St Mary's Acton St David's Wettenhall & St Oswald's Worleston January 2024



The Cross Country Parishes
of
Acton with Worleston, Church
Minshull and Wettenhall

Happy New Year!

When I told a friend that I was due to write the January 'letter' she said 'Well, I suppose you'll just need a few pious platitudes about fresh starts, hopes, resolutions,



celebrations, and then best wishes for the unknown year ahead. That's what people expect.' $\,$

Perhaps she was being cynical, but there may be some truth in what she said. Often at New Year we do talk about our wishes - that in 2024 the economy will boom, that the Health Service will get a new lease of life, that 'our' party will win the next General Election, that the world will take Green issues seriously, that our families, friends, and colleagues will thrive and that 2024 will be a truly memorable year. We know, however, that they are just that - hopeful wishes.

Before that, in the last days of 2023 we had reminders in the press and the media of the major happenings of the year, in our country at least. Of course, the Coronation came at the top of the list, and would perhaps have been the most important event to go down in our history books. Sadly, however, at the end of the year, the terrible war in Gaza dominated the news to the extent that the equally horrific war in Ukraine, took a back seat.

All the other events seemed fairly unimportant in comparison.

What then should we do, or can we do, with our thoughts, hopes and wishes for 2024?

At the risk of being blamed for 'pious platitudes' then I can suggest that we do what Christians have always done - pray. Very often our prayer leads to action and practical help has gone out to refugees from war, and those nearer home who are disadvantaged and vulnerable.

As to families, friends and colleagues, then I know of a couple who keep their Christmas cards and taking one card a day throughout the year, they pray for that person or family. We could all do that.

Otherwise, we can polish up the words that I suggested we learn a year ago and turn them into our New Year Resolution for 2024. They are words from St Paul -- 'There is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.' These words will help us through the uncertain year ahead.

I hope that my friend is not too disappointed with these thoughts and suggestions! Happy New Year!

Isobel

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Wishing you all a Very Happy New Year

Sunday Services

Acton

7th Jan 11:00 am Communion, 6:30 pm Christ in Quiet

14th Jan 8:00 am Communion,11:00 am Morning Prayer

21st Jan 10:00 am Messy Church

28th Jan 8:00 am Communion, 11:00 am Morning Prayer

4th Feb 11:00 am United at Reaseheath, 6:30 pm Christ in Quiet

Church Minshull

7th Jan 11:00 am Service of the Word

14th Jan 11:00 am Cafe Church

21st Jan 11:00 am Communion

28th Jan 11:00 am Messy Church

4th Feb 11:00 am United at Reaseheath

Worleston

7th Jan No Service

14th Jan 9:30 am Communion

21st Jan No Service

28th Jan 9:30 am Morning Prayer

4th Feb 11:00 am United at Reaseheath

Wettenhall

7th Jan 11:00 am Morning Prayer

14th Jan 11:00 am Communion

21st Jan 11:00 am All Age

28th Jan 4:00 pm Informal Communion

4th Feb 11:00 am United at Reaseheath

	St David's Church Wettenhall			
		Sidespersons	Cleaning and Flowers	
7th	Jan	Mrs A Hignett	Mrs H Moss	
14th	Jan	Mrs A Brooks	Mrs A Nicholas	
21st	Jan	Brownies	IVIIS A NICHOIAS	
28th	Jan	Informal	Mrs A Brooks	
4 th	Feb	United at Reaseheath	IVIIS A DIOUKS	
Visit: www.wettenhallchurch.org.uk				

Remembrance Sunday

We were very privileged to have Julie Summers to speak to us at the Remembrance service in November. Julie has written a book on British and Commonwealth War Cemeteries. She provided us with a fascinating insight into how the Commonwealth War Graves Commission began and, along with a series of slides, she detailed the tremendous work that it provides, giving comfort and support to serving families of all ranks.

We are greatly indebted to her and to Chris for his technical help.

Following the service the collection of £155 was forwarded to the Royal British Legion.

From The Register

Burial of Ashes

15th November 2023

Marjorie May Brereton

We extend our deepest sympathy to Marjorie's family and friends.

