

# TemerTalk

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December 2020



**In this month's issue**  
**Hedgehogs and Hittites**  
**Christmas trees and tea leaves**  
**and all your parish news**

*A very merry Christmas to all our readers*

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# TemeTalk

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*A community going forward with God*

## December 2020

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Teme Valley South Group  
*and delivered free to every household*

Designed and typeset by  
Sandra Griffiths, St Michaels

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### Editor:

Sandra Griffiths  
Grey Gables, St Michaels  
Tenbury Wells WR15 8TW  
Telephone 01568 750665  
[ronsmum@btconnect.com](mailto:ronsmum@btconnect.com)

### Distribution:

Alison and Keith Tompsett  
(Stoke Bliss & Kyre)  
Averil Opperman (The Hanleys,  
Eastham and Rochford)  
Sue Softly (Stanford)

### Priest-in-charge

Rev Julia Curtis  
Telephone 01886 853286  
[revjuliacurtis@gmail.com](mailto:revjuliacurtis@gmail.com)

### Parish website

[www.temevalleysouth.org.uk](http://www.temevalleysouth.org.uk)

Items for inclusion should be  
sent to Sandra Griffiths  
by the 18th of the preceding month  
and will be included subject to space

## Dear Villagers

One of the things that clergy spend a lot of time doing, as you might expect, is thinking about Christmas! We usually start thinking about it around January, reflecting on what went well the previous year and what we might change for the year to come.

It then drops off the radar for a few months as we prepare for Easter, but when things calm down again over the summer we spend our idle moments trying to remember what we had decided back in January and coming up with wildly creative and completely impractical ideas for things we could do in the winter to come.

Generally those wildly creative ideas never make it off the drawing board, and we end up doing more or less the same as usual.

This year, however, has been completely different. Planning ahead for Christmas this year has felt more like a game of snakes and ladders where one roll of the dice can send you sliding back down a completely different path and you have to start all over again!

So we have made some plans for holding services both in church and online, and we are excited about what we're hoping to offer to help our communities celebrate Christmas this year. But we also know that a word from the prime minister, or an uptick in local cases, could scupper some of these plans and send us back to the drawing board.

All this uncertainty has given me a new perspective on the Christmas story itself, because the more I reflect on it this in this year of disruption, the more I realise how disrupting the events of the first Christmas were for those involved.

Mary and Joseph were engaged to be mar-

*Continued on page 3*

## Hanley William Book of Banns and Marriages, 1797

A bridegroom is described as  
"late from Botany Bay"

## Hanley William Register 1798

Christened Priscilla and William  
and baptized Mary, children of  
Samuel and Dorothy Philpots

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## Teme Valley South Contacts

**Priest-in-charge:** Julia Curtis 01886 853286  
**Associate Priest:** Sally Jones 01584 781526  
**Reader:** Pete Thorp 07917 783159

### Churchwardens

**Eastham:** Celia Adams 01584 781258  
**Rochford:** Ann Prosser 01584 781317  
**Stoke Bliss & Kyre:** Jen Jones 07749 977821  
**Hanleys:** Ed Yarnold 07930 882728  
**Stanford:** Robin Dean 01886 853295

### Pastoral Team

**Stanford:** Lesley Dean 01886 853295  
**Hanleys:** Peter Thorneycroft 01885 410484  
**Stoke Bliss:**  
**Rochford:** Ann Prosser 01584 781317  
Jenny Barbé 01584 781298  
**Eastham:** Helen Matravers 01584 781510

**Parish Safeguarding Officer:** Sue Softly  
01584 881342

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# Parish news

*Continued from page 1*

ried, they no doubt had their plans for what their lives would look like, until the angel Gabriel turned up and sent all their plans out the window. Then, just as they were getting used to the idea that they would have a baby, the emperor ordered a census so they had to set off away from home on the long journey to Bethlehem. Not what they had planned at all.

Or what about the shepherds, sitting happily in their fields just doing their job until the angels appeared and sent them running into the village to find the new-born Jesus. And then there were the wise men, sent on a perilous journey to a far-off land because of the appearance of a new star in the sky. None of these people could have predicted or planned what would happen to them, but when the disruption came they went with it and in doing so they met God face to face.

We all approach Christmas with our own sets of expectations and hopes, rituals and traditions, and after all we've been through this year it may feel heart-breaking that we won't be able to celebrate in the ways that we usually do. But perhaps this Christmas, this strange and disrupted Christmas, gives us an opportunity to learn anew from Mary and Joseph, the wise men and the shepherds, and to allow the strange turn our lives have taken to lead us closer to the God who is always with us.

Wishing you all 'Comfort and Joy' this Christmas and in 2021,

*Rev'd Julia*

## From the registers

Our prayers and sympathy are with the family and friends of Violet Heeley. Her funeral and burial took place at the church of St Peter and St Paul at Eastham on 17th November.

Also, with those who knew Ann Brierley, wife of Rev'd Brierley. Ann's funeral was at St Edmund's, Dudley on 19th November and a cremation followed.

Finally, with Veronica Pound, of Kyre, and her family after her husband, Mick died recently.

May Violet, Ann and Mick rest in peace.

## Service times and openings

Our church buildings remain open as below, but if you would like to visit outside of these times, please contact the churchwardens, who will do their best to accommodate this. You are very welcome to come and spend some time in these spaces to reflect, to pray and just to 'be' for a quiet moment. Now the evenings are darker we may close at dusk, and please note Rochford's Christmas hours on page 5.

