



THE PARISH MAGAZINE
Ashford in the Water
and Sheldon
<https://ashfordparishchurch.com>
December 2022



ASHFORD SERVICES

Sunday 4th Advent 2: 9.45am Morning Worship led by David Baldry

Sunday 11th Advent 3: 9.45am Sung Eucharist

Sat 17th 5pm Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 18th Advent 4: 9.45am Sung Eucharist

Sat 24th Christmas Eve: 4pm Crib Service

Sunday 25th Christmas Day: 10am Christmas Eucharist

Sunday 1st January The Naming of Jesus: 10am at Rowsley Benefice Eucharist

SHELDON

Sunday 18th : 4pm Carol Service

Funeral

10th November Dorothy Greenhalgh

A Christmas Prayer

Eternal God, in the stillness of this night,
you sent your almighty Word,
to pierce the darkness with the light of salvation:
give to the earth the peace that we long for,
and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven,
through our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.



ASHFORD CHRISTMAS EVENTS



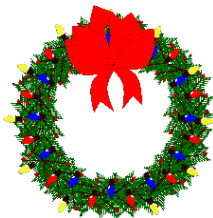
Saturday 17th December at 5pm: Carols by Candlelight

Wednesday 21st December at 6pm: Village Carol Singing round the Christmas Tree near the Sheepwash Bridge. Mulled wine, mince pies available. If wet this will take place at the War Memorial Institute



Christmas Eve at 4pm: Crib Service by Candlelight in the church

Christmas Day at 10am: Christmas Eucharist



CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR
SUNDAY 4TH DECEMBER
10AM TO 4PM



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A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Dorothy Daybell will be held on 19th December at 12 noon.

Dear Friends

It is difficult to quantify whether 2022 has been a good, bad or indifferent year. Partly it will be to do with how healthy it has been for you and your family, how successful in terms of how things have worked out for you in terms of work, education, plans realised or positive life events. On a global and national stage, we may feel that it has been a very challenging year with the war in Ukraine, the rising cost of living and inflation and continuing concerns about climate change. Of course, these have an impact upon our lives and well-being.

The meaning of Christmas and the message of hope it contains in the story of God's direct intervention in human life through taking our human flesh offers us a sign of reassurance that we can and will find the strength, resource, comfort and hope to get through the tough and uncertain times and emerge from them with new insight and resolve. It does feel that we have been in a state of flux and uncertainty for quite a while now with the pandemic and reflecting on what we have learned as we emerge, and all we want is a bit of respite and time to enjoy doing things again without worry or



restriction. The strength of community, relationship and family has grown to some degree over the past two plus years, and the looking out for our neighbour who may not be able to heat their home, or a family struggling to provide over Christmas, or somebody who is homeless or isolated in their home has to be part of our care and compassion this Christmas, into the New Year.

God reminds us through the Child of Bethlehem and the characters who form the Christmas Nativity that we are not born into isolation or a 'Me culture', but are interdependent and flourish when in positive and affirming relationships that can bring the best out of us. Sometimes life is unfair, and things don't go the way we planned, but rather than feel angry, resentful or be trapped by disappointment, it is about how we can see the light in the darkness, find the will to pick ourselves up, and enable those around us to encourage, support and help us, as we can do for others.

God loved us so much that he entered our human existence- not just the good and nice bits, but the messiness, brokenness, hurt, pain, and selfishness of life, in order to heal, reconcile, comfort, renew and restore. This is the way God came to share with us, beginning with a

teenage single Mother, shepherds, travellers searching, and Jesus and his family forced to become refugees. Into the mess, fear, apprehension, anxiety and aggression came the Peace of God that passes our understanding, a love that is unconditional, forgiveness that is lasting and a call to be agents of God's love, peace and compassion through our lives and care for each other.

We don't know what the New Year will bring for us personally, but what we pray for is peace where there is conflict; hope where there is despair; love where there is hatred and healing where there is pain, division and suffering. Money may be a lot tighter this Christmas and we may need to draw our celebration and gift giving in, but may we remember and carry into 2023 the greatest gift that we have received that cost nothing to us, but for God was a complete pouring out of himself, for us to know life in all of its fullness. May we never take this for granted and see that there are more precious things in life that are above monetary value and make the most of them day by day.

A Happy and Blessed Christmas and New Year to you.

Canon Tony

The Cost of Living Crisis

Please do not suffer in silence if you are concerned, or you know somebody in the parish to be. Please do contact Canon Tony with any concerns, who will respond in total confidence.



