

**Reaching Out from the Cockfield
Benefice**

Covering the villages of:
Bradfield St Clare, Bradfield St
George w Lt Whelnetham, Bradfield
Combust, Cockfield, Felsham,
Gedding, Gt Whelnetham &
Stanningfield

**Issue 94
February 2022**

Dear friends

February brings with it some glimpses of Spring. I have seen snow drops in many places, including my own garden. They lift the heart and point us towards warming temperatures and longer days.

I'm sure that, like me, you have been listening or watching the drama that has been unfolding both here in the UK and in the Ukraine. It feels as though we no longer stand on solid ground; as those who govern us take stock of the events at no. 10 Downing Street in the past couple of years and world leaders think through their tactics for negotiating with Russia. I was also reading today of the sad news from Myanmar, which is going through a terrible time of virtual civil war.

It seems that it is only bad news that reaches us; and it can make life feel a little depressing.

But there is always good news to be found. In Cockfield, Mr Norman Gregory celebrated his 100th birthday at the end of January. Many of you will have seen him cycling around Cockfield, and further afield; or you will have seen the TV coverage that he

attracted. He is a remarkable man, and it is wonderful to see someone of such an age still retaining a zest for life.

In John's gospel Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' We have just celebrated 'Candlemas' at Lt Whelmetham Church, where there is no electricity and candles are used to light the building. It was a powerful reminder of Jesus' presence among us, and that whilst we follow Jesus, there will always be light in our lives.

We need not fear the darkness when we follow Christ, and when we have each other for support and encouragement.

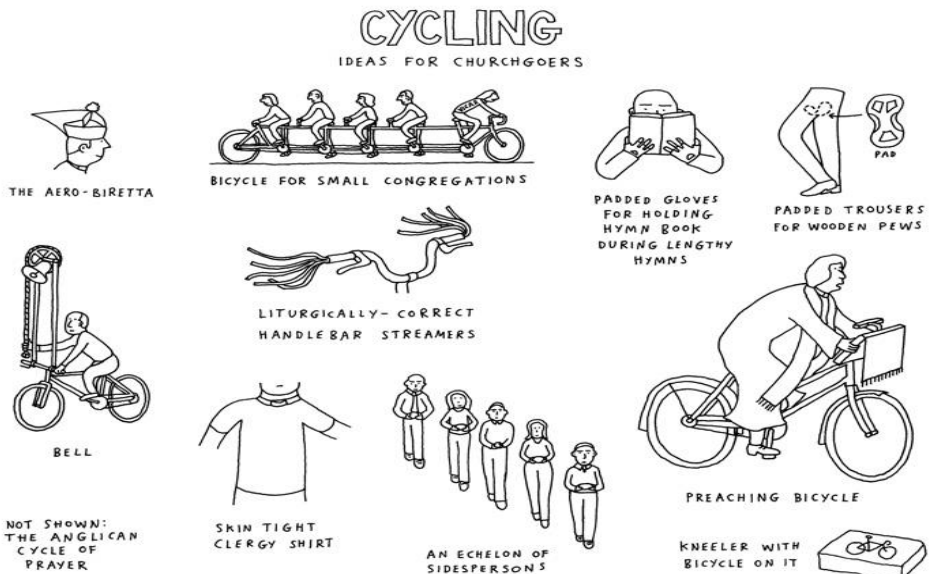
With every good wish.

Sharon

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CartoonChurch.com



Welcome to our new Churchwarden at Stanningfield!

Ben Jenkins was admitted as the new Churchwarden at Stanningfield by the Archdeacon; who also happens to be his dad, after he was confirmed by Bishop Mike at the Epiphany Service held at Stanningfield on 6th January.

He has attracted quite a bit of publicity as he is only 19, but he is taking it all in his stride!

Congratulations to Luke Hibbert, Tracey Fisher and Mark Fisher, who were also confirmed at the

service. It was a lovely evening, much enjoyed by all!

Refugees in Suffolk - a local perspective on a global issue Friday February 4th 7.30pm

Bury St Edmunds Amnesty and Suffolk Freedom From Torture groups are hosting a Zoom talk by Martin Simmonds from Suffolk Refugee Support.



If you would like to attend please email Maggie Cohen maggiecohen59381@gmail.com who will send you a Zoom link before the meeting.

There is no charge for "attending" but we are asking participants to make a donation to Suffolk Refugee Support which can be done via their website : www.suffolkrefugee.org.uk

Worshipping Together

For those readers new to our enlarged Benefice, *Worshipping Together* is a monthly informal Sunday morning service, at 10am, with pictures and words projected onto a screen, in which the congregation is encouraged to discuss the issues raised, after the service, should they wish. The objective of the service is to grow the faith of attenders and attract those on the fringe who rarely, if ever, go to church. We start a new series at Bradfield St George church in February and this article explains the thinking behind it.

An article by Matthew Parris in the Times newspaper in 2021 November entitled "Anglicanism was never really about God" has provoked a lot of debate in various sections of the press. In it he suggested that the Church of England was here to look after beautiful churches and provide comfortable familiarity of hymns in services for an elderly congregation that does not really believe in God. Reaching out, planting new churches, and targeting a younger generation were a mistake and bound to fail.