Winter Evening Services

For the remaining winter months of January and February it has been decided to trial a change of time for the Informal Communion on the fourth Sunday of the month. On January 28th and February 25th the service will take place at 4pm rather than 6.30pm . This is only for the winter time.

Happy New Year 2024



Coffee and Cake

The next meetings will be on 4th January and 1st February from 10-12 noon in Church.

Everyone is very welcome to pop in for as little or as long as they wish.





Christmas Lights



The BIG switch on of the St. Davids Church Christmas tree outside lights took place on Sunday 3rd December, following the Christingle service. A huge THANK YOU to Ang, Simon and Ann Hignett and all the Hancock and Walton families for their help and support at St. Davids – oh and we mustn't forget Sarah and Isabelle and Alice too.







Thank You

Sincere thanks to Ann Hignett for the beautifully decorated Christmas tree inside St. Davids. Also to Heather and Chris for the window decorations and especially the brightly coloured display of lights on the tree outside church.

It was certainly a great example of a light shining in the darkness!

Darnhall Village Hall

Darnhall Show was held on Sunday 2^{nd} July and this years chosen charity was for the Stroke Association. The committee are pleased to say that after the success of this year's Darnhall Show we are able to make a donation of £750 to them.

Several members of the Darnhall Show committee gathered together at Darnhall Village Hall to present Stroke Association with a cheque for £750 on Wednesday $22^{\rm nd}$ November.

Next year's show date will be Sunday $7^{\rm th}$ July. Entries have already started coming in so if you are interested in attending with a stall/attraction/entertainment, please get in touch with me Sue Langley suelangley 64@hotmail.com



Darnhall Brownies

Congratulations to the ten new Brownies enrolled at the end of November. Well done and welcome!



Darnhall and Wettenhall WI

The December meeting of our WI is always a Christmas meal to be enjoyed together in the village hall. This year was no exception, and Grants Butchers from Minshull's Nursery supplied a delicious meal for us. Slices of turkey, ham, and pork, with jacket potatoes, salads and gravy all added up to a feast. Afterwards there was a choice of desserts, with cream or ice-cream and second servings all round if required! It was an evening of friendship and a sense of looking forward to the festive season with family and friends. Everyone received a Christmas present, there were very many Christmas cards exchanged, and a prize raffle completed the gifts. The WI committee have worked hard throughout the year to ensure that each meeting is interesting, varied, and informative.

A crafting session to make Christmas wreaths also took place the following day. Lots of holly, ivy, baubles, and ribbon created beautiful wreaths to grace any front door. We were expertly guided by Angela Hancock to ensure success with our creations. With this December meeting and wreath making session the committee have excelled in providing a perfect end to the programme for 2023. Everyone has a rest in January and then we meet again on Tuesday 6th February 2024.













Christingle Service and Calveley School

Every year St. David's Christingle service is held on the first Sunday of Advent to start the Christmas season with a joyous celebration of the Earth and God's role in creation and the story of Jesus' birth. This year was no exception, with thunder and lightning, more water sprayed across the church than Noah's flood and the making of the Christingles themselves. We have Mary Drinkall and all those people who prepared the oranges, glow sticks, cocktail sticks of sweets and ribbons to thank for the Christingles being ready for the children. Everyone put together their Christingle in record time and sweets were being enjoyed before the final hymn. Calveley school choir gave us beautiful and enthusiastic versions of The Twelve Days of Christmas, Away in a Manger, We Wish You a Merry Christmas, and Jingle Bells. Thank you to all the teachers and helpers for rehearsing these songs and helping us with the service. The service finished perfectly with a lovely Bible reading.

At the end of the service everyone took their orange home [most of the sweets had already been eaten!] and left the church to go out into a cold and frosty evening. The chilly weather was brightened up with the lighting of the Christmas tree in the churchyard, a sight that can be seen throughout Wettenhall until Twelfth Night.





