



JULY 2021

The Akeman Benefice Bugle

Services

4th July Trinity 5

8.00	Holy Communion	Kirtlington
10.00	Holy Communion on Zoom	
11.00	Matins	Hampton Gay
11.00	Young Families' Service	Chesterton
16.00	Family Service	Kirtlington

11th July Trinity 6

9.30	Holy Communion	Wendlebury
10.00	Morning Worship on Zoom	
11.00	Service on the Green	Bletchington
18.00	Evensong	Weston-on-the-Green

18th July Trinity 7

9.30	Holy Communion	Middleton Stoney
10.00	Informal service on Zoom	
11.00	Morning Worship	Chesterton
18.00	Evensong	Kirtlington

25th July St James the Apostle

9.30	Morning Worship	Wendlebury
10.00	Holy Communion on Zoom	
11.00	Holy Communion	Bletchington
11.00	Holy Communion	Weston-on-the-Green

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 or email joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com for the rest of the Benefice Bugle, which contains...

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News



It was a stunning summer's day for the visit of the **St Sigfrid's Pilgrimage** walkers to Hampton Gay on 14 June. The walkers are travelling from York via Canterbury to Vaxjö in Sweden (via Dover and Göteborg). Oxford is linked with the Diocese of Vaxjö and our own benefice is linked with the parish of Mönsterås and Fliseryd. The walkers made a short detour to visit the Akeman Benefice at Hampton Gay. They were joined by Bishop Gavin, and serenaded by a surprise choir, Hexachord, who just happened to be singing in the churchyard as the walkers arrived! A wonderful time was had by all.



Young Families June Service



"It won't rain 'till lunchtime" they said. I kept my fingers crossed, said a quick prayer and laid out the chairs and all my stuff outside on the grass in good faith.

My families arrived in their splendour with summer dresses, shorts, picnic blankets and sunglasses, and a new family to boot (which I always love to see). We were all set!

With no birthdays this month and no notices we went straight into our 1st hymn:

'The sun came out' with actions to match. This was followed by prayers beautifully read by Cariad and Luca.

Our story was called 'The Magpie's tale', a thinly - masked story of Zacchaeus, the tax man, who cheated and stole from the people, until Jesus showed him the error of his ways. The Magpie learned the same lesson and returned all the shiny objects he had stolen and hidden in his nest. My message to children and adults alike (and me) was that none of us is perfect... I know, hard to believe at times! However, it's never too late to say sorry, mend our ways, and try just a little bit harder to live our lives the way Jesus taught us ... with more understanding and kindness.

I played the recorder for our 2nd hymn, 'Zacchaeus was a very little man' – It went quite well I think, but it did make me wonder if we had any budding musicians in the congregation. A couple of recordists, a drummer and some enthusiastic tambourine bashers seemed to be amongst us... I may try a little *jamboree* in July! If there are any other children who would like to join in, please get in touch.

We finished off, as always, with The Lord's Prayer and our very own Young Families Prayer:
[Dear Lord, I am sailing on your wide, wide sea. Please guard my little ship for me. Amen.](#)

We next meet on **JULY 4TH @ 11am** and with any luck, will be able to serve refreshments!

