

Link

December 2020 / January 2021

The Magazine of the United Reformed Church
Stratford-upon-Avon



Worship, Witness and love for others through Jesus Christ

**The United Reformed Church
Rother Street
Stratford-upon-Avon**

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Thoughts for December / January

Waiting



As the December magazine is published, we enter into Advent, a time of waiting - waiting to celebrate the coming of Jesus, the son of God appearing to us as a human being, sharing our lives, our joys and our sorrows.

But as human beings we are not very good at waiting, are we?

As a nation we are probably better at waiting and queuing than many of our continental neighbours. Our experience of queuing when we are abroad is that the French, the Italians and the Spanish are hopeless at waiting patiently! They frequently try to hop over the queue – that's in the supermarket AND on the roads. Then there's the drivers in this country on the motorways, who, when there is a traffic jam, drive, either up the outside lane, or even along the hard shoulder, and then force their way into the queue when they get close to the obstruction. It drives Linda mad! Queuing and waiting in airports is a nightmare. The queue for security and bag checking, the queue for customs checking, the queue at the gate waiting to get onto the plane. Everybody is impatient and wants to get to the head of the queue.

Why does it matter if you are at the back of the queue? – everybody has to get onto the plane – they won't go without you – assuming you do get to the gate in time! Why not sit patiently, read your book and wait for the queue to diminish before joining it? The reading distracts from the waiting. On the return journey, or the last leg of a journey, it's even worse because on top of everything else you are tired! There have even been huge queues on Mount Everest during the popular climbing season!!



Disney, on the other hand has turned queuing and waiting into a fine art. You may have to queue for 40 – 50 minutes at least before you board your 5-minute ride, but it's a fun experience. Disney has put televisions and signage along the way, plus things

to do. The information is either whetting your appetite for the ride that is about to come or it's informing you that from this particular point you have 40 more minutes to wait. This removes the uncertainty about when the queuing will come to an end and removes the boredom.



In the play by Samuel Beckett 'Waiting for Godot', the two friends, Vladimir and Estragon, spend two whole days waiting for Godot, who never arrives. They spend their time in a variety of discussions, which are really the basis of the play. Near the end of the play, they even consider suicide because they are fed up with waiting – but they haven't got a rope! The characters' discussions flit from political, to philosophical to religious: perhaps that's the attraction of this very successful play. Sometimes, people assume that Godot is meant as God, but Beckett denies that this was ever his intention. Vladimir and Estragon are not waiting for God, but we, in Advent, ARE waiting for God.

One of the hardest things about waiting is not knowing when it's going to end, or indeed if it IS going to end. It's one of the hardest things we have had to endure over the last nine months or so. Is this Coronavirus pandemic EVER going to end? Apart from the loneliness that people have experienced in lockdown, I think that uncertainty has been very wearing for some people.

The Jewish people waited and waited for their Messiah. The Messiah was foretold hundreds of years before by the prophets. The subjugation by the Romans heightened their sense of waiting. Waiting for the Messiah became waiting for God to release them from the grip of Rome. The sad thing is that when the Messiah DID come, most of them didn't recognise him! They were waiting for a mighty warrior and King. They didn't recognise the Messiah sent to them as a baby born out of wedlock, delivered to them in a stable, not even in a house, never mind a palace. He even became a displaced person and a refugee in Egypt. The Jewish people didn't have the signposting that we have during Advent.

But of course, the waiting that comes with Advent is fine, because it's finite. We know that what's coming at the end of our wait will be good, and we know exactly how many days we have left to wait for it. There is a sense of joyful anticipation, which you don't get in the airport or in the motorway queues. And in addition, along the way during Advent there are appointed topics that help us in our preparation – just as in Disneyworld. We think about God's people, with the candle of Hope, we think about the Prophets with a candle of Peace, we think about John the Baptist with a candle of Love and we think about Mary with a

candle of Joy. We are distracted from the waiting; we know when it will end.

We often think that a successful Christmas comes about because of all the preparation we put into it: the cooking, the Christmas shopping, the cards, the decorations and the music. We frequently forget that Christmas comes to us as a miracle: it's a free gift from God our Father. He gives it to those who stretch out their longing arms, waiting for his son to be born as a human being. It's a miracle that our God **wanted** to give us such an incomparable gift – Jesus. Now that's love beyond measure and well worth waiting for.