### St Peter & St Paul, Eastham

Tuesday 9am to dusk

### St Mary, Stanford on Teme

Thursday 9am to dusk

### St Mary, Kyre Wyard

Friday 2.30pm to 5pm

Church to be attended

### St Michael, Rochford

Wednesday and Sunday 9am to dusk

### St Peter, Stoke Bliss

Friday 10am to 4pm

### All Saints, Hanley William

Saturday 9am to 4pm

Thanks to all of you who are willing to air the churches and give them a spruce up before opening and have offered to lock and unlock. Without you we could not re-open.

## Services

We are praying online daily via Zoom so do email Rev'd Julia if you would like to join us. If you have a prayer request to be included please ring or email Rev'd Julia or your local pastoral team member – see Teme Valley South Contacts on page 2.

The Blessings Group continues to meet weekly and is coordinated by Richard Skerrett who can be contacted on 01886 853099 for details.

Online Sunday services continue. For details see:

- Teme Valley South Churches Facebook page
- Our website, [www.temevalleysouth.org](http://www.temevalleysouth.org)

For details of Sunday services please see the schedule on page 28.

*Rev'd Julia Curtis*

# Rochford 49 Club Congratulations

to this month's £25 winners:

## Wednesday winners

Oct 21st	No 8	Roger Gough
Oct 28th	No 14	Dan Taylor
Nov 4th	No 24	Norma Goodall
Nov 11th	No 38	Rod Rickets

## Saturday winners

Oct 17th	No 46	Not sold
Oct 24th	No 44	Dan Taylor
Oct 31st	No 35	Pam Francis
Nov 7th	No 44	Dan Taylor
Nov 14th	No 13	Robin Dean

There are still plenty of numbers available – why not join in? It's just £1 per draw and the profits are split between Rochford church and the village hall – plus you get two chances each week to win £25!

It would be great to see fewer unsold tickets next month!

Remember, you must be in it to win it!  
Ring Gill Smith on

**07815 030050**

# Teme Valley Tote

November's prize draw of the Tote (the eighth in this series) was decided when Rev'd Julia Curtis rolled the dice on 2nd November to select the set of random numbers. Prizewinners are:

£50 – **Mr & Mrs D Wintle** of Pensax  
(No 324)

£30 – **David Pearson** of Stoke Bliss (No 831)

£20 – **Paddy Harding** of Stoke Bliss (No 805)

If you have any queries please contact the organiser, Robin Dean, on 01886 853295 or by email at [robin.c.dean@gmail.com](mailto:robin.c.dean@gmail.com).

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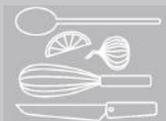
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# Rochford Rochford Rochford

## Coronavirus update

Well hopefully lockdown 2 will be eased this month, but we are still very conscious of social distancing and therefore community events continue to be arranged outdoor where possible. If you are shielding and need assistance the Rochford Tenbury Coronavirus Care Group will continue helping out with collecting prescriptions, shopping and sharing online deliveries and local information. If you need help please ask.

## Neighbourhood Christmas lunch

Lockdown and Boris permitting, Ann will produce a Christmas take-away neighbourhood lunch (delivered or collected) which will be available on Friday 18th December. Lunches can be collected or delivered to your home for just £5 (please bring your own plates). Please contact Ann on 01584 781317 by 12th December if you would like one.

## Christmas isn't cancelled!

Covid restrictions mean we can't have the usual Christmas lunch in the village hall but we will have an **outdoor carol service** on Sunday 13th December at 3.30pm at the Old Forge (by kind permission of Rod and Di Ricketts). The carol service will be around a large decorated tree. Mother Earth Pizzas will be coming to the Old Forge to deliver their delicious range of pizzas with a few Christmas toppings from 4.30pm, after the service. Eat onsite or take-away (see page 13). Please get your orders in early to avoid disappointment.

## Rochford church Christmas tree

There will be a Christmas tree in the church with the usual remembrance tags to remember the loved ones we have lost. The church will be open every day of the week leading up to Christmas Day for you to write your tags, but please follow the guide lines in the church with regard to use of sanitiser etc. If you can't get to the church and would like a tag written for you, please let me or Ann know.

## Christmas Eve communion service

This will be on 24th December at 11.30pm. **Please book with Ann for this service** as due to Covid restrictions numbers are limited. If it is oversubscribed an additional service will be arranged at 9.30pm. Please let Ann know if you would like to attend.

## Thanks

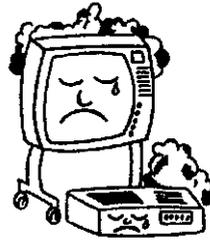
We would like to thank the magazine deliverers who get the magazines out to everyone each month.

Vera Beale's daughters, Jan and Di, send very grateful thanks to the people of Rochford for looking out for Vera and taking her under their wings, and they have sent a generous donation to village hall funds. Vera is settling in to life at Areley House, Stourport and is safe and well. Hopefully we will see her again soon, when Covid restrictions are relaxed.

## All Souls and Remembrance services

Rochford church hosted a moving service to remember all those we have lost. Names from across the benefice were read out, candles were lit and recorded music was provided by a small group of local people. The annual service of remembrance was only online this year but was very moving and well received.

*Andrew Barbé*



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# Stoke Bliss and Kyre

## New churchwarden for Stoke Bliss & Kyre

Welcome to Jen Jones who was appointed churchwarden for Stoke Bliss and Kyre in October.

We are very pleased that Jen stepped forward to represent our churches. She lives in Eastham and works for the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust, where she coordinates a project that involves mentoring, training and assessing a group of trainees as they gain experience and a City & Guilds Diploma in environmental conservation.

Since Easter she has been getting to know our group of parishes as well as assisting with Teme Valley South Churches admin. (If you want a job done, ask a busy person ...).

We will be actively supporting her as churchwarden and look forward to welcoming her to Stoke Bliss and Kyre on a more formal basis when Covid regulations allow. Meanwhile we thank her for all you has engaged with so far and hope she finds fulfilment in this post.