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St Mary's Church, Acton Sidespersons		
7 th Jan	Ena Furber and Gill Evans	
14 th Jan	Lewis-Jones Family	
21 st Jan	Tracey and Peter Foster	
28 th Jan	Susan and Charles Hull	
4 th Feb	Sandra and Mike Houlston	
Visit: www.stmarysacton.org		

Tea at the Tower Guided Walks

The next walks are:

7th January 2024

4th February 2024

Tea at the Tower is open every Sunday from 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm. On the above dates there is a guided walk departing the church at 12:45 pm. Nick organises circular walks varying between 3 to 5 miles, then returning to the church for a refreshing cup of tea or coffee and a slice of delicious cake.

The pace of the walks is relaxed, and the routes generally involve canal towpath and lane walking. The footpaths should be good (also hopefully dry?) and only a small number of stiles are negotiated. Stout outdoor shoes or walking shoes / boots are recommended.

All are welcome including dogs on leads

For further information please phone Nick Harley, Lead Walker, on 01270-620612 or 07710983125.

Churchyard Maintenance

This happy gang of volunteers spent a sunny Saturday morning clearing and cleaning some of the graves and borders in the Churchyard, for which we are all very grateful. If you would like to help maintain our beautiful church grounds, do join the Spring clean team on Saturday 17th of February, at 10 am. More details from Philip Percival 01270 624158.



Holly Holy Day, Battle of Nantwich Events

The Church will be open from 9am until 11:30am serving hot drinks and buttered toast. At 10am Mike Lea (local historian) will give a talk: 'The Civil War - Unwrapped!' inside the Church. At 11am a guided walk will head off to view the battlefields without treading through the muddy fields! Please come and enjoy any or all of these events (donations are gratefully received). The Sealed Knot plan to send some of their soldiers up to the church to join us!

The 'Battle of Nantwich' occurred during the first English Civil War (1642-1646) and was fought between the Parliamentarians (Roundheads) and the Royalists (Cavaliers) who were loyal to Charles I. At the end of 1643, the Royalist Army had secured much of the North West and Cheshire with the exception of Nantwich where, surrounded by Royalists, the Parliamentarian garrison held out under siege. Namptwiche, as it was then called, was Cheshire's second major town and very important due to its strategic position on the road to Chester. A Parliamentarian force under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax (1612-71) advanced from Lincolnshire to relieve the town. This army engaged the Royalists in the Henhull area to the west and defeated them in the Battle of Namptwiche. As Fairfax's forces marched on Acton, Col Richard Gibson deployed four Royalist regiments of infantry to meet them. The Royalists fell back to Acton Church where Col Gibson surrendered to Fairfax. Many of the Officers took refuge in Acton Church and were also taken prisoner after surrendering. The battle took place on 25th January 1644 and it was a Parliamentarian victory. To celebrate the Parliamentarian victory people wore sprigs of holly in their hair and hats.

For further enquiries, please contact Stephan Davies Tel. 07731800663.









The Proms at Acton

After a very busy day, Acton Church hosted a 'Proms Concert' on the evening of Remembrance Sunday, 12th November, with the proceeds being given to the Royal British Legion.

The large audience was warmly welcomed into the church by Church members and settled down to enjoy a varied musical programme performed by the Nantwich Concert Orchestra together with Jessica Thayer with her exquisite soprano voice and accompanied by Stephen Clay on the piano.

Union flags and poppies were in abundance together with a floral tribute consisting of three large poppies and a draped union flag suspended over the centre aisle, created by Deana Emerton.

The programme included modern compositions and old favourites and closed with the singing of Land of Hope and Glory and an encore!

This was a highly successful concert organised and hosted by Stephan Davies, which will be remembered for some time to come.

The evening raised £2738.20 to support the good works of The Royal British Legion.

Eileen Allwood & Gina Haigh















A representative from Nantwich Concert Band said: "Thank you St Mary's Church, Acton, for having us back this year to perform a Proms Concert. Special

thanks also to Jessica and accompanist Stephen for joining us. Most of all, thank you to the incredible audience - the church was packed. We're so glad you enjoyed it!"

John Dwyer said: "As President of the Nantwich and District Branch of the Royal British Legion I was delighted to attend the Proms at Acton concert which was to raise money for the Poppy Appeal.