NEW YEAR



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Ashford in the Water Parish Council

For information about the village and surrounding area, and the activities of the Parish Council, please visit:

<http://www.ashford-in-the-water-pc.gov.uk>

Hall Orchard

The parish council have recently received complaints regarding increased instances of dog excrement in the Hall Orchard. This is a children's play area and should not be defiled in this way. The parish council wish to remind anyone using the Hall Orchard to please keep their dogs on leads at all times, in the interests of the children's safety. Thank you.

Farming News

Grass is the most important crop grown in the UK

and very often it is overlooked. It could be called our natural and national crop. Grass might not be in abundance now in the fields but farm livestock are enjoying eating combinations of stored grasses



throughout the winter. 60% of agricultural land is devoted to grass and it is vital for the production of milk, beef and

lamb. Grass constitutes about 80% of everything that beef cattle eat and 90% for sheep.

We grow a huge range of grasses in the UK including Yorkshire fog, creeping bent, fox sedge and dogs tail. Sadly since the 1940's we have lost 95% of our wildflower meadows and natural lowland grassland.

Grass management now covers a mix of grasses as well as clover and herbs; even new varieties are being developed to help water absorption to prevent flooding. When buying grass mixes we can have short term leys which last only a couple of years but grow very quickly suitable for silage and forage land, and mixes which last long term with traditional mixes of perennial rye grass, cocksfoot, timothy and meadow fescue. Of course the latest trend is to include herbs and wild flower mixes for which there are grants available to include these.





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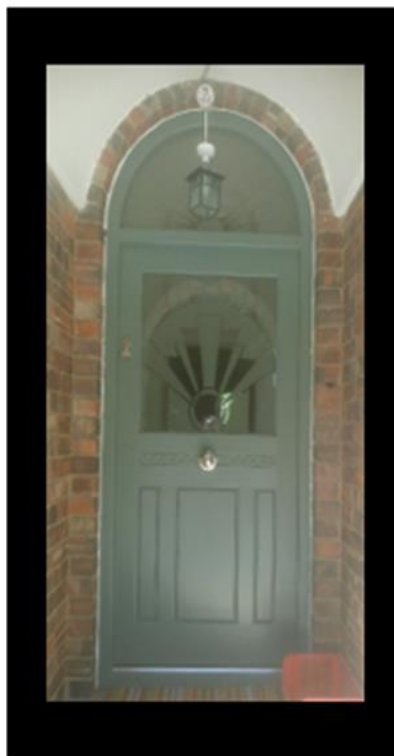


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An Amazing 60th Anniversary



On November the 7th Barrie Birkin, one of our organists, celebrated 60 years as a church organist, which is an amazing achievement. To celebrate we held a special service with Barrie choosing all of the hymns and playing a wonderful prelude, Festal Offertorium by Percy E. Fletcher and a postlude, Nun Dankett Alle Gott by Karg-Elert. He also made the organ splendidly ring out in the wonderful arrangement of the hymn 'All people that on earth do dwell' arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The choir sang one of Barrie's favourite anthems by David Ogden, 'Christ has no body now but yours'. After the service we

toasted him with wine and home-made cakes and after Ian, fellow organist, had said a few words about Barrie's musical career, we presented him with a bottle of his favourite wine. It was a lovely morning enjoyed by us all and by his two daughters who joined us. Very well done Barrie, thank you for your ministry.

Visit from Ann Beedham highlights Ashford's Maidens' Garlands

At the church coffee morning on November 5th, Ann Beedham, a graphic designer from Sheffield, came along and sang to us her composition about Elizabeth Blackwell whose garland hangs in the North Aisle of the church along with three others. Lizzy drowned in the River Wye in Ashford in 1801 aged 16 and as was the custom for young girls who died before they were married, a crown or garland, was carried before her coffin at her funeral. The crown sometimes known as a 'crant', was made of wood and decorated with ribbons and paper rosettes, A personal item, maybe a glove or a handkerchief belonging to the girl, was hung from the centre.

The poignant lyrics of the folksong are:



Maiden Garland

I walked by the Wye and strolled in
the meadow.

The river did beckon and I was
beguiled.

The waters swirled round me and
pulled me beneath them.

My life it was ended - scarce more
than a child.

I was early in years and still but a
maiden,
but death stole my future, my days
were not long,
so make me a garland and bind it
with kindness
let your love and your weaving be
constant and strong.

***Hang it up high, oh hang high my
garland***

***Let the maiden crown rise as my
soul seeks the sky***

***Hang it up high, oh hang high my
garland***

***May the flowers of paper bloom
longer than I.***

Oh friends, weave the willow and
cut out the petals,
make me a garland as a token of
grace,
then walk with me slowly and carry
it before me
and hang it aloft at the place I once
prayed.

