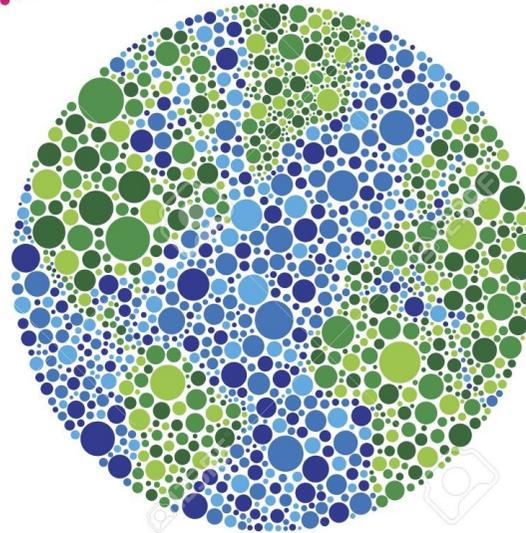


St John's Church

serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde

Christmas
Special



Parish Magazine

Dec 2016 / Jan 2017

£1



Remembrance Day Book and School Choir; see News Section and School Report for more details, and inside back cover for more pictures of the Book



December 2016

Sunday 4th Advent 2

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Special Family Service - Retelling the story of Christmas

Sunday 11th Advent 3

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

5 pm Carols by Candlelight

Tuesday 13th 2.30 pm Friendship Tea

Sunday 18th Advent 4

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am **Nine Lessons and Carols**

Saturday 24th Christmas Eve

4 pm Crib Service

10.30 pm Midnight Mass

Sunday 25th Christmas Day

11am Family Service

**** Morning Prayer 10 am Wednesdays ******

The Vicar's day off is Friday each week

Readings (preacher reads the gospel at Parish Communion)

4th Romans 15: 4-13 Matthew 3: 1-12

11th James 5: 7-10 Matthew 11: 2-11

18th Romans 1: 1-7 Matthew 1: 18-end

25th Timothy 4: 6-8, 16-18 Luke 18: 9-14

Coffee after 11am Services.

Sunday 1st Christmas 2

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Sue Stilwell

11am Family Service

Sunday 8th Epiphany

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

Tuesday 10th 2.30 pm Friendship Tea**Sunday 15th Epiphany 2**

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Morning Prayer led by Paul Seymour

Sunday 22nd Epiphany 3

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11 am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

Sunday 29th Presentation of Christ

8am BCP Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

11am Holy Communion led by Paul Seymour

**** Morning Prayer 10 am every Wednesday *******The Vicar's day off is Friday each week***Readings** (preacher reads the gospel at Parish Communion)

1st	2 Galatians 4: 4-7	Luke 2:15-21
8th	Acts 10: 34-43	Matthew 3:13-17
15th	1 Corinthians 1: 1-9	John 1:29-42
22nd	1 Corinthians 1: 10-18	Matthew 4: 12-23
29th	1 Corinthians 1: 18-31	Matthew 5: 1-12

Coffee after 11am Services. Sunday Club at 11am save Family Service

*“So here it is Merry Christmas
Everybody's having fun
Look to the future now,
It's only just begun.”*



For me Christmas can't possibly be Christmas unless I hear Slade at some point bellowing out this Christmas song. That having been said when I heard it being played in a supermarket on the 1st of November, I was to say the very least slightly surprised. I mean Halloween stuff was still being reduced so it could be sold off, but the next chance to sell goods on the hope of a happier time had arrived. So the Halloween ghosts and ghouls have dematerialised and the witches have flown off and out comes the Christmas bunting, Santa sleighing overhead and reindeer afflicted with enlarged and postbox red proboscis helping pull his sleigh of brightly packaged goods.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm really not worried about when the retail industry sells a product, nor does the fact that Hot Cross buns are on sale all year or that Easter seems to begin on the 1st of January, after all who doesn't like a crème egg at any time of the year. Frankly as a Christian these eggs still manage to remind me of the Easter story and that gives me hope.

