

Chronicle

December 2019
January 2020

COME AND JOIN THE CELEBRATION

COWLEY TEAM MINISTRY 2019

Christmas in Cowley Parish - 2019

Friday 6 th	Christmas Meal (you need to book for this!)	19:30 pm	St James Centre
Saturday 14 th	Get in the picture	10:00-4:00	Templars Square (Cowley Centre)
Sunday 15 th	Christingle service	10:00 am	St James Church
	Christingle service	10:30 am	St Francis Church
Saturday 21st	Christmas Messy Church Christmas party	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	St James Church
Sunday 22 nd	Carol service	10:30 pm	St Francis Church
	Carol service	4:30 pm	St James Church
	Pop up Crib service (come dressed as a part of the Christmas Story!)	4:00 pm	St James Church
Christmas Eve Sunday 24 th	Carols and Christmas singing	6:00 pm	Corner House Pub, Hollow Way
	Anglican Asian Living Church Christmas Eve Service and meal	7:30 pm to 9 pm	St James Church Centre
	Midnight Mass	11:00 pm	St Francis Church
	Midnight Mass	11:00 pm	St James Church
	Traditional language Christmas service	8:00 am	St James Church
Christmas Day Monday 25 th	Family Christmas Communion	10:00 am	St James Church
December	Christmas morning service	10:30 am	St Francis Church
	Anglican Asian Living Church	1:30 pm	St James Church

From the Editors

Sally Hemsworth and Nicki Stevens

We hope you enjoy the mix of articles in this edition of the Chronicle – to cover the festive months of December and January. Thank you to all the contributors.

Please see the thank you note from Samaritan Purse Boxes which has been put up in the two churches – thank you to all who participated. The boxes had to be delivered to the distribution centre at Chalgrove, and it was wonderful to see people working on the boxes to ensure all goods were acceptable to customs in the different countries. Many thanks to those volunteers who ensure things are correct as we were told that should one box be found to have the wrong content it would stop that whole consignment going through, so it was essential that this work was done.

The Cowley History Group is going from strength to strength. At the November meeting Carole Newbiggin spoke about how the Changing Faces of Cowley books progressed from an idea for one book and had now extended to five books on Cowley, and books on other parts of Oxford City and, indeed, Oxfordshire. There is a very interesting programme planned for 2020 and details will be published in the February edition of the Chronicle.

Plans are full steam ahead for the Christmas Tree Festival – cards are ready for delivery, together with cards setting out the church services (or you may have delivered some already). More details are available in this edition of the Chronicle, but help with house to house deliveries would be much appreciated.

A major item in the Chronicle is How to Pray for this General Election – a rather longer piece than usual for us to include but so relevant at the present time.

With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Nicki and Sally

Reports from 2nd Cowley Rainbows and 2nd Cowley Brownies, with Christmas and New Year greetings

2nd Cowley Rainbows - the unit is going from strength to strength. This term the girls have enjoyed an evening with the County's coding robots. They learnt how to operate through programming and exploring. We have been working on some badges including a Christmas one. We are planning a trip to the panto just after Christmas.

2nd Cowley Brownies - the unit is continuing with good numbers. They have also enjoyed a night with the coding robots. They have done some fun badges such as The Sundae Challenge badge and a Christmas one. The Brownies are also going to the panto in the new year.

Abi Reynolds

A word from the Rectory

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.

(The book of Revelation Chapter 7 verse 9)

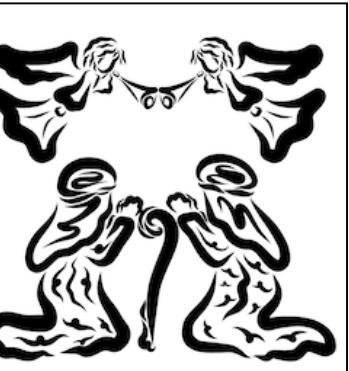
Let me tell you of three journeys.

The first? A young girl and her betrothed. Called to a far off town by the whim of the Roman Empire. A young girl, out of wedlock, who, for no fault of her own, found herself pregnant. Fearing the wrath of her town's folk she had taken refuge with her cousin, Elizabeth, in a far-off village. Accompanied by her fiancée, they head off, unsupported, to a new life in the family town. Heavily pregnant, they arrive and are homeless. No fault of their own, just not enough housing for the people who needed it. A kind hotel keeper allows them space with his animals. And, amongst the dirt and waste she gives birth to child. Young parents and a child united together.