Peter

Family News

Sadly we heard that Graham had died peacefully at home on 28th October. He had reached the stage of palliative care with his illness and, as he had said to Peter, he had made the final turn and was preparing for the flight path in. Following a cremation service for the family at Oakley Wood on 16th November, his long standing friend, Blair Kessler led the service of celebration at Rother Street. Because of the current restriction for gatherings, a small socially distant group of thirty folk attended this lovely service led by someone who was clearly very close to Graham and shared his sense of humour. Under normal circumstances, the church would have been full with family, friends and associates from past pastorates but Blair effectively led us through the service, largely planned by Graham, and it was indeed a real celebration of his life. We offer our sincere condolences to Rita and all Graham's family and many friends.

Jim P has been unwell but following the fitting of a replacement heart pacemaker his health is improving.

Congratulations to Katalin on the birth of a grandson in Hungary.

Sue has made a great recovery from her double partial knee replacement operation and was signed off by her consultant recently at Warwick Hospital. She is delighted that she is now allowed to drive again. We wish her continued progress.

Nina was discharged from Warwick Hospital over two weeks ago and returned to her apartment at Harvard Place. However, it soon became clear that she required more stable care and attention. She is currently in Quinton House for four weeks respite care which hopefully will enable her to regain her strength and mobility.

Ileen Fisher

Thank you for all your kind enquiries about Andrew, my brother. He is making good progress now and is starting to eat, although he has lost a lot of weight. He has enjoyed his first glass of beer in many weeks - clearly a positive sign!

Peter

Graham J Spicer (1948 - 2020)



As has been mentioned, Graham died on Wednesday 28th October. But, mercifully the final phase was short.

There was a short service at Oakley Woods Crematorium on Monday 16th November followed by a service in the Church at Rother Street at 12.15pm. Both the services were conducted by Blair Kessler, whom Graham had asked, some time ago, to take his funeral: he was a long time friend of Graham.

The service at the church was as Graham had requested: he had written the order of service and chosen the hymns and readings. Blair, Rita and to a certain extent I, all took part in the details of the planning. Since the Covid regulations only allowed 30 people to be present in the church and Graham had wanted members of his last three churches to be present, Rother Street only had 4 invitations. Linda and I, and Ann Jones, were part of the organising team and were therefore add-ons. It was difficult to decide who should attend to represent the church so Elders decided that it should be all Graham's Church Secretaries, together with Sheila, as being the people who had worked most closely with him. Unfortunately, because of shielding, Sheila was unable to attend.

In view of the fact that therefore, many members of our congregation were unable to be present, we thought that we should let you all have a better appreciation of Graham's funeral / celebration service.

The Order of Service taken from the booklet was as follows:

“I may not have gone where I intended to go, but I think I ended up where I needed to be”

Douglas Adams (The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul)

Processional: *Marche Funebre d'une Marionette - Gounod*

Call to Worship: *Ecclesiastes 3: 1 - 14 (Contemporary English Version)*

Hymn 557: *“Who would true valour see” (Tune: Monks Gate)*

Prayer and The Lords Prayer

Reading: *“A Far Green Country” (from the Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkien)*

Hymn: *“How blessed are all the saints” (Tune: Angels Song)*

Readings: Psalm 139

“Hope from the Flowers”

(From The Naval Treaty by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle)

Hymn: *“By Gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered” (Tune: Intercessor)*

Commemoration by Blair Kessler

Hymn: *“He comes to us as one unknown” (Tune: Melita)*

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercessions

Hymn: *“One more step along the world I go. (Tune: Southcote)*

Commendation

Blessing

Recessional: Highland Cathedral - Roever & Korb

***“Fear no more the heat o’th’ sun
Nor the furious winter’s rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone and ta’en thy wages.
Golden lads and girls all must
As chimney sweepers, come to dust”***

The quotation is from Shakespeare’s Cymbeline. In Elizabethan times in Warwickshire flowering dandelions were known as ‘Golden Lads’ and their seeds as ‘Chimney Sweepers’ - because they resembled the shape of the brushes used by sweeps.

Here are the readings from the service: clearly, Graham's choice:

A Far Green Country - From Lord of the Rings by JRR Tolkien

As Gandalf and Pippin are facing near certain death they have the following exchange:

“PIPPIN: I didn't think it would end this way.

GANDALF: End? No, the journey doesn't end here. Death is just another path, one that we all must take. The grey rain-curtain of this world rolls back, and all turns to silver glass, and then you see it.

PIPPIN: What? Gandalf? See what?

GANDALF: White shores, and beyond, a far green country under a swift sunrise.

PIPPIN: Well, that isn't so bad.

GANDALF: No. No, it isn't.”