Which is why I have always liked the song as its full of hope (unless mother is caught kissing Santa) and hope is something we all need. It would be wrong to say it's because of the lack of faith that people look to seasonal purchases to fill some kind of spiritual void. Frankly I don't believe it. What I do believe is that the need for hope in society is great. I'm sure there have been times when that need has been stronger but none the less it's a strong need now and expecting retailers to remember why we have Christmas is a hopeless cause. It is for Christians to find ways of reminding our communities that the origins of Christmas are simply the story of the birth of the Son of God in human form.

It is the birth of Jesus that brings us greatest hope for he brings the good news of forgiveness, the hope of healing of our ailments and diseases and the hope of salvation. Which begs the question *what is salvation?*

Salvation is about eternal change in our situation, Jesus himself equated being saved with entering the kingdom of God ([Matthew 19:24-25](#)). So as we enter 2017 lets choose to hope, to hope for a good year, to hope for good health, to hope for peace but most of all have hope of salvation.

Why the Envelope?

With this Magazine you should find an envelope addressed to the Vicar. It is there to help readers who get the Magazine delivered to them for free and wish to contribute to St John's.

As we have reported it is pretty certain that St John's is going to have a deficit in 2016; the only question is how large. If you value the Magazine please help us by a donation. The cover price is only £1 so why not donate at least £5, which is a bargain since we produce 6 issues a year?

We do try to include material about the area, not just Churchy stuff. For example, we aim to feature in each issue an article from the Lemsford Local History Group. We also, thanks to Mandy Evans, carry a School report. If you are a School parent we hope you value the strong support and encouragement we give in many ways to your child.

Of course there is nothing to stop you giving more than £5 if you are feeling generous at Christmas! You may be sure that any contribution you do make will be put to good use.

Don't put it off. If you live near Gina Butler our Treasurer at 33 Great North Road you could drop the envelope into her letter box. If you prefer electronic transfers email me for details.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Geoffrey Hollis, Magazine Editor g.hollis2@ntlworld.com

Christmas Highlights

Sunday 4th 11 am Family Service retelling the Christmas Story

Sunday 11th 5 pm Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 18th 11 am Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve 4 p m Crib Service
10.30 pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day 11 am Family Service—bring your presents!

Baptisms

On 9th October **Layla Flin**; 5th November **Annabelle Gatford, Hannah & Alan Bruce**. We welcome them to the Church Family.

Funeral

On 30th September, **Jim Maxwell**. See our tribute to him on page 7.

Police Choir Concert

Well done to Carole Payne for the excellent concert in Church which raised £600, to be shared between Isabel Hospice and St Johns.

Stanborough School Music

Choir members **Poppy, Florrie, Edie, Karl and Jay** will be performing in two school events this December: Thursday 1st winter concert at school 7pm tickets £4 for adults; Monday 19th carol concert at St Francis church 6pm, free, mince pies afterwards.

Memorial Book

At the Remembrance Day Service Andy Chapman presented to the Church a book prepared by the Local History Group detailing every man listed on the War Memorial. An impressive effort which is currently on display in the Brocket Chapel. *Pictures inside covers.*

Lemsford Local History

Group welcomes everyone to their

meeting in the Church Annexe on Thursday 8th December at 7.30pm and wishes everyone a very Happy Christmas.

Shoebboxes

87 boxes (up on last year) were despatched from St John’s. Mary Douglas went with them to the distribution centre at St Mark’s and said ‘it was so humbling to see all the boxes, some packed to the gunnels...’

Welcome to new Advertisers

Alice Coralie Glyn Trust—see article on page 14—and house cleaners **Top to Bottom**.



Alice Coralie Glyn Homes Trust

We are a local Almshouse Charity with
14 properties in
Turmore Dale and Hyde Valley
Welwyn Garden City

If you are over 60 and looking for accommodation,
please contact our Managing Agents:

Welwyn Garden City Housing Association on:

[01707 390044](tel:01707390044)
We may be able to help

Parish Magazine copy date for the next issue: **22nd January**.



