



Alcester Minster Churches at Alcester, Arrow, Coughton, Great Alne, Haselor, Kinwarton, Sambourne and Weethley December 2021

RECTOR of ALCESTER MINSTER The Reverend Katie Cross

St Nicholas Rectory, Old Rectory Garden, Alcester B49 5DB **t: 01789 764261** rector@alcesterminster.org

Administrator

Tricia Berry t: 01789 509278 m: 07840 284294

(Monday - Friday 10.00 am - 1.30 pm) Alcester Minster Office, Church House, 17 Butter Street, Alcester, B49 5AL (opening hours 10.30 - 12.30 Monday - Friday) administrator@alcesterminster.org

Reader

Mrs P Newbold t: 01527 458852 the_newbolds@blueyonder.co.uk

COUGHTON WITH SAMBOURNE CHURCH OFFICERS

Church Wardens Gail Laband t:01789 764736 gail@laband.uk Mike Thake t:07966 314828 mike@thake.biz

PCC Secretary

Vacancy - Please contact Gail Laband if you are interested in helping the PCC

Treasurer

John McTavish t: 01789 764703 jhmctavish@btinternet.com

Coughton Flowers Co-ordinator

Joy Hawthorne **t:01789 764577** joyandjimhomestall@btinternet.com Please contact if wishing to make own flower arrangements for baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Sambourne Church Booking Agent

Debbie Lanz, t: 07711 834716 debs.doo@gmail.com

GIFT AID

Whenever possible, please gift aid any donations made to our churches. Charitable causes can reclaim an extra 25p in the $\pounds 1$ from the government on donations made under the Gift Aid Scheme. The giver must have paid a tax amount that at least equals the tax being reclaimed on the donation. Please contact the treasurer.

Items of news for **"The Link"** by the **FOURTEENTH** of the month to: Gail Smith gaildsmith@aol.com **t: 07449 930480**

Whilst the Editor welcomes material for publication in **"The Link"**, they do not guarantee that items submitted will be included or will appear in a particular issue. The Editor reserves the right to edit or shorten items used. Publication is in good faith and does not imply accuracy of content or agreement with views expressed

THIS PARISH NEWSLETTER IS DELIVERED FREE OF CHARGE BY VOLUNTEERS. Contributions towards the cost of production are very welcome.

A Message from Rev Katie Cross Weave a Christmas story...

As December marches on and the days get shorter, we are reminded that the year is coming to a close, but not before we have celebrated and spent time together. There are lots of traditions that people have at this time of the year. The Church uses these days of



advent, as a time to wait, in anticipation of the celebration to come. Some of you might have an advent calendar to mark the days, or perhaps use a candle, burning a little each day, but however you log the days, these last few moments of the year will pass all too quickly.

You may have traditions that determine who you get together with, the ways you will celebrate and what will be eaten and drunk. We each have our own ways of marking the occasion. For some, this Christmas will be difficult, the first without a loved one, or changed circumstances, Coronavirus has altered many things which may mean that previous traditions seem to lose their appeal.

Advent gives us the opportunity to stop and think, to reflect on our lives. The word Advent simply means 'coming' – it's the season when Christians remember that God came to earth to be born as a child, Jesus. God also promised that Jesus will come again at the end of time to heal all the world's hurts and divisions. Advent remembers this amazing promise, so it can be a time of hope, of getting ready, and expectation.

Whether this is a familiar Christmas or a new encounter, can I suggest that you might think about starting a new tradition?

If you can, take time throughout December to be thankful for all the good things we have. Maybe you would like to say a prayer to God, thanking him each day for the little surprises and gifts that life offers us. And as we approach Christmas itself, why not come and hear the story for yourself once again, be reminded that there is hope for this world, that God does indeed love us. Weave yourself a new story, wrap your presents with thankfulness, sing a few carols, enjoy time with



family and friends and come to a Christmas service where the greatest story will be retold, and we are reminded that we are not alone.

Whatever Christmas means to you, I pray that you know you are loved.

