Prisons and is the Patron of the Nelson Trust in Stroud who support people who have faced trauma and addiction. She also works for a charity which raises awareness of body image anxiety in young people.

GREAT WASHBOURNE

Thank you to all who left donations for the North Cotswolds Foodbank. They were gladly received and will be distributed widely in time for Christmas.

Our **CAROL SINGING EVENING** this year will take place at the church, **6.30pm, on Monday 19th December**. Everyone is invited to join in at this informal evening of singing and the blessing of the crib. Mulled wine, sausage rolls and mince pies will complete our festive get together and it would be great to see you there.

A reminder that our Great Washbourne tea towels are still available. £8 each or two for £15. Blue embroidery on good quality white cloth. All proceeds go to the church. Contact Jane Harrington at janeh.ovgw@gmail.com for details.

DUMBLETON

FILM NIGHT SUNDAY 11th DECEMBER. Do come and join us for our next great CINEMA EVENING when we will be showing "NATIVITY" a very suitable choice for this time of year. No need to book, it's £5 on the door and the Bar will be open for your drinks. Festive Refreshments will be served so please come to this event wearing your seasonal hats and jumpers as we hope to inspire the spirit of Christmas. Thank you to those who supported the last film night.

SUNDAY 18th DECEMBER at 10.30 am. There will be a "CELEBRATION Of CHRISTMAS" service in church when we hope you will come to sing some familiar and favourite Carols and hear special poems and readings telling the wonderful Christmas story. There will be Mulled Wine and other Christmas Refreshments for you to partake of so please come along and enjoy! We look forward to welcoming you.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE at Dumbleton will be held at 10pm. All are welcome. Please see the reverse of this newsletter for all Christmas Service details.

NEW YEAR SERVICE! Now here is an invitation you might like! 1st JANUARY at 10.30am. Get over that "morning after the night before feeling" by joining us for a very relaxed and informal service to welcome in 2023! We will be serving Bacon Baps, Coffee, Tea and even perhaps Alka Seltzer for those who were partying the previous evening. A warm welcome awaits you so come and join us.

CANDLEMAS and CHRISTINGLE SERVICE BY CANDLELIGHT will be held on **29th JANUARY 2023**. More details next month.

WORMINGTON

A big THANK YOU to all who have donated items for the North Cotswold Food Bank. These items will be put together to make up Christmas Hampers for the many clients who are in need.

Service of 6 Carols and 6 Lessons - Sunday 18th December at 6pm. All are welcome to come and join in this lovely service. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served after the service. We will be blessing the crib at this service.

Christmas Flowers - Please come and help decorate the church for our Carol Service on Saturday 17th December from 10am - Coffee and biscuits provided 😊

SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2022

Lectionary Year A

4 Dec 1st Sun Advent 2 Purple	9.00am GT WASHBOURNE Advent HC	10.30am DUMBLETON Advent HC	Isaiah 11.1-10 Romans 15.4-13 Matthew 3.1-12
11 Dec 2nd Sun Advent 3 Purple	9.00am WORMINGTON Advent HC	4.00pm ALDERTON Lessons & Carols by 'Christingle' candlelight	Isaiah 35.1-10 James 5.7-10 Matthew 11.2-11
18 Dec 3rd Sun Advent 4 Purple	9.00am GT WASHBOURNE Advent HC Isaiah 7.10-16; Romans 1.1-7 Matthew 1.18-end	10.30am DUMBLETON Celebration of Christmas with Readings & Carols	6.00pm WORMINGTON Service of 6 lesson and 6 Carols and Blessing of the Crib
19th Dec Monday			6.30pm GT WASHBOURNE Carol Service and Blessings of the Crib
21st Dec Wednesday		5.00pm ALDERTON Carols in the churchyard and Blessing of the Crib	
Christmas Eve Saturday 24th Dec Purple	10.00 pm start Midnight Communion DUMBLETON	11.30 pm start Midnight Communion ALDERTON	Isaiah 9.2-7 Titus 2.11-14 Luke 2.1-14 [15-20]
Christmas Day Sunday 25th Dec White	9.00am in GT WASHBOURNE AND WORMINGTON Family Communion and Celebration	10.30am ALDERTON Family Communion and Celebration	Isaiah 52.7-10 Hebrews 1.1-4 [5-12] John 1.1-14
1st Jan 2022 1st Sun Christmas 2 Naming of Christ White	A very relaxed and informal Service [refreshments included] to welcome in 2023! 10.30 am - Dumbleton		
8th Jan 2022 2 nd Sun Epiphany White	9.00am WORMINGTON Epiphany HC	10.30am ALDERTON Epiphany HC	Isaiah 60.1-6 Ephesians 3.1-12 Matthew 2.1-12

CHURCHWARDENS

ALDERTON

Mr. M. Newman, 18 Courtiers Drive, Bishops Cleeve 01242 675028
Mrs S Reid, 4 Culls Meadow, Toddington 01242 621265

GREAT WASHBOURNE

Mrs J. Kent, Washbourne House, Gt. Washbourne 01242 620291
Mrs Jane Harrington, Orchard View, Great Washbourne 07766 483130

DUMBLETON (PCC Secretary and Wedding Secretary)

Mrs T. Steggles, Bracklin, Main St. Dumbleton 01386 882049

WORMINGTON

Mr J. Evetts, Middle Hill Farm, Saintbury, Worcs. 07799035873
Mrs A. Piercy, Dairymead, Wormington 01386 584416