## Drive-in carol service

Lockdown permitting, we will be holding a drive-in carol service in the car park at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall on Sunday 6th December at 3pm – admission from 2.30 to 2.45pm to allow time for parking.

Spaces are limited so advance booking is essential. If you live locally and want to walk to the event, advance booking is still required and government Covid-19 regulations for meeting outdoors will apply.

To make a booking on a first come first served basis please email Jen Jones, churchwarden at [jonesjengem@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jonesjengem@yahoo.co.uk) or phone 07749977821.

We look forward to seeing you there.

## Ian Jackson

Our thoughts and sympathy go to the family of Ian Jackson of Tenbury, formerly of Kyre, who died recently. May he rest in peace.

## Kyre Advent display

On Friday afternoons from 2.30 until dusk during Advent until 8th January, there will be a developing display in the church on the theme of the Nativity and thoughts inspired by it relevant for the 21st century. Donations please in aid of food banks and churches.

If Friday afternoon is not possible please contact Maggie Kingston on 01885 410431 to arrange a time for her to open Kyre church for you.

## Happy Christmas!

Stoke Bliss and Kyre thanks everyone who has, in these strange times, been generous with time and help for everyone in these parishes and the wider community. At times like this the value of living in such a community is most appreciated. So although this Christmas will be different from usual, perhaps it is closer to the original event in more ways than we realise. We can still give Christmas greetings but without the usual parties and hugs. Low key events are still taking place. So peace and love be with you now and always.

MK

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# Eastham Jottings

## Coffee morning

The next coffee morning will be on Wednesday 2nd December by Zoom. If you would like to join the Zoom and/or need help please call Celia Adams on 01584 781258 or email easthamcourt@icloud.com. Regulars will receive an invitation on the day. Theme: Christmas memories of days gone by.

## Flowers and cleaning

December – team effort

January – Adrian and Joanna Worsley

## Eastham Community Garden

In addition to the building the hall, we want to enhance the outside area. An outside area will be the perfect spot for the community to stop and have a seat for five minutes whilst on a walk, or meet neighbours, and it will provide a lovely ambience for gatherings such as pub nights, barbecues and get togethers.

The garden will be for the community to help design, build and maintain, nothing is set in stone so we are open to suggestions once funds are in place.

Join the crowd funding site to make a pledge. The programme is open for a couple more weeks. To pledge please click on the link [www.spacehive.com/eastham-community-garden](http://www.spacehive.com/eastham-community-garden), click “support the project” and pledge any amount from £2 upwards. You will be asked to create an account and give your bank details. Use the PayPal option if you prefer. No money will be taken until the goal is reached.

If you prefer to make a cash or cheque donation please contact Celia Adams at easthamcourt@icloud.com or call 01584 781258.

Also please plant a pot of bulbs for outside the hall in spring 2021.

## Wish list for donations

More items have been crossed off this month, and some new ones added: Four wall lights at £50, specialist storage loft ladder £500. Please telephone Mike on 07976 854267 or email [mike.palfrey@easthammemorialhall.org.uk](mailto:mike.palfrey@easthammemorialhall.org.uk).

## Sale of surplus items

We are hoping to sell items surplus to requirements that were removed from the old hall. Watch out for the list early next year.

## Eastham Memorial Hall AGM

This will take place on 18th January. The public meeting is open to all Eastham residents. It is intended to be held in the new hall, but a final decision will be made depending on Covid-19 restrictions after Christmas.

Villagers wishing to join as trustees should contact Celia Adams (01584 781258) for an information pack. Nominations are needed by 3rd January (14 days in advance of the AGM). If you wish to attend please contact Celia Adams (01584 781258) in advance to book your place due to Covid-19 restrictions.

## Eastham Memorial Hall update

The new hall is progressing well despite a few delays over the roof, which is now in place. The completion date is now 11th January. The building is weather tight and Iris Construction are getting on with the work.

The floor slab is in place and screed laid, drainage in place, external wall framing up with the stud work and first fix started.

Updates and construction plan can be found by visiting the website <https://easthammemorialhall.org.uk/news/new-hall-build-project.html> and Facebook page Teme Eastham.

## Violet Heeley

Vi's funeral was at Eastham church on 17th November. Family and friends were limited to 30 to pay last respects to Vi, who had lived at 1 Brickyards Cottages for 20 years after a life in the Black Country. Special thanks to Joe, Paul, Lillian and Sylvia for donating Vi's funeral collection to St Peter and St Pauls Church.

## Great news – a new baby girl

Many congratulations to Daniel and Katy at 8 Astley Orchard on the birth of Clementine Mary Bradley on 16th November.

*Celia Adams*

# Hanley Happenings

## Save the date for a plant stall

As I indicated in recent Hanley Happenings, Anna Fletcher has agreed to run a plant stall again for us next year from her home at Hanley Court Gardens, Hanley William on Saturday 8th May from 10am.

Anna has been extremely busy propagating her stock and anyone who purchased plants from her earlier this year will appreciate that it will not just be any old plants but a really special selection.

She would like the proceeds to go to the Air Ambulance and local community projects and hopefully it should be possible to organise a Covid-19 compliant event. More information in the new year.

## Carole must be better – Macmillan marathon

Instead of a coffee morning, which Carole Gardner organised earlier this year, she is proposing a MacMillan Marathon, challenging people to run, walk or even ride (and if you can't get out of housework that will count) a marathon between 2nd December and 2nd January to raise funds for MacMillan. (A marathon is 26 miles, so one mile a day!)

She is setting up a funding page or you can donate at the end or promise to donate before it starts. For more information contact Carole at [carole.gardner@gmail.com](mailto:carole.gardner@gmail.com)

## Jane Delahay

A huge thank you to Jane Delahay for all her work at Hanley William church over the last twenty years or so. She was absolutely dependable in ensuring that the church was always functioning and her input will be missed but hopefully some fresh blood might be tempted to come forward.