Oh place in the centre a glove of
white paper

A word and a token within do enfold
And remember my touch as it hangs
out towards you
as if reaching for hands that I never
will hold.

Chorus

In old Ashford church, my garland's
still hanging

The dust and the years have taken
their toll.

The colours have faded along with
my memory,
the paper grows frail like the lives of
us all.

So as you pass by beneath my old
garland
as winds of time whisper and the
petals they sway,
remember young Lizzie, the maiden
of Ashford
whose crown has hung high there
since her dying day.

Chorus x 2

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Maidens' Garlands at Holy Trinity, Ashford-in-the-Water

Part I

1. Elizabeth Blackwell

Those who were able to attend the coffee morning at Ashford Church last month enjoyed hearing Ann Beedham sing a folksong that she wrote recently. It tells the story of Elizabeth Blackwell of Ashford, who died on November 9th 1801 when she was just 16 years old. Elizabeth was accorded the privilege of having a "maiden's garland" made for her.

Ann has very generously allowed us to reproduce the words of her song. You will find them elsewhere in this issue of the parish magazine, as well as on the church website – <https://ashfordparishchurch.com> – where you can also hear her singing it. (Select "History" under "Other Information" on the main navigation menu.)

Ashford church is well known for being one of the few places where these now rare relics have survived, and one of even fewer where they are on permanent public display, so many villagers will know of them.

Dr Thomas Nadauld Brushfield, one of the chroniclers of Ashford's history, explains their use, and how they were constructed, in an article he wrote in 1899:



*One of the four surviving ancient maidens' garlands at Ashford Church.
(Photo: Martin Crampin).*

"It was formerly the custom in many English counties, and one which extended into the present century, on the occasion of the death of an unmarried woman who had led a pure and blameless life, for her friends and neighbours to construct in her honour a light framework, nearly always of wood, and decorated with flowers (real and artificial), ribbons and paper ornaments, several emblematical articles being suspended in the interior. This was generally termed a funeral garland, and was borne with much ceremony before her coffin on its way to the place of interment; and at the conclusion of the burial service, was hung up in a conspicuous position in the church."

The "emblematical articles" that he refers to would typically have been a handkerchief; a paper or kid glove; or a collar. On these would be written the name and date of death of the maiden and, on occasion, some lines of poetry.

Maidens' garlands or funeral garlands are also known as virgins' crants, as referred to in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, when the priest objects to Ophelia, suspected of having taken her own life, being nevertheless "allow'd her virgin crants, her maiden strewments".

As I heard Ann singing her song, I was inspired to look a little closer into the story about these, our treasured and poignant reminders of times long ago.

The histories associated with Ashford's ancient garlands are, unfortunately, far from complete: we have relied principally on the research of a number of Victorian antiquaries, and on narratives passed down to us by oral tradition.

Elizabeth Blackwell's story is, in fact, the most well documented. Mounted on the east wall of the outer vestry is a family memorial dedicated to her; to her parents, John and Mary Blackwell; and to her nephew, John, who died as an infant 16 years after Elizabeth's own death.

At this time, burials within the church walls were common, and were known at Ashford to include members of the Blackwell family. The placement of Elizabeth's memorial inside the church suggests that she and her family may be among them.

On a recording about village life and history, the late Leonard French Blackwell passed down to us the story of his great-grandaunt Elizabeth's tragic demise.

(As many local residents will know, Len was for 20 years the publican at the Bull's Head, Wardlow, and then ran the Riverside in Ashford as a restaurant for 14 years. He lived in Bridge Cottage on Church Street, and later in life married Jean, who for many years continued to run his craft shop on Fennel Street).



A tablet, mounted on the east wall of Ashford Church's outer vestry, memorialises Elizabeth and other members of the Blackwell family.

Len tells how Elizabeth died in a whirlpool as she was bathing in the river, following an evening church service. (He mistakes her name as Hannah – there were rather a lot of Hannahs amongst his ancestors!) The river was close to Elizabeth's family house, Bridge Foot (now demolished), which stood near the bottom of John Bank Lane, opposite the bridge at the corn mill. It seems unlikely that anyone could have survived for very long on that November night, in what would have been frigid water.

