



**The Downs and Valley Parishes Magazine No. 11 Feb. 2024**

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The Old Church, Upper Green, Ilmington

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Contact Kathryn 628087

## The Downs and Valley Church Service Rota March 2024

February 2024	St George's Darlingscott	St Mary's Ilmington	St Mary's Preston-on-Stour	St Peter's Stretton-on-Fosse	St Gregory's Tredington	St Mary's Whitchurch
4 <sup>th</sup> 2 before Lent		11.00am Holy Communion (1662)	6.00pm Evensong (1662)	9.30am Holy Communion	11.00am Morning Worship	
11 <sup>th</sup> Next before Lent	11.00am Morning Worship	11.00am Morning Worship	9.30am Holy Communion		11.00am Holy Communion	
14 <sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday					7.00pm Ash Wednesday Communion with ashes	No services until March
18 <sup>th</sup> Lent 1		11.00am Holy Communion		9.30am Holy Communion	11.00am Morning Worship	
25 <sup>th</sup> Lent 2	4.00pm Evening Prayer (1662)	6.00pm Evening Worship	11.00am Morning Worship		11.00am Holy Communion	

**Church web-pages** - For further information, please search for the Church name and click on the relevant 'A Church Near You' page. (This is more effective than searching 'A Church Near You' directly.)

### Ministers:

Rector: The Revd Canon Dr Richard Cooke 07952 544820 (mobile) or 01608 544821 (landline) or [Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com](mailto:Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com)  
 Hon. Assistant Minister: The Revd Dr Tim Seller 01608 682244 (landline)  
 Reader: Ros Wakefield 01608 682146 (landline)  
 Reader Emeritus: Malcolm Davies 01789 450793 (landline)

### Churchwardens:

Tredington *Posts vacant – contact the Rector*  
 Darlingscott Doreen McCarroll 01608 682949 (landline)  
 Ilmington Jane Downie 01608 682720 (landline) Helen Patrick  
 Preston-on-Stour Andrew Holman- West 07712 193773 (mobile)  
 Stretton-on-Fosse *Posts vacant – contact the Rector*  
 Whitchurch Carol Rutter 01789 450795 (landline) John Craner 01789 450200 (landline)

**Enquiries about Weddings or Baptisms are very welcome! Please contact the Rector, Richard Cooke.**

*Richard Cooke, the Rector, writes:*

My Mum was a fairly regular church-goer, but one thing she couldn't stand was the cross. She found the idea repellent that God the Father sent Jesus, his son, to suffer and to die. 'No-one could do that to their child' she said. She really disliked pictures of the crucifixion – 'I can't stand all that blood' she said. But something changed in the last few months of her life. She had been ill with cancer for a while, and in mid-February she lapsed into unconsciousness, and we were called to her bedside as a family to say goodbye. Yet, remarkably, she rallied and recovered for four more months of Spring and early Summer. In that time she wasn't able to do much more than sit in bed, but she sketched flowers as she did so, and drew a card for Easter. To my surprise she drew a cross, but it was an empty one, surrounded by signs of Spring, and on it were the words 'He is Risen.'

The cross sits at the heart of Christian faith and you can find examples of it in all kinds of places – in windows, on altars, in churchyards, and even our church buildings are, mostly, designed in the shape of a cross. The point of the cross is not the blood or suffering of Jesus, but the way it shows the kind of love God has for the world – a love so strong that God would give himself for the sake of his world. This is love so powerful that, Christians believe, it could even conquer death. I think that is what my Mum realised in those last months, and the Easter card (now in a small frame) still sits in my study.

This Lent, which begins on 14<sup>th</sup> February this year, a day when we celebrate love for St Valentine as well as Ash Wednesday, in the church services we shall be looking at some paintings and Bible passages about the cross in a series called 'Bystanders at the Cross'. Each week's theme will be on the 'Ilmington Downs and Stour Valley Churches' website – do have a look. Shipston Deanery also has a series on 'Perspectives on the Cross' with a variety of speakers on Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm in Lent – details also on the website – and the first is at St Mary's, Tysoe on 20 February with Ruth Worsley, who is currently our acting Bishop.