## Looking forward with optimism

Whilst it has been a difficult year for many of us, I think that one thing we can rely on in Teme Valley South is the tremendous community support that we have experienced; although we are now feeling the direct effects of coronavirus more here, we need to continue that mutual support more than ever. Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas.

*Peter Thorneycroft*

## Shop Local

Support local talent and buy something quite unique for that special someone this Christmas.

- Shelly Perkins, international wildlife artist [shellyperkins.co.uk](http://shellyperkins.co.uk)
- Patrick Geenty, crystalline pottery [herriespottery.com](http://herriespottery.com)
- Maria Smith, new original designs [info@masiverdesign.co.uk](mailto:info@masiverdesign.co.uk)
- Elena Fletcher, animal and pet portraits [elanafletcher96@gmail.com](mailto:elanafletcher96@gmail.com) (see page 21)

## Thank you

I have been a member of Hanley William and Hanley Childe church committee for nearly 20 years and have decided it is time to stand aside, with the hope that new people will bring new ideas and drive to the committee.

I'd like to thank all the people who have been such a great help to me over the years with the upkeep of the church. Without this help the church would not have functioned so well.

I have enjoyed my time on the committee and I hope to be able to continue supporting Hanley William church. I hope someone else will feel able to support this special church.

*Jane Delahay*

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## Where to begin?

At the time of writing (16th November) we are in our second national lockdown with no public services! Fancy making it a criminal act to hold a service!

## The new normal

Let's be optimistic and say that after lockdown ends on 2nd December we will be able to continue with public services in Teme Valley South. If we are allowed, social distancing measures will be in place during the services. Masks should be worn at all times, except if you are doing a reading or prayers. We also need to collect your names and details for contact tracing – these lists will be destroyed after 21 days. We will continue to try to stream services or record them and we will continue to record special services and publish them on Facebook and the TVS Parish Website.

## Private prayer

St Mary's will be open for private prayer from 9am to dusk every Thursday during December, including Christmas Eve. There will be a continued need for social distancing when in the church and you will be asked to use the provided hand sanitiser on entering and leaving the church. Thanks to Anthony for opening up each week.

## Christmas – comfort and joy

In Stanford we will not be having our usual Christmas Eve Crib Service – instead Cecilia is writing a Zoom Nativity service which we hope will go out on Christmas Eve. We will record it so that you can enjoy it if you are not able to see it live. So we are looking for children to act the different parts. They can come from anywhere in Teme Valley South – with the wonders of Zoom I suppose that they could be from anywhere in the world! Actors please!

We are still planning to have Christmas stories recorded. We have had no volunteers expect Lesley – stories please!

We are still going ahead with the Christmas Tree Festival but it will be virtual. Further details on page 14.

## AGM of Stanford ACC and APCM

The ACC meeting was held via Zoom. Cate Mawston agreed to become ACC secretary, Robin Dean to continue as churchwarden and Chairman and Tracey Dewis to continue as treasurer with Janet Mills as ACC electoral roll officer. The remainder of the committee are Alexandra Winnington, Stuart Strickland, Jo Strickland, Cecilia Dean, Lesley Dean, Brian Mills and Sue Softly. Rev'd Julia Curtis is ex officio member. Robin, Lesley and Cate were elected to be Stanford's members of TVS PCC. Robin stated a wish to resign as churchwarden at the next AGM.

The APCM meeting was held at Stanford Church and via Zoom (thanks to Robert for mastering the technology for us) – the churchwardens from around the parish were sworn in. Sue Softly was co-opted as safeguarding lead for the parish. Julia thanked Lesley for her period as authorised lay minister on her resignation. The parish electoral roll officer (Jennifer Gledhill) also resigned and Brian Mills was elected in her place.

## Remembrance Sunday

Because of the lockdown we were not able have a physical service on 8th November but we had a virtual parish service with a two minute silence and with the names of the fallen being read out – for some reason Stanford's fallen from World War I were read but not those from World War II. You can still see the service on the Parish Website and Facebook.

## Volunteers please – again

People have recently joined both the church committee and the village hall committee but we would welcome some more, especially when the crisis is over. What should we do to celebrate the end of the crisis? Robin (01886 853295) is happy to explain what is involved and you are welcome to one of our meetings when they restart so that you can see what it is like. We need people to organise events and assist.

*Robin Dean*

## Letter to the editor

In last month's TemeTalk Jessica Middleton wrote, "One of the first things folks do when they move here is to erect double electric gates. Why? Are we so dangerous? Do we thieve? In this community we go out of our way to help people and make them welcome. Don't shut us out." Now Neville Jones puts his side of the argument ...

### Country living

Just to answer a couple of questions asked by Jessica Middleton in last month's TemeTalk, to help her understand, we have two front gates to welcome you in, but since our move here we have been visited by thieves on two occasions; on the advice of the police and our insurers we increased our security. So our double electric gates are to stop thieves looking in our back yard to see what they can return to steal after dark, and to stop easy access.

Crime in rural areas is on the increase due to the surveillance in towns and cities. We country folk are easy pickings, so we need to make it difficult for them. When my wife's great grandfather George Haywood was born at Rochford in 1827 and great grandmother Anne at Stoke Bliss in 1825, this was not a problem – times have changed, not all for the good..

*Neville Jones*



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# From the editor ...

It's that time of year again, when I must thank everyone who has helped to produce TemeTalk during the last eleven months. But this year my thanks are even more heartfelt than usual, as we are all still struggling through what has come to be popularly known as "this unprecedented situation".