Come and celebrate God's great gift to us this Christmas – Jesus!

We will be retelling the Christmas story in songs and drama at our **family service for Christmas on Sunday 4th December** at 11.00. We'd love it if children (and adults) could come dressed in nativity costume – shepherds, angels, sheep and stars – the more the merrier!

The **Christmas Eve Crib Service at 4.00 on the 24th** will get you and the kids ready for the big day with lots of carols and maybe even a bit of peace as you visit the nativity scene in church!

Contact Jo Brooks at joholifield@gmail.com about these events.

.. and the rest of the year?

Sunday Club meets each Sunday of term during the morning service for Bible stories, games, crafts, music and prayer, toddlers to year 6.

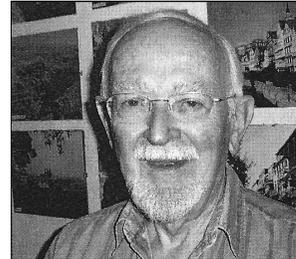
Family services are always on the first Sunday of the month, term time and holidays alike - we meet together for a shortened service of songs, readings, prayers and activities. .

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for Harvest Festival this year. We supported **The Bishop's Harvest Appeal in aid of WaterAid** and raised over £300. This will help provide clean water and toilets for many families in Madagascar.

Thanks too to everyone who has filled and brought a shoebox to church this year for **Operation Christmas Child** – from school to the Ramblers Association, you've all been wonderfully generous. 87 boxes go out this week with our love and prayers to bless many children overseas this Christmas.

Jim's Funeral was conducted at St John's by John Barnard on 30th September. When fit he was a regular attender and in September 2006 contributed the article below to the Magazine. He was a lovely man and we will miss him greatly.

Early Life: Jim was born in 1928, in Wallasey, Cheshire. He remembers well the Blitz of Liverpool, which was not much publicised but which killed many people and devastated large areas. He has a lot of Celt in him-his father was Liverpudlian/Scottish and his mother Welsh.



Career: He took a BSc and PHD at Liverpool University, in chemistry, and then joined ICI in Welwyn Garden City, where he stayed for 37 years, working and lecturing on pure and applied research into plastics. He has written 2 books: *The Layman's Guide to Plastics*, and *Plastics in the Automotive Industry*; and gave a Millennium Lecture to the Plastics Historical Society. Latterly Jim has been a reader on a series called Random Editions for Radio 4, which he enjoyed.

Interests: He has been married to Beth for 52 years. They have 3 sons and 3 grandchildren. One of their sons, Glyn, is well-known as a poet, and is now writing plays. His poem about his grand-father was included in an anthology of poems about the First World War, compiled by Andrew Motion, the Poet Laureate. Jim has acted under Beth's direction in many productions for The Barn Theatre, taking large roles. He enjoys listening to male voice choirs, and speaks several languages-must be the Celt in him. His Welsh grandfather was a Master mariner who kept a diary and Jim is working on making this and contemporary material into a biography.

St John's: Bill Griffin many years ago involved them in his Old Tyme Music Hall, and also introduced them to St John's, where they are well-known for their reading of the Lesson.

Favourite hymns: *Cwm Rhondda*, (Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah); and *How great Thou art*. Also, he and Beth have several times been to Ypres, to hear the Last Post, and been moved by *The day Thou gavest Lord has ended*.

This year, for the first time in living memory, a trumpeter sounded the Last Post at the Remembrance Day tribute by the War Memorial. It was moving and added greatly to the spiritual dimension of our Service. The trumpeter was Jason Wratten and this is his story.



I come from Harworth, a small town in South Yorkshire about 133 miles up the A1, which takes about 2 hours 20 minutes with no traffic. I used to work in a pub about 3 miles away in the next village as a chef. They took me in as an apprentice in 2012 during which time I completed a Level 2 and a Level 3 NVQ and, more importantly, learnt to cook. It was a very traditional pub and the food served was traditional pub grub: pies, lasagne, steaks along with the odd Special—and we weren't shy about portion sizes.