With Christmas blessings



Alcester Minster Church Services – December 2021

05 Dec Readings: <i>Philippians</i> 1 v 3 – 11, <i>Luke</i> 3 v 1 - 6			
	9.00 am	Morning Prayer	Haselor
Advent 2	11.00 am	Gift Service	Alcester
Purple	11.00 am	Morning Worship	Great Alne
-	4.00 pm	Holy Communion	Sambourne
Tuesday 07 Dec	2.15 pm	Christmas Tea	Sambourne
12 Dec Readings: <i>Philippians</i> 4 v 4 – 7, <i>Luke</i> 3 v 7 - 18			
Advent 3	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Arrow
Purple	11.00 am	Sung Eucharist	Alcester
Friday 17 Dec	7.30 pm	Carol Service	Haselor
Saturday 18 Dec	5.00 pm	Christingle	Coughton
19 Dec Readings: <i>Micah 5 v 2 – 5a, Luke 1 v 39 - 55</i>			
	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Haselor
Advent 4	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Weethley
Purple	11.00 am	Morning Worship with Baptism	Alcester
Alcester	6.30 pm	Alcester Town Carols	Alcester
Tuesday 21 Dec	7.00 pm	Carols by Candlelight	Kinwarton
24 Dec Readings: Acts 13 v 16 – 26, Luke 1 v 67 - 79			
Christmas Eve	3.00 pm	Children's Carols	Great Alne
	2.00		
		Christmas Communion	Weethley
Purple		Crib service	Alcester
Christmas Eve	Readings: Isaia	ah 52 v 7 – 10, John 1 v 1 - 14	
Midnight			
5	11:00 pm	Sung Eucharist	Alcester
Purple/white	11:15 pm	Holy Communion	Great Alne
25 Dec	Readings: Isai	ah 9 v 2 – 7, Luke 2 v 1 - 20	
Christmas Day	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Haselor
_	9.00 am	Holy Communion	Kinwarton
White/Gold	11.00 am	Family Eucharist	Alcester
26 Dec	Readings: Cold	ossians 3 v 12 – 17, Luke 2 v 41 -	52
Christmas 1	10.00 am	Minster `Said' Holy	Alcester
Each Wednesday	10.00 am	Midweek Holy Communion	Alcester
Diasso noto: No mid wook Holy Communian on 20 December			

Please note: No mid-week Holy Communion on 29 December

An On-line service is available every Sunday on the Welcome page

MINSTER EVENTS

For the most up-to-date information on Minster Events please see the website calendar on the noticeboard page on the website – www.alcesterminster.org or check out the weekly notice sheets available in the churches

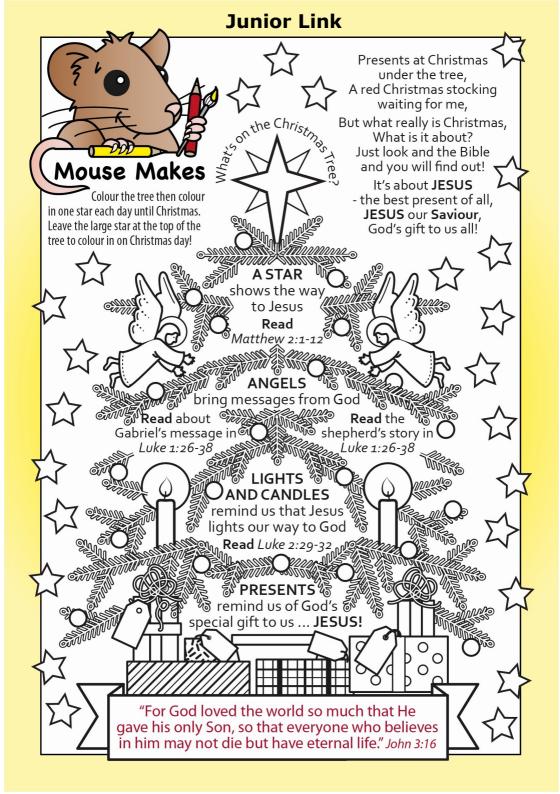
Did you know that you can now 'LIKE' Alcester Minster on facebook?

Find details and pictures of events at

www.facebook.com/AlcesterMinster



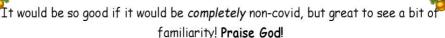
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December Delights!

'Just dreaming of a non-Covid Christmas'



<u>CHRISTMAS AFTERNOON TEA</u> after such a long absence will be on Tuesday 7th December at Sambourne starting at 2.15 pm so we will have lots of time and still get home in the light. Lifts will be provided if necessary. We ask you to bring masks, and we will have a bit of spaciousness and fresh air, but otherwise it will be as usual - if you remember - poems, few songs, Thought for the Day and teas and delicious bits and pieces, including the obligatory TRIFLE! Everyone is welcome, but do let myself or Gail know you are coming, as we really haven't a clue how many to cater for, and in any case need to be Covid aware.

CHRISTINGLE !!!!

