



Judge a man by his questions rather than his answers. Voltaire



Messy Church shines on St Boniface (full report and more photos on page 5)

Bunbury Aldersey School is outstanding – it's official!

Bunbury Aldersey School is proud to announce that at their recent OFSTED inspection in November, the school was judged outstanding overall. They were also judged to be an outstanding church school.

One of the comments that the staff regularly receive from visitors is how friendly and welcoming the school feels and that it has a bright and happy ethos. This is now official because that's also what the inspectors said!

Comments in the report include: 'Bunbury Aldersey is an outstanding

primary school. Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points because of outstanding teaching and an exciting, highly-effective curriculum. Key drivers in pupils' outstanding achievement are their exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning, their high level of attendance and their excellent spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils are mature, responsive, self-controlled and well-rounded young people.'

Headteacher, Alyson Thacker said, "This report is a real accolade for

the whole village. I hope that the community of Bunbury is as proud of their school as we are!"



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Who we are

Until a new vicar is appointed, please call readers Peter & Kath Collinge for pastoral support on 01829 260077 or the churchwardens for all general enquiries (details below).

St Boniface

Churchwardens

Neil Dewson-Smyth 261680
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Colin Stanyer 07791 869674

Organist

Andrew Dean 261222

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John Mason 733971

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Margaret Bourne 260944

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Churchwardens

Brigid Sayce 260865
Elizabeth Marren 01270 528556

Secretary

Ann Posnett 261154

Organist

Ann Badrock 260343

Calveley

Churchwardens

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Organist

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The Link

We are always happy to get calls/ emails about The Link. Please contact us if you would like to advertise your business, or if you want to send us your news, views and pictures.

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Community news

We are delighted to announce that **Jon and Lindsay Cox**, proprietors of the Yew Tree Inn, are celebrating the



arrival of a new member of the team: their first son, **Jasper Noel**, born on 23 November. Jon's sister Rachel was not going to be outdone and gave birth to her

first child Pdraig Oliver Finnegan three weeks earlier. Judging by the photo, the South Notts. hunt will soon have a new member.

Congratulations to **Sue and Caroline Briggs-Harris** on the birth of their baby, Joseph.

We welcome **India Rose Baker**, daughter of Kevin and Phillippa Baker, baptised at St Boniface on Sunday 27 November 2011.



We also welcome **Daisy Florence Cooke**, daughter of Claire and David Cooke, baptised on Sunday 4 December 2011.

Congratulations to **Henry Thomas James Wilson**, son of Phillip and Joanna Wilson, baptised at St Boniface on Sunday 8 January 2012.

Leap-year birthday celebrations to rival the Olympics are on in Bunbury! Depending on how you count, **Justin and Tristan Bird**, born on 29 February, are about to turn either 12... or 3. Mum Nicky says, "The year of their "proper" birthdays is always eventful. In an ideal world they

would have a summer party along the lines of the Bunbury Fun Day with everyone they have ever known from their first weeks in the neonatal ward at the Countess of Chester, through toddler groups at both Tarporley and Bunbury, friends from Hebden Green, Utkinton and Bunbury Primary Schools as well as all their friends and neighbours both in the village and in Anglesea!"



This year's **Women's World Day of Prayer** service will be held at Bunbury Methodist Church at 2.30pm on Friday 2nd March. The speaker will be the Revd Sue Levitt. The service has been prepared by the women of Malaysia and the theme is "Let Justice Prevail".

Tiverton Methodist Chapel Anniversary will be held at 2.30pm on Sunday 1st April.

We pray for **Rick** and for the parishes of Bunbury and Tilstone Fearnall and especially their **Churchwardens** and **Lay Readers** now we are entering a vacancy. We pray for the work of our representatives in the selection process, **Neil** and **John**, and that we will soon welcome a new vicar to lead us forward. We also pray for the families of **Teddy Bacon, Dorothy Ennion, Norman Woodward** and **Evelyn McDermott** who have died, and for anyone who has lost a loved one.

More than 30 local singers participated in the choir for the **St Boniface Carol Service** this year, wonderfully led by Nicola Howbrigg. Many thanks to her and to all who gave up their time for rehearsals.

There is a new **bus service to Crewe and Nantwich** from Bunbury from 2 January 2012. Buses 55 and 55A will operated on schooldays in primary school term time, Monday to Friday. Please see

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk for times.

In November the Bunbury Good Companions organised and hosted a Quiz night in the Village Hall to raise money for the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign. Eleven teams participated in a lively, light-hearted contest before the 'Nomads' were declared the overall winners. It was a very enjoyable evening, which raised £510 for this worthy cause. A cheque was handed over in December to a delighted Charles Horton, a volunteer fundraising manager. Thanks to all those who came along and those who worked hard to make the evening such a great

success. Special thanks to Mike Ridley and Mairi and Bob Harris for organising the questions.

