



August 2021

## Services

NB after consultation with the Zoom congregation it has been agreed that there will be no zoomed services in August.

Please maintain awareness of health and safety.

### 1 August Trinity 9

- 8.00 Holy Communion in Chesterton
- 9.30 Morning Worship in Middleton Stoney
- 11.00 Holy Communion in Kirtlington
- 11.00 Mattins in Hampton Gay

### 8 August Trinity 10

- 9.30 Holy Communion in Wendlebury
- 11.00 Morning Worship in Bletchingdon
- 18.00 Evensong in Chesterton

### 15<sup>th</sup> August The Blessed Virgin Mary

- 9.30 Holy Communion in Middleton Stoney
- 11.00 Holy Communion in Weston on the Green
- 17.00 Celebration Service in Bletchingdon

### 22<sup>nd</sup> August Trinity 12

- 9.30 Holy Communion in Kirtlington
- 11.00 Morning Worship in Chesterton
- 18.00 Evensong in Wendlebury

### 29<sup>th</sup> August Trinity 13

- 10.30 Benefice Communion in Chesterton

## Contact details

Do feel free to contact a member of the ministry team if you would like to chat over anything, or a churchwarden if you would like information

### Ministry team

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If you are reading this on a notice board in a printed version, do also look on the website [www.akemanbenefice.org.uk](http://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk) or email [joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com](mailto:joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com) for the rest of the Benefice Bulletin, which contains...

Page 3 News from the parishes  
Page 7 PCC changes, Schools' news  
Page 9 Things to Look Forward To - Notices  
Page 10 Out and About in Middleton Stoney  
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Page 16 Answers to the Middleton Stoney puzzles

## News from the parishes

### Bletchington

The rain held off for a wonderful **service on the green**. In the service we were reminded how we need to be kind, considerate and supportive to our neighbours all the time.

Many thanks to the Bletchington Silver Band who provided the music. They even gave us a rendition of 'Sweet Caroline' afterwards, which was very fitting for a Euro final match day!



We couldn't avoid the inevitable mention of the football - Gareth even brought a special towel along for the occasion!

We also had a 'drive past' of tractors afterwards (completely

unrelated to the service but well received by the younger members of the congregation!)



Also in Bletchington, the school held an **Art Exhibition** in the church, which attracted a good number of visitors.

The PCC is most grateful to the bell-ringers, who put in a week's work to some refurbishment in the bell tower.

### Chesterton

An Open Gardens and Produce day in the Old Rectory Gardens was successful, and raised about £550. Looking ahead, preparations are ongoing for the fete on August 29<sup>th</sup>.



That produce looks SO delicious!



### Report from Sue on [Chesterton's July YOUNG FAMILIES SERVICE](#)

This month we were not as lucky with the weather so masks a-face we piled into the church for our July service.

We had four birthdays: Erin, Fleur, Maisie & Bella. Happy birthday, girls! Unable to give a roaring chorus of the said song ... we spoke it with gusto!

Our first hymn 'All things bright and beautiful' was played via my trusty CD player ... it's just not the same though. Hopefully, by September we will all be singing our hearts out and not having to wear masks AND enjoy a cup of tea and a chat afterwards. Our hymn was followed by prayers read beautifully by Michael, Bella & Maisie. Well done. I asked if anyone had anything in particular to pray for. One grandad asked for an England win in the football ... not really the sort of prayer we do, however, I think God was probably bombarded with them during the second half of the match! But now is the time to reflect, now is the time to pray. I think those poor boys need our prayers. Send them one along the lines of kindness, acceptance and respect.

Our activity looked at some of the miracles Jesus performed ... I know, I know - but we looked at making the blind man see, making the cripple walk and helping the sick man, who was lowered down through the roof, to be well again. Luca, Oliver and Edie, and a doll named Penelope, (who was lowered down on a plank from the pulpit) were my helpers in acting out the miracles - which they all did brilliantly. Thank you team!

Our final hymn was a treat! 'He gave me eyes so I could see' was introduced on the organ by six-year-old Bella. Yes that's right, six years old and up at the proper grown up organ - and she did it perfectly. Well done Bella! It didn't end there though: Hilary and Jill along with me played our recorders accompanied by Cariad on the tambourine and Oliver on his recorder. It was wonderful! And not the last time we will hear our budding musicians, I'm sure.

We finished with another little treat. I presented all the children with a bookmark with our YF's prayer printed on one side and YFS info on the other. If you didn't receive a bookmark, please let me know at the September service.