### **In case you were wondering:**

#### **'First Day of Christmas' Quiz Results**

*Unfortunately no completely correct answers were received! We'll try to make any future quizzes a little less challenging...*

A partridge in a pear tree – the bird known for being prepared to die to protect its young is a symbol of Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves – the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who inspired the two testaments (old and new) of the Bible.

Three French hens – three virtues of faith hope and love, of which love is the greatest (1 Corinthians 13.13).

Four calling birds – four gospels which each tell a story.

Five golden rings – the first five books of the Old Testament which 'begin at the beginning' with Genesis.

Six geese a-laying – six days of creation, connected with Genesis in the last clue.

Seven swans – seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Eight maids a-milking – the eight blessings in the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5.3-10).

Nine ladies dancing – nine fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5.22-23).

Ten lords a-leaping – 10 Commandments.

Eleven pipers piping - the disciples were originally twelve but minus Judas become eleven.

Twelve drummers drumming – the twelve main points of the Apostles Creed.

### **Being Realistic about Church Costs**

People often assume that the Church of England receives a Government subsidy. In medieval times local churches were supported by a tenth part of produce from the land (a 'tithe' again) – in effect a local tax. This system had collapsed by the early 1800s and was finally abolished in 1936, when the Government agreed to pay a lump sum to the Church to end the liability. Since then around 75% of Church costs have had to be met through personal giving. The remaining £25% comes from the Church Commissioners, an independent charitable body that provides funding for new initiatives and low-income communities, and for bishops and cathedrals, but not, usually, for ordinary parishes.

The aim is that each group of churches should pay for the cost of mission and ministry in its own area. These costs basically fall into two categories: buildings and staff. Here is a very rough estimated guide to what I expect the costs in each category to be for our six churches in 2024. (Tredington and Darlingscott are one parish, so their figures have been merged.)

The cost of buildings is fairly straightforward, but as we have 6

Parish	Building	Staff (Parish Share)
Ilmington	12000	21000
Tredington & Darlingscott	28000	22000
Preston on Stour	10000	6500
Stretton on Fosse	6000	1000
Whitchurch	4000	4500
	60000	55000

churches varying between 150 and over 1000 years old, their upkeep is not cheap. Our PCCs have been working hard to keep these costs down (there have been significant recent savings in some cases by shopping around for better insurance deals, for example). All of our buildings are valued by their local communities, and I am committed to keeping them open and available to be oases of calm and peace in an increasingly busy and frantic world. We need these still places.

The actual cost of staff for our group of churches (one full-time Rector, plus a part-time Associate, with two clergy houses) is reckoned to be £72,000 per year. This figure includes the cost of pension and house, and a significant contribution to training future clergy – the actual stipend paid is about £27,000. You'll see from the table that, at the moment, we are not able to meet our full staff costs by some margin, as we are only able to contribute £55,000. This means we are being subsidised by other churches across Coventry and Warwickshire.

Therefore in the next magazine I'll be including some information about how you can support your local church financially if you would like to do so. Expanding the range of people who give a regular

monthly amount, even if it is small, could transform our finances. In the meantime, do get in touch if you'd like to know more. Contact [Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com](mailto:Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com)

### **From the Registers**

#### **Baptism**

At Ilmington on 21 January, Jack David Flower, aged 6 months

#### **Funerals**

At Oakley Wood Crematorium on 5 January, Glyn Robert (Bob) Johnson, aged 81 (formerly of Ilmington)

At St Peter's Stretton-on-Fosse on 17 January, Samuel Donald Holdsworth, aged 92.

At The Vale Crematorium on 30 January, Clive Tinson of Ilmington

At Oakley Wood Crematorium on 31 January, Molly Wade of Ilmington

### **Editor's Note**

The deadline for copy for the March 2024 issue is Saturday 17 February to Susan Brock, Editor, E. s.brock9@btinternet.com, Daisy Cottage, Front St., Ilmington, CV36 4LA. Please note that the limit for editorial articles is 150 words. Enquiries about advertising to Tim Seller: E. Tim.Seller@outlook.com, Long Barn, Back St., Ilmington, CV36 4LJ.