In November Early Birds preschool were collecting **Bags2School**. We received a massive 800kg of second hand clothing, shoes and textiles. This activity raised a wonderful £400 for the preschool and we would like to thank Bunbury residences for their donations. We will be collecting again in May - a perfect time for that spring clean and getting rid of any unwanted winter items.

Would anyone like to help the children with the **school vegetable plots**? If so, please contact Elaine Crotty at Bunbury School.

A church de-clutter and spring clean will be held on Saturday 3 March, 10am-1pm at St Boniface. Please come and help! It would be good to have representatives from each group (Kingdom Kids, Young Christians, Musicians, etc.) to sort and spring clean their own stored items.

Paul Cook, curator of the Ness gardens, will give a talk at the **Bunbury Gardening Club** meeting on 21 February. For more information, please contact Adrian Caine on 261163.

The copy deadline for the March issue of the Link is **Monday 6 February** and the magazine will be available for distribution on **Friday 24 February**.



Church diary for February

Wednesday 1 February	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 5 February	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion	St Jude's St Boniface Calveley
Wednesday 8 February	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 12 February	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion 4.30pm Evensong	St Jude's St Boniface St Boniface
Wednesday 15 February	10.00am Holy Communion	St Boniface
Sunday 19 February	8.00am Holy Communion 9.30am Morning Service 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Family Worship	St Boniface St Jude's St Boniface Calveley
Wednesday 22 February	10.00am Holy Communion 7.30pm Compline	St Boniface St Boniface
Sunday 26 February	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Communion	St Jude's St Boniface
Wednesday 29 February	10.00am Holy Communion 7.30pm Compline	St Boniface St Boniface
Sunday 04 March	9.30am Holy Communion 10.00am Family Worship 11.00am Holy Communion	St Jude's St Boniface Calveley

Give us two minutes

John Ellis

If you had a motto, what would it be? Ready for anything

It's a celebrity beer call. Whom would you like to invite?

Well, it wouldn't be beer but red Italian wine - in Florence. I would invite two people - Lorenzo de Medici and Domenico Ghirlandaio (the artist who did the original Last Supper, the inspiration for da Vinci).

What would you call your autobiography? It seemed like a good idea at the time!

What was your first job? I was a mixer in a cement works, producing concrete road pieces, drains etc. It turned out that, because we didn't have protective gloves, I had no fingerprints left when I joined the army a few weeks later!

What is the best book you have read to date? Very difficult but probably Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, an 11th century Persian elegy on all faiths.

If you could change one thing in Bunbury what would it be? Place the old church under English Heritage and build a new easily heated one in the village centre.

What is your biggest regret? One shouldn't regret but probably not transferring to the US Army a lot earlier. The family adored America.



If you were granted one wish, what would it be? A happy and pleasant old age.

What is the one thing that people would be surprised to learn about you? I was delighted that a Stuka dive-bomber destroyed school on day 1 of the siege of Malta 1940-42. I was sent to a convent school but was 'invited' to leave after a week by the Reverend Mother.

What would you like to achieve in the next 12 months? I am committed to produce three books and I would dearly like to finish them.

What is your favourite place and why? Verona - the Opera and people - I adore Italy. Because I spent time in Malta as a child, I'm a Mediterranean 'brat'.

How would you like to spend your ideal weekend? To relax at Pieve a Castello in Tuscany, an 8th century parish (updated of course) with a couple of old friends.



Fatima Cruttock's Recipe of the Month Liver and onions with a twist

In February we haul up the drawbridge and batten down the hatches in the Cruttock household. The parties are over until the new season starts in April, and it is a time when the Major and I like to sit in front of a log fire and eat some delicious comfort food whilst watching Series 1 of Downton Abbey (our Christmas present from the grandchildren).

Liver and onions has always been a favourite of ours, but this one has a bit of a sweet and sour twist to it which will have your taste buds tingling! Even better, it can be

prepared from scratch in under an hour. Try it with creamy mashed potato or some polenta.

What you need:

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1oz butter
- 2 red onions, thinly sliced
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 thin slices of calf's liver, cut into thin strips
- 1 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1 tbsp crème de cassis
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley

How to do it

- 1 Heat one tablespoon of the olive oil and all of the butter in a heavy-based frying pan. Fry the onions over a low heat for 30 minutes, or until soft. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground black pepper, place into a bowl and set aside.
- 2 Heat the remaining olive oil in the frying pan until hot. Season the calf's liver with salt and freshly ground black pepper and fry for 30 seconds (you should keep it pink inside). Remove and add to the onions in the bowl and mix together.
- 3 Place the liver and onions back into the frying pan. Quickly heat through and add the vinegar, crème de cassis and parsley.
- 4 Place the liver and onions on to hot plates and serve at once.