When John Charles Cox, another Victorian historian, wrote about the Ashford garlands in 1875, he did not know the date that Elizabeth Blackwell had died. He says that he had been informed that "an old man, who had died in 1869 at about the age of 80, had carried [Elizabeth's garland] before the coffin". If this date is correct, this "old man" would have been aged just 12 years old at the time of her death. Dr Brushfield, in following up Cox's story, searched the parish registers, but was unable to locate Elizabeth's burial record, and did not come across "any local tradition relating to it". Given that we are now confident that Elizabeth died in 1801 (and that her baptism and burial are, indeed, documented in the parish registers), I conjecture that the "old man" may have been her 78-year-old father: he died himself two years later, at the age of 80.

We learn from Dr Brushfield that Elizabeth Blackwell's garland was one of seven known to exist at Ashford "within living memory". They are extremely fragile, and their preservation has depended largely on the care bestowed on them by successive incumbents.

The five that remained by the time of the church's 1868-1870 restoration were scrupulously preserved by Revd John Reddaway Luxmoore.



Five maidens' garlands on display at Ashford Church, in a photograph published by Revd John Reddaway Luxmoore in 1908.

To be continued next month ...

By Ian Pykett, with great thanks to David Windle for his review and contributions.

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SHELDON JOTTINGS



November proved to be an incredibly soggy, wet month, but a lively month for Sheldonians with a very successful MacMillan Coffee Morning hosted ably by Elizabeth and team in the village hall. This was followed by a Pie and Peas Supper in the Cock and Pullet, which raised the wonderful total of over £500 for the Church Funds. Both these events proved to be extremely successful, well attended and with ample opportunity to meet friends and neighbours and catch up with all the gossip.

On the 13th we remembered those who gave their lives in the defence of our country at a service in the Church led by Canon Tony, with Stephen playing the organ to accompany the singing. The Church was beautifully decorated by Mel and helpers, with poppies at the door and also hanging in a lovely display behind the altar in front of which were crosses with remembrances written on them and a wonderful arrangement of poppies and foliage. There were even poppies leading up the Church path.

The service was very moving with a slide display and singing, as Canon Tony led us to remember those five young men who went to War from this village and gave their lives fighting for our freedom. A wreath

was laid in their honour and our prayers given for all those who lost their lives in the two World Wars and in wars fought since. Following the service we were able to chat and reminisce with others in the congregation over refreshments. Thanks to all who helped make this such a memorable occasion.

December is a very exciting month for children and parents alike when we celebrate the birth of Christ and enjoy a host of festivities. It is the time of the shortest day and the longest day – at least that is what it seems like to all parents awakened at some unearthly time in the morning by the younger members of the household but with a joyous but busy day stretching before them!!

We hope you have all booked your place to make your wreaths with Lindsey on Tuesday 6th December in the village hall. Although Sheldon weather can play havoc with wreaths optimistically hung on our doors, Lindsey is determined that fun will be had and success assured at this event. It is always lovely to see everyone's masterpieces on doors up and down the village.

More excitement on Saturday 10th with Sheldon Christmas Fair – last year this was an evening to remember with stalls and an impressive and indeed quite spectacular procession of brightly lit tractors through the village. Santa,

of course, will be here, and there will be mulled wine and the Church will be decorated for the occasion. No doubt we will be lighting up our houses and joining in the fun.

As we prepare for Christmas there will be a Christmas Tree Carol Service in the Church on Sunday 18th December at 4 o'clock which is sure to be a happy occasion not to be missed, so do come along and add your voice to the throng.

So good to hear that Mike L has almost recovered from that traumatic accident of many months ago. Good luck Mike.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all in Sheldon and Ashford, joy and happiness for the festive season and best wishes for the New Year.

DIARY DATES

Tuesday 6th December – Wreath making in Village Hall

Saturday 10th December – Sheldon Christmas Fair – 3.30pm to 7.00pm

Sunday 18th December – Carol Service in Church – 4.00pm

PLANTING FOR THE PLATINUM JUBILEE

After the Remembrance Day service at Holy Trinity, Canon Nigel and members of the congregation joined villagers at the War Memorial Institute for the planting



and blessing of the new cherry trees. The trees

are to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and were planted by Pat Hollingworth and other

villagers who have lived in the village for many years and by Harriet Harrison of the new generation of our village community.



WI

In November Ashford WI welcomed Mike Higginbottom who spoke about St Pancras Station and Hotel. Mike illustrated his talk with some wonderful slides. The train shed (designed by W Barlow and R M Ordish) and the magnificent Midland Grand Hotel (designed by George Gilbert Scott) are contrasting examples of Victorian architecture. Mike explained how the station and hotel have been updated in the last 35 years to make the impressive international station we know today. We look forward to welcoming Mike again in 2023 when he will talk about "The Big Apple".