The second? Shepherds on a hillside giving up their solitary life. Called by angels, they unite with the young couple at the side of this child. As they go back to the hills their visit had changed them: '*glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*'

The third? Wise men. Students of the stars. Called to unite with the Holy Family from afar. And they come, not to a palace with wealth and thrones, but to a simple family scene. They come with a gift for a Priest, a King, a Death.



Each journey led them to unite at the side of the Heavenly babe, the Messiah, Jesus. So, come and join the celebration. Come and be united in voice, actions and love. Come, ask whatever questions you like. Come and know that you are loved and cherished. Come, gather around, the table is spread



Benson Cottage

CHILDREN'S CORNER

It is so difficult for me to think of one subject that will cover for the next two months and still give you something to do. However, I have put my thinking cap on and decided that one thing that we have to do is to look forward through Advent and then the Christmas season towards a New Year.

If you think forward, as we all must rather than continue to look backwards remembering the things that we could have done better or not done at all because they didn't work out as we wanted them to, we can see that the New Year is approaching and it is a completely unknown item. This will come to us all and we must be prepared for it in the same way as we prepare for Christmas.

I like painting pictures and when you start you have to have an idea. You also have to have the equipment to complete the picture whether it is painting with water colours or oil paint or simply pen and ink. You also need a blank sheet of paper or canvas. The blank sheet of paper means that it is a completely new item that can become a masterpiece or a simple study of a flower or you could write a poem. When you start you are not always clear how it will finish and some of my drawings and paintings have not always turned out the way that I wanted them to for a number of reasons. In the same way, your life may change or stay the same, but can remain empty if you do nothing. If you do not put any work into the actions of your life you will not achieve or gain any experience or progress, just grow old. So it is necessary to make some preparations before we continue, in the same way that you would prepare the paper or canvas and have ideas and plans to achieve a goal or target.

In addition, along the way you will probably want some help or advice from friends and

family. They may know more about your subject than you or have some good ideas to improve the details. Or you can ask them to help and advise you from their experience how to overcome problems. Do not worry about asking friends for help because that is what friends are for. Often friends are pleased to help even if it is to encourage you and say how much they like your work. In the same way when someone asks you for help you may be able to tell them the answer. You can offer friendship and perhaps another opinion of how they can overcome their problem. No one can live easily as an island without any help or guidance. In the same way that you progress with a painting or plan a journey, so to you need some idea of what you want to achieve or have as a target and this will allow you to measure your own progress and achievement. No one is perfect but I am sure that you will surprise yourself if you aim high and always try to do your best.

Sometimes these plans for the new year are called new year resolutions. Unfortunately. I don't seem to be able to keep my New Year resolutions for very long but I do hope that I can keep my general plan. Join me to go forward to enjoy life giving thanks each day of my life and help others during the coming year. Try to do your best to make your plan for your New Year and we shall go into it with joy and hope. We have a time for celebration and an opportunity to go forward into the New Year by starting a whole new canvas or picture.

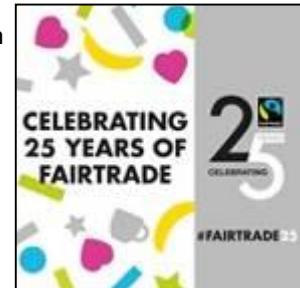
Blessings on you all during this season of thanksgiving. A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you.

Uncle Ben



FAIRTRADE

This year, the Fairtrade mark celebrates its 25th anniversary, with events held mid-September to mid-October. 25 years of impact: fighting against poverty and inequality, making a real difference to the lives of farmers and workers, working with businesses and governments, teaching about Fairtrade in schools, campaigning and lobbying.



The Cowley PCC has declared its intention to become a Fairtrade Parish in order to demonstrate our Christian commitment to our worldwide brothers and sisters - but we are making very slow progress towards it as we STILL regularly receive gifts of non-fairtrade products when fairly traded equivalents are readily available.