The image on this month's cover is by Fran Chapman of Ilmington. I'm always looking for artwork so if you have a painting, drawing or photograph which you would like to submit, email it to me, Susan Brock, as a jpg or PDF file (portrait layout). Age is no barrier! No computer? Drop it round to my house (see address above) and I'll scan it for you.

### **Nature Notes January 2024**

Flowers are generally a traditional gift for St Valentine's Day, especially the red rose. In Victorian times, flowers had different meanings. Due to strict Victorian etiquette flowers were primarily used to deliver messages that couldn't be spoken aloud so learning their meaning meant that nearly all Victorian homes had, alongside the Bible, guide-books for deciphering the "language," definitions could vary! Using this "language" flowers could be used to answer "yes" or "no" questions. Flowers given with the right hand meant "yes", flowers given with the left hand meant "no". Red tulips were a declaration of love, violets from your loved one declared that he would be faithful to you, forget-me-nots were sent to a loved one who was moving away. Irises meant that a message had been sent and Canterbury bells that the message had been received to name just a few!

*Gill*

## **ILMINGTON**

### **St Mary's Church**

#### **Reservation of Gravespaces or Cremation Plots in the Churchyard**

We're in the process of making sure the churchyard paperwork is in order and, to this end, would like to speak to anyone who has

reserved a gravespace or cremation plot. If this is you, please could you contact Jane on (01608) 682 720 or at [churchwardenilmington@gmail.com](mailto:churchwardenilmington@gmail.com) for a quick chat? ? And, to put your mind to rest if you haven't got a space reserved, ANYONE resident in the parish or on the church electoral roll has a right to be buried in the churchyard, so reservations are only necessary if you would like a specific spot, e.g. next to a family member, or if you are not a parishioner. Applications for reservations are made to Coventry Diocese, and if you would like to find out more about the application process and associated fees, please do get in touch with Richard Cooke on (01608) 544 821 or at [Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com](mailto:Richard.Cooke.Ilmington@Outlook.com).

Thank you!

*Jane Downie/ Helen Patrick, Churchwardens*

### **Ilmington Community Shop and Café**

*February Feasting!* We are delighted to announce another season of Long-Table Suppers, beginning with a February Feast in the Community Café. Join us on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> from 6.30pm for Ardennes Pate, Coq au Vin and Chocolate Roulade. Tickets, only £20 including your first drink and a hot drink, are available from the shop, or call 01608 682838.

*Have you joined us yet?* As we approach our AGM, there's a window to join our cooperative and have your say! Shares are available from just £10 and we welcome as many members as possible. Call into the shop for a membership form - and if you're already a member, please note the AGM is on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm in Ilmington Village Hall. There will be wine...

*Ilmington Community Shop and Café Committee*

### **Ilmington Screen-on-the-Green**

On Friday 23 February our film is *A Haunting in Venice*, starring Kenneth Branagh as Hercule Poirot. Loosely based on an Agatha Christie mystery, this stylish and darkly eerie whodunnit takes place in late-1940s Venice, where Poirot, now retired, reluctantly attends a seance and finds himself drawn back to sleuthing after one of the guests is murdered. Tina Fey and Jamie Dornan are among the A-list cast. Rated 12. Doors open 7pm for a 7.30pm start at Ilmington Village Hall. Tickets from the Village Shop, although some are available on the door. Licensed bar and raffle.

*Lis Ribbans, Ilmington Cinema Group*

### **Ilmington Village Hall**

The annual Quiz+Supper night will be held Saturday 24 February with the charming Lis Ribbans setting the brain teasers, and Dave Raeburn (The Poet) entertaining you as MC. This is always a popular event and it is recommended to buy tickets from the shop early. As in previous years there will be teams of 6. Indoor curling on Thursdays at 2:30pm and Tai Chi on Fridays at 11:15am (1:00pm last Friday of the month) continue. They remain popular, offering opportunities to meet fellow villagers and enjoy some gentle exercise.

*Bryan Clifford, Chair*



### **Ilmington Defibrillator Training**

**On 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 from 10.00-12.00** (Venue to be announced) Stuart Eastbury from Shipston's Defibrillator Group is kindly giving residents of Ilmington a **two hour training session on how to use the Defibrillator and how to do basic Resuscitation (C.P.R).**

In case you don't know: Ilmington has four readily available Defibrillators on the side of the Village Hall, entrance to the Village School, by the Playing Field Toilets, and in the Howard Arms pub. ANYONE CAN use the Defib - and IT MIGHT WELL SAVE A LIFE.