"The concert was absolutely fantastic with the Nantwich Concert Band leading the audience on a journey through a musical wonderland of tunes old and new. The conclusion to the concert was Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance which got the entire audience on its feet to sing Land of Hope and Glory. Oh what a night!"



Stephan Davies, St Mary's Acton, said: "It was wonderful to see the church so full of happy people enjoying such fabulous music - a huge thank you goes to Nick Birch and the Nantwich Concert Band, Jessica Thayer and Stephen Clay for sharing their talents so generously".

Bell Frame Maintenance

Over the past six months a mammoth task has taken place in the belfry. After an inspection by Taylors of Loughborough it was reported by them that a considerable amount of work was needed to be done on the bell frame.

After much discussion, researching and sourcing the correct materials required, work began in August.

The first stage of the task was the wooden frame to be thoroughly cleaned and then painted with a high quality wood preservative which was completed over a few weeks by David Allman, John Batchelor with assistance at times from Carole Sturgess. Following this the work on the metal frame, supports, and bell headstocks began. This was a very time consuming task lasting a few months, which included the paint and rust being removed with angle grinders which took many hours to complete. The next stage was painting with a rust inhibitor, followed by two coats of primer and then two coats of undercoat and finally two coats of top coat which was very kindly donated by Reaseheath College and is much appreciated.

Anyone who has been in the bell chamber will appreciate the complexity of this work as this was by no means an easy undertaking. Climbing under and over the bell



frame required a certain amount of agility.

I can now report that this huge and time consuming task has been completed and our thanks must go to David and John who over the months have probably spent over a 100 hours working on this project giving up their own time to ensure that the bells of Acton ring out for many more years.













Christmas Tree Festival





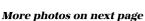
At St Mary's Acton, Christmas celebrations were in full swing on the weekend of the 8 & 9 December. Over 35 trees, many depicting nursery rhymes from our childhoods, were admired by visitors from far and wide. Trees had been individually decorated by local groups, members of the congregation and local businesses. Many of the trees had handmade decorations designed to depict specific nursery rhymes. In the centre of the church, depicting 'Hickory Dickory Dock', a giant 6ft wide clock reading 1 o'clock, with teasel mice running up and down was our central exhibit, designed by Mrs Deana Emerton.















A celebrity dropped in, Gyles Brandreth pictured with his daughter Aphra and local Christmas jumper enthusiast Bob.

On Friday, the event was opened by children from Acton School singing Carols skilfully led by Hayley Rogers. Saturday saw Concordia Choir, led by Allison Phillips, entertain visitors with tranquil festive songs. The Christmas Concert performed by Acton Operatic Society on Saturday evening was a sell-out, for which we welcomed over 200 visitors to our beautiful church. The events manager, Mr Stephan Davies led our team and compered, ensuring the evening was enjoyed by all.

Acton Operatic Society sang a mixture of festive numbers and songs from musicals to everyone's delight.

Sunday afternoon was enhanced by our local folk band starring Mr Steve Jones. Together with an interval for a solo from a visiting soprano, Miss Sophie Lewis-Jones a lead chorister from Chester Cathedral, the atmosphere in the church was electric. Visitors were encouraged to enjoy the multitude of decorated trees through participating in a quiz. A great weekend was had by all.









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Cross Country Pages



this month to

Cameron Mather Isabelle Herbert **Chloe Yarwood Jack Harding** Ella Dav Katie Drinkall **Elliot Nicholas** Kiere Pelle **Fallon Ward Liberty Howarth** George Drinkall Sienna Palin Imogen Bond William Herbert Hannah Boyd William Jones

Special Wishes

Happy Birthday to **Zoe Sutton** who is 94 on 3 January. Very best wishes for a wonderful day from all at Acton Church and across the parishes.