We of course THANK YOU for generous supplies to the Parish kitchens at St James and St Francis. *But PLEASE only buy/give FAIRTRADE PRODUCTS when those are available in supermarkets and the fairtrade shops in Headington, Cornmarket and elsewhere: tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar. Fairtrade biscuits, jam, kitchen roll and cleaning materials would also be appreciated.*



Available to buy at the Christmas tree festival: 'Christmas blessings' 80g fairtrade chocolate bars - £3 an excellent stocking filler

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/What-is-Fairtrade>

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/get%20involved/Current-campaigns/Fairtrade-at-25>

SNOWDROP DAYS – FEBRUARY 2020

The Snowdrop Days at St James will be held on the first two weekends in February – vagaries of the weather permitting!

The dates are: Saturday, February 1st
and Sunday, February 2nd

also Saturday, February 8th
and Sunday, February 9th

There will be opportunities for welcoming visitors with refreshments in church, also for providing cakes – look out for sign-up sheets during January.

Now that the churchyard has been cleared of undergrowth there should be a good display of aconites and snowdrops so please tell family, friends and neighbours and encourage them to come along.

Margaret Martin

ART AND FAITH

Our new group called Art and Faith met in November, to create some art for the first time. There were six of us and after coffee and cake we set to work. Some of us brought our own materials and others used some donated to the group. To give us inspiration and a starting point I read out a short passage from Scripture.

It was encouraging to see the variety of artistic activities that members were pursuing. Three of us got involved in calligraphy, both European and Chinese while someone else produced a drawing based on the passage from Revelation. Another member was engaged in embroidery while the final piece of art was an acrylic painting of a kingfisher.

Thinking about our morning's art since, two thoughts keep occurring to me.

We all very much enjoyed our time together, I think, for one reason in particular. We shared our enthusiasm for what we were creating, both our own work and that of others. We shared responses, fresh thoughts and ideas, and new skills. All of this meant the time passed without us really noticing it.

Secondly, whatever your chosen art form or your level of skill, pursuing it brings freedom, to experiment, take new directions, build on old ideas, make mistakes, and learn from it all. A great way to spend time!

So, if you would like to join Art and Faith, either talk to me, John Booty (Tel: 01865-770836), or simply come along. You will be very welcome.

Our next meeting will be Saturday, 11th January 2020. 10 a.m.to 12 noon in the Church Centre.

BIBLE SOCIETY 'MORE THAN A BOOK' REGISTRATION

If you order anything on line or by phone from the Bible Society, please use the unique Parish reference number 12044 or select the 'Parish of Cowley' from the drop down menu when placing an order and we will benefit from the 'More than a book' cash back scheme. It's that easy! We have just earned some more from our latest 'Open the Book' resources order – not a huge amount but useful!

Dare we mention Christmas shopping? Do look at the on line shop – Bibles, prayer books, cards, courses, fiction, dvds etc.

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/products/>



Life skills course to live well

New free sessions run by local churches could be the answer to many people's modern-day stress.

The Oxford CAP Centre has become the latest centre to train with charity Christians Against Poverty to offer CAP Life Skills. The free eight-week course is to give people the confidence and decision-making skills to live well, look after themselves and feel positive, even on a low income.

Andrew Johnson who will be leading the course said:

"It's a series of relaxed sessions. We'll be looking at lifting the pressure to spend and sharing some great practical tips to help us take control of our money and make it go further."

"We'll also be looking at making good food so we can help our families stay healthy on a budget. Towards the end of the course, we'll spend some time on helping relationships, as these have a big impact on how we treat our finances."

"Most of all, it will be time to share what works and what doesn't, both as a group and one-to-one and give each other encouragement to do things better."

The course will be held at Cornerstone Church, 2 Quarry High St, Oxford, OX3 8JT, starting on January 23rd, 2020. It will run from 10.30 am to 12.30. To find out more phone 01865 249008.