Lockdown, shielding, social distancing, self isolating, furlough ... all words which had quite different meanings before last March. During the first lockdown we had online only editions of the magazine in May and June, including our virtual flower show in the June issue which had over eight pages of your photographs of beautiful flowers and shrubs – thanks to everyone who entered. We had everything from humble daisies to magnificent rhododendrons and stunning lupins.

With no events to advertise and many of our advertisers failing to renew, we've had more space than usual to fill with your contributions, including Maggie Downes' memories of her trip to the Holy Land and Jane Bull remembering a Rolling Stones' concert and her Live 8 adventures. Not forgetting Andrew Barbé's advice on how to be more like a dog!

So as we reach the end of this strange year I

would like to thank all our regular and occasional contributors who make sure that all the news from our parishes reaches me in time to be included in the magazine, all our advertisers, whose support is vital to the continued existence of the magazine, all our delivery people who make such an effort every month to make sure that every household in the seven parishes receives its copy of TemeTalk, and Orphans Press in Leominster, especially to Gary for all his help every month. And last but not least, thanks to all our readers for your support which makes it all worthwhile!

The next issue will be a joint **January/February** edition and the deadline will be **Monday 4th January**.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy, and hopefully stress-free, New Year.

*Sandra Griffiths*

PS I mustn't forget to thank the Boss for his unwavering support, his help when my computer goes wrong ("switch it off and switch it on again") and for collecting the magazine from Leominster every month.



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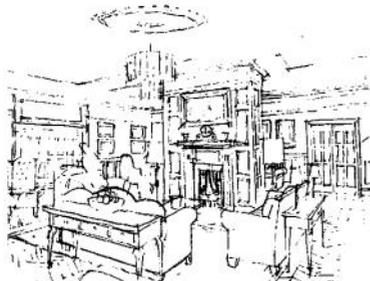
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Following the success of last year's Christmas Tree Festival at Stanford, this year's is going to be a little different – it will be online!

## To enter this year's competition:

- Post a photograph of your tree online at [www.facebook.com/events/394343625256178](https://www.facebook.com/events/394343625256178)
- Email your photos to [stanfordxmastreefestival@gmail.com](mailto:stanfordxmastreefestival@gmail.com)

Please add your name/organisation along with any other comment you would like displayed.

Enter from **Friday 5th December** to **Tuesday 15th December** inclusive.

Judging will take place on **Wednesday 16th December**.

The trees will be displayed on the Facebook page and YouTube over the full Christmas period.



A panel of local judges will award prizes in the following categories:

- **Children's Christmas tree** – school, nursery, children's club or just your own tree at home
- **Real tree** – no size too small or too big, open to families, individuals and businesses
- **Artificial tree** – no size too small or too big, open to families, individuals and businesses

All proceeds from the festival will be split equally between Acorns Children's Hospice and Maggs Day Centre – we are asking for a suggested donation of £5 please, for each tree entered

*We look forward to seeing all of your wonderfully decorated Christmas trees online throughout December.*

Get involved without entering a tree by making a donation at [www.give.net/stanfordxmastreefestival](http://www.give.net/stanfordxmastreefestival) site. Any amount gratefully received.

We hope the event will provide Teme Valley South with a real sense of continued community spirit. In a year where we have had so much turmoil and uncertainty, along with the ever changing lockdown measures being introduced, the Christmas spirit has never been needed as much as it has this year.

You can also request a prayer for you and your family by emailing your request and this will be written up and hung on our prayer tree in the Rectory. These requests will be prayed over daily during the Christmas period.



# A hedgehog's snowy adventure

A short story for children (of all ages) by Jane Bull

Penny Prickle shivered and clutched her basket tight, wishing with all her might that she did not have to go. "Come on now Penny," said Mummy, wrapping a scarf snugly round Penny's neck. "You know Granny hasn't been well and will be looking forward to your visit and the lovely soup you're taking. Now don't forget you **must** use the tunnel to get to the other side of the road." Granny lived on the other side of the big loud scary road, but some kind people had dug a tunnel under the road for all the animals to use. Penny had watched the noisy cars, lorries, tractors and motorbikes zooming along the road from the top of the hill near her home, where she and her friends often played. She was very glad and grateful the tunnel had been built *but* she had never ever been through it on her own before. Even when she went through with Mummy and Daddy and her brothers Tommy and Timmy, she was still frightened. It was so dark in there and the noise from all the traffic made her feel like the roof would fall in on her. Her brothers were very naughty, they would run ahead and then make ghostly noises or shout 'boo' as she got close to them.

"Please Mummy, I don't feel very well. Can't Tommy or Timmy go? I'll go next time, I promise." Mummy smiled, "The boys are helping Daddy clear the snow Penny, you will be fine, now off you go."

Penny set off down the garden path with a very gloomy face. "Cheer up Pen, maybe you will meet a friendly ghost in the tunnel," shouted Tommy. "Or even a witch who could give you a lift on her broomstick!" shouted Timmy and then they both rolled over and over in the snow roaring with laughter until Daddy told them to stop.

The closer Penny got to the road the louder the roar of the traffic became. "I am not frightened; I can do this," Penny kept saying to her-

self. She saw the sign for the entrance to the tunnel and gripped her basket very tight. Then she came to a halt, for the entrance to the tunnel was completely blocked by a huge snowdrift. Penny breathed a great big sigh of relief. There was no way she could get through the tunnel now and she knew she was definitely not allowed to try and cross the road. She did feel sad at not being able to visit Granny and deliver the soup but there was nothing she could do except go home.



As she turned to go, her cousin Spiky Pete came sliding down the path on his snowboard. "Hi Pen, what are you doing here?" Penny told the whole story to Pete who thought for a moment and then said "Mm, it would take too long to dig out the entrance, so don't move Pen, I'll be back in two shakes of a donkey's tail," and with that he shot off on his snowboard again, leaving Penny standing with her mouth wide open.