And the wine to go with it...

Liver and onions is a British classic, loved equally by our French and Italian neighbours and these are the two very same places I would be looking for my wine to accompany it. Pinot Noir in France would be my first choice on the reds and, with it being January, I would avoid the more expensive Burgundian ones and look for one from the Loire Valley or even a Vin de Pays (country wine) version. If whites are your thing, look out for Vermentino (which actually originates from Italy) - not a well-known grape but one that offers an excellent balance between richness and acidity. As for Italian wines, are you feeling flush this January? If so, go for a Barolo - exquisite wines - or for better value look out for Barbera, similar and often half the price. As for whites, I would play it safe and go for a decent Pinot Grigio. **Cheers! Greg**

And don't forget to say Grace

This happy meal will happier be
If we O Lord remember thee. **Amen.**



Light shines on Messy Church

The church was brightly festooned with strings of light bulbs for Messy Church 'Light' on Sunday 15 January. There was a dark tunnel with scary bits hanging down before you emerged into the light. You could make lanterns or laminated book marks or window tags. There were Bible verse light cards to create and traffic light biscuits to ice. Children learned to use wires to light up a bulb from a battery and make scary sounds with it. Jars were pasted with brightly coloured tissue paper to make candlelit prayer lights for the worship, during which Kim told a Bible story and led the singing and flag-waving. It finished with a delicious meal. Many thanks to all those who helped make it such a success.



Getting our new vicar – Q&A on the vacancy

What is the vacancy?

The vacancy is the period of time between a vicar leaving a parish and a new one taking over. Some people still refer to this period as the "interregnum" although that is no longer technically correct. It is an important time for the church, offering opportunities for people to get involved and help out. The work of the church and its support of the community must continue during the vacancy.

How long does it last?

This depends on many factors, but typically it takes between six and nine months to find the right person and for them to take over (they usually need to give a notice period to a current parish).

Who is legally responsible for the church during the vacancy?

The churchwardens and the Rural Dean, the lead clergyperson in the deanery, are appointed "sequestrators" and have formal responsibility for ensuring the church services and ministry are maintained during the vacancy. They also maintain the vicarage. Our Rural Dean is currently the Revd Keith Hine, rector of Tarporley.

What services will there be during the vacancy?

At St Jude's, normal services will be maintained using visiting priests. For St Boniface, churchwardens Neil and Walter will ensure that all the usual Sunday and Wednesday church services will be held, except that there will be no 8am Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month. There will however be Holy Communion services nearby on the first Sunday of each month at St Jude's (at 9.30am) and Calveley (at 11am). Regular services needing a priest will be covered by the Revd Trevor Davies and the Revd Melvyn Davies. On Easter Sunday, we will be fortunate to have Bishop Keith with us. Weddings, baptisms and funerals will be covered also – sometimes with the help of Keith Hine.

Where do we go if we need help?

During the vacancy most questions should be directed initially to the churchwardens, although any member of the PCC should be able to help or point you in the direction of someone who can. For pastoral issues, please contact one of the readers Peter or Kath Collinge (contact details on page 2).



Eric Wallington

Reader Emeritus

Thought of the month

Living Water

One of the most popular films of the 1950s was the western film, 'The Big Country' - I'm old enough to remember it! It centres on the feuding between two families for control of a water source, without which their cattle would die of thirst. The need for water in a dry land is, of course, desperate.

Stagnant water is of little use and dangerous to drink. However Jacob the nomad had found a well, near Samaria, north of Jerusalem, and it was named after him. Some hundreds of years later, Jesus stopped there and got into conversation with a local Samaritan woman. Women were very much second-class citizens and the fact that Jesus was even speaking to a woman alone was deeply shocking. Jesus

asked the woman for a drink; this was also surprising as he was a Jew and not supposed to share a drinking vessel with her. He went on to tell her that he could give her 'living water' - the Hebrew phrase for fresh, running, drinkable water.

Jesus was shifting the emphasis of the Hebrew phrase to the sense of life-giving water. He was shifting the conversation to make the point that God is 'life-giving'. Many of the Psalms refer to him as 'the living God' and indeed God is as essential to our survival as fresh water.

Hundreds of people die each day because of the lack of fresh drinking water. We find it tragic that so many people fail to experience God's life-giving spirit in their daily lives. His spirit is freely and readily available to all - just for the asking.

THE GREAT DEBATE: A response to the position in the last issue

Can you be a (good?) Christian and not go to church?