Claire Ewers

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BEING A FILM EXTRA - FROM ROMANS TO ROYALTY

I was asked to be a double for a main character in the film Horrible Histories – Rotten Romans. Upon arrival at a country park on a wet and windy day I was taken off to costume and dressed as the wife of an ancient Briton Chieftan, followed by make-up where I was given a scruffy wig of plaits and fake tattoos. Apparently, she had been kidnapped and I was doubling for her being whisked away in a cart. The cart was an authentic looking wooden wheeled contraption, pulled by a horse and manned by two very young actors, one of which introduced himself as Baz. My role was to lay in the back and look kidnapped. Hup! Called Baz and off we went, round and round and round the park over hill and dale and bumps followed by a camera truck. Very realistic and not a trip I would recommend if you are liable to travel sickness. Every now and then, a roar would go up as we trundled past the big red double decker dining bus full of ancient Britons and Romans eating their lunch! After filming, I had a lovely conversation with "Baz" and hoped that he was successful in his chosen career finding out much later that he was actually a main actor in Game of Thrones! When the film came out I proudly took my Grandchildren to see it and they were not disappointed (although I was). There was my backend bouncing up and down in the cart. No acting necessary!

As for the Royal bit! I was asked to play the Queen in Four Weddings and a Funeral, the TV Series, coming out next year. I had already had a costume fitting where the dresser raved about my twin set and this very long tweed skirt finished off with the obligatory

pearl necklace. The filming was at Hatfield House aka Buck Palace. As her Majesty, I was given the special treatment i.e. first in the breakfast queue, and an escort on set. As HM I was permitted to sit on one of the sofas (all other furniture had ropes round them). My corgi also had a seat but only if it was covered and he had to be carried on and off in case he damaged the velvet. In my scene I had to watch a TV Special and do a Queenie voice and walk out the room followed by said Royal Corgi. But at the risk of being sent to the Tower, he went the other way and had to be bribed with a trail of doggy bikkies. We were not amused!

My final story is one where I realise how lucky we are living here in this green and pleasant land. I am a regular on Call the Midwife and us "children of the Beatle revolution era" often complain how the costumes are so wrong. This particular day, I went upstairs on the dining bus to look for my travelling companion who I found talking to a very gentle spoken black gentleman. Again, the topic came round to clothes and my friend and I were discussing the hot pants, kinky boots, mini skirts and hipsters we wore in our young teens. I then turned to our companion and asked him "what did you wear in the 60's" to which he replied "I was half naked, running from soldiers who were trying to kill me". Well that was a conversation ender! We asked him what he meant and he said "I am Biafran" and he went on to relate how he, aged 7, and his younger brother and older sister were abandoned in their village and how they endured starvation and bombing before reaching a refugee camp. It was there

a miracle happened. His parents had come over to the UK for work before the war broke out and his mother was frantically trying to find out what had happened to her children and religiously watched the news at every opportunity she could hoping to see them. This time she turned the TV on just in time to see a broadcast from one of the camps and there he was standing behind the reporter! The authorities warned her about going to the area

but she sold everything she had for the plane tickets and flew into the War Zone. She had to disguise herself as her tribe were open targets but eventually managed to be reunited with her children and it took two years before she could return with them. This gentleman grew up to be a Social Worker, helping problem families.

Sue Hallett.

Film Club at the Centre

With a beautiful girl (Meg Ryan) coming to the rescue of a lonely bereaved dad (Tom Hanks) and his anxious little son in a delightfully romantic film with a happy ending you cannot really go wrong, can you?

Well, we did not. Our November club evening sent us all home with a warm glow. Not only that but we had an (almost) record attendance and raised nearly £80 for Parish funds. Film Club continues to flourish.

The film chosen for December is a full-on production for Christmas. "A Song for the Season" does not have a cast of big stars but does have a lovely story. When Cal and his niece Fern move to Bethlehem, Kentucky, they are lacking any Christmas spirit. Cal has to tackle the depressing job of digging the school out of a deep financial hole while Fern is unhappy about the move anyway. But when they meet a lovely music teacher

.....no, I won't go on but I am sure you will guess that it is a very heart warming, human story. I am sure our members and guests are going to love it.

Our programme of chosen films for 2020 is now available so anyone who is interested in joining the club can obtain one and decide whether they would like to give us a try. Film club is friendly and welcoming and with coffee or tea and cakes before the film and with Sally as our more than competent projectionist we look forward to more pleasant evenings in the coming year.

Rosanne Butler



RECIPES

Who will be trying this?