If you are interested in learning this skill please phone Brian Lighthill on 01608 682048 by February 4<sup>th</sup> and leave a message with your name and phone number - Brian will get back to you with details of the venue.

*Mark Robinson*

### **Wednesday Club next meeting on February 14 at 2 pm, Village Hall.**

Dr. Lynn Deakin provided a very interesting session showing us the light touch therapy in action. A big thank you to all those who braved the extremely cold weather. Our next meeting falls on Valentine's Day so let's celebrate romance! We will be having Afternoon Tea set in cosy surroundings (the Village Hall lounge) with romantic music and a local actor whispering endearments in our ears! What more can you want? Please do come! Also, Chris Young will be telling us about his latest endeavour and we will find out why we celebrate Valentines Day. It is the time to pay your subs so please remember £6! So cheap!

February sees Christine Warmington celebrate her birthday on 11th, Sue Matthews on 22nd and Rosie Pargiter on 25th. We hope you have a lovely day ladies! Edith Tuohy now resides happily at Low Furlong Care Home and she would be happy to see anyone but please do phone first.

*Carole Clifford, Chair*

### **Snowdrop Open Gardens 11 February 2024 2-4pm**

This is the third year that we will be raising funds for cancer charities which have supported friends and neighbours in the village: the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund and The Children of Worcestershire Cancer Fund. Pick up a map of the three open gardens and other snowdrop vistas at the start of your tour in the Community café where refreshments will be available. Donations in cash on the day or online through [Justgiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com). Enjoy a walk round the village and do some good!

Catherine Hilton, Jackie Prosser and Susan Brock

## **PRESTON-ON-STOUR**

### **The Preston Village Quiz - Saturday 3rd February**

The closing date for entries is the morning of 1st February, so you should still just have time to book a table. There is a maximum of four people to a team, £5 per person, bring your own drinks and there will be a delicious plate of halftime nibbles provided. For bookings please contact Mick on 01789 450797, e: [mickandsally76@gmail.com](mailto:mickandsally76@gmail.com) or Margaret on 01789 450710 e: [prestonbrocks@gmail.com](mailto:prestonbrocks@gmail.com).

*Margaret Brocklehurst*

### **Film Nights**

3 pm Thursday 15th February : There will be an opportunity for all to see the very popular family film 'Barbie'. This is extra to our usual evening adult film as it is half term. The doors will be open from 2.30 pm, no prebooking necessary just £3.50 on the door.  
7 for 7.30pm Friday 23rd February: Our usual last Friday in the month film will be 'All at Sea'. A black comedy, starring Brian Cox, about an old rogue named Wally, who breaks all the rules to fulfil an old friend's dying wish to be buried at sea.

*Margaret Brocklehurst*

## **TREDINGTON with DARLINGS SCOTT**

### **St George Church Darlingscott**

In the schoolroom at Darlingscott we have a number of books we are selling for church funds. If you are interested please walk straight through the church and if you would like to make a donation please do so. Thank you.

*Doreen McCarroll, Churchwarden*

### **Tredington & Blackwell WI**

Our next meeting in the WI Hall is on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February. We begin at 1pm with lunch, then hear from our speaker, Analiza Jones, on the subject of 'Handmade Bags from The Philippines'. All women are welcome – if you'd like to attend (Guests £5), please contact Gill (for catering purposes) by text to 07789 810877, or email [secretary@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk](mailto:secretary@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk)  
Gill Goodlad, Secretary

### **Welcome to Tredington Booklet**

The WI maintains a directory of local activities and services. It can be downloaded at <https://tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk/welcome-to-tredington>. If you would like your group or activity to be included, please contact Gill at [secretary@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk](mailto:secretary@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk).  
Gill Goodlad, Secretary

### **WI Community Film Night**

Our next film, in the WI Hall, CV36 4NP, will be on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. This British film (2023) tells the heart-warming

story of a man's unplanned journey. It is certificate 12A. The bar opens at 7pm with the film starting at 7.30pm. We include a short interval when the bar and ice creams are available. We will be collecting subscriptions of £15 for those who wish to pay annually. Others are invited to make a voluntary donation. For details of this and other films to be shown in 2024, contact Gill at [treasurer@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk), or text 07789 810877.