NO SERVICE IN AUGUST, but we will be back in September for more song, prayer, stories, laughter and fun! Do join us. Wishing you all a good and safe summer.

*Sue Ashdown*

## Hampton Gay

It was recently proposed by an archaeological report that the church is even older than previously thought. Work is proceeding on tower repairs.

## Kirtlington

The collapsed section of the boundary wall is now being repaired; an eye is being kept on another area that looks vulnerable. It has been good to have choir back in action at recent services.

## Middleton Stoney

The church roof still leaks and the difficulty of access to the church through the new electronic gates is still causing some problems. BUT it is well worth the effort: see the Out and About section on All Saints' Middleton Stoney on pages 10 and 11.

## Wendlebury

One great excitement has been the much-anticipated [wedding](#) of church-warden Charles with Maggie.



*As well as our guests we had a number of supporters and well-wishers from the village who came along - which was lovely.*

*We would like to record our thanks to everyone who came, helped and supported us on our special day.*



*Charles & Maggie  
10th July 2021  
Wendlebury*



*There is nothing I would not do for those who are really my friends...  
Jane Austen-Northanger Abbey*



And there was also the very successful [open gardens](#)...

The event was organised by the Church Fundraising Group and run this year by Kate Lewis (taking over from Anne Hibbert who has sadly left the village). Kate writes:

“It was a great success and we will have raised around £650. I hope you all enjoyed the day, meeting new



faces from the village and beyond.

I know all of the visitors that I spoke to had a lovely time and were very impressed by the gardens.”



Visitors, totalling over a hundred, reportedly came from as far away as Milton Keynes, Faringdon and even Hampshire!

Apart from those opening their gardens (10 gardens this year) there were also volunteers at the village hall selling the “passports”, serving teas and cakes and manning a plant stall.

The weather held, apart from a few spots of rain, and a great time was had by all.

## Weston-on-the-Green

The [Second Sunday](#) group enjoyed catching up with each other at a BBQ kindly hosted by the Jones family. All the group have been involved in exams of one kind or another, so it was nice to let our hair down! The group (mid-late teens) has met most months for the past three years. One is already at college, and another is off to University in the autumn.



There has been an increase in [stewardship giving](#) thanks to a successful campaign to convert casual givers during lockdown into regular donors.

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## PCC news

### Bletchington

Thanks to Patricia Hampson who has retired as secretary. Welcome to Kate Ehrman (new treasurer) and Sally Cross.

### Kirtlington

Welcome to Mark Chacksfield and Philip Maybank. The latter has joined as a result of his election to Diocesan Synod.

## News from the Schools

**Bletchington School's** production of 'Mary Poppins' was a splendid tour-de-force, with stellar performances by several members of Year 6 and others. Huge congratulations to everyone who was involved in such a magnificent show. The Rector presented Bibles to the leavers at the end-of-term service the next day. Our thanks and congratulations to Mrs Walker and all the staff for all they have achieved during this difficult year.

The Art Exhibition in the church was lovely, on the theme of “Shine like stars and become like light in our world”



**Chesterton School** came to church for the leavers' service, at which the Rector spoke and Mr Horner presented Bibles and produced the one he had been given on the day he left school. He urged the children to treasure this very special gift. We thank him and all the staff for a tremendous effort during this year of pandemic.

**Kirtlington School** bid a very sad but fond farewell to Miss Williams, who is leaving the school after six years as Headteacher. She has guided the school through many ups and downs with huge dedication, warmth, gentleness and professionalism. We owe her a huge debt of gratitude. At her farewell assembly the pupils, staff and governors presented cards and gifts. Year 6 children also had their own special assembly and were presented with Bibles by the Rector. Well done to all staff and pupils for coping so well during this past year.

## Prayer Spaces at Chesterton School

The rain stopped just in time to erect a smart gazebo in the new Hope Garden at Chesterton School, where we had hope-themed Prayer Spaces. It was wonderful to be back at (if not in) school, not having been able to do the termly Prayer Spaces for over a year. The children were very excited to be doing the activities in a tent and, although it was not the usual quiet reflective atmosphere were able to perform a simple action while thinking about:

- giving thanks for aspects of nature that make us hopeful, of which the rainbow is a wonderful symbol. The children considered the patterns on a shell while thinking about their favourite natural scene.



- renewed hope given by saying sorry and being forgiven, with a reminder of the father's forgiveness of the Prodigal Son, and the familiar action of hand-washing to remind us about a fresh start and how it feels



- asking for help for those in apparently hopeless situations, because of homelessness, loneliness, disaster, or war. Giant Jenga bricks were used to construct together a representative safe space.
- giving thanks for the people who make us hopeful, while creating a reminder of them in pipe cleaners. A jolly line-up of pipe-cleaner people (and pets) ensued!