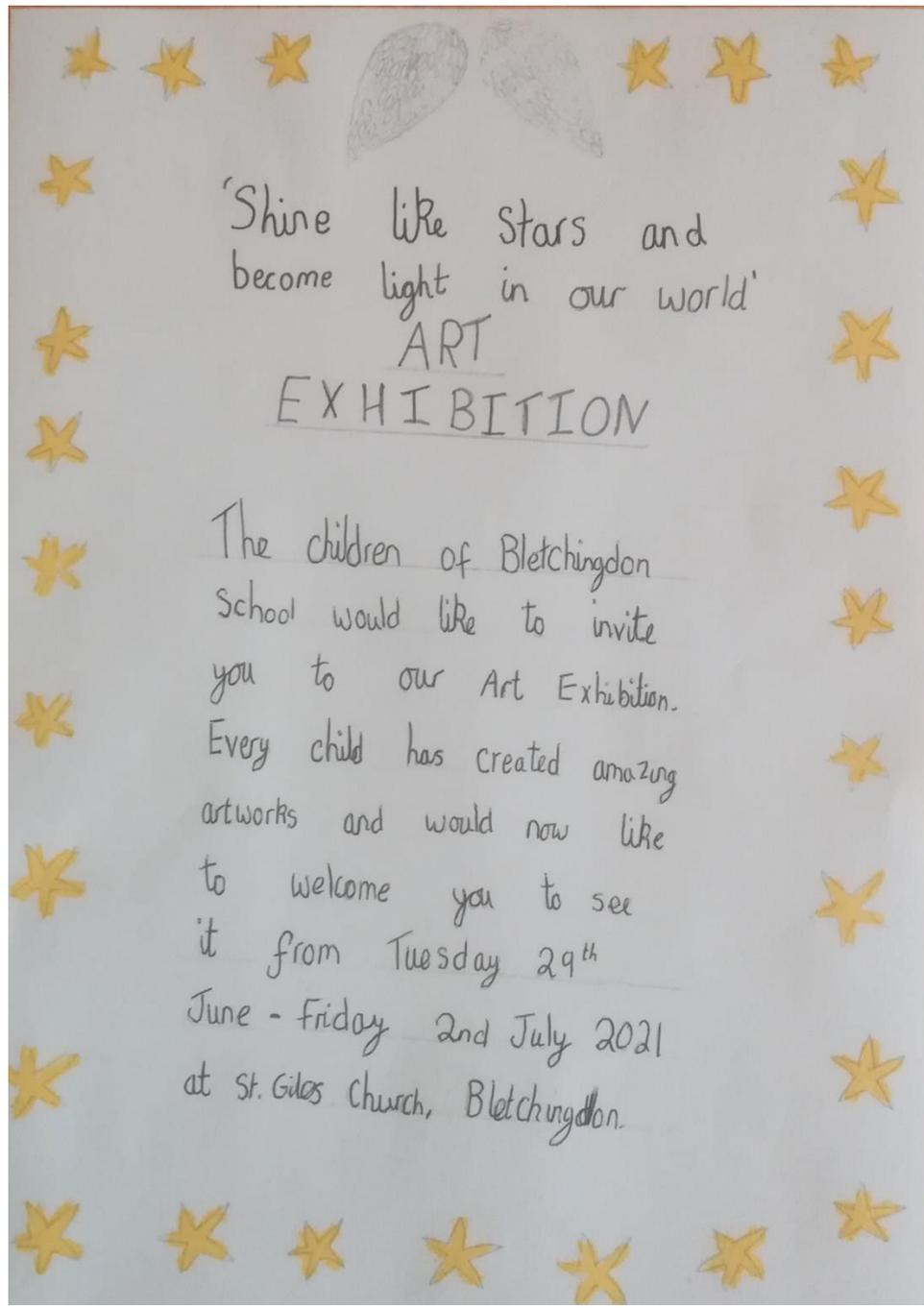
Btw – It didn't rain.

Sue Ashdown

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Things to look forward to

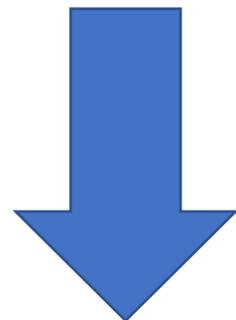
First, an art exhibition by the children of Bletchingdon School in the church, ending on 2nd July. BE QUICK! What a lovely theme...



Then a weekend of garden visits, first to a delightful garden in Chesterton, (AND produce sale, look out for apple juice...) in aid of the church, on Saturday 3rd July, 2-4pm...



Then the next day Wendlebury opens its gardens, too...



Wendlebury Open Gardens

Sunday 4th July 2021

1pm – 5pm



All proceeds to St. Giles Church, Wendlebury

Enjoy meandering through a selection of Wendlebury's beautiful gardens.

Passports, Tea, Coffee, Cakes available on the day from the village hall.

£5 adults; under-16s free.

For further information email
kate@thethamesgroup.co.uk

While you are in Wendlebury, you could pop into the church to make use of the Great Wendlebury Book Swap, another fund-raiser



Looking ahead, Kirtlington's fete will be on 7th August. Put it in your diary and meanwhile you can help St Mary's Kirtlington by donating a bottle of wine. Go along on 7th and see if you can win it back again...