Yes, you can! I have an i-phone and like all good consumers, I considered it a good Christian thing to download a bible app. I swipe through it whilst drinking my latte at a café with free wi-fi looking for passages that say, "There was the church - and it was good" or, "and He sayeth, attend the church and break bread every 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sunday letting the children suffer unto me on the 4th Sunday only" or, "Stand, sit and speak only the words in BOLD or forever be a lost sheep". I can't find them.

I've been to church and have felt lost and lonely. I've been rejected and ignored. I've arrived on my own, sat on my own and walked home on my own. I've been acutely aware of longing to belong. Almost nowhere else have I experienced the emptiness of not belonging other than when I've been in a church when it is full of people.

I have been moved to tears by the stories of strangers and the resilience of their human experience. I have been touched by love at the smile of a friend who says to me, "You're OK". I have been held in hope by arms so warm and strong when all feels so helpless. But not in church.

We take our life stories wherever we go and I take mine too. I blame no-one and if someone crosses the threshold of those very thick cold stone walls and leaves feeling alive and connected to God and His people that's a wonderful thing: be blessed, celebrate and be thankful. It is only by the grace of God.

If, like me, your heart gets heavy, full and worrisome and your bones ache with the cold of it all, soothe your soul - by the grace of God only - He loves you and has you forever.

Written by an anonymous contributor



Pat Edgley

Reader

Where are we going?

Travelling by train, you can relax: the driver knows the way, there is a definite track to follow. But by car it's a different matter. It's so easy to miss the signs, to take a wrong turning. Google maps and sat nav

can let you down.

And strolling through the woods, when those little yellow arrows peter out and one tree looks much like another, we could do with a guide to lead us safely back.

Our whole life is a journey of twists and turns and surprises, not all of them pleasant.

We can feel very much on our own, and vulnerable.

At St. Boniface we are charting an unknown path as we look for someone to replace our irreplaceable Rick.

Who knows what the future holds?

But unlike the walker in the woods,

or the sat nav follower, we do have a trustworthy guide, One who will walk with us and support us wherever we go, and whatever life throws at us.

Father, you lead us by ways we do not know,

Through joy and sorrow, by paths as yet untrodden,

Perils unknown, and events beyond our understanding.

Give us faith to go out with good courage,

Not knowing where we are going,

But only that your hand is leading us

And your love supporting us,

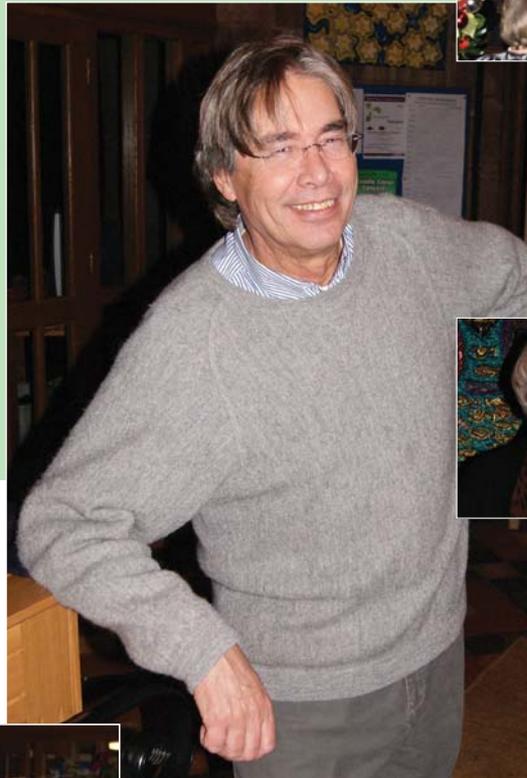
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Farewell to Rick

St Boniface was packed for a farewell party to celebrate Rick's time as our vicar. Goodwill and best wishes were present in abundance and, thanks to many "bring and sharers", so was the food and drink. As well as chatting to Rick and reminiscing informally, friends new and old watched a moving show of photographs set to music that recalled the many memorable events Rick has been involved in over the 13 years of his incumbency.

An equally moving but contrasting occasion was provided on New Year's Eve, Rick's last day in post, when the church was again packed, this time for a communion service held by candlelight.

A vicar like Rick was always going to need at least two send-offs, and for many, the combination of these summed him up: a person full of fun, ready to enjoy life, but also at the core a man of faith caring for the spiritual needs of his flock.



Many people have paid **tribute to Rick's ministry** in Bunbury by writing in the book that he will be taking with him when he leaves the village. If you would like to add your message or contribute to his retirement collection, please pop into church before the end of February. The book is at the back of church, and donations can be placed in an envelope marked 'Rick's collection' in the collection box.



Calveley bares its chest

Calveley Hall Chapel was established around 1839; it was an interesting time here as 'cuts' (the canals) were still being produced but the railways were well underway. There was a large itinerant population.