JRR Tolkien

Quotation from The Naval Treaty

Holmes standing by a window says:

“What a lovely thing a rose is!”

He walked past the couch to the open window and held up the drooping stalk of a moss-rose, looking down at the dainty blend of crimson and green. It was a new phase of his character to me, for I had never before seen him show any keen interest in natural objects.

"There is nothing in which deduction is so necessary as religion," said he, leaning with his back against the shutters. "It can be built up as an exact science by the reasoner. Our highest assurance of the goodness of Providence seems to me to rest in the flowers. All other things, our powers, our desires, our food, are all really necessary for our existence in the first instance. But this rose is an extra. Its smell and its colour are an embellishment of life, not a condition of it. It is only goodness which gives extras, and so I say again that we have much to hope from the flowers.”

Arthur Conan Doyle

An Appreciation of the Life of Graham Spicer



Almost everything you have heard so far was planned by Graham but now we come to my bit. The address. So, I have got just a few minutes to try and paint a verbal portrait of Graham. The brushstrokes will be broad, and the details may be a bit fuzzy, but I hope when I have finished you will recognise a likeness.

Graham grew up in Leamington with his sister, Susan and brother David. David told me that it was obvious early that Graham was the clever one and so he was sent to Warwick School. To be honest this wasn't Graham's first choice: he would have preferred Leamington College where his hero, Frank Whittle, the inventor of the jet engine, had been a pupil. He was, however, successful at Warwick, where one of his claims to fame was, with another pupil, tracking the first earth satellite, the Russian Sputnik.

He went from Warwick to Reading University to study meteorology but failed the maths. It was at this time that his mother died and so Graham went home. The first church that he became involved with was Killington Congregational Church, which is where he first felt the call to ministry.

Meanwhile, his father remarried, and two half-brothers were born, William and Michael. The family, like so many others, weren't close, coming together mainly for weddings and funerals. Unfortunately, Susan and Michael have died, but I am glad to see David with us today. It was David who told me the Graham was always there for him, and whenever they met they were able to pick up exactly where they had left off.

By the age of 22 Graham knew that his call to ministry was genuine and went to Manchester to do his degree.

It was there that he met Rita Walker. She was living just round the corner from the

Congregational college where Graham was studying and they were introduced by Ann, a mutual friend.

The relationship blossomed and they were married in August 1976 just a month before Graham's ordination. Thus, Graham joined this large Scottish family who warmly welcomed him, treating him as one of their own. He loved visiting Steven and Liz and joining the rest of the clan for numerous celebrations, weddings and funerals. Whenever a minister was required, he was, of course, first choice. Once he realised he was entitled to wear the tartan, he adopted a clan tie. Rita was pleased that this was as far as he went. He certainly didn't have the legs for a kilt! I'm wearing my clan McDonald tie in honour of the Scots here today.

Graham became the minister of his first church in West Bromwich - a church he held dear for the rest of his life. From there he moved to the joint pastorate of Christ Church Solihull and Knowle URCS, before joining his final church here at Rother Street. It is good to greet members from his churches here today, but we all know that in 'normal' times there would have been many more.



I met him when he was in Solihull and we struck up a firm friendship. I mentioned his help with my first funeral, and in many other ways he became my mentor in faith.

Twenty years ago, in November 2000, Rita, Graham, Cheryl, Ken and Lynn and I went on holiday to Florida, visiting Mickey Mouse. My first memory of that fortnight was Rita's unerring ability to direct us to wherever we needed to be, even in the pitch dark when we arrived. In honour of that, all my SatNavs have been nicknamed 'Rita'. I sometimes pretend that it is an acronym for 'Road Information and Traffic Advice' but Mrs. Spicer and I know the truth!

Anyway, we decided to take a couple of days away from Orlando and visit the Gulf Coast. We discovered a little paradise called Anna Maria Island and on that Sunday we ate out at a local, rather posh restaurant. Returning to our motel on the beach, a little more wine was taken and Graham and I took our glasses down to the beach itself. Sitting there on a bench on that warm night, we talked. Graham's brother, David,

described him as a philosopher and he is right. I learned more practical theology that night than I ever did in the dozens of courses I have taken. There and then he changed my ministry.

Three years after that in October 2003 Graham had a major stroke just before Lynn and I were going back to Anna Maria. Before we left we went to visit him in hospital. He was very poorly and we said our goodbyes not expecting him to recover. We were, of course, wrong. He returned to ministry and continued until his retirement in 2017.