My home church would probably be classed as liberal catholic in its traditions and I have been going there since before I was born as my Mum used to run the Sunday school. When I was 9, the vicar started a children's choir which I took part in. From there some of us had the chance to become acolytes and I was eventually asked to serve and administer the chalice, which I have done for the last 10 years.

“But, what brings you here?” you may ask. Well, I'm currently exploring my vocation and am on a scheme supported by both the University of Hertfordshire and the Bishops Hatfield Team called the Hatfield Root Group. I am one of three that are currently on the scheme, working half-time in the University Chaplaincy and half-time with the parishes in the area. The aim of the scheme is to give young people like myself and my colleagues a chance to see what life ministering in the service of God is like and to help us to see what God is calling us to. Whether that be to ordination, reader training, children and youth work, pastoral care or Chaplaincy, this scheme provides a range of different experiences to be able to make an informed and decision.

I am based mainly alongside Rev Paul in St Johns, and St Michaels, Birchwood as well as helping out in the other parishes within the Team. As a Pastoral Assistant I am expected to gradually take on different roles and responsibilities like serving, reading, leading services and even preaching. The idea is to test myself and to challenge myself to step out of my comfort zone. Between the parishes in the team and the university, there will be plenty of opportunity for this.

One of the biggest challenges will be remembering everyone's name because of the sheer volume of people I meet, not only in the parishes and university, but in my wider travels as part of the Root Group scheme. I am great at recognising faces but linking names to those faces is hard, so please forgive me if I do forget your name and maybe give me a prompt if I look like I'm struggling.



I am really looking forward to spending the year here in Hatfield. I pray that, as we journey along together this year, each of us grows in the strength and love of God, and that his guiding light may illuminate not only my path, but the path of the Church and each individual within it. That we may all find our true calling in Christ and answer that calling with willing hearts.

With the approach of Advent and Christmas, we are preparing ourselves for this wonderful time in school when we re-enact and celebrate Jesus' birth. All schools are always busy at this time of year but at St John's we aim to keep our eyes clearly focused on the joy, love and peace of the Christian message, as well as the tinsel and presents! Our Christian Values for the months of November and December are, indeed, Peace and Love. Harvest Festival seems a long time ago now, but those who were able to attend the service at St John's Church will know how proud we were of our school choir who joined with the church choir to sing a John Rutter anthem. *Pictured inside front cover* Thank you to Carol Payne and Tim Armstrong Taylor, who were the main links in this lovely and on-going collaboration; members of our choir also came to sing at the church service on 6th November. *Pictured below*



The choir have also sung in St Albans Abbey at the Bishop's Harvest Service in early October and there is no let up for them as we approach Christmas! Again this year the choir will sing for the elderly residents' of Quantam Care at their Christmas Party (about 300 guests!) and also with the Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir, as well as our cherished time at Stanborough Lodge home for the elderly.

Our House and Vice Captains organised an inter-house Poetry Recital competition before half term which encouraged all children to learn a poem off by heart and perform or recite it to the school before a panel of pupil and adult judges. We were delighted that even Reception class children had the confidence to enter and it was a truly wonderful afternoon of performance! Thank you to all who took part and to those who led it, and also to Ms Ng for helping to facilitate this for the children.

The Autumn term is always packed full of activities and events and this term is no exception. We have welcomed the NSPCC in to our assemblies to talk to all children about keeping safe, particularly online and they have also delivered a workshop to our older children when they discussed in more detail, many issues surrounding keeping safe in this new digital world.

Our children have represented us in many sporting events including Table Tennis, where our team of 4 pupils came second in the local schools competition, losing narrowly to a team with a national player! We are seeing the rewards of having an outside table tennis table! As many of you may know we have two new members of staff this half term, Mrs Keeley Quicke-Jennings is our new teacher in Class 1 and Mrs Karen Willson is our new secretary. Both have settled in fantastically well and have become valued members of the St John's team.

