



## January 2022

### Services

Clearly, the situation may change so keep an eye out for emails and changes on the website Sunday by Sunday

#### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January Christmas 2

8.00	Holy Communion*	Chesterton
9.30	Holy Communion	Bletchington
9.30	Morning Worship	Middleton Stoney
9.30	Morning Worship	Wendlebury
11.00	Holy Communion	Kirtlington
16.00	Evensong*	Weston-on-the-Green

#### Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January Baptism of Christ

9.30	Holy Communion	Wendlebury
11.00	Holy Communion	Chesterton
11.00	Morning Worship	Kirtlington
11.00	Morning Worship	Weston-on-the-Green
16.00	Evensong*	Middleton Stoney

#### Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> January Epiphany 2

9.30	Morning Worship	Bletchington
9.30	Holy Communion	Middleton Stoney
10.00	Zoom Service	
11.00	Morning Worship	Chesterton
11.00	Holy Communion	Weston-on-the-Green
16.00	Evensong*	Kirtlington
16.00	Evensong*	Wendlebury

#### Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> January Epiphany 3

10.00	Benefice Holy Communion	Bletchington
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#### Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January Candlemas

10.00	Holy Communion	Weston-on-the-Green
18.00	Candlemas Service	Kirtlington

\*indicates that the service is  
Book of Common Prayer

## 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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To send information, articles, news etc to the  
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### **Churchwardens**

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# LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

“They never ask me what I think”. Well, now they are asking!

*Living in Love and Faith*, the Church of England’s major report on identity, sexuality, marriage and relationship issues, was published in 2020. In a rare move, the General Synod has set out to consult congregations as part of a national conversation. This is your chance to learn about what the Report says and to contribute your views on matters including same-sex marriage, transgender issues and sexual identity.

Over the course of a day, carefully-curated sessions will include video interviews, reflection on the Church’s teaching, some Bible study and plenty of group discussion. You will hear a wide variety of experiences and opinions from a number of people in the Church, and have the chance to think through your own responses in a stimulating but safe environment.

The day will be jointly-led by our own Revd Dr Paula Clifford and Paul Clifford, LLM, who will do their best to enable open but respectful exchanges in areas where views can be strong and deeply-held.

The dates for the consultation days are Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022, 9.30am to 5pm. The two days will be the same so to be involved you only need to attend one. Venues are not yet finalised but will be within the benefice.

If you would like to take part please contact *either* Paula ([cliffordpaula.akeman@gmail.com](mailto:cliffordpaula.akeman@gmail.com) or on 350806) or Paul ([paulclifford.akeman@gmail.com](mailto:paulclifford.akeman@gmail.com) or on 351652).

The Church wants to hear from you. Please get involved.

# Benefice Christmas in pictures



Members of Reaching Out coffee morning group enjoying Christmas lunch in the Oxford Arms, Kirtlington, with Gareth's support!



Carol service in Middleton Stoney



Wendlebury Community choir played to packed houses and the church looked lovely, thanks to the flower/decorations team.

About 40 people braved the terrible weather for outside carols. They were rewarded with mince pies and mulled wine.





A message from Kirtlington:

We held the Carol Service outside and despite rather cool weather it was well attended. Thanks to the choir the singing was great.

Our Crib Service was on Zoom but disappointingly did not attract many viewers. Our thanks go to Gemma and Paul for their hard work in streaming it from the church.

Christmas Day saw the church packed with lots of families and children. It was lovely to see so many people there.

Thanks to all the Ministry team for our Christmas Services, and Best Wishes for 2022

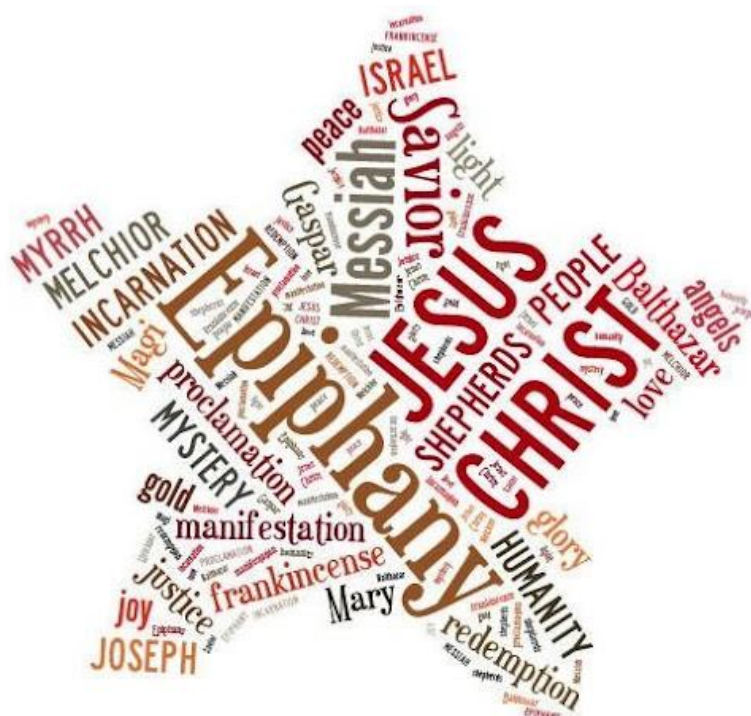


The amazing Winter Wonderland event in Chesterton 🌲

Thank you to Stephen and Maggie Webster who put on such a fantastic event - and to Russell Jones who serenaded us through the evening. A great turnout so thank you to all who came and made it such a magical evening...