PEACOCK FOR A KING'S CHRISTMAS

Next in importance to the boar's head as a Christmas dish came the peacock. The skin was carefully stripped off, with the plumage adhering; the bird was then roasted. When done and partially cooled, it was sewed up again with its feathers, its beak gilt, and so sent to the table. Sometimes the whole body was covered with leaf-gold, and a piece of cotton saturated with spirits placed in its beak and lighted before the carver commenced operations. This "food for lovers and meat for lords" was stuffed with spices and sweet herbs, basted with yolk of egg, and served with plenty of gravy. The noble bird was not served by common hands. That privilege was reserved for the lady-guests most distinguished by beauty or birth. One of them carried it into the dining hall to the sound of music.

W. & R. Chambers Book of Days, 1864

Christmas dinner all sorted then – so now for something lighter?

The following recipe is from Cakes, Bakes, Puddings and Prayers by Susan Over:

Chocolate Silk

(Serves two, but could also be increased for a dinner party)

Ingredients:

60ml (2 fl.oz) milk

1 heaped teaspoon instant coffee granules

50g (2oz) plain chocolate

50g (2oz) milk chocolate



1 egg

1 scant tablespoon brandy or whisky (optional)

Whipped cream and grated chocolate to decorate

Method:

- Chop chocolate into small pieces.
- Heat milk and coffee together in a small pan or microwave until just below boiling point.
- Pour milk mixture into blender and add chocolate.
- Blend for about half a minute.
- Separate egg and add yolk and spirit to mixture. Blend again until smooth.
- In a large bowl, whisk egg white until stiff, then fold in the chocolate mixture until well blended.
- Pour into individual glass dishes and chill for at least three hours.
- Decorate with whipped cream and flake before serving

Chocolate shapes give a professional look and are easy to make. Place a couple of squares of chocolate in one corner of a plastic food bag and melt in microwave for a few seconds. Snip one corner off the bag and drizzle chocolate onto baking parchment to make knot or fan shapes. Set in fridge.

NB: This recipe includes raw egg and therefore should not be given to pregnant women or the very elderly

A good woman is hard to find, and worth far more than diamonds ... She makes her own clothing, and dresses in colourful linens and silks.
Proverbs 31:10,22 (The Message)

Lord, help me to be a better wife, mother, friend. Help me to share the best things of life with others so that your love is reflected through me to them. Amen.

SAFEGUARDING IN COWLEY PARISH

As a Parish, we are committed to the Christian care, nurture of, and respectful pastoral ministry with, all children and all adults but particularly those who are vulnerable in any way.

So we ensure that our policies and practice on the selection and training of all those staff and volunteers with any responsibility within the Church are in line with safer recruitment principles, including the use of Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records checks where applicable.

We intend that St James and St Francis churches will be safe, caring communities which provide a loving environment where there is a culture of 'informed vigilance' as to the dangers of abuse, including domestic violence.

We will challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust.

We follow statute, guidance and recognised good practice in all our safeguarding practice and check that all users of our premises do so too.

Role descriptions. Volunteers will realise that they have thus far not received their promised role description pro forma, asking them to write in all that they believe their role involves and then to return it to Lesley Williams to formalise, type up and sign. Apologies – it is in hand but is just somewhat more complicated than anticipated..... It's now a new year, post-Christmas tree festival task.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

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From the Archives

Extracts from the Cowley Chronicle

DECEMBER 1973

Letters are being sent out by St. James' Church to hundreds of couples married in the church in the last thirteen years, telling them about a scheme to replace the old pitch pine pews with chairs. It is hoped that some among them (and among Chronicle readers too) may wish to contribute a chair (£12) to mark their wedding (or their children's christening, or in memory of someone departed). A hundred chairs are needed to enable the scheme, adopted by a majority at the church's annual meeting in February, to go ahead. The substitution of chairs for pews will enable the seating arrangements at the church to be more flexible, in relation to the particular needs of the occasion.

JANUARY 1975

A good welcome was given to the new chairs installed at St. James' Church when a large audience attended a concert given in the church on December 12th, by the Roman Way Singers, the Shinfield Handbell Ringers, and the church's own choir and organist. The concert was followed by refreshments in the north aisle.