Mrs Emily Norbury, who left at half term, has had a beautiful baby girl, Florence, and we all wish her and her husband our congratulations and look forward to a visit soon!

Our Nativity will soon be upon us and rehearsals have started. Please do come and watch it, if you would like to, as this is always such a special start to Christmas. We have two performances: both on Tuesday 13th December at 2.30pm and 6.30pm, and also, please feel welcome to attend our Carol Service on the last morning of term: Wednesday 21st December at 9.00am, led by Reverend Paul Seymour.

Kindest regards,

Mandy Evans Headteacher

The Welwyn Viaduct is one hour's walk from Lemsford and it is likely that on August 6th 1850 anyone who was able to walk went to Digswell to watch Queen Victoria open it. In 1850 I can only imagine the amazement of the locals at its size: 1490 feet long, 100 feet high, forty arches at thirty foot span. All the new bricks were made on site and the two embankments either end which required around one million tons of earth moved by human and horse must have been seen as the eighth wonder of the world.



Railways were quickly spreading in the mid 19th century: the Luton branch railway line, 'The Luton & Dunstable', opened in 1860. This line would be used by the village maybe to visit and shop but certainly to export the straw plaits which were a valuable commodity for the economics of the area. In 1861 Lemsford was connected to Hertford by railway via Welwyn and then in 1865 connected to St Albans via the Hatfield to St Albans Abbey via London Road.

The census of 1861 shows the Parish with 434 people living there, seventy eight heads of families, occupation similar to 1851. Major occupation for males was agricultural labourers (83) females straw platters (72). Services range from baker, miller, blacksmiths and wheelwrights. In 1871, the next census, the population (433) had hardly changed but railway related occupations had arrived: Railway smith, rail labourer, plate layer (four men) and railway flagman. Agricultural labourers were only slightly down, at seventy eight, but there were now only seven Straw Platters. The decline of straw plating was due to changes in import duties which led to an upsurge in imports of plaited straw from the far east. The railway made this change easier with links to the ports. The people of Lemsford supplemented their meagre wages with plaiting and its loss must have had an adverse effect on them. Comparing the census from 1861 to 1871 sons and daughters are reduced, possibly having had to move away to earn a living..

Our final census is 1881. It shows a population reduced to 392, heads seventy seven, agricultural labourers forty nine and straw platters nine. Jobs on the railway included loco driver and porter. The Roebuck had closed in 1879—a sign of the decline in passing trade, a combination of the bypass and the railway. The wagon & Horses, Sun Inn and Long & Short were still open for business.

In 1851 census the majority of entries for birthplaces was Hatfield. In 1881 we see Hertford, Stevenage, Hitchin, & St Albans a sign of travelling to other towns on the railway and meeting future partners and bringing them back to Lemsford. This could also explain the decline in daughters who visited towns on the railway and met future husbands and settled in their towns. The railway was a form of escape on a Saturday night, with easy access to London, Luton, Hertford and St Albans.

1841 to 1881 was the transfer from stage coach to train. The next 130 years would see the golden age of steam come and go, 2 world wars where ninety eight men and women would leave Lemsford for WW1 via Hatfield station and twenty never returning. In the 1920s Welwyn Garden City provided another railway station and employment. A factor in Ebenezer Howard locating here was the GNR with its quick journey time to London and the North. After WW2 the parish would have enjoyed holidays on the coast using the railway.

Today the railway lives with the A1M in a peaceful coexistence complementing each other leaving Lemsford with a rich past and prosperous village. Very little has changed in the last 150 years. It still boasts a church, a school, a water mill, two pubs, a flowing river and happy community who are thirty minutes away from the centre of London due to the railway.

Long may it continue.

Part one was in our last issue, which may be read on our website.