All funds raised from the evening will go to St Mary's Church in Chesterton.





**Epiphany**, when we think about the manifestation of Jesus to the wider world, seems a good time to reflect on our involvement as Christians in the world outside the church. Many of us no doubt are very busy in our local and wider communities, making a difference. The January Bulletin has accounts from some examples of them.

If anyone's New Year's Resolution is to "Make a Difference" then here are some ideas for groups you could join.

**FIRST Louise Jones from Weston-on-the-Green tells us about her volunteering:**

"For the last year I have been volunteering at the Fair Trade shop at St Michael's church in Oxford. Each week I help restock the shelves and take sales. I have enjoyed meeting caring and considerate customers who come into the shop to offer their support for Fair Trade. Fair Trade is a wonderful organisation that supports communities in developing countries. Each year, the remaining profits go towards a particular project in a developing country, for example, a water pump or a new classroom at a school. The aim is that the money benefits a community rather than an individual.



The shop has a great variety of small knicknacks and food items; my favourites include the incense sticks, leather bound notebooks and of course the Divine chocolate. If you are in the market for quirky and unique gifts, or even a treat for yourself, I would strongly recommend coming in and having a look around. We have pieces suitable for all ages and tea in every flavour imaginable.

We hope to see you soon!"

**Fairtrade at  
St. Michaels**  
FAIRTRADE, SUSTAINABLE & ETHICAL

[www.fairtradeatstmichaels.co.uk](http://www.fairtradeatstmichaels.co.uk)



Bob Wilkes from Kirtlington volunteers for



**restore**  
working for mental health

“This saved my life” she said, sweeping round the room with her arm. There were many pieces of craft in the making and - very special for her - framed photos on the wall. I was sitting in one of the Recovery group rooms in Restore, the mental health charity based in Oxford. Recovery is a key word for us, as we support people through times of challenge to their mental health. Shared activity helps many people move towards renewed confidence to work again and enjoy social life. For the person I was with, the break-through from despair was in discovering a flair for composing good photos.



Bob at the Elder Stubbs Festival, a big annual event for Restore

For eight years, I have volunteered at Restore in a particular - and not very visible - way. I have served on the Board of Trustees, handing on the role of Chair of the Board last month. What do Trustees do? The usual quick explanation is that the CEO heads up the management, the Board govern. Trustees make sure the charity does what it says it does and stays legal and solvent. We get regular reports to read, business plans to create, policies to review and accounts to scrutinize. We stay in touch by visiting the many services, and, as Chair, I have been supervising the CEO, Lesley Dewhurst. I have one more year to serve on the Board. I will sure miss the work when my term ends - especially hearing how making good photos can save a life.

[www.restore.org.uk](http://www.restore.org.uk)

## WHAT TO DO IN RETIREMENT! From David Attwood in Chesterton:

A few years ago - 7 to be exact - I retired from many years as a police officer, followed by some years at Brookes University and topped off with 12 years as lecturer at Bullingdon Prison. I was 68 and the time had become to - metaphorically - put on the pipe and slippers.

My wife often says that I find it impossible to spend long periods at home and that I needed something to do. Anyway, if I didn't do something outside of my home, we would have nothing to discuss at teatime.

It so happened that there was a Volunteer Fair held a few months after retiring. I duly went along to see if anything took my fancy. Within a short time, I had been signed up for two things both of which I work at to this day.



Firstly, I was collared by an ex-police colleague and before I knew it was about to become an Appropriate Adult. Following the Fred West case, it had become apparent that many detained persons needed some sort of support whilst in custody. They may have learning difficulties, have mental health problems or be a young person whose parents or guardians are unable, unwilling or not suitable to attend. That's where we come in. An arrest is made, and the Custody Sergeant at Abingdon or Banbury deems it necessary for an Appropriate Adult to attend. I arrive, meet the client and get some idea of the offences involved. I then look after the client's welfare, am present when fingerprints and photos are taken and most of all present during the interview to potentially clarify anything the client may not understand. It can mean hours in a stuffy environment and dealing with some of the more unsavoury aspects of humanity - and all for just mileage!!. It is fascinating though. I volunteer roughly once a week and wait for the phone to ring.



On a lighter side I also volunteer as hospital transport. We take clients to hospital appointments, surgeries, care home visits and of course at present Covid jabs. We offer a door-to-door service and will wait at the hospital or wherever for the return journey. I love it as I get to meet so many lovely people and have great chats on the journey. Again, all for mileage, but that's not important. We are much cheaper than taxis - an average JR visit will be about £15 return. I won't frighten you with taxi fares and of course we wait for you, which taxis won't. One benefit, for us, is free parking at the hospitals which can be useful when we have appointments.