Yes, it is back!! Halleluiah!! But sorry not on Christmas Eve, on SATURDAY 18th December at 5.00 pm at St Peter's Coughton. Our lovely Rector, Revd Katie Cross, and I will be doing it between us, so there may be some surprises, but do come along, Mums and Dads, Grannies and Grandads, Aunts and Uncles and all the friends and neighbours and children you can gather. Be assured Jesus will be there to greet you! But do please bring a torch, because you need to park in the National Trust car park. Masks would be good, but not compulsory. Think we will make the Christingles at Sambourne in the morning, at 10.30 am.

CAROL SERVICE

At **Coughton** will be on **Wednesday 22nd December** at 6.00 pm. This is a bit more traditional, but how great to sing those lovely carols and hear the familiar stories that remind us what Christmas is all about. Followed by Mulled wine and mincepies. Again, remember torch and parking.

Christmas day services are at 9.00 am at Haselor and Kinwarton and at 11am at Alcester.

Happy Christmas everybody!!



Pat N



Nature jottings from Perrymill Lane

We have entered what can be a rather gloomy time of year, but nature can brighten our days.



13th Oct. Although most leaves are still green, I look from an upstairs window and see the first autumn golden glow in neighbours' trees.

23rd Oct. Gail informed me that Middletown has received a surprise, and perhaps unwelcome, visitor over recent days. First there was an unexplained disappearance of a chicken

from a garden. Then there were reports of a chicken-stealing Harris Hawk in Astwood Bank. Finally, it was spotted perched on a pole in Wayne and Jenny's garden. The Harris Hawk is a native of southern United States and parts of Central and South America, but is popular in Falconry in this country.

24th Oct. As we walked along Wike Lane and into the woods we noticed a number of Jays in flight. They become quite obvious at this time of year as they seek out acorns.

We were entranced by the feature on MacGregor's Bower Bird in David Attenborough's "Mating Game" programme. Its mimicry of sounds including human voices was amazing and worth seeking out if you missed it.

27th Oct. Most years we have a Lawyer's Wig fungus (Coprinus comatus) appear in our gravel drive and we spotted one today. The family is known as Ink Caps and a few days later it lived up to its name when we saw it had auto-digested into a black mess.

5th Nov. One pleasure at this time of year is encountering mixed flocks of small birds, mostly of the Tit family, feeding in the trees in Wike Lane. We stopped to watch such a party today. Later, we noticed a Nuthatch spending some time on our garden feeders.

7th Nov. We spotted a Red Admiral feeding on flowers in our garden.

9th Nov. We hear from the residents of Station House, Coughton, that their garden and pool are quite a nature reserve with visitors including a Cormorant, five pairs of Mallard, Herons, Greylag and Canada Geese, a Kingfisher, and a passing Barn Owl. They have also noticed the arrival of Fieldfares, which we have yet to see this autumn.



10th Nov. I had recently noticed that pyracantha shrubs in our garden were covered in berries, and had hopes for a visit from winter thrushes to feed. Today I realised that the berries were fast disappearing and soon saw a Blackbird wolfing them down. 11th Nov. From our back garden a Tawny Owl could be heard calling from the direction of Oak Tree Lane at dusk.

Phil J (12th November)



Sambourne Village Association

Sunday 5th December Join us for the annual Christmas tree lights switch on following the church service at 5.30 pm. There will be mulled wine, mince pies and perhaps even some carol singing. Donations towards the Christmas tree costs are as usual much appreciated. Please contact Julie: 01527 892644 juliewaplington@hotmail.com

Sunday 12th December The Children's Christmas Party will be held from 3-5 pm. Tickets in advance at £3.50 from Justin. A visit from Santa, gifts, games, crafts and snacks. Parents are welcome to stay for a glass of sherry and a chat.

A Great big thanks to the enthusiastic group of volunteers who have come forward to take over from Ann and Kate.

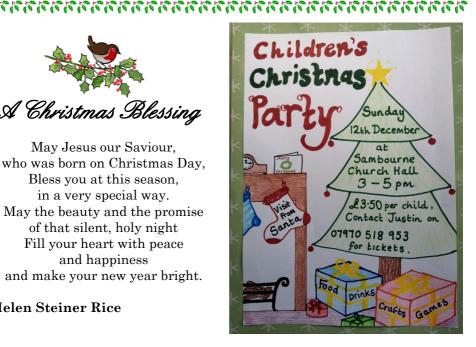
If anyone would like to help selling tickets, please contact Justin on 07970 518953.

Sunday 19th December Christmas carols at the Green Dragon Pub.

A Christmas Blessing

May Jesus our Saviour, who was born on Christmas Day, Bless you at this season, in a very special way. May the beauty and the promise of that silent, holy night Fill your heart with peace and happiness and make your new year bright.