Who ordered the chapel to be produced? The tenant of the Hall about this time was Sir Charles Napier who a few years later was to command in India and become the conqueror of the Scinde (a region of India on the borders of India and Pakistan). He took the Scinde with The Cheshire Regiment and some of 'John Company's' army of sepoy soldiers in 1843.

He was reputed to have sent back the message of their success to London as the single Latin word, 'Peccavi' (I have sinned – a pun on 'I have Sindh'). Actually the Regimental archives have no such amusing note. It was

believed to have been coined by a young Manchester schoolgirl who was taking Latin lessons from her vicar and suggested what Sir Charles should have said. The vicar was so delighted he sent the comment to the London Press who evidently attributed it to Sir Charles who had become a national hero!

Two of the paintings ordered by Sir Charles' brother are on display at the Cheshire Military Museum at the Castle, Chester, together with other memorabilia of Sir Charles and the Scinde. In my opinion, he is just the sort of person who would have ordered a Chapel to be established. The heavy parish chest in the vestry at Calveley is also very similar to regimental chests of the time at the Castle. Come and see it some time.

John Ellis

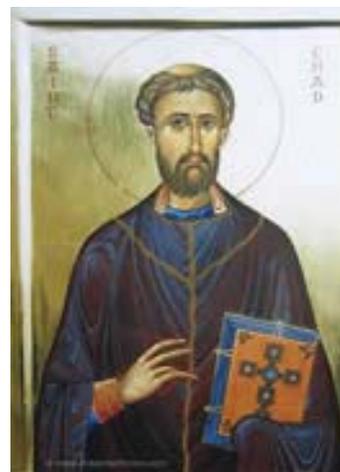
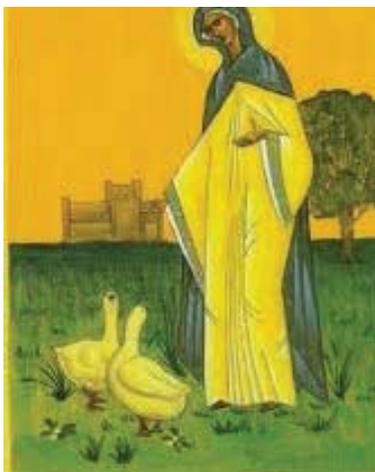
THE TWO SAINTS WAY - Pilgrimage Route Through Bunbury

The last 20 years has seen a revival of interest in the practice of pilgrimage. Faith-based tourism is said to be one of the fastest growing sectors of the travel industry and Bunbury is about to benefit from this movement as the Two Saints Way is established. This 90-mile pilgrimage route follows the old mediaeval passage from Chester to Lichfield. In medieval times, it formed part of the greater journey for pilgrims travelling from Ireland to Canterbury, with some even going on to Rome and Jerusalem.

The Two Saints Way – so named due to the shrine of St Werburgh in Chester and that of St Chad in Lichfield - has been set up to recover the beneficial aspects of medieval pilgrimage and apply them in a contemporary fashion. Along with other churches, the PCC at St Boniface has registered an

interest with the project, as our building has much historic interest. It is hoped people of all ages will walk the way to find health in body, mind and soul, making the most of a time for self-reflection. The project is therefore linking with the NHS Change4Life initiative and has the slogan, "Walking your way to Health on the Two Saints Way." Schools and colleges may make the most of the route for an active experience of pilgrimage and an appreciation of the medieval mindset.

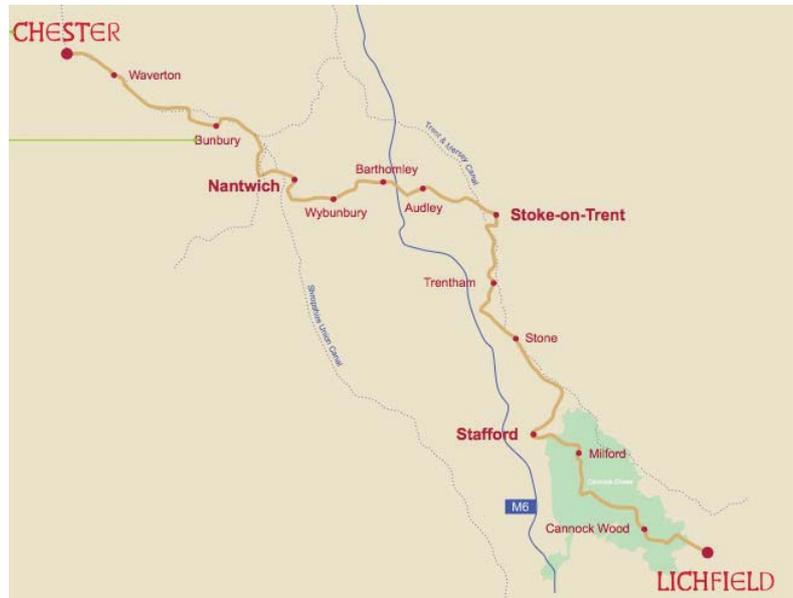
It is hoped that the Two Saints Way will bring good things to this parish and that in the ancient traditions of pilgrimage, modern day pilgrims will find Bunbury to be place of warm welcome and hospitality. With our three pubs, coffee shop and 'chippy', they won't be stuck for physical sustenance and the church is sure to be a stop for spiritual nourishment.