JANUARY 1998

Young Men Who Were Looking for Peace and Freedom

Many older parishioners who lived in the Oxford area just after the Second World War will probably remember a hostel situated in the Botley Road which housed many refugees and displaced persons from mainland Europe. The hostel was set up in the old Majestic Cinema and it was there that a group of young Polish ex-servicemen turned themselves into a club.

What has that to do with our parish? Well, that club which began in such inauspicious circumstances and surroundings now has its "home" in our Parish Hall. Pass the hall any weekend evening or maybe on a Wednesday and you will see the lights on. The Polish Club is up and running. Ted Dela, one of its founder members, will be behind the bar chatting to many of his friends in their native language and serving others in English. Ted has been president of the club for 45 years without a break. His wife, Beryl, is a stalwart committee member who offers unstinting support.

The story of how the Polish Combatants, as they are known, found their home in our midst is one of change and chance. Their first home was in the basement of the old Mission Hall in St Clements where tea or coffee, a chat, a game of darts or ping-pong was on offer. Naturally,

the ex-servicemen would have liked to meet over a pint of beer but as the premises restricted this, they moved to The Cape of Good Hope pub on The Plain and then on to the Prince of Wales in Cowley Road. There they remained for 17 years.

In the meantime, many of the men were married and when young families arrived, they were anxious to teach their language, history and customs to the next generation. Thus began a Saturday school, first in St Joseph's building in St Clements and, as the classes expanded, finally in St James' Hall (as the Parish Hall was known). This was when links with our parish were formed.

The social side of the club has always been important. In the early days, Ted recalls, dances were held in The Carfax Assembly Rooms and The Forum. Now, though many of its members are elderly, they trip the light fantastic to live music in the John Betton Room. The musician is a member with an accordion who sings and plays not only dance music but the traditional songs of Poland too.

The club has about 108 paid-up members with about 50 regulars who turn up for special occasions. Ted counts our parish clergy as honorary members and is looking forwards to offering them drinks in the near future. The club moved into the Parish Hall on Friday 13th June 1975 and are responsible for the redecoration and running repairs to their part of the premises.

Their main activities include Aunt Sally - home matches on Wednesday evenings in summer – and a 'deadly' ladies darts team. Their ties with their homeland are strong. They recently collected hundreds of pounds for the Polish flood victims. At Christmas, parcels and gifts of money are sent to relatives whose life-style is pretty frugal. Many young people who attended those Saturday schools, now being fluent in the Polish language, are working in the land of their forebears as reps for British firms. This is a matter of pride to those who came to Britain over 50 years ago seeking the opportunity to live in peace and freedom and finding it here in Oxford.

Researched by Les Hemsworth



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Preparing for winter

The weather has been wet and the ground is sodden. Not the best of conditions to get out into the garden or on the allotment. It is too dank to hang out the washing, but I can still have a wander in the garden and pick a few flowers for the kitchen windowsill. That is a must for me to keep me grounded while washing up and a challenge in winter to find something in flower to grace the kitchen. Otherwise I tend not to linger too much. Mainly it is a dash to the compost bin with kitchen scraps or to gather some herbs for cooking.

Trips to the allotment are just to fetch some vegetables though we have a good growth of parsley and sage there, we have cabbages, parsnips, chard, beetroot and leeks. We have been wanting a delivery of manure this autumn, but the ground is just too wet for the tractor and trailer to come in on the grass paths to deliver. Maybe we will have a drier spell sometime? We have been flooded once in the last 30 years from the Boundary Brook that flows alongside our site. That happened because there was a blockage of debris but there are traps now to stop that. However, the stream can fill very quickly after heavy rain. I do feel sorry for all those who have suffered from the floods this autumn and glad that we live up a hill!

Our potatoes, onions and shallots are in storage in the shed and peas, beans, tomatoes, chillies, plums, raspberries are in the freezer. My other half went to Gloucester Green market this Wednesday to buy small onions for pickling, as we never grow enough. He loves them and the jars won't stay full for long, once they are ready. Today, you can buy vinegar for pickling that has already been spiced. I vividly remember my

mother boiling vinegar with the pickling spices, which you bought from Boots in a muslin bag, and everyone complaining of the smell that permeated the whole house!