Friends of St Mary's Church Kirtlington

Wine for the village fete stall required

Can you please help with a wine donation(s)

All donations of wine will be gratefully received



Bottle drop-off Points:

Brian Waterhouse – 35 Hatchway OX5 3JS

Ann Mowat – Honeoye, South Green OX5 3HJ

Lydia Boodell - Kirtlington House, Crowcastle Lane OX5 3HP



IN THE BENEFICE

Apart from the Open Gardens and the Kirtlington fete there is plenty for Akemanites do while “stay-cationing” this summer, going and visiting around the parishes and exploring some of the hidden treasures of our wonderful church buildings. To start you off here’s something you may not have known:

Bletchingdon’s mass dials

“Details of services can be found on the website”. But what happened before websites, before pew notes or printed notices, before watches or even clocks? We are used to the idea that our forebears were summoned to church by bells but how was it decided when the bell should be rung?



On the south wall of Bletchingdon church are three dials incised into the stone. They are to be found on either side of the Priest’s door, near the Norman window which is the oldest in the church. They are “mass dials” used to show the times of the daily services and to give the villagers an indication of the time of day. In effect they are vertical sundials.

Mass dials are not uncommon in mediaeval French and English churches but they are often to be found in unexpected locations, inside the porch or on a north facing wall, a sign that the stone has been re-used and re-positioned. In Bletchingdon the dials make the best use of the arc of the sun and are set at eye level.

The two older dials are on the right side of the door. The simpler one is the older and was probably installed before the Conquest or shortly afterwards. It is based on the Saxon system of dividing the day into four “tides”. The dial to the far right suggests the day’s division into twelve hours according to the Norman preference. Both systems were used in the tenth and eleventh centuries, perhaps the Saxon villagers looked to the left and the Norman officials and clergy to the right.

The dial to the left of the door is the most detailed and the dividing lines are marked by Roman numerals. The design was influenced by the latest technology of the fourteenth century—clocks which were installed first in cathedrals (Exeter 1300, Wells 1390) and increasingly in parish churches. Bletchingdon did not aspire to a clock but could at least have a state of the art dial.

All three dials have a hole at the centre. This would have held a metal gnomon which, once installed, could have been bent and adjusted to Bletchingdon Time.



If you come to look at the dials do glance at the **graffiti** scratched into the right side of the porch. The overlapping Vs are code for “Virgin of Virgins”. When inverted they become M for Mary. The porch was not built until the late seventeenth century so these marks were either re-positioned from elsewhere or are evidence that Catholic beliefs continued underground well past the Reformation.

To get to see the mass dials and other things at **St Giles' Bletchingdon...**

You can park in the village and take a delightful walk along a Path With a View, or drive/bike round to the church in in the intriguingly-named Tollbrook Corner. Admire the sheep in the field as you approach...

Once inside, there is both ancient and modern to admire. Jacobean pews, a fragment of 15th-century wall painting, but also modern facilities and this delightful stained-glass window.



When you have located St Francis you will find his animals are rather unusual for this theme. The window is in memory of Lady Kenmare who lived in Africa.

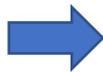
Did you know?

As a young man, **Christopher Wren** lived at The Rectory with his family after his father was deprived of his living by the Puritans, his sister having married the then Rector, William Holder. Dean Wren (Christopher's father) is recorded in the burial register for 1656 and is believed to be buried under the chancel floor. The school's logo has a wren on it to commemorate the link.

While you are there, enjoy the **Bletchingdon School Art Exhibition**, (see the poster above with details) on the theme of Shining Like Stars. We are really pleased to have been able to host this event in church once again, and trust that many from the village and beyond will come and enjoy both the art and its peaceful setting.

Cross the valley
to go to **St Mary's Kirtlington...**

and see if you can find the **Anglo-Saxon carving** and work out what you think it is of.



There is no missing the 15th-century wall-painting of **St George and the dragon**, but can you find St Christopher?

Sit on the very comfortable chairs and enjoy the reflection of the stained glass East window in the glass in the floor of the nave which, on closer inspection, reveals the pipes of the Victorian heating system.

An unusual feature of St Mary's is a 17-century monument to Sir Robert Dashwood's **servant Thomas** which has recently been brought inside the church for its protection. Can you find it to see what is unusual about it?

Strange happenings: in 977 a meeting was held in Kirtlington church (the Anglo-Saxon church was where the chancel is now, and probably not much bigger) attended by the King (Edmund the Martyr), the barons, and the bishops (including St. Dunstan), at which the Bishop of Devonshire died suddenly.

