

Christmas 2024

No we haven't gone completely mad and yes it is still only March but at the social activity meeting it was felt that we needed to give everyone a heads up of something we are planning for next Christmas. So you can put your thinking caps on and get creative!

We are hoping to hold a **Christmas Tree Festival** in church. So the idea is that the church will be decorated with many Christmas "trees" and we need businesses, organisations, individuals, families to provide and decorate a small(ish) Christmas tree. It would be great if they were "themed" and blatant promotion of a business, charity or organisation is encouraged. And they don't have to be your traditional fir or artificial tree. How about a tree made of sticks or cardboard? If you're a fervent rambler, maybe hiking poles? What's your hobby? Could you translate that into a decorated tree? (Traditional trees are also welcome!)

All trees will need to be in situ by 30th November to coincide with the Christmas Fayre. They will need to be self contained (so battery operated lights) & small enough to go in a window or on a shelf. More detailed instructions will be forthcoming nearer the time. So get thinking!

Barbara

3rd March 2024 – National Day of Reflection

Cathedrals are preparing to be places of comfort and hope as we mark the COVID-19 pandemic, National Day of Reflection.

The National Day of Reflection this Sunday (3rd March) is organised by Marie Curie to reflect on our collective loss, support those who've been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future.

The National Day of Reflection was started by charity Marie Curie to acknowledge the devastating effect of the pandemic; 'we need to come together, in our communities and as a nation, to acknowledge this lasting pain. Let's make the legacy of the pandemic one of compassion, love, and being there for each other during the toughest of times.'

A Prayer for the National Day of Reflection from the Canon Chancellor of Rochester Cathedral.

Our God of love and mercy, hear our prayers as we reflect on the passing of time and the distress of recent years.

We hold before you the fear, isolation and misery; the suffering and the grief experienced by so many and we remember those who have died or whose lives changed forever.

We thank you for the unstinting service and unflinching courage of key workers.

As we are borne onwards by tides of uncertainty, give us grace to look back with love, to journey in faith and live in hope, for the sake of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

Amen

Prayer Corner:

Friday 1st March celebrated the World Day of Prayer 2024.

The invitation to us all is to be personally enriched by contact with other Christians as we share their faith experience to learn at first hand of the situation of women in other countries worldwide to share the hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, needs and opportunities of women around the world to pray with them and for them to turn prayers into positive action.

We can be part of the great wave of prayer!

This year the service has been prepared by an ecumenical group of Christian women from Palestine, the land in which Jesus was born, ministered and died, where our Christian faith began and is rooted.

A Prayer for Peace

Dear Lord Jesus,

Today we pray for the women of Palestine whose ancestors walked with you in the desert, shared bread and fish with you on the hillside, waved palms for your entry into Jerusalem and touched the hem of your cloak to receive healing.

Palestinian women today face many difficulties which curtail their freedom as human beings and make living often dangerous and fearful.

We pray for peace: peace between beliefs, peace between heritages, peace between political affiliations and peace between nations.

You have the power to open the eyes of those in authority and make them see that bombs and bullets only bring destruction and never harmony.

In the country of your birth, boyhood, ministry and death many are calling out for your intervention, to bring peace into troubled lives and make all things new.

Amen.

By Maureen Colbert.

To find out more about the World Day of Prayer-it's fascinating history and it's global influence visit

www.wwdp.org.uk

Muriel

Another piece of sad news with the death of Mary Goodson. Many of the older members of the church will remember Mary and her late husband, Michael.

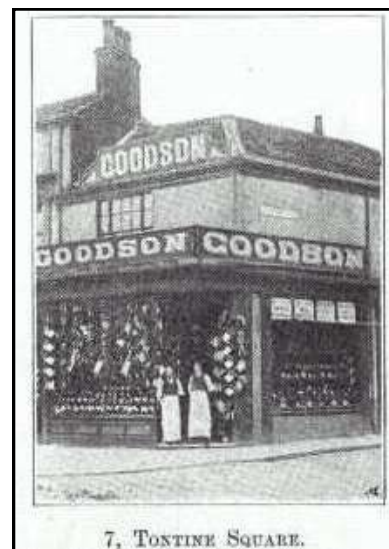
It was Mary who commissioned the cleaning and restoring of the two large murals in the church as a memorial to Michael. (There are still some postcards in the tower showing these paintings, so help yourselves)

The two murals were painted by John Thorley in 1881. They are replicas of works by Raphael owned by the Queen. You will find the story of the miraculous catch of fish by the disciples in Saint Luke, chapter 5. Acts of the Apostles chapter 5 will tell you the story of Annanias and Sapphira.

I can also remember taking Jo-Anne as a child to their shoe shop in Hanley. (Not quite as long ago as the picture!)

Mary was also a very keen member of Bagnall W.I. for many years. I will always remember the beautiful cross stitch that she did, the back of her work was just as tidy as the front, unlike mine which is exceedingly messy. (you don't look at the back though do you!)

Our thoughts are with her family, friends and the McGregor family.





The Give A Duck Foundation is a children's cancer charity, supporting local children who have been diagnosed with cancer throughout the UK.

Chemo Duck is fitted with medical lines and ports to mirror those of the child. Play Leaders, through play therapy use Chemo Duck to prepare children for their treatment, be it an appointment with their Consultant, administering chemotherapy or taking blood samples.

Children feel they can take back some control at a time when they have very little, for example by suggesting that nurses clean the Duck's Hickman Line or Portacath before their own. Things are less scary if Chemo Duck experiences the treatment the children will go through and provides a relaxed way to have discussions about what will happen to them in hospital.

We want to provide Chemo Duck packs to every specialist centre in childhood cancer in the UK. We work with the majority of the specialist childhood cancer centres in the UK and in partnership with some local children's charities who distribute the ducks on our behalf. By working with health care professionals about the many uses and roles Chemo Duck can play during treatment, we know we can help make things a little easier at a really difficult time.

Creative Crafts, led by Barbara and Meg have been knitting duck outfits for this foundation. Here's a sample:



Now that I've finished knitting chickens etc I can go back to knitting duck clothes! I can see a couple of my knits in the picture.

This is the 2nd parcel that they have sent this month!

If you'd like to attend any meeting, with or without craft, the next one is on Monday 4th March at 1.30pm in the Village hall.

There is a small contribution towards the hall, but tea and cake are provided.

Smiles:

Knock Knock. Who's there? Isabel. Isabel Who? Isabel working? I've been ringing it for hours!

Two snakes are talking. Snake one, "Are we Venomous." Snake two, "Yes, why?" Snake one, "I just bit my lip."

How do you warm up a room after it's been painted? Give it a second coat!

What happens when you tell an egg a joke? It cracks up!!

Knock Knock. Who's there? Alaska. Alaska who? Alaska only one more time to open the door!

What kind of bird can write? A penguin!

Why did the guy put a stove in his car? To make a hot rod!

How do you close an envelope under water? With a seal!

Customer: "There's a dead beetle in my soup." Waiter: "Yes, sir. They aren't very good swimmers."