A pilgrimage will be coming through Bunbury on Monday 26th March 2012. If anyone is interested in making sure their passage through Bunbury is a memorable one or meeting the co-ordinators, please get in touch with Johnny Gillett on 01829 260680 or email johnny@thejourneyman.org.uk.

Further information can be found on the website which includes a map of the route plus stories of the saints connected with the path – including the intriguing tale of St Rufin and St Wulfin.

www.twosaintsaway.org.uk



Ash Wednesday

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. But why 'Ash' Wednesday? The reason has to do with getting things right between you and God, and the tradition goes right back to the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, the Israelites often sinned. When they finally saw their evil ways as God saw them, they repented in sorrow, mourning the damage they had done. As part of this repentance, they covered their heads with ashes. For the Israelites, putting ashes on your head

and rending your clothes were outward signs of heart-felt repentance and acknowledgement of sin.

In the very early Christian Church, the yearly 'class' of penitents had ashes sprinkled over them at the beginning of Lent. They were turning to God for the first time and mourning their sins. But soon many other Christians wanted to take part in the custom at the very start of Lent. They heeded Joel's call to 'rend your hearts and not your garments'. Ash Wednesday

became known as either the 'beginning of the fast' or 'the day of the ashes'.

The actual custom of 'ashing' was abolished at the Reformation, though the old name for the day remained. Today, throughout the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional. Certainly the mark of ashes on the forehead reminds people of their mortality: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return..."



Pancake fun for Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday means pancakes, whether you race with them, or just enjoy eating them. Here's a fail-safe recipe for a good batter: Sift 100g of plain flour with a pinch of salt. Make a well in the centre, break in an egg and beat with a wooden spoon. Gradually add 300ml of milk, beating and drawing in the flour from the sides of the bowl until the batter is smooth. Heat a little oil in a heavy-based saucepan and add just enough batter to cover the bottom, running the mixture around the sides. Cook the pancake for one to two minutes, using the spatula to make sure the batter isn't sticking. Then turn the pancake over, and cook for a couple of more minutes on the other side. Serve immediately, with sugar and a squeeze of lemon juice.

Teddy Bacon - a man of 'tall tales and treasured memories'



On Friday 18 November, family and friends from as far afield as South Africa and New Zealand came to St Boniface for a memorial service to Teddy Bacon, who died on 14 September aged 93.

Born in Cheshire, Teddy Bacon lived a full and varied life, travelling widely but spending most of his life in Cheshire. He spent the majority his career working in the family ship broker firm based in Manchester, Sivewright

Bacon and Co., also joining the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve during the war. In later years, Teddy became Danish and Norwegian Consul for the North of England (pictured here in his consular uniform) and also served as President and Secretary of the Manchester Consular Association.

A consummate storyteller with a sunny, charming temperament, Teddy had a huge capacity for friendship. He even had a special table reserved for him at the Cholmondley Arms, where he was always greeted warmly by his many friends. His large family is rightly proud of the deep, close relationships forged between them all, despite many being spread around the world.

One tale from his travels hit the national press in 2008. A Bulova automatic gold watch bought whilst working as part of a fleet on its way to Singapore to counter the Japanese invasion slipped from his wrist into the harbour in Gibraltar in 1941. Despite efforts by divers to locate it, it could not be found. 67 years later it turned up on his doormat in Tarvin – still ticking! The discovery had been made when the harbour was dredged in 2007, and as a detailed entry in a log book had been made, staff were able to post the watch back to the address left by the young officer. Teddy said at the time, "To say I was stunned could be considered a major understatement. It truly was a miracle that I had been reunited with that watch after a lifetime. Now I wear it every day and it keeps perfect time, even after all those years in the water. I consider it a long-lost friend."

Dorothy Ennion - lifelong commitment to Bunbury



Dorothy (Dodie) Ennion was born at Spurstow corner in 1927, the younger of two daughters. Following her sister to the village girls' school in College Lane before transferring to the Aldersey School on the merger with the boys' school, she enjoyed spending time at her grandparents home, Brook Farm. Dodie was delighted to be accepted to Love Street School in Chester,

following in her sister's footsteps.