He had many passions over the years. The author Terry Pratchett - we used to have an annual pilgrimage to Abingdon for the latest play. Narrow boats - he and Rita were co-owners of 'Snail' and cruised the waterways for many years. Model railways and Rotary. Spaniels - their first was Ben, bought as a fourth wedding anniversary present for Rita. Graham was initially not keen, but Rita remembers that by the time they got Ben home, Graham was already planning the routes for the dog walks. He continued walking their spaniels until almost the end. Then there was sailing: he loved their holidays in the Mediterranean. According to Rita that was because Andrew, the captain, treated him like a god, "Are you comfortable, Graham?", "Another G&T, Graham?", while she and Cheryl and Ken did the work!

His friends: they were so important. He kept in touch with people from Primary School, Warwick School, University, all of the churches he served and those people that he met through Rita.

That leads me to what I believe was at the core of Graham, his life, and his ministry: People. David remarked that he knew how to talk to anybody, how to make a connection to best effect. It made him the go-to minister for Festivals, Weddings and Funerals. Especially funerals, where he could always balance the solemnity with some lightness and humour. You always left a Graham funeral knowing a little more about the deceased than when you entered.

Graham was a scholar, a wit, a philosopher, a cleric, and a teacher. But most of all he was Graham Spicer, husband, brother, friend and minister. A man who cared for others, a man who loved his God, but never forgot to love people. A man we will all miss.

Blair Kessler

Tributes from some who knew Graham:

"One of life's great characters has left the stage"

George Jones, Kenilworth

"I saw Graham just a week ago. We had organised a brunch meeting for Rotarians at Stratford Garden Centre and in true Graham style he turned up despite looking terribly ill. He was not on my table but, although we were not supposed to be mixing, I was able to have a quick chat as we were leaving. He was honest about not feeling good

and said that he wouldn't see Christmas, and he was, as usual, right!

I shall miss him terribly. We always got on and agreed about so many things and he was a great ally to have in the Rotary ranks too. May he rest in peace."

Revd Richard Williams, Alveston

"Graham was a fabulous gent. I remember him fondly as someone who always wore a smile"

Revd Peter Kimberley, Coventry

"I always enjoyed conversations with Graham and it was great that he was often in the congregation in recent years when either Erica or I took services.

A particularly fond memory was when he and I both made the cut to join the Ministers' Refresher in 2011 in Orkney, around this time of year, when we were accommodated in the local secondary school residences and a jolly time was had by all.

My beard will never be the equal of his but I would hope to have something of his attitude to life and – perhaps – to serious illness, which of course he has borne with remarkable spirit."

Revd Bill Young, Coventry

"When Graham "retired" from URC, he would come occasionally to Quaker Meetings for Worship on Sunday mornings. He never spoke during the Meeting, but was always ready for a chat with coffee afterwards. I'll let the local Quakers know. Please pass on our condolences to Rita.

Roger Matthews, Stratford

"I'm sorry to hear that, Peter, although glad that he has died peacefully, and was still full of conversation until the end. He had a lovely dry humour - though I sometimes had to peer through the beard to be sure. But he was a good colleague, and I know he loved being minister at Stratford"

Revd Craig Muir, Coventry



My First Job(s)

In last month's Link I told you about going to Germany with my friend Waldtraut [Wally]. A few months before that we decided to get Saturday jobs to earn some money for our holiday.

It was January 1960, both only 15, we trudged round the centre of Birmingham and finally ended up at Saxone shoe shop on the corner of New Street and High Street. They employed us both, our wages being 15 shillings for the Saturday. We actually took home fourteen and ninepence as 3d had to be deducted for the insurance. I guess they knew what might happen if they put us together, so we parted company. She was put on the ground floor selling flatties and men's shoes, but I was the lucky one, being put on the first floor. Here were the smart court shoes, kitten heels and stilettos, high heeled sandals, wedge heels and wedding shoes. I was in my element and loved every minute of it: measuring feet, finding the correct sizes and the exact colour co-ordinations, also trying to persuade customers to buy matching handbags.

Our lunch breaks were at different times, but I didn't mind because a few doors away was a large BHS and they had a record department right by the escalator. The records were played loudly and so I would spend part of my break going up and down listening to the pop music of the day. 'Cathy's Clown' by the Everly brothers seemed to be in the charts for ages and as this was one of my favourites then, I would rush to the store to hear them playing it over and over again.