This was followed by a second article "The battle between good and evil is fantasy". In 2009 the same Parris wrote "'As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God.'" Comparing the effectiveness of Christian and purely secular aid agencies he continued, referring to Christians, "It would suit me to believe that their honesty, diligence and optimism in their work was unconnected with personal faith." Despite this desire, he had to admit that Christians were shaped by their faith.

What made him change from admiring Christians, with faith, in 2009 to doubting that Anglicans had much faith, in the UK, in 2021?

By contrast, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has been a consistent proponent of the benefit of religion. In his last book before he died, he argued

that morality is indispensable for society and that for morality to survive, religion is essential.

In his words, religion builds communities, aids law abidingness and helps us think long-term. Rabbi Sacks spoke as a Jew and one of the most respected religious leaders in our country.

Christianity is the world's largest religion, but in the UK only 2% of the population regularly attend church on a Sunday. It is up to us to share the Gospel, to help grow our church congregations above the 2% and to reach a younger generation. Is our reluctance to do so a reason for Parris to condemn us?

Our new series is designed to give us the confidence to explain what we believe and share our faith with others. With the title, "Why Follow Jesus?" over the next eight months members of our ministry team and others will be answering questions and considering the following themes.

Why follow Jesus?

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|---------|--|
| 27 Feb | As Christians, what do we believe? |
| 20 Mar | Was Jesus more than just a good man? |
| 24 Apr | Why did Jesus have to die? |
| 22 May | What makes the Church of England distinctive? |
| 26 Jun | Why say sorry to God? |
| 24 Jul | Why did Jesus pray and what is the point of prayer? |
| 28 Aug | New life in Christ for all! |
| 25 Sept | Why do we need to go to Church in the 21st Century? |

Do come along and bring a friend!

**Aconite and Snowdrop walk
@ West Lodge
Bradfield St George IP30 0DL**

**10 a.m. — 12 noon
Saturday 12th February 2022**



**£3 entry includes
refreshments:
Coffee/tea/hot
chocolate
Cake or biscuit**

**Cake stall, book stall and
White elephant stall
Fund raising for Bradfield St
George Church**



From the Parish registers

As we approach that time of the year when we have more weddings and baptisms taking place in our Churches, I thought it would be a good idea to mention these in Reaching Out.

Therefore from next month there will be a slot in Reaching Out giving details of those who have been baptized or married for prayers and thanksgiving.

In January there were two baptisms, of Luke Hibbert, who was also confirmed at Stanningfield, and Marley Bates, baptized at Bradfield St George.

Canon Sharon

'Thank you for the Rain'

'Thank You for the Rain' tells the compelling story of Kisulu, a smallholder farmer in Kenya who uses a video camera to capture the life of his family in the face of climate change. This award winning film is a rare and personal insight into the cost of the climate crisis. We shall be showing the film in the benefice later in the month, so watch out for news of this on our facebook page and in the pew sheet.

New Book Group

Melanie Salinger of Cockfield is starting up a Women's Book Club, where the book being discussed will be the Bible, beginning on Thursday 10th February at her home. It will meet fortnightly, start time of 10am, with tea/coffee/cake til 10.30am, then discussion til 11.30am – followed by a short time of prayer. If you are interested in coming along do get in touch with Melanie. Her email address is: melaniesalinger@yahoo.co.uk

Coffee Morning Lent Course from 10am-11.30 in Horringer St Leonard's which will be open to all from Ash Wednesday.

This will be led by Rev Canon Max Osborne, Helen Woodroffe and Craig Young. The Course has been written by the Venerable John Cox (formerly Archdeacon of Sudbury) and is called 'From the Jordan to Galilee' and based on the Gospel of Saint Mark. The intention is to begin with Coffee around tables with the obligatory cake from 10am and to begin our discussions and reflections around 10. 20am allowing lots of opportunity for discussion.

10am-11.30am Horringer St Leonard

Session One Ash Wednesday 2 March

Session Two Wednesday 9 March

Session Three Wednesday 16 March

Session Four Wednesday 23 March

Session Five Wednesday 30 March

Cockfield Benefice Services & Events – February 2022

Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at www.cockfieldbenefice.com

Sunday 6 February 4th before Lent	9.30am Morning Prayer CW - Stanningfield 10am Communion CW - Bradfield St George 10am Morning Prayer CW – Cockfield 6pm SixtoSeven – Felsham Village Hall – Gerry Blake will be speaking on 'How to Reach the World' thinking of Bible translation with particular reference to South Sudan.' Refreshment and fellowship from 6-6.30pm followed by talk.
Sunday 13 February 3rd before Lent	8am Communion BCP – Cockfield 10am Morning Prayer BCP – Gedding 10am Communion CW – Bradfield St Clare 4pm Healing Service – Gt Whelnetham
Sunday 20 February 2nd before Lent	9.30am Communion CW – Stanningfield 10am Communion CW – Cockfield 10am Family Worship – Felsham 4pm Evening Prayer – Bradfield St Clare
Sunday 27 Feb Next before Lent	9.30am Communion – Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together – Bradfield St George 10am Communion BCP - Gedding

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A service of Celtic Morning Prayer is held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am
A prayer group meets via zoom every Wednesday at 2pm via zoom. For more details contact Rev Canon Sharon Potter at revsharon2@gmail.com or phone 01284 828599 or 07825-086063