If you want to use the service then ring 0300 30 30 125 and a friendly driver could be coming your way.

Add to this school governor and, of course, churchwarden, I am rarely at home. Less chance of arguing at least.



David in full protective gear for Covid security.





**Chesterton is full of volunteers: Jill Peck tells us about working in Bowlers Copse.**

During the winter months (end of October to end of March) I volunteer in Bowlers Copse, which lies between Chesterton and Wendlebury, occupying a long, thin triangular-shaped piece of land between the A41 and the Wendlebury road. The project was started way back in 2003 with the intention of restoring the copse to provide an amenity for the villages and to improve biodiversity in a neglected area. Hazel normally has a life of around 50 years but when coppiced it will live much longer. The copse therefore provides a sustainable source of timber and, due to regular harvesting, creates an environment supporting a wide variety of flora and fauna. We were delighted when the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre notified us in November that the site had been accepted as a Cherwell District Wildlife site, following a biodiversity survey.

This season there are six of us who normally work on Thursday mornings from 10am to 1pm, with a break for coffee and a chat. There is usually a section of the copse ready for harvesting each year, and we produce posts for fencing; binders for weaving through the fencing posts; beanpoles for use in gardens and allotments; and hazel for walking sticks. In previous years we have learned how to make gates using a shaving-horse. The photo below shows a finished section that was coppiced and fenced in March 2020. I enjoy learning new skills, being out in the fresh air, and being able to see the results of our labours. We're always looking for new volunteers, as most of us are retired and would like a new, younger team to take over the management of the copse to determine how it can best be developed for the use of the villagers in Chesterton and Wendlebury. If anyone is interested in joining us, please contact Mike Pearce on 01869 243967 or [mike@imazed.co.uk](mailto:mike@imazed.co.uk).



**Simon Dancer lives in Middleton Stoney** with his wife, Maggie and two children Beatrice and George.



In addition to being Treasurer of All Saints' Church in Middleton Park, Simon is also a Foundation Governor at the neighbouring village of Chesterton at the Church of England school on Alchester Road. He explains what is involved:

"Traditionally, Foundation Governors have responsibility for ensuring that the Christian character of a C of E school is secured, preserved and developed.

We are very lucky having Chesterton School in our Benefice - under the sturdy leadership of Mr Horner - which is a superb establishment and regularly has waiting lists to enrol.

In practice, the governors get together regularly with the headteacher and senior staff to help guide the school. During Covid, these meetings have migrated onto the internet, which has worked better than expected. Governors also have specialist subgroups - e.g. finance - where more detailed discussions are undertaken.

There can sometimes be diary challenges, juggling a demanding job and family life, but it is very rewarding contributing to your local community."



Our schools are always looking for more Foundation Governors, the term for those who represent the church's involvement in school life. To find out more about doing this challenging but very rewarding work talk initially to Gareth, or go on the website of one of our local schools to find out more. Or you can look at this website: <https://governorsforschools.org.uk>

## Ron Hill from Kirtlington is a long-time Reading Volunteer



When I lived in Richmond, the very happy and rewarding time I had providing reading help to children at a local primary school encouraged me to look for a similar opportunity when I moved to Kirtlington. I went online and found 'School Readers' a national charity based in Bedford, and which was advertising for volunteer readers.

Recruitment started with a telephone interview with School Readers followed by me submitting an application form including details on how often I could help and how far I would be prepared to travel to provide the

help. With this information, School Readers contacted schools that matched my offer and replied that Chesterton C of E Primary School would be willing to consider me. I then met the teacher there who is the school's Named Contact with School Readers for a relaxed interview including a tour of the school. The school response was positive, so it then arranged for an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be performed. This included me viewing the online video, 'Introduction to Child Safeguarding', issued by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, and another entitled 'Prevent', issued by the Home Office and dealing with the risks of radicalization. These checks are not as daunting as they perhaps sound and the school was very supportive throughout the whole process, which took less than a month.

I began my once weekly two-hour sessions in July 2021, spending half-an-hour with each of four pupils in Year 4 and this has continued throughout the Autumn Term. Chesterton school has a lovely ethos and the staff and pupils made me feel very welcome. I have a table in an open area where I sit with my pupils. They bring along the book that they are either reading or would like to read and we tackle it together. We also play spelling or memory games tailored to their individual reading needs. Progress is generally not quick, but the pupils appear to enjoy the sessions and there is always a sense of achievement when we finish a story. I compare notes with and get feedback regularly from the class teacher. For additional advice, the School Readers website has sections on tips to help the volunteers and pupils get the most out of their sessions.

Being a Volunteer Reading Helper is an incredible experience and one that I recommend to any adult, young or old - I'm a grandfather so age is no barrier to being accepted. Children have missed much schooling during the pandemic, and this is a great way to help those that need it back onto the bus. And, with luck, you'll get to meet Biff, Chip and the rest of the gang with the Magic Key!

The deadline for submitting your news and views to the February Bulletin is 20<sup>th</sup> January. Looking forward to hearing from you!

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