We did these jobs until we went to Germany in the August. When we returned Wally didn't want to work on Saturdays any more, so I found myself another job in a store called 'Henry's' in Martineau Street. This was very handy as it was right by my bus stop. The job was not so interesting, as this time I was selling gloves, stockings and scarves. It paid well and so I stayed there for a few months. We had to clock in on arrival, but the best part was clocking off as we left in the evening to go home. This was the only time in my life that I would use this system.

(To be continued)



Jill Fradley

Journeys

Maybe it is because we can't go anywhere at the moment, but we have found that we have been reminiscing about various journeys we have made in the past and there are 3 very different ones which I will never forget.

Adrian and I were in Kenya in the summer of 1982 visiting his family in Mombasa. We were due to fly back to the UK from Nairobi and had booked on the overnight Mombasa / Nairobi train to do the almost 500km journey. This journey on The Blue Train was then considered one of the great rail journeys of the world. The train was beautifully decorated in an old colonial style and this was a real treat at the end of our holiday. The day we were due to leave Mombasa, we woke to hear there had been an attempted coup d'état. This was overturned after 6 hours and the train was still running, so we decided to go to Nairobi as planned. However when we arrived at Nairobi station, it was a very different place to the city we had visited several weeks earlier. As we stepped outside, we felt we had been transported onto a Hollywood set. There was debris everywhere. All the shop windows were smashed and glass was lying around on the ground, mingled with patches of blood. It was also totally silent. There was a huge armed presence on the streets and we went straight to the travel agency to confirm

our flights. This was in the time prior to having emails and text messages and we had to confirm in person. Unfortunately we then found that our Sudan Air flight (we were students and these had been the cheapest tickets we could find) had been cancelled and they washed their



hands of us. Not knowing what to do, we hung around the office and tried to persuade people to help us. Needless to say we were not alone as no flights had come into the country that day and so many outbound flights had been cancelled. Suddenly word went round that Lufthansa had a plane on the ground and were going to be able to take a number of stranded passengers. We were amongst the lucky ones. Our tickets were transferred and we were told we needed to get to the airport as soon as possible as the plane would be leaving within a couple of hours. In the tense political situation it was difficult to find a taxi that was prepared to take us out to the airport. When we did, it was a scary drive past armoured vehicles and military personnel on the streets. There were also machine gun nests along the central reservation of the road. As we approached the airport, there was a heavily guarded

roadblock and we were flagged down. The taxi driver was as terrified as we were. He told us to hold our passports out of the windows which is what we did. Our iconic dark blue British passports saved the day, as the armed guard said “You’re British – go through!” and bowing, let us drive on. We were never so glad to reach an airport, let alone leave a country. The icing on the cake was when we found that we had been put in Business Class for the flight to Frankfurt and were treated so well, despite being hitchhikers!

The second memorable journey was much shorter in fact it was barely 50 metres! We were living in the Umfolozi game reserve in South Africa and I worked in one of the tourist camps which was about 20 minutes drive from our home. It was on the other side of the Umfolozi River. We had had a lot of rain over the past few days and the river was rising but was still well under the bridge when I crossed in the jeep that morning. The bridge was made from sheets of concrete with a low rail at either side. However one of the game rangers radioed a few hours later to say that if I wanted to get back to the main camp I had to leave right then as the river was almost over the bridge. I just grabbed my things and drove as fast as I could to the river. I parked up on high land and Delmain had parked his Land Rover on raised ground at the other side. He had attached a rope to the vehicle and walked over the bridge through the flood water to the side where I was. The other end of the rope was attached to a post on the upstream side to form a hand line. He announced that the river was flowing too fast to drive across so we would have to walk! He then produced another rope which he attached to me and himself. There was no time to waste as the water was already up to my knees. We just had to hope the bridge underfoot was intact. Sandals around our necks as there was better purchase with bare feet, we inched our way across, hanging onto the hand line and hoping that no trees would be washed at us, let alone crocodiles or hippos. It was a nerve-wracking experience and it seemed to take forever to cross the 30 m bridge. We made it just in time as the water rose so fast that 30 minutes later it was impassable and we were cut off for 3 days until it subsided.

