

# Grapevine

*St James Family news and PCC highlights*

November 2014

## **An Advent Challenge**

At a recent WARM Day held at Holland House, the speaker Dr. Christina Baxter, retired Principal of St John's Theological College Nottingham and ex-chair of the House of Laity in General Synod, reminded everyone present that the Book of Common Prayer is full of prayers for the Holy Spirit to be at work in our lives. She challenged those present with the words 'if we are not using the morning or evening prayer in our personal devotions, when do we pray for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?' She stated that we need that indwelling of the holy comforter and guide to remain faithful to our calling as God's church.

John Bell from the Iona Community, and regular contributor to Radio 4's Thought for the Day, visited our Benefice last month and he stated during the course of the weekend with us that he had rarely known churches to regularly pray for more people to come to their church. Cross Club have now taken up that challenge and are praying every week for more people to come to St James' Church.

As we come to the time of Advent, maybe we could take up these two challenges as a daily discipline, and wait expectantly for God's answer.

*Editor Gill Thorniley: please use the "Contact Us" page on the website*

**ARCH Group's aim: "To show our love for God and You"**

## Family news

Revd. Steve Jordan will be licensed as our Associate Minister at 6.30 pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December by the Bishop of Dudley. We look forward to welcoming Steve in his new role, although in reality he never left us!

You may have noticed that building has begun on our new toilet and storage area. It is hoped the work will be completed by Christmas.

Congratulations to our Youth Worker, Hannah, and her husband Matt as they are expecting an addition to the family in March.

If you know of any significant events in the lives of members of St. James' or those close to them, please let Gill know.

## Activities

On the 31<sup>st</sup> August the Benefice service in Rous Lench was followed by the first **Benefice Lunch** in the function room of the Coach and Horses. Despite a slight mix-up over the timing of the lunch, 27 members of the ARCH Benefice met and enjoyed a delicious roast dinner and a chance to chat and get to know one another a bit better.

At the beginning of September Sophie and Revd. Richard visited our link church in **Hadmersleben, Magdeburg** to attend the licensing of Pastor Theo Speilmann to a new (to him) church. Sophie and Richard were made to feel very welcome and enjoyed meeting local people of all ages, seeing the village and its surrounding countryside and taking part in the licensing service. They have written a report about their visit which will shortly be available at the back of the church.

The **Open the Book** team have returned to taking assemblies in the school, and some of the tricky topics they have covered so far include David and Goliath and the wisdom of Solomon. The children often take part as extended members of the team by miming, acting or providing shouting, cheering and clapping.

**Harvington First School** held their annual Harvest service on 15<sup>th</sup> October in the school hall. It was decided to hold it there this year rather than the church, because the numbers attending would have been cramped in the church. As usual every child contributed to the service in some way, with prayers and singing, and afterwards 150 boxes of fruit, vegetables and dry goods were distributed around the village.

**John Bell**, the well known hymn writer, speaker and contributor to Thought for the Day, visited the ARCH Benefice on 18-19<sup>th</sup> October. Both the sessions that he spoke at on the Saturday were packed and he gave us much food for thought and the sessions were very encouraging. On the Saturday evening, over a delicious meal supplied by Steve and Di at the Coach and Horses, there was a chance for members of the ARCH Benefice and the Inkberrow Benefice to get to know one another better before listening to John speak. The weekend ended on a high note as all the churches came together for Holy Communion in Inkberrow on Sunday morning.

St James' celebrated **Harvest** on 26<sup>th</sup> October with a Harvest service followed by a bring-and-share lunch held in the church. As usual the trestle tables were groaning with food although, unlike after the feeding of the five thousand, there were not many leftovers. Many thanks to all those who decorated the church and helped with the lunch. The gifts were divided up and delivered to Caring Hands in Evesham and St Paul's Hostel in Worcester.

The **Gardening Team** have downed spades and boots for another year, after again making our churchyards such attractive places for people to visit and reflect in. Many thanks to all the volunteers and also to Keith Hemming who keeps the grass under control. The Gardening Team are always happy to welcome new members, even if they can't manage the whole morning.

*(PTO for the PCC digest)*

## PCC Digest

*The PCC met on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September, and the following items were discussed.*

***Toilet*** Work should commence soon, following necessary administration, which included contacting interested parties such as the insurers, HMRC and co-ordinating the archaeologist's visit. The builders will use the choir vestry as their site office. (Work has now begun.)

***Quinquennial Inspection*** This has now been carried out and a report should be received soon.

***Harvington First School*** The Diocesan Board of Education has not raised any objection to Harvington First School joining the Prince Henry's Multi-Academy Trust.

***Germany*** Richard reported that he and Sophie had had an interesting time during their recent visit, and had enjoyed getting to know the church and the area. Sophie had found common links in the area, which had been unexpected. Sophie and Richard hoped to report back to the Benefice soon.

***Finance*** The income needed by St James' to pay the Parish Share may fall short, and there is a need for an increase in the regular donations. Money received through fundraising is doing well. The church has been informed that it will soon be receiving a legacy of £500.

***Benefice Lunch*** The first lunch has been held in the function room of the Coach and Horses and was much enjoyed by the 27 people attending from across the Benefice.