I grew up on a farm with a huge garden and, having no freezer, never mind a fridge, my Mum would be pickling and preserving to feed the family. Runner beans would be salted down in earthenware jars and fruits preserved in Kilner jars. I still can't stand gooseberries! Jam and chutneys would be made too and the top shelves in the pantry would be full. She once had a go at preserving eggs with isinglass and I really can't remember whether it worked or not!

Our pantry was quite big. It had a brick thrawl* down one side and, at the end, a wide one with a drain, for slaughtering your pig. Not that we ever did! That was where the egg crates were. We kept quite a few hens and collecting and washing the eggs was a daily task. The crate would be collected weekly by the egg packers. *A thrawl is a sort of wide shelf at working height supported by arches of bricks underneath making more storage space.

This time of year, Mum would have already made her Christmas cake. (I, too, made mine a few weeks ago). The Christmas cake would be a special one. Ordinary fruit cake would be consumed fast in our household of eight. Every birthday would be celebrated with an iced cake. December was totally mad because 3 of us, including me, had birthdays that month, never mind Christmas! When each of us went back to university each term we would have a tin containing a fruit cake!

Enjoy Christmas, cakes and all!

Joan Coleman

Cowley Women's Institute

November has seen our WI go out not once, but twice. Firstly, we visited the Ashmolean where we learnt how coffee travelled from Istanbul to Oxford, how slaves were involved in the tea trade and how gunpowder can be used to create works of art. Our second outing was to Summertown to paint pottery.

Yet more creativity was had at our main meeting where we made Christmas wreaths from metal coat hangers and recycled material. I hope these will decorate our homes over the festive period.

We are looking forward to celebrating Christmas. We have planned to go out for a meal in Chalgrove and will be holding a party later on in December.

Cowley WI is a great source of friendship, entertainment and learning. Cowley WI welcomes women of all ages over 18, so please come and have enjoyable afternoons with us. We meet from 2pm – roughly 4pm in St James Church Centre on the third Wednesday of each month.

Sarah Lawrence, Secretary to Cowley WI

cwleywi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

PARISH MISSION AND SOCIAL PLANNER

DECEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
<p>SUN 1st Advent Sunday 08:45 <i>Big Brekkie</i> (CC)</p> <p>FRI 6th 7:00 <i>Parish Christmas dinner</i> (CC)</p> <p>FRI 13th-22nd <i>Christmas tree festival</i> (J)</p> <p>SAT 14th <i>Get in the picture</i> (TS)</p> <p>SUN 15th 10:00 (J), 10:30 (F) <i>Christingle services</i></p> <p>SAT 21st 2:00-3:30 <i>Messy Church Christmas party</i> (J)</p> <p>SUN 22nd 10:30 <i>Carol service</i> (F) 4:30 <i>Carol service</i> (J) followed by tea (CC)</p> <p>TUE 24th Christmas Eve 6:00 <i>Singing in the Corner House</i> (CH)</p>	<p><i>Christmas tree festival</i> (J)</p> <p>FRI 13th <i>Opening reception and blessing</i></p> <p><i>Festival opening times</i></p> <p>SAT 14th, 21st 10:00-4:00</p> <p>SUN 15th, 22nd 2:00-4:00</p> <p>and to order for groups, schools</p> <p>SAT 14th 7:30 <i>Festival concert – Jubilee Brass (ticketed)</i></p> <p>WED 18th 10:15-11:00 <i>Schools Christingle</i> 7:00 – 9:00 <i>festival open with informal concert</i></p>	<p>SAT 15th 4:00-6:00 <i>Games and Crumpets</i> (F)</p>

(CC) - St James Church Centre - Beauchamp Lane (J) - St James Church - Beauchamp Lane

(F) - St Francis Church - Hollow Way

(TS) - Templars Square

(A.A.L.C) - Anglican Asian Living Church (J & CC)

(CH) - Corner House pub

ARCHAEOLOGY IN OUR MIDST

The charming couple who are the leading lights of our Cowley History Group, Maggie and Eric, rang me last week to ask if I would like to experience an archaeological dig at the top of St Omer Road. How well they know me. Since I live in the said road and am highly enthusiastic about Cowley history how could I resist!