She barely had time to gather her thoughts before Pete came sliding back. "Here, put these on" and he handed Penny a helmet, elbow pads and knee pads. "But ..." spluttered Penny. "Oh, come on Pen, don't worry, I'm going to snowboard you down to the people's footbridge, over the road to Granny's and then home again." Penny was almost as frightened as she had been at the thought of going through the tunnel, but she trusted Pete, so she did as he asked and quietly said to herself "I am not frightened; I can do this".

"Right, climb on behind me, put your basket over your arm, your hands around my waist and hold on tight!" Penny did as she was told, and Spiky Pete pushed off with one foot and they started sliding down the path. Penny held on very tightly, her eyes squeezed tightly shut. "Wheee!" shouted Pete as they picked up speed. Penny nervously opened one eye just as

*Continued on page 16*

they sped past a large rock covered in snow but quickly closed it again. Then, as she felt the wind on her face and heard Pete shrieking with delight, she opened both eyes wide. "Oh my days!" she screamed laughing and flinging her head back. "This is fantastic." They sped past snowmen and animals, trees and bushes and actually did a little jump over a snowdrift. Penny even managed a little wave to the traffic as they whizzed over the road.

Granny was extremely pleased to see them but was a little worried that Penny's spines were a bit higgledy piggledy. "It's just the wind," giggled Penny and after she and Pete had had a delicious cup of hot chocolate with marshmallows, they set off home.

Penny loved the journey home because she wasn't a bit frightened anymore. When Spiky Pete slid up the garden path with Penny on the back of his snowboard, Daddy, Tommy and Timmy all dropped their snow shovels in surprise and Mummy came rushing out of the house without even putting on her coat, she was so surprised.

Penny told them all about her wonderful adventure and even said she was going to ask Father Christmas for a snowboard, but the best bit for Penny was when Tommy and Timmy told her she was the bravest girl they knew and they would never make fun of her about the tunnel again.



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# Secrets in my teacup

Such funny subjects prompt people to respond on social media. Recently I posted a photo of my unusual tea leaves after a morning cup of tea and asked on Facebook for suggestions as to what they might mean.

The replies were most entertaining. One friend said Waltzing Matilda. Another said it showed a passport, a pen waiting for the right time to sign travel documents, a map of Australia, clearly Queensland and the Whitsundays! I feel that might have been an invitation ... what a shock they'll get when we turn up after lockdown!

Another said there was a smoking pipe ... often packed with a type of grass used for 'relaxation and finding your inner self'. I have no idea what this might mean ...

And yet another said it was obviously a good quality tea, I had enjoyed it and didn't approve of waste as there was nothing left in the cup! Three affirmatives – it was Lapsang Sou-chong.

When we were children, reading tea leaves was a daily treat. We were unaware then that our harmless pastime was known as tasseography – tasse, French for cup; graph, Greek for writing. Tea leaf reading is believed to have started shortly after tea was discovered by the Chinese Emperor Shen Nung. It was later practised by Romani gypsies and European fortune tellers. Remnants of tea leaves, coffee grounds, wine sediments, hot chocolate, and beer or fruit juice can be read. And they all involve rituals and concentration.

You have to learn to recognise the many symbols and their position in the cup. The larger the symbol, the greater its importance or impact on your life. The long list of symbols includes a boat (a visit from a friend), circles (money or presents), a cow (prosperity), a fox (backstabbing from a close friend), a moon (happiness and success), a pig (a faithful lover but jealous friends), a shark (danger of death), a unicorn (scandal), worms (secret enemies).

If you want to have your tea leaves read,

your tea for the reading must not have milk, sugar or lemon in it. Just a pinch of tea leaves in a cup, preferably plain white, topped with boiling water and covered by the saucer or a lid.

Let the tea draw for a few minutes. Now drink it and leave behind a few drops. Take the cup handle in your left hand and swill the remaining tea in an anti-clockwise direction, then turn upside down and place on the saucer to drain the remaining drops of liquid. (Please do not burn yourself at this stage.) Again wait a few moments, turn the cup up and it will be time for your future to be read.

The rim of the cup is the present, the side is medium term and the bottom shows the distant future. Your reader will then study the cup quietly for a period and slowly interpret the symbols.

Who would have thought the humble cuppa could carry such secrets? Bye for now, I'm off to put the kettle on ...

AO



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# Ann Brierley

Ann Brierley died on 1st November and will be sadly missed by everyone. Ann was married to Michael Brierley and came to Eastham Rectory (now Eastham House) in 1971.

In Ann's eulogy her son John recalled that "Ann had moved with Michael, John and Paul to Eastham, to the church of St Peter and St Paul, a small parish sharing the Rector (dad) with St Michaels, Rochford. We all have many happy memories of our time living in the country and mum kept in contact with friends from the area and visited the church on a couple of occasions over the last two years.

"Ann worked at Norris and Miles Solicitors during the early years. Later her big focus was on the Mothers' Union. She started the local branch in Eastham and Rochford and continued to be a member of the MU ever since. She joined different branches as we moved. She went on to become president for the Worcester Diocese where she had to visit many branches and attend occasions which she did without hesitation and with great enthusiasm.

"Michael and Ann moved to St Luke's in Cradley Heath in 1979 where Ann made lifelong friends within the church and local community."



Ann's final resting place will be St Edmunds church in Dudley where Michael was buried last year. The funeral was on 19th November. Donations in memory of Ann to St Edmunds Church and Mothers Union Projects to H Cope (CH) Limited, 123 Reddal Hill Road, Cradley Heath, B64 5JG.

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# The Battle of Kadesh: Egyptians 0 – Hittites 0

Last week I tuned into a television history program which I thought was interesting.