Many thanks to school staff, to Paul, Bob and Gemma for their help to make this a happy and thoughtful time.

Sadly, the planned Prayer Spaces in [Bletchington School](#) on the theme of "Special Places" had to be cancelled at the last minute because of heavy rain and gazebo failure. Better luck next time!

Joanna

That's the past - how wonderful that so many things have been able to take place in July, safely and happily. And now there are further [things to look forward to:](#)

- **Kirtlington Fete, August 7<sup>th</sup>**
- The re-launch of the **Kirtlington Reaching Out Coffee Morning**, at the Oxford Arms on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 10.30 - 11.30 am
- **Chesterton fete, August 29<sup>th</sup>**
- **Akeman Benefice Family Afternoon**  
Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September at 2pm, in Kirtlington Quarry. With all sorts of exciting activities for young ones and their families!
- The start of **Rise and Shine** - an intergen(eration)al café, every Wednesday at 9.15 in Kirtlington Church, starting 8th September
- The relaunch of the **Akeman Church Community Choir**, to be arranged. Interested and new members to contact [akemanbenefice@gmail.com](mailto:akemanbenefice@gmail.com)
- **Celebration and Harvest Service** in September and October. Watch this space!

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Meanwhile, have a lovely summer everyone. For an interesting afternoon's exploring, see the next page...



## IN THE BENEFICE

This month's church to visit is the intriguingly hidden and atmospherically-situated **All Saints' Middleton Stoney**.

These days, the village of Middleton Stoney stands a little away from its parish church of All Saints' because in about 1825 the then Lord Jersey, whose family owned the village, moved most of it down to our crossroads. ("Just like that")

To get to All Saints', you have to negotiate the gates of Middleton Park, near the crossroads, following the sign to the church. They look impenetrable, but if you drive slowly up to the gates (try muttering 'Open Sesame' as you go) they will open for you once you get close to them. Admire the really splendid cows as you go slowly along the tree-lined drive. Or you can walk up School Lane, which is off the Heyford Road, on the left after the crossroad, and keep straight on up the narrow path to the church. Ignore any signs telling you not to!! Then the intriguing puzzles begin...

**Puzzle no. 1:** what do you think this blunt column is the remains of? (You may find a hint in the nearby memorial). And does it have any link with the mysterious mound behind it?



Step through the fine doorway, for more puzzles!



**Puzzle 2:** The mystery of the font: can you work out what is wrong with the inscription on its base, telling you it was the font from the king's chapel in Islip in which Edward the Confessor was baptised?

**Puzzle 4:** What is odd about the window in the east end?

*If you are still puzzled after visiting Middleton Stoney, you will find answers at the end of this Bulletin.*

**Puzzle 3:** How can you tell that there was once a rood-beam across the chancel arch supporting a screen?



CLUE: look carefully at the dog-tooth moulding in the chancel arch.

All Saints' University Connection

The 2 oval tablets, cartouches, to the right of the east end window commemorate Thomas Ottley, a former rector and a Fellow of University College, Oxford, during the Commonwealth. Mr Ottley was the lead fund-raiser for the rebuilding of the college's medieval quadrangle , started in 1634 but not finished till 1676 because of the civil war.

The Grand Finale to the visit



Go up the steps into the chancel, and up more steps to this curtained gate. If you have never discovered it before, the Jersey Chapel behind it is a treat.

Here's a tantalising slice to give you a taste of What's Behind the Curtain.



Something to admire, something to consider.

On your way out, admire the fine new wall-laying in the churchyard, a great piece of recent community teamwork.

At the southern end of the churchyard you will find war graves of airmen who died in the wartime hospital that was in nearby Middleton Park House, after being injured in crashes during training at Upper Heyford airfield.

How sad to think of how young they were when they died.

As you are leaving, drive slowly up to the gates but not too close, this time, as they will slowly open towards you! We hope you enjoyed your visit.

Next month: **OUT AND ABOUT** in another church of our benefice. Contributions eagerly anticipated!



## People of Middleton Stoney:

**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Campbell and Claire Leggat**, who celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary in August.

The August 1971 wedding between a Scot and a New Zealander was an appropriately international one, with guests from 5 continents. Campbell and Claire met through their work for what was then called Moral Re-Armament, now Initiatives for Change, which works for reconciliation between peoples and individuals. One of the people at their wedding ceremony had been deeply affected by this process, as Campbell explains below...