Helen Steiner Rice





Conservation over the winter months at the North Warwickshire Portfolio

Ash dieback is a growing concern across the country including at many National Trust properties and we will sadly see the decline and death of many – maybe the majority - of ash trees over the next few years. Where trees die in places where they could affect people, we have an obligation to work on them to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, visitors and the wider public.

Ash dieback is a disease of ash trees caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. It causes leaf loss, crown dieback and bark lesions in affected trees. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal, either directly, or indirectly by weakening the tree to the point where it succumbs more readily to attacks by other pests or pathogens. We don't yet know what the full impact of the disease will be in Britain, but it seems likely to affect 70-95% of our ash trees. We have seen significant decline already in ash on chalk and limestone landscapes like the South Downs and White Peak over the last couple of years, and most places in England and Wales are now affected to some degree.

This winter at Baddesley Clinton, Packwood and Coughton Court around 100 ash trees need to be felled on public safety grounds across the land we care for. At Packwood this work is due to start mid-November and over at Baddesley from the start of January. Some visitor paths may be closed during your visit for public safety as well as for our staff and contractor safety. At Coughton we are hoping to get this work completed over the closed season, but you may see the work being completed from public footpaths across the estate.

Some of the felled trees will be removed and re-purposed as firewood and some out on the estate will be left. The deadwood and log stacks left behind are excellent for fungi, soil condition, invertebrates and birds

Abi

For full opening days & more information please visit: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coughtoncourt or call 01789 400777

Follow us on Twitter @NTCoughton or 'Like' us at www.facebook.com/CoughtonCourt

Keep Fit Adele has been very gentle and it's such fun (honest!) If you would like to join us it's £5 per session and is at 1.30 pm on Wednesdays do give Pat Newbold a ring on **01527 458852** to check availability.



COUGHTON & SAMBOURNE 100 CLUB

The November draw for £100 was won by Helen McCarthy, a previous Churchwarden, now living in Evesham. Helen an earlier Jackpot winner this year is obviously having a good 2021.

For this month and as Christmas is coming there will be 3 prizes for December. 1^{st} prize £100, 2^{nd} prize £50 and 3^{rd} prize the specially prepared cockerel for the Christmas lunch table donated by Heart of England Farms. The draw will be made on Sunday 5^{th} at 5.00pm at Sambourne Church Hall.

The Organisers would be delighted to have some new members join the 100 Club. By doing so you would not only be helping to maintain the churches in both Sambourne and Coughton but also have every chance of winning a cash prize each month. You should contact Peter Laband (01527 893879) or John McTavish (01789 764703) to be included in the monthly bit of fun.

COUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Our meetings are held at Coughton CofE Primary School and our next meeting is on Monday 24th January at 6.30pm.

We would love you to join us!

Our website includes the following information and more:

Councillors Info, Meeting Dates, Agendas, Minutes, Events, News & Information and a Planning Tracker.

Please sign up for email alerts at <u>www.coughtonparishcouncil.co.uk</u>

For PC information, please contact our Clerk:

Sarah Whittaker coughtonclerk@gmail.com

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COUNCILLOR? WE HAVE A VACANCY



SAMBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

Our meetings are held at the Sambourne Parish rooms located opposite The Green Dragon public house and our next meeting is on Tuesday 11th January 2022 at 19:00pm.



We need **your** help in updating the Sambourne Parish plan

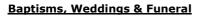
Our website <u>www.sambourneparish.org.uk</u> includes the following information and more:

Meeting Dates, Minutes, Agendas, Councillors Information, News & Information Local Contacts, Community Speed Watch and a Planning Tracker.

Please sign up for email alerts by clicking the link on the website.

For all PC matters, please contact our Clerk:

Teresa Murphy clerk.sambournepc@aol.com



Announcements

There were none during this periodd

15 October to 14 November 2021

in connection with Coughton with Sambourne Parish



Take the hassle out of Christmas shopping by catching the free Thursday bus to Redditch. Each week it picks up from The Green Dragon at 10.00 am. Other pickups are available, inc. Middletown Lane layby next to the noticeboard.

Lateral Flow Antigen Testing If you are taking part in church related activities with regular contact with the public, such as helping with the food bank etc. and do not have any COVID symptoms, you are encouraged to access weekly Lateral Flow Testing. This is a very quick process with quick results. You would need to pre-book a test. Find out more by following the link:https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/covidcommunitytesting there is a centre in Stratford-upon-Avon.







To find out how we can help you, call: **01789 444 307** or visit: **www.helpinghands.co.uk**



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