It all happened over 3,000 years ago. Two powerful empires were in dispute. It was carefully recorded in state records so we have a good idea of what happened and this is thought to include the earliest fully recorded battle with plans, strategies and other details.

On one side were the Hittites. They controlled a huge area of what is now mostly Turkey and Syria – more than 2,000 miles across. On the other side were the Egyptians under Ramesses II who was expanding his empire up the east coast of the Mediterranean.

At the Battle of Kadesh in 1274BC the two met somewhere to the west of modern day Aleppo and had one hell of a scrap. It involved up to 50,000 men on each side and maybe 6,000 chariots.

Technological progress was applied to the chariots. The Hittites' innovation was to place the axle under the platform so it was stronger and could carry a driver plus two soldiers. On the down side it was less manoeuvrable. The Egyptians had chariots with the axle at the back which was structurally weaker so could only carry one or maybe two soldiers.

In the battle the Hittites won the first encounter but the retreating Egyptians turned the tables with a

fleet-footed counter attack catching the Hittites off guard.

We are not sure which side finally won. The Egyptian records are most persuasive that they won – but the records were written by Egyptians. Ramesses II had a reputation at home to guard and a spin doctor to work for him.

It was not decisive and the fighting continued for 15 more years until a peace treaty in 1258BC, the first one ever recorded. An enlarged replica of the agreement hangs on a wall at the headquarters of the United Nations, as the earliest international peace treaty known to historians. The original is in the Istanbul Archaeology Museum.

Both sides had been successful, powerful states for nearly 1,000 years but before too long both empires had expired. They were overtaken by the Assyrians – who lasted until 600BC.

(Did you know? The study of the Hittites is called hittitology.)

*Brian Griffiths*



*Egypto-Hittite Peace Treaty 1258BC*

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## Eastham Book Christmas discount!

Copies of 'Eastham: Within Living Memory' will be offered at a knock-down price this Christmas as books, always welcome gifts, become even more desirable to take our minds off Covid-19.

Until the New Year, the books will be on sale for just £5 with free p&p.

Future proceeds from sales of the book will go to the Eastham Welfare Trust, a registered charity which offers confidential help to those in need in our local parishes.

Previously the committee of the Millennium Living Memory Project kept the money in a special bank account for use when needed. That account has been closed now and £1,345 transferred to the EWT's account.

The book is available from Averil Opperman on 01584 781381, Sylvia Breakwell on 01584 781402 and Josie Ward on 01584 881435. Or it is available at full price £10 from Tenbury News in Teme Street, 01584 810230.

If you or someone you know needs help or advice from the EWT, please contact Alyson Brookes on 01584 781237 or [geoffbrookes@googlemail.com](mailto:geoffbrookes@googlemail.com) where your call or email will be treated with complete confidence.

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# Pet portraits by Elena Fletcher



Our local talent spot this month features Elena Fletcher from Hanley Broadheath who, like a lot of people, has rediscovered her love for the arts during the lockdowns.

Elena is an amateur artist and since moving back from London to the Broadheath, where she grew up, she has produced some stunning work. She says that she has always been creative and dabbled in painting but during the pandemic she has been able to rediscover her love for it.

During this time she has experimented with different media and refined her work. Her recent output has focused on painting animals, mostly African wildlife from a safari she took in January, and domestic animals. She has also been doing pet portraits for local people. Elena paints oil on canvas or board and her painting looks so realistic because of the photo studies she takes of the subject beforehand.

She is more than happy to take on commissions. As she is only just starting out she has yet to create a website but she is happy to show you her work and talk to you. So do please contact her at [elenafletcher96@gmail.com](mailto:elenafletcher96@gmail.com) – I promise you won't be disappointed.

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### **Daily Hope – a new way of bringing worship and prayer to people’s homes**

Recently the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, launched Daily Hope, a free phone line offering hymns, prayers and reflections 24 hours a day during the lockdown. The line received more than 6,000 calls in the first 48 hours of its launch.

The free phone number is: 0800 804 8044

It opens with a greeting from the Archbishop followed by a number of options:

\* To listen to a full message from the Archbishop of Canterbury

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## **An open letter to farmers from Cllr Barbara Jones-Williams**

Dear farmers,

As the well-known harvest hymn says: “Come ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home, all is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin ...”

But as we all know, farming doesn’t finish at the end of harvesting. There are animals still to be fed and looked after, dairy cows to be milked, machinery to be repaired and maintained, fencing jobs to be carried out, fields and crops to be prepared for planting for next year’s harvesting, the list is endless

Whilst most of the country has been on lockdown due to Covid-19, you and your farm workers have carried on regardless of this unprecedented situation in which we find ourselves. As a district council we are thankful and extremely grateful for your vital work in helping to feed our nation particularly during these challenging times with the triple challenges of unpredictable weather, changes in agricultural policy and coping with Covid-19.

You have not locked down your farms and for this we thank you ...

*Cllr Barbara Jones-Williams  
Rural Champion  
for Malvern Hills District Council*

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# Teme Valley Wildlife

It's usual to review the year in a December article, but what a year we've had. No-one could have predicted the events of 2020 – tragedy for so many and disruption to daily life for everyone. As far as wildlife is concerned, two un-mistakeable facts have emerged. First, wildlife prospers in the peace and tranquillity of human absence and second, humans need the presence of the natural world to cope with distress. That they are mutually exclusive creates a huge conundrum.



tographed lounging on empty national park roads, fragile coral reefs along Thailand's deserted beaches were noted to be rebounding with life and health and seahorse numbers in waters off the south coast of England jumped unexpectedly. But this wasn't all, breeding success was reportedly greater than usual both for large

mammals, in Africa for chimpanzees, gorillas and elephants (lots of twins) and for large endangered birds, here in Britain for the hen harrier. It is the larger creatures which tend to be more critically endangered, so this was very encouraging news for wildlife conservationists.