“1971 also happened to be the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our Conference Centre, Caux, in Switzerland, and a charter plane with 146 people came from Australasia and the Pacific. Among them was a Maori Anglican clergyman who had been Padre of the Maori Battalion, which suffered a great many casualties at Monte Cassino. It left him with a deep bitterness against Germans. Following his time at Caux he came on to our wedding where he formally took part, and then went on to Scotland where he stayed with my family. Later he was able to share his story with Ian Paisley. And when 4 years later we arrived in New Zealand he was one of those who welcomed us. And over the following years he was a great friend, who opened many doors and introduced us to the leadership of the Maori community.”

This is his story...

### **CANON WI TE TAU HUATA: TURNAROUND**



As a young padre during the war

As the chartered plane flew up the coast of Italy, heading for Caux, the Maori Anglican clergyman, Canon Wi Te Tau Huata, experienced strong emotions.

He had been chaplain to the 28th Māori Battalion which had suffered heavy casualties in Italy during World War II, especially at Monte Cassino. Huata had conducted the burial service for each Māori who was killed.

When the party arrived at Caux, one of the hosts of the conference, **Fulvia Spoerri**, gave the new arrivals an introduction to the conference centre. She ended by saying, ‘I am a German; many of my generation call themselves Europeans. We are ashamed of the cost paid by your countries on the other side of the world for our actions in the Second World War. We don’t ask you to forget; we do ask for your forgiveness.’

As soon as the meeting ended, Huata stormed out. ‘That was one of the worst moments I have lived through,’ he told a friend who asked what was wrong. ‘I am reminded of all the friends I buried in Italy and of my prayer during those days: “God, destroy Hitler and wipe the Germans off the face of the earth.”’

‘What do you feel to do about it?’ the friend asked.

‘I need to apologize to the lady,’ Huata replied. ‘I have been a priest all these years and I have carried this hate in my heart.’ Before he left for Caux, his wife had asked him, ‘What are you going to do when you meet the Germans?’ His reply had been that he would wait until it happened.

**‘IT FELT AS IF A TON HAD FALLEN FROM MY BACK’**

At that moment Fulvia Spoerri walked by and Huata stopped her and asked for her forgiveness. ‘This produced a stormy conflict inside me and I had a restless night,’ he said later. ‘Next morning my room-mate told me it had been like sharing a room with a whale!’

The next morning, he asked for a chance to speak from the platform, and repeated his apology to all the Germans present. ‘I spoke about reconciliation and felt as if a ton weight had fallen from my back.’

Unknown to him, former officers from the German Afrika Corps were present and at the end of the meeting they came to shake his hand. Some of them had come to Caux in a last attempt to heal difficult marriages, or to reach an understanding with their children. They asked Huata to help them.

Wi Huata and Tomai, daughter of the Maori Queen, celebrating at the wedding before going on to Scotland and Ireland



After Caux, Canon Huata visited Northern Ireland, where he met the outspoken loyalist politician Ian Paisley. He told him of the freedom from bitterness he had found, and of the new friends he had made amongst former enemies.

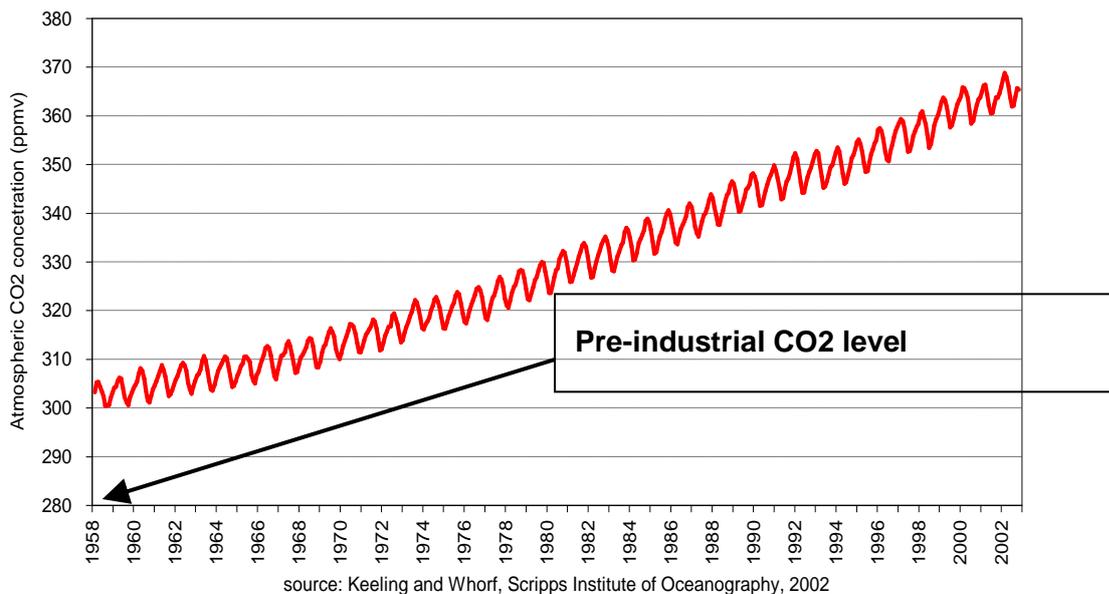
He also went to see the Abbot of the Cistercian Order in Portglenone. There he spoke of the bitterness he had held towards Catholics. ‘My eldest son married a Catholic and I never forgave him, until at Caux I saw that “love your neighbour” includes those not in the Anglican Church!’ He had written a letter of apology to his son and daughter-in-law and received their loving reply on the day he arrived in Ireland. On his homeward journey Huata visited Rome where he was presented with a Papal Medallion by Pope Paul VI, and conducted a memorial service for all those killed at Monte Cassino