On December 1st we are having an early Christmas celebration when we will be entertained by the Matlock Flame Belly Dancers. They will give a talk on their history, show us some of their costumes then give a display (members may join in if they wish but there is no compulsion!). Please note that the December Meeting is in the evening at 7:15.

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Of which Christmas carols are these the last lines?



1. To God on high be glory, and peace on earth to men

2. And fit us for heaven to live with thee there

3. Gather all the nations to him; every knee shall then bow down. Gloria...

4. O tidings of comfort & joy

5. Ye who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing

6. And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing

7. O come to us, abide with us Our Lord Emmanuel

8. Where like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around

9. Sing through all Jerusalem, Christ is born in Bethlehem

10. Let our merry organ go, Benedicamus Domino (x2)

11. Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men begin and never cease

12. Christ our Saviour is here (x2)

13. The playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.

14. Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light

15. O that we were there (x2)

16. Yet what I can I give him; give my heart

Answers on last page.

**Bakewell and Ashford Film
Society (BASH)**

**84 CHARING CROSS ROAD
(1987, cert. PG)**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 11TH 2022

7.30 pm at the Medway Centre,
Bakewell



This is a true story of a single career woman Helen Hanff (Anne Bancroft) a humorous script-reader living in New York City. Her life is happy in spite of her being single. She has friends, her writing, the books she is buying and reading. When she sees an ad in the Saturday Review of Literature for a bookstore in London that does mail order, she begins a very special correspondence and friendship with Frank P. Doel (Sir Anthony Hopkins), the bookseller who works at Marks & Co., 84 Charing Cross Road. This is a classic film which is in contrast to the other film made in the same year dealing with a single woman and a married man - "Fatal Attraction".

BASH meets once a month, usually on the 2nd Sunday in the month, from

September to June in the friendly atmosphere of The Medway Centre, Bakewell to show a variety of new, classic and foreign films. There will be an introduction to each film with, this month, Christmassy refreshments served during the interval. Accessibility is important to BASH. We use a wheelchair friendly building with film subtitles and a hearing loop. You can join BASH Film Society via our website, sign up on the night or you can telephone the membership secretary Joy Throter 01629 814863. As a member of the film society you will also be entitled to borrow for two weeks any DVD or BluRay from our ever growing library of films (see www.bashfilms.org.uk). We look forward to welcoming you on Sunday December 11th at 7.30pm.

POT LUCK

**Sticky Christmas
Sausages**

A tasty alternative to
pigs in blankets.

Ingredients

2 red onions

2 tbsp olive oil

400g uncooked cocktail sausages

1 heaped tbsp cranberry jelly
(redcurrant jelly will also do)



200g fresh or frozen cranberries

Zest of 1 clementine

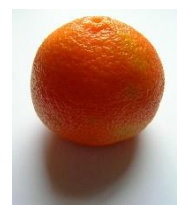
Method

1. Fry the sliced red onions in a pan with the oil for a few minutes until soft.

2. When the sausages start to brown, add the jelly and cranberries.

3. Cook on a low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until caramelised and sticky.

4. Grate over the clementine zest and serve.



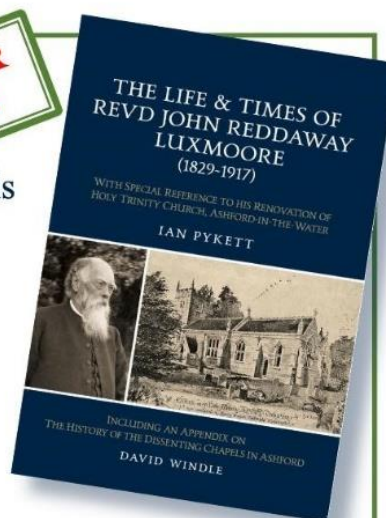
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Sarah Dines MP, working hard for
Derbyshire Dales



Christmas Quiz Answers

1. A great and mighty wonder 2. Away in a manger 3. Angels from the realms of glory 4. God rest you merry, gentlemen 5. Good King Wenceslas 6. It came upon the midnight clear 7. O little town of Bethlehem 8. Once in royal David's city 9. See amid the winter's snow 10. Unto us is born a Son 11. While shepherds watched their flocks by night 12. Silent night 13. The holly & the ivy 14. We three kings of Orient are 15. In dulci jubilo 16. In the bleak midwinter

The deadline for the January magazine is 22nd December 2022.

Please send any poems, pictures, articles, recipes, puzzles, animal profiles, thoughts or reminiscences to stone.mary@sky.com. Thank you!