The first sights and sounds of a wildlife response to fewer people, less traffic and more silence were pictures of hedge-munching goats in Llandudno and reports of birdsong suddenly assailing the ears of city-dwellers. There then followed a steady stream of positive wildlife stories. Lions in Africa were pho-

On the human side of the equation many people reported their pleasure at watching wildlife in their gardens (an asset valued more than ever before) and then in parks and open spaces once restrictions were lifted. Outdoor exercise and communing with nature gained a new national importance. But going forward, how do we reconcile our needs with the needs of our fellow planet-dwellers?

I pondered whether the various wildlife organisations which act as guardians for Britain's natural habitats should consider excluding visitors from each of their reserves for a year at a time, on a rolling basis, to allow reserve residents to recover from the attentions of their

*Continued on page 24*

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human admirers. Many of us are members of such organisations and I for one would not mind being denied access to a particular reserve if it were to benefit the creatures living there. Should we call for this?

Whilst thinking about this article I came across a recent appeal from one of Britain's foremost Nobel Prize-winning scientists, Sir Paul Nurse, which seemed totally apt and which I'd like to share.

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"All the living organisms we know are all related and clearly interacting. As far as we

know, we humans are the only life forms who can see this deep connectivity and reflect on what it all means. That gives us a special responsibility for life on this planet, made up as it is by our relatives, some close, some more distant. We need to care about it and we need to care for it."

Happy Christmas!

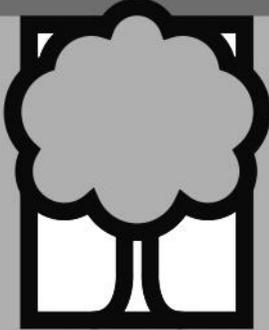
The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group is on hold whilst we await the re-opening of our venue. Our meetings are usually held at Stoke Bliss and Kyre village hall at 7.30pm. It is just £2 on the door and everybody is most welcome.

Stephanie Mcroft

*For up-to-date information on what wildlife is being seen in the area, or to give us your sightings or comments, visit our Facebook page. Our programme of events, bird survey and archive photographs are available on our website [www.temevalleywildlife.co.uk](http://www.temevalleywildlife.co.uk) We normally holds meetings on the second Thursday of the month. All are welcome. Contact us by telephone on 01568 750413 or by email at [twwg@outlook.com](mailto:twwg@outlook.com).*

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**TemeTalk**  
Deadline 4th January

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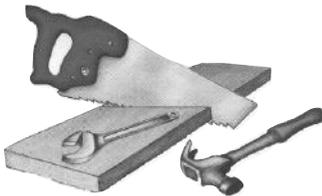
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# What's on in Teme Valley South

## December

2nd Wednesday	Eastham Coffee Morning, via Zoom, 10.30am
5th-15th	Entries for Stanford Church Online Christmas Tree Festival
6th Sunday	Drive-in Carol Service, Stoke Bliss & Kyre Village Hall, 3.30pm
13th Sunday	Outdoor Carol Service, the Old Forge, Rochford, 3.30pm
18th Friday	Rochford Neighbourhood Christmas Lunch (collect or delivered)
19th-24th	Father Christmas at Angel Gardens, Mill Farm Country Retail
20th Sunday	Online TVS Carol Service Music and Readings, Hanley Childe
24th Thursday	Stanford Crib Service via Zoom
24th Thursday	Rochford Midnight Service, St Michael's Church, 11.30pm
25th Friday	Holy Communion, Hanley William, 9.30am Family Service, Eastham, 10.00am

## January

18th Eastham Memorial Hall AGM, Eastham Memorial Hall?

Send items for inclusion to Sandra Griffiths by 18th of the month  
telephone 01568 750665 or email [ronsmum@btconnect.com](mailto:ronsmum@btconnect.com)

**TemeTalk** Deadline for the January/February issue is 4th January



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# Services

## December 2020/January 2021

**Sunday Services – please bring a face mask for indoor services, some of which will be limited on numbers for safety, so advance booking will be needed for those services marked \*\* below.**

### Sunday 6th December

10.00am	Stanford	Holy Communion
3.00pm	Stoke Bliss Village Hall	Drive-in Carol Service

### Sunday 13th December

10.00am	Hanley William	Holy Communion
3.30pm	Rochford	Outdoor Carol Service at the Old Forge
	Online	Blessings Group Nativity – sketches and carols to tell the Christmas story

### Sunday 20th December

	Online	TVS Carol Service
10.00am	Eastham	All Age Service and communion
2.00pm		Walking Church
3.30pm	Hanley Childe	**Music and Readings** <i>(book with Ed Yarnold)</i>

### Thursday 24th December

	Online	<b>Christmas Eve</b>
11.30pm	Rochford	Stanford Zoom Crib Service
		**Midnight Mass** <i>(book with Ann Prosser)</i>

### Friday 25th December

9.30am	Hanley William	<b>Christmas Day</b>
10.00am	Eastham	Holy Communion
		**Family Service** <i>(book with Celia Adams)</i>

### Sunday 27th December

	Online	Streamed service
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### Sunday 3rd January

10.00am	Stanford	Holy Communion
3.30pm	Stoke Bliss	Celtic Service

### Wednesday 6th January

	Online	Walking Church for Epiphany
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### Sunday 10th January

10.00am	Hanley William	Holy Communion
3.30pm	Rochford	Evening Service

### Sunday 17th January

10.00am	Eastham	All Age Service and communion
2.00pm		Walking Church
3.30pm	Hanley Childe	Evening Service

We plan to celebrate Plough Sunday on 24th January at Kyre in the afternoon and Candlemas at an on-line café church on 31st January

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