## The Akeman Benefice Green Page

Once again Eric Bohm from Weston gives us food for thought - and action

Our planet is a living organism. It breathes. The cause of the “breathing” is the greening of the northern hemisphere forests in spring. The chart below shows the fluctuation of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

### Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Record, Mauna Loa, Hawaii, 1958-2002



The concern is the continued escalation of CO<sub>2</sub>. As the world's population has expanded our carbon footprint has grown. It now stands at 415 in 2019!. This is the consequence of humanity's reliance on fossil fuels to generate cheap energy.

Sadly, the reaction of government, industry, and consumers is avoidance. Our government has declared a climate emergency, but where is the corrective action? As an example, transport planning applications are not required to account for the climate change impacts. After considerable pressure this policy will be reviewed in 18 months' time! Industry spends money on information denying their contribution rather than investing to solve the problem. As consumers, we are slow to address the use of throw-away plastics which end up in our oceans inhibiting their CO<sub>2</sub> absorption rate. We must encourage our government, political parties, industry to create quantifiable action plans/policies to reduce our carbon footprint. We can write to our MP and alter our consumption patterns to achieve the necessary change.

Our collective actions can make a difference. Consumption data reveals that we waste about 20% of our energy inputs, by not turning off lights, leaving our cars idling while waiting and pre-heating an oven well in advance of actual use. Cheap energy makes people postpone improving the insulation in their homes. Just stopping the waste will make a major difference.

There is an aboriginal saying: "We only borrow the planet from future generations." Governments have the power to change corporate and consumer behaviour. Humanity has the intellectual capacity, the scientific knowledge and the resources to make the necessary changes. We need the will to do so.



## Caption competition

The Bulletin received several submissions:



"How to use a Mosquito Mask"

"and when I rub this lamp a bishop appears!"

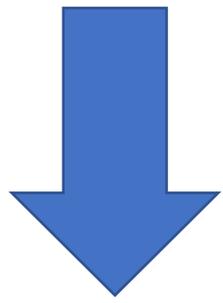
'Are you here for the churchyard clear up morning?'

And what's your day job actually?'

So sorry, I didn't recognize you without your mask

Thank you all, all inventive, but the prize of a bar of fairly-traded chocolate goes to Cynthia Hill, for her contribution of:

## And Finally...



**ANSWERS** to the Middleton Stoney puzzles:

Puzzle 1: The blunt column is the shaft of the Market Cross which once stood at the sharp bend of the playground in School Lane. This now stands on the site of the old rectory and the former manor house, the medieval predecessor of Middleton Park House. Both were pulled down in about 1825. Some was saved, but the useless rubble was dumped on top of the remains of the old castle, (as in where the mound is). The castle had been largely destroyed in about 1216 on the orders of King John, he whom the barons had forced to have Magna Carta sealed at Runnymede. So... no, no real link between the mound and the shaft in puzzle 1.

Puzzle 2: The two bits of the shaft supporting the font have been wrongly put together; did you work that out?

Puzzle 3: The holes where the beam once was to support a rood-screen, have been filled up with mortar.



Puzzle 4: If you look carefully at the east window you will see that the inner arch of the Victorian window does not match the shape of the original window.

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The editor is always very pleased to receive items for the newly-renamed Benefice Bulletin. The deadline for September's issue is 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Send pictures, news, articles, stories, to [joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com](mailto:joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com)