Both sisters were regular attendees at Sunday school and Dodie liked to recall the day in 1939 when she and her sister were confirmed at St Boniface by the Bishop of Chester, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury.

On leaving school she worked at her uncle's shop in Dutton where she met John Derek Ennion who had recently joined the business. Their friendship was put on hold as Derek was conscripted into the army and posted to Egypt at 18. In 1948 Derek was demobilised and then worked at the Peckforton Estates office, enabling him to take up a tenancy at Beeston Moss Cottage.

In 1950 Dodie married Derek at St Boniface Church and moved to Beeston Moss Cottage, where they lived for the rest of their lives. In 1961 they were delighted to have a son Robert. Dodie returned to Bunbury School in 1967 as school secretary, a job she held for 25 years until her retirement. During this time she had to help organise visits from the Patron to the Haberdashers, Princess Margaret. Dodie was a long-standing member of the village WI and for twenty years served on the Parochial Church Council.



Norman Woodward - life and soul of the family



Family and friends gathered on Wednesday 30 November to pay tribute to Norman Woodward, who died on 19 November aged 75.

Born in 1936 the fifth child of eight, Norman spent all of his life in farming. After marrying his wife Heather, they moved to Home Farm, Beeston, to work for Lord and Lady Tollemache, and their first daughter Karen was born there. Norman then moved to Church Minshull to work for the late Thomas and Stanley Parton, staying with that farm until his early retirement. Karen's sister Clare was born during this time. In 1988, Norman was honoured by the Cheshire Agricultural Society for 20 years' service to agriculture, and later by Mr Stanley Parton for 25 years' service. On his retirement, he and Heather moved to Sandbach to be closer to their growing family.

Norman was active within St Bartholomew's Church Minshull, as a member of the PCC, a sidesman and a bell ringer. He loved dancing and sport; in recent years he developed an interest in motor racing.

Norman's family remember him as ever-smiling, always with a mischievous glint in his eye. As a young boy, he loved to tease his family helper by climbing on the roof just out of reach when it was time for bed. His sense of playfulness remained with him all his life and has been passed down to his children and five grandchildren. Behind his playful nature was a strong work ethic, however, and his family paid tribute to his character: "Norman did nothing by halves; he rose to any challenge and encouraged others to do the same."

Evelyn (Eve) McDermott a woman of many names and many happy days

St Boniface said farewell to Eve, Mac, Mrs Mac (to use just a few of the names by which Evelyn McDermott was known) in a service on 5th December to commemorate her family life.

Born 80 years ago as one of seven children, her parents Rose and Arthur Heath lived in Calveley. Throughout her happy childhood, Evelyn attended Tilstone Fearnall School with her brothers and sisters; Eve always enjoyed recounting tales of childhood pranks that must have kept her parents busy.

Eve married Brian when she was 17, moving to Wardle. She is survived by children Kathleen, Michael and Sharon. Times were hard for the family and the children remember how hard their mother worked to create a happy time for all at Christmas and during the family holidays in a caravan at Rhyl. At one time, Eve had three different jobs to support the family before starting a career nursing on children's wards at Leighton hospital which lasted 37 years. After so much hard work husband Brian sadly died just six weeks after she retired so Eve focused on family visits from children, grandchildren and now great grandchildren, always finding time for tea and a chat despite her busy schedule of housework. She loved her gardening in retirement and enjoyed comedy and visits to shows.



Tom reports on his cycling adventure

In April 2011, we reported that local cycling enthusiast, Tom Bruce, was setting off from his home in Peckforton to cycle around the world, raising money for SOS Children's Villages. Now back, Tom recounts details of his trip.

Cycling around the world was an incredible adventure. Leaving home on 13th March 2011, I cycled from my front door across the UK to Dover. I cycled along an amazing route through Europe, with a new country every couple of days. Highlights included the Black Forest, the Danube River bike track and finishing Europe in Istanbul.

The Caucasus came next - absolutely beautiful. Georgia is my favourite country from the trip: amazing mountains, friendly people, beautiful Orthodox Christian churches, delicious food and a brilliant capital city. After crossing Azerbaijan, I took the Caspian Sea ferry to what felt like the middle of nowhere: the lonely city of Aktau in Western Kazakhstan. The huge Karakalpakstan Desert came next, then the amazing silk road cities of Khiva, Bukhara and Samarkand in Uzbekistan.

The part of the trip that I was most looking forward to was the Pamir Highway in Tajikistan. Unfortunately, I got a terrible tummy bug and was worried that I wouldn't be fit to cycle the 4,000+ metre high passes before my visa expired. Having managed to ride for a morning, I met a Pamiri doctor who took me in for the night. He was amazing: I just slept all day and drank this local remedy that he concocted from herbs. Whatever it was, it worked and the next day I cycled the Wakhan valley along the Afghan border then over a series of high mountain passes on the stunning Pamir Highway - it exceeded all expectations!