Even stranger happenings: A previous tower captain, who was also a clock-winder, several times briefly saw 'men and boys in flat caps' sitting on the benches round the ringing chamber when he went up to wind the clock. Dare you offer to ring the bells in St Mary's?

While you are pondering this, look for the plaques to the faithful **Norridge family** and work out for how long they served the church as organist and chorister. Do you have any family in your church that outperforms that feat?

While you are there.. you could add a prayer to the prayer tree, and admire the wild flowers in the churchyard.

Top tip:

In St Mary's there is a lovely activity sheet for children, and a Lift the Flap book for younger ones, and you can find a useful History and Guide that will help you with the things above.

To get even deeper into the countryside, you could venture down the road to the hamlet of **Hampton Gay**. Park and walk across the field past the romantic ruins of the Elizabethan manor-house to visit this charming church, free of such 20th century phenomena as electricity or running water. You can admire the new porch and train-lovers can catch sight of a speeding train close by, which the sheep or cows don't even look up for! It is well worth returning to Hampton Gay for a summer evensong or the celebrated candle-lit carol service at Christmas.

The more energetic could visit Hampton Gay as part of this walk, which starts at St Mary's Kidlington Church and goes through Hampton Poyle, and Thrupp, along the canal.

<https://www.walkandcycle.co.uk/trail?trailcode=OXFOTR0052>

Next month - more churches to visit! Do send in your recommendations, stories, interesting facts and sights from your local church.

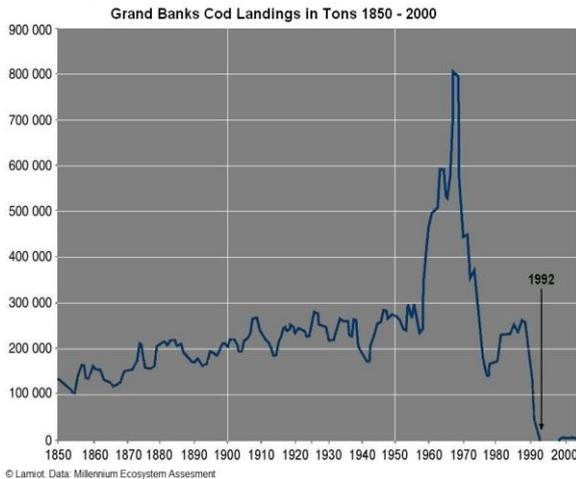
The Akeman Benefice Green Page

Thanks to Eric Bohm from Weston for the following interesting article

In 1961 I visited the Grand Banks off the coast of Newfoundland. I went on a trawler in search of cod fish, which we found in amazing abundance. The net used was like a large sock. It was brimming with fish, to such an extent that the fish were being forced out through the holes in the net. I mentioned to the captain of the trawler that this could not continue because of the vast quantity of fish being caught not only by his boat but by the many others on the Grand Banks. His answer was surprisingly simple; "It is an infinite resource." 1961 was the start of an era known as the 'industrialization of fisheries'.

The chart below shows the extent of this industrial process. The resource is not infinite!

In 1992 the fishery collapsed and was closed by the Canadian Government in 2000 with the forecast the fishery would recover in 20 years.



In 2004 the Canadian Government stated that the fishery will never recover because the entire eco-system was destroyed. This last statement is also inaccurate because the fish are slowly returning. We can only hope that we have learned a lesson from this experience. One result of this catastrophe was the creation of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) which works with governments, fishing communities and consumers to establish sustainable fishery policies and practices. It is not an easy

task, but one advantage is MSC will certify the catches and use its marketing power to encourage consumers to buy only certified product. It is the cumulative effect of the combined actions of consumers, suppliers and government that will preserve our valuable fishing resources.

You can participate by looking for the MSC and other conservation agencies' labels and purchasing certified product.

We must learn from David Attenborough's many ecology presentations that life on our planet is both precious and finite.



Comment on the G7 summit by Ruth Valerio, Canon Theologian of Rochester Cathedral, on Twitter, 9th June

"You flew??? From London to Cornwall??? To talk about building back better, fairer and greener??? Words. Fail. Me."

Quoted in Church Times 18th June

And finally....

Caption competition

A lovely bar of fair-trade chocolate will be given to the person who submits the wittiest or most apposite caption to the picture below...

Suggestions to joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com