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Ladies' Lunch

Thursday 11th January The Barbridge Inn, Barbridge 12:30 pm - Cost: £12.50 For further details contact: Heather 528755, Isobel (624521). Ann (528273) or Joyce (624158) Please book with Joyce

Mobile Library

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The Twelve Disciples; St Andrew

The first of all the disciples is said to be Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter and the man who introduced Peter to Jesus. Andrew was a follower of John the Baptist and is said to be the first of the disciples to recognise Jesus as the Messiah. He was born around 10 AD in Bathsaida in

Galilee.

an area with a strong Greek tradition which gave him the name Andrew. meaning manly or brave. Andrew was a fisherman alongside his brother Peter. both becoming 'fishers of men' with Jesus, living together in Capernaum. They are said to have used their boat when Jesus spoke to crowds on the shores of Galilee, and it was their boat in the miracle of Jesus filling a boat with a huge catch of fish after a barren night of

miracle when he brought forward the boy with the loaves and fishes to feed the 5000 as Jesus preached. Andrew remained with Jesus throughout His ministry, staying with Jesus until the last supper when He was betrayed. After Jesus died Andrew went out to spread the Gospel, travelling around the Black Sea and the Dnieper River to Kiev and Novgorod. After his own death he became the Patron Saint of Ukraine. Russia, and Romania. Legend records that he travelled to Constantinople [now Istanbul] in 38AD and installed its first Bishop. From there he moved on to Achaea [now Greece] and was martyred in the city of Patras. He was crucified, as legend has it, on an X shaped cross or saltire, although this legend did not become widespread until the Middle

fishing. Andrew was named in another

Ages. His body was buried in Patras, where it remained until 375 AD, when a monk, named Regulus, dreamt that he must take the bones and sail until shipwrecked. Then he was to build a shrine in that location. He was shipwrecked in Fife, Scotland, and so

Andrew became the Patron Saint of Scotland and his Saltire remains the flag of Scotland to this day. Despite this legend, it is more likely that the relics were brought to Scotland by the Bishop of Hexham in 732 AD, a well-known collector of religious relics. Andrew's relics are believed to have been dispersed to Amalfi in Italy in 1208 AD, where the town is

dedicated to him. In 1461 the skull was taken to St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican but returned to Patras in 1964. The saltire cross was held in Marseilles in France, but it also returned to Patras in 1980. These relics are now kept together and celebrated each year on 30th November, St. Andrew's feast day.



Recipe

Winter Rice Pudding

This recipe is taken from 'Miss Read's Country Cooking'. Miss Read was the author of many popular books about a country schoolteacher in the 1950's and 60's.

Ingredients

- 2oz/50g rice
- ត 2oz/50g sugar
- 靣 1oz/25g butter
- 靣 1 pint milk
- 1oz/25g chopped glacé cherries ត
- ō 1oz/25g seedless raisins or sultanas
- 百 1oz/25g candied peel



Method

- Put milk, rice, sugar and butter into a greased pie dish.
- Stir in the dried fruit, and finely grated lemon rind.
- Cook very slowly in a gentle oven for 2 hours at least. Stir once or twice during cooking to improve texture.

This is ideal when you are cooking a casserole for the main course.

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28 th Jan	Marilyn and David Booth	Jo Bailey	
4 th Feb	United at Reaseheath		
Flowers		Cleaning	
14 th Jan	Jo Bailey		
28 th Jan	Jill Alexander	Jan Marilyn and David Booth	
4 th Feb	United at Reaseheath	Feb Lynne & Ginge Ablard	
Visit: www.worlestonchurch.org.uk			

The Royal British Legion

On Remembrance Sunday the collection was taken to send to the work of the Legion. St Oswald's added to this with a contribution from Church funds so that the total sent to the Legion was £150. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the valuable work of the Royal British Legion.



Many thanks from St Oswald's to Mrs McDonough and her staff at the school, who enabled us to put up our big tree again. We're grateful that they gave their time to help us make the church fit to celebrate Christmas.







Coffee and Cake

Saturday 6th January from 10-12 noon in Church.

Come along and enjoy Coffee, Cake and Chat.

Everyone is very welcome to pop in for as little or as long as they wish.





Worleston WI

New President and Christmas Fun

It has been a busy couple of months for Worleston WI.