Krygyzstan was fantastic: high pastures and staying in yurts with nomads (the gone-off mare's milk was disgusting though!). China was amazing, but difficult too. The people in the small villages find it difficult to communicate with foreigners and are still recovering from communist times.

America was another world and I suffered reverse culture shock, looking at the vast amount of wealth in San Francisco compared to my trip so far. Cycling through beautiful national parks like Yosemite and Death Valley, eventually I crossed the Rockies and then followed the gulf coast to Florida.

So far I've raised over £2,300 (including gift aid) for the largest orphaned children's charity in the world. I'd love to use my adventure to raise a lot more. If you would like to add to my total, please log on to: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/tombrucecycling>



Keeper of the Spring

An old man who lived near an Austrian village high in the Alps was hired by his village council to clear away the debris from the pools of water high up in the mountain crevices. These pools fed the spring that flowed through the town. So with faithful regularity, year after year, the old man patrolled the pool, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt.

In time the village became a popular attraction. Swans and ducks floated along the sparkling spring, the mill wheels of various businesses turned day and night, farms were irrigated, and the view of the spring from restaurants was picturesque beyond description.

Then one evening the town council met to review the budget. Someone queried the salary paid to the obscure keeper of the spring. Others joined in: "He is a waste of money. Drop him." And so they did.

For several weeks, nothing changed. Then in early autumn, the trees shed their leaves. Small branches snapped off and fell into the pools. Down in the village, they soon noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the water. Soon a slimy film covered sections of the stream. The mill wheels got entangled with twigs. Soon the stench of rotting vegetation in the water drove away the swans and ducks and the tourists.

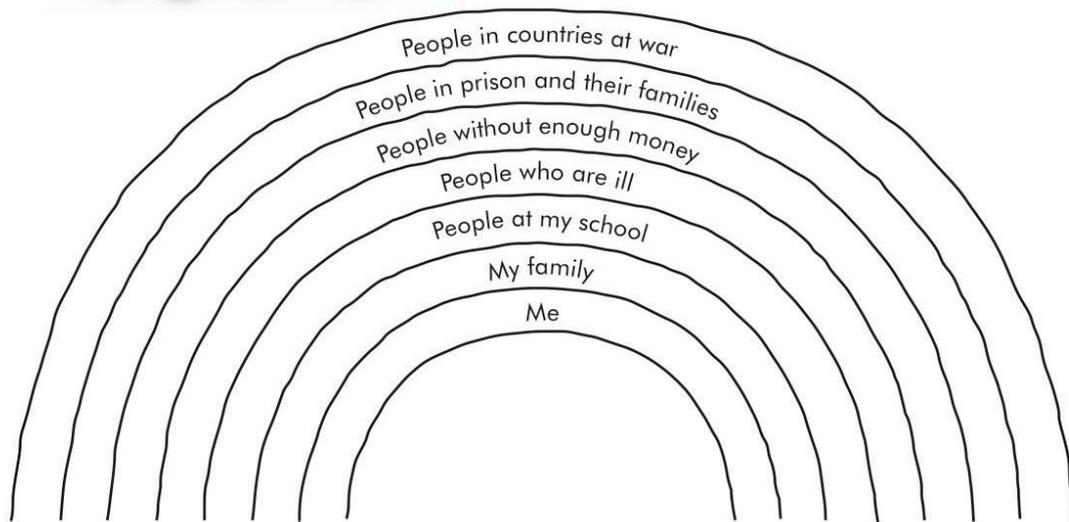
In a panic, the village council met.

Quickly they set off to visit the old man, and pleaded with him to keep the spring clean again. Within a few weeks, the village's 'river of life' began to clear up. The water ran pure and clear, the birds returned, the mill wheels turned, and even the tourists came back.

Are there leaves of anger, twigs of resentment, or a silt of unforgiveness clogging your spring of living water? Just as little by little the stream became contaminated by debris, so our spirits can become obstructed by the 'small sins' of daily life. Let's allow our Keeper of the Spring to do his job in renewing and cleansing us, so that we can 'run free' and bring blessing to others.

Colour the rainbow and pray for the people as you colour.

Rainbow prayer



'Each morning you listen to my prayer, as I bring my requests to you and wait for your reply.'
(Psalm 5:3)

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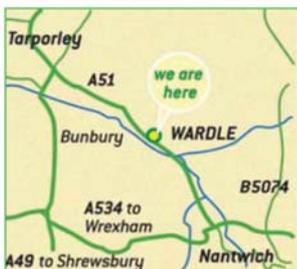
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