The Hon Alice Coralie Glynn was a feminist novelist who died in 1928. She stipulated in her will that the interest on her Estate should go to her friend Lois Twemlow. After Lois's death, the capital was to be spent in Welwyn Garden City building homes for older men and women in hardship who had some connection with Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield or Tunbridge Wells (where she lived with Lois).

As a result a Trust was founded in her name and two plots of land were obtained on long leases from the Welwyn Garden City Development Corporation – one in Turmore Dale and the other Hyde Valley. The Trust built 14 bungalows, of which ten have 1 bedroom and four have 2 bedrooms, designed by a local architect, Paul Mauger.

The Trust is run by volunteer Trustees who look after the 14 bungalows and select new residents as vacancies occur. Properties have been modernised and provide good quality, reasonably priced accommodation close to local amenities. The Trust is a member of the Almshouse Association.

It currently has vacancies so if you know of anyone currently in hardship, over 60 and in need of accommodation, they should contact Managing Agents, Welwyn Garden City Housing Association, on 01707 390044.

Alice Coralie Glyn was born on 5 November 1866. Her father was the son of the second Lord Wolverton, who was present at the siege of Sebastopol during the Crimea War, and later became Vice Admiral to Queen Victoria.

In 1889 Alice Coralie married Henry Lister Beaumont but the marriage did not last. Her husband refused a divorce but she left him and became a novelist. Her books supported the role of women in life and business. 'A Woman of Tomorrow' was published in 1896, printed by The Women's Printing Society, followed by 'A Drama in Dregs', and 'The Idyll of the Star Flower'. She wrote pamphlets including some in furtherance of better housing, and founded institutions aimed at helping professional women.

Her legacy to Welwyn Garden City probably sprang from a regard for the Garden City movement of Ebenezer Howard.

**This Christmas,
God of peace,
bless us all over again,
that we might live with a new, mature faith,
that we might become peacemaking saints,
that we might be instruments of your Christmas gift of
peace on earth.**

National Catholic Reporter

And finally



Web site	www.lemsfordchurch.org.uk	Post Code	AL8 7TR
VICAR	Rev Paul Seymour 9 Great Braitch Lane, Hatfield AL10 9FD	revpaulseymour@gmail.com	271966
Churchwarden	Mrs Jackie Spry 57 The Crescent, Welwyn AL6 9JE		01438 715868
Treasurer & Parish Clerk	Mrs. Gina Butler 33 Gt. North Road Stanborough AL8 7TJ		372062
Assistant Treasurer (Gift Aid)	Mrs Jackie Spry 57 The Crescent, Welwyn, AL6 9JE		01438 715868
PCC Secretary	Mr. Martin English 13, The Valley Green, Welwyn Garden City AL8 7DQ		334074
Electoral Roll Secretary	Mr Andy Garratt		322731
Deputy Churchwardens	Mr John & Mrs Olive Benson Mrs Eileen Martindale Mrs Jean Mitchinson Mr Brian Spry		325663 01438 716162 329023 01438 715868
Choir Leader	Mrs Carole Payne		329697
Church Cleaning Organiser	Mrs. Eileen Martindale		01438 716162
Flower Arranging Organiser	Mrs. Sara Poole		320358
Garden of Remembrance & Records	Miss Barbara Taylor		329553
PCC Chairman & Magazine Editor	Mr. Geoffrey Hollis g.hollis2@ntlworld.com		265617
Organist /Musical Director	Mr Tim Armstrong-Taylor		0779 6268565
Notice sheet/ secretarial assistants	Liz and Gus Edwards lizandgusedwards@gmail.com		323785
St John's School	Head Teacher Mrs Mandy Evans		322589
Tower Captain	Mr Roger Brown		01727 859059
Transport Co-ordinator	Barbara Taylor		329553
Youth Co-ordinator	Mrs Jo Brooks		256702



The Book presented on Remembrance Sunday by the Lemsford Local History Group honouring the men whose names are recorded on the War Memorial. (See also inside front cover and News Section).