The third journey is very different but also linked to weather. We were living in France on the Swiss border and were coming back to the UK to spend Christmas with my family in Newcastle. We’d booked the overnight boat from Amsterdam just before Christmas and left very early in the morning to drive the 750 km to board the ferry. We always liked to leave plenty of time just in case of holdups. I don’t know if you remember the winter of 2009? It was extremely cold and was -16 degrees when we left home in a very white winter landscape. Even in the car, we were all wearing thermals and ski clothing, hats and gloves as they were the warmest things we had. The girls had a duvet in the back of the car too and the heating was on full blast, but it just couldn’t cope with the cold. We even had ice forming on the inside of the car windows! We stopped at a remote service area near the Luxemburg border for a quick loo break, only to find the toilets were frozen and the temperature had dropped



to -20. Luckily with living in France, we were legally obliged to have snow tyres which stood us in good stead for what was to come. It started snowing. There was already snow all around but the roads had been clear. However, this was a blizzard with visibility vastly reduced and the 3 lanes quickly shrank to 2 lanes and then to 1. Although there was not much traffic on the road by the time we entered Holland, what was there was ill-equipped to cope with snow and was sliding all over the road or crawling at little more than 15 kms an hour. The ferry check-in time was getting closer and closer and we still had a long way to go. Fortunately as the weather deteriorated, the amount of traffic reduced too and we managed to keep going. But in those conditions, 30 kms / hour feels very fast and your eyes are peeled to look through the swirling snow for any obstructions on the road ahead. The snowploughs were working overtime to keep one lane open. Driving in bad conditions against the clock is not a comfortable thing to do. We made it to the boat with about 15 minutes to spare, very relieved to have arrived safely and in time. A journey which usually took 7-8 hours, took us over 12 hours. The ferry that night was only about half full so we were some of the lucky ones.

We've certainly had some adventures over the years but these three are ones we wouldn't want to repeat!

Kirsty Knott

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world.
All things break. And all things can be mended.
Not with time, as they say, but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.

L. R. Knost

2020 Shoebox appeal

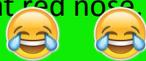


Thank you to the many people who gave me generous donations of goods or money for this annual appeal. I have prepared 17 boxes this year – the only limiting factor was the number of shoeboxes I was able to get hold of, because my usual source (Hotter) has closed down! Nevertheless, the boxes I have done are jam-packed with the sort of goodies we might not think are great, but we know that they will be received enthusiastically in Romania. I had a little money left over, so I have purchased a solar lamp for a family in Romania, where in poor villages, they have no electricity and rely on candles or oil lamps to light their homes. In small crowded homes these can be dangerous and house fires are not uncommon.

There has been a bit of a hiccup this year, as you might expect, with the pandemic interfering, but the collectors at the Baptist Church (Anne and Malcolm) have told me that they are hoping to get the lorry off to Romania as soon as the present lockdown is over, so they should still arrive in time for Christmas (and before Brexit looms its ugly head!)

Linda

No Nativity this year, because the Three Wise Men face a travel ban.
The shepherds have been furloughed.
The Innkeeper has shut under tier 3 regulations and has had a slump in bookings.
Santa won't be working, as he would break the rule of six with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner and Blitzen.
As for Rudolph, with that red nose, he should be isolating and taking a test.



Thanks for this, Mairi

Christmas Past

Since we are unlikely to be in Church this year for our usual festivities, here is a little reminder of previous Christmases till, hopefully, we can resume next year.











St Basil's Christmas Donation

As has been said many times over the past months, things are very different this year, especially as we come up towards Christmas. Over the past few years we have had the St. Basil's Card Tree and have made regular contributions to this very worthy cause. At Graham's recent Service of Celebration it was noted that he had been a long standing supporter of St. Basil's, and the family has suggested that we may wish to support the charity in his memory. If you would care to do this, St. Basil's Sort Code is 30-00-06 Account Number 01709948. Alternatively you can send a cheque to A.E.Bennett and Sons, 34 Sheep Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6EE.

Thank you Graham for solving my dilemma this year!

Ileen Fisher

We haven't listed services, because of the uncertain situation of Coronavirus regulations. We will try to keep you updated - look out for an Email explaining the current situation. If not on Email, ring 01789 750971. Elders will meet in January to reassess the situation

F&F Rota

Please report any problems with the buildings to:

December	Tom Purves 01789 293013	Iain Kelso 01789 299698 / 07770688984
January	Sarah Salmon 01789 269134 /07816 565371	Rob Fradley 01789 269134/ 07765 412606
February	Ann Jones 01789 266177/ 07580 557163	Tom Purves 01789 293013

The next edition of Link will be published on 31st January 2021.

The deadline for submission to the next edition is Monday 25th January 2021. Please send us your articles, pictures, humour - If you have views about the future of the Church or the future of the Ministry, please let us know. Don't forget to think about writing an article about your first job.

Editors details:

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For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will
be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince
of Peace.

Isaiah 9: 6 – 7