On a very wet, soggy afternoon I joined a similarly enthusiastic group to find out what had been uncovered on the former Murco garage site. Two busy people digging, and three expert archaeologists were there to give us information as we ploughed through lots of puddles and mud. The spokeswoman informed us that there had been a Roman pottery on a site over the road, which of course most of us knew already. The proof produced was a few shards of early Roman pottery. Very little else had been found except a large bone which they surmised was part of a pig and a lovely piece of medieval pottery which we concluded was a relic from the Hockmore Street settlement which was situated close to where we stood.

Someone mentioned the bakery which had been there for many years. The archaeologists knew nothing of this but our Cowley folk did and great stories ensued until we almost had a history club session on the spot. It turned out to be an interesting afternoon.

Rosanne Butler

CEF

We have had a busy year since our last report to the Cowley Chronicle. Numbers coming to the foodbank have remained high and some months we fed over 300 people especially during the winter. This was partly due to the problems people were encountering as their benefits were transferred to Universal Credit with the subsequent delays, sanctions and payments in arrears. Comparing numbers from January to July 2018 and 2019 we have seen an increase particularly among families with children. There continues to be many other reasons why people find themselves in difficulties as well as from changes in benefits and the need remains.

We continue to open the foodbank café at St Francis Church on Tuesdays and Fridays and at Littlemore Baptist Church on Thursday. We are pleased to announce that in mid-July we opened another foodbank café on a Monday and Wednesday in the Barton Neighbourhood Centre. This is in partnership with the Baptist Community Church run by their minister Pastor Paul Clarke and his associate Damion James. They will be particularly focusing on their local community in Barton. We are now able to provide a food bank service in Oxford 5 days a week.

The Holiday Scheme we run in the Summer and Christmas holidays to help certain families in receipt of free school meals during the term, has had an excellent uptake this summer.

CEF hosted a 'Best Practice' training day for all the Oxfordshire Foodbanks at St Francis in March. This was deemed to have been a helpful event and enabled the different groups to share their experiences, concerns and ideas during the day.

Jane and her husband Tom and their dog Moses once again completed a sponsored walk in September in aid of CEF. This year they walked from Canterbury to Oxford and her blog is still on the CEF website www.cefoxford.co.uk if you would like to read all about it.

Prayer needs:

- That CEF continues to meet the food needs of those in difficulties in Oxford, particularly during this time of the increasing numbers coming through our doors.
- That sufficient volunteers be available to run the CEF café and manage the warehouse particularly during this busy period over Christmas.
- That our volunteers continue to provide a 'safe place' for people to come to get their food.

Once again, the CEF Trustees thank all of you at St Francis Church and St James' Church who support CEF in many different ways.

Jane Benyon

DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

Mothers' Union

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Monday of month from 2.15 pm

16 December 2019

St James Church Centre

Women's Institute

Monthly Meeting on 3rd Wednesday of month from 2 – 4.30 pm

18 December 2019

St James Church Centre

Gardening

Last Saturday of the month – Gardening at St James Church/St James Church Centre (not December)

Film Club

Friday, 13 December 2019 – "A Song for the Season"

St James Church Centre, commencing at 6.30 pm with coffee and cake

Parish Walks

Monday, 2 December 2019 - Walk to The Perch, through Jericho, meeting outside Randolph Hotel at 2 pm.

Monday, 16 December 2019 – Details to be announced.

St James Church Committee

Monday, 2 December 2019, at 7 pm
Ranklin Room, St James Church Centre

Parish Christmas Dinner

Friday, 6 December 2019, at 7 pm
St James Church Centre

St Francis Church Committee

Sunday, 8 December 2019, at 12 noon
St Francis Church

Mission and Social Meeting

Monday, 9 December 2019, at 7.30 pm
88 Temple Road

Christmas Tree Festival

Friday, 13 – 22 December 2019
St James Church

Get in the Picture

Saturday, 14 December 2019
Templar Square

Messy Church Christmas Party

Saturday, 21 December 2019, 2 – 3.30 pm
St James Church

Singing in the Corner House

Tuesday, 24 December 2019 at 6 pm
The Corner House

Sunday Lunch

19 January 2020 at 12.45 pm
St James Church Centre

REMEMBER: Tuesday lunches at St James Church Centre from 12.30 pm
The last one before Christmas is Tuesday, 17 December 2019, and lunches will recommence on Tuesday, 7 January 2020