November brought our AGM and Produce show. Gwen Winstanley won the overall cup for Produce, Jeanne Soddy the overall Craft Cup and Annita Grunner for Best in Show for her Coffee and Walnut Cake.

There was also a vote by the members for the new president who will be Anita Grunner from January 2024 taking over from Marilyn Booth who has been the President for the last 12 months.

Early in December, The Malbank Group had their Christmas Carol Service at Nantwich Methodist Church in Hospital Street. Members from each of the eleven WI's in the group were present and members from Burleydam, Aston, Worleston, Nantwich Dabber Dames, Marbury and Willaston presented readings from the Bible or written poems. There were carols sung and afterwards everyone met for a cup of tea, mince pies and shortbread biscuits. A great time was had by all.

December brought the WI Christmas dinner at the Royal Oak, 29 members and guests met there for a lovely evening with a variety of Christmas fayre.

At Acton Parish Church the Worleston WI ladies dressed one of the Christmas trees in the theme of a nursery rhyme. They had chosen 'Mary, Mary Quite Contrary'. A number of members of the Craft Group had made all of the decorations for the tree and this will be on display in the church with others for the rest of December.







Happy New Year 2024





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Calveley School

December got off to a great start. An athletics team of Year 3 and 4 students took part in a competition at Tarporley High School, and WON! A huge achievement for all involved. Mrs Rudd, who accompanied the children said 'The children showcased remarkable sportsmanship and athletic prowess, embodying the spirit of teamwork and dedication.' Another super event to get Christmas started was Christingle at St David's church. A choir of 20 children performed Christmas songs they'd been practising and they learnt about the creation story with their Christingles.

Beech and Willow class enjoyed a fantastic trip to St Mary's Church and Nantwich fire station. The morning was spent at the church where they discovered the meanings and stories behind the beautiful windows, as well as the symbolism in the font, pulpit and lectern. The organist arrived to give the children a really special performance where they could learn about all the different sounds and how you play not only with your hands but with your feet too. After lunch the children walked to the Fire Station and this did not disappoint either. They were able to try on the equipment, sit in the fire engine and see all the flashing lights and ask the firefighters lots of questions.



















Happy New Year 2024

Worleston School

We have had another exciting month here at St Oswald's. From exciting trips to the cinema to special visitors in school, we have had lots of fun.

Our visitors have included a visit from the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, the local PCSO and even the fire brigade. Our youngest children in Owls were fortunate enough to have PCSO Jones visit them who taught them all about what the Police do and how they help us. As a whole, we had a fantastic day when Cheshire Fire and Rescue came. They spoke to the children about their job and when you should ring 999. They took time to answer questions and even gave every child in the school a chance to look at the fire engine and how it works.

This month, we have also been busy raising money for Children in Need and also want to say a huge thank you to our fantastic PTA for an amazing school fayre. The children had the opportunity to buy cakes, play games, visit Santa and even head to a secret shop to wrap up presents for their family members. It was such a special occasion for us to come together as a school family and begin the Christmas season. On behalf of the St Oswald's family, we want to wish you the warmest blessings for the New Year.







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Worleston Music School Student Spotlight

My name is Maria and I have been playing piano for about 6 years.

I started by playing the cornet for a couple years before moving onto the piano. I played for a year before starting with Mr Bassey and I'm now currently working towards my grade 8 practical. It's been such a pleasure to play the piano for the last few years and Mr Bassey has taught me



so much about the piano and different composers and genres.

I plan to work towards a diploma later on, as well as developing more technique through more challenging pieces.



At Worleston Music School adults and children can learn any orchestral instrument and piano. Free introductory lesson given!

Worleston Community Orchestra is open to all grade 3 and above orchestral players and meets at Worleston Village Hall Fridays 7pm term time. Please contact us if you would like to join the fun.

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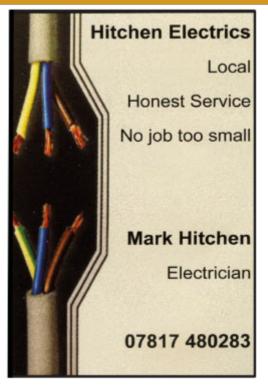
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