Gill Goodlad, Treasurer

### **Craft & Chatter/Chatter & Craft**

The next **Craft & Chatter** is in the WI Hall on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February. The next **Chatter & Craft** is in the same venue on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February. Each meeting starts at 2pm, with a charge of just £1 towards tea or coffee and cake. For details contact Vanessa on 07818 599353 or

email [vanessa@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk](mailto:vanessa@tredingtonandblackwellwi.co.uk)

Gill Goodlad, Hall Secretary

### **Qigong (Movement, Breathwork & Meditation)**

These popular classes are based on ancient techniques that are shown to reduce stress and enhance energy levels. They are suitable to those with all levels of experience (or none) and may be done seated or standing. Classes by Alissa Powell are available twice each week in the WI Hall: Tuesdays 6.15-7.15pm and Fridays 9.30-10.30am. To book a place visit <https://breath-therapy.uk/events/> or email Alissa at [alissa@breath-therapy.uk](mailto:alissa@breath-therapy.uk) for more information. £7.00 per person per class.

Gill Goodlad, Hall Secretary

### **Tredington & District Garden Club**

The next meeting is in the WI Hall on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February. We open at 7pm with the bar available, then begin our meeting at 7.30pm. Our speaker is Mary Fenton on the subject "The Wonder of Trees". Items are welcome for the free 'bring and share' table. We close the meeting with a raffle draw and light refreshments. If you'd like to know more about the club see

see [www.tredingtongardenclub.weebly.com](http://www.tredingtongardenclub.weebly.com)

Gill Goodlad, Programme Secretary

## **WHITCHURCH**

### **St Mary's Whitchurch**

The church is closed for services in February but very much open to visitors, walkers, parishioners and anyone looking for a quiet place for contemplation or prayer. There's a small shelf of books to dip into: poetry, short stories, letters (C.S. Lewis's satirical *Screwtape Letters*, for one: a senior devil's book of advice to his junior). If you visit the church, you'll see a Public Notice pinned to the door, and another on the noticeboard inside, alongside plans and

supporting documents. These advise you of a faculty application we've submitted for restoration work on the church and tell you to whom to write if you have objections. We're circulating Notice here, too, to make sure no one misses it. Please remember access to the church in winter is along the public footpath. Cars should park tight up onto the verge to allow for tractor traffic in the lane. We re-open on Mothering Sunday, 10 March, 4pm.  
Carol Rutter, Whitchurch PCC

## **OUTSIDE THE PARISHES**

*We charge £6 for editorial articles about events outside the five parishes to cover our costs. Contact the Editor s.brock9@btinternet.com*

### **BLACKWELL**

We would like to thank the villagers of Blackwell who have kindly donated to the Shipston League of Friends charity. They have in the past provided much needed funds for the Ellen Badger Hospital plus other valuable resources such as Shipston First Responders, the Shipston branch of the Stroke Association amongst others. They continue to provide funds to support the cause for obtaining a new Ellen Badger Hospital in Shipston. In 2023 your donations came to a total of £125 so thank you.

*Colette Nock & Hazel Suthers*

### **A Date for your 2024 Diary! A Spring Breakfast for Women will be held at the Halford Bridge Inn, on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2024**

A delicious continental breakfast for £9 is served from 9.15am. To reserve a place please contact Liz Harvey at

[ma\\_harvey@hotmail.com](mailto:ma_harvey@hotmail.com)

Revd Charmaine Host will be speaking: **PURPLE INTO GOLD – A journey of hope and healing**: I left school at the age of 16 with barely four GCEs. I had lost my faith and had little sense of the path I should take in life. As I began a new life as an au pair girl in Switzerland, little did I know that I was destined to play a part in an important moment in history as 'one of the first, neither did I foresee that Paris, Nashville, art school and a therapist named John would play such integral parts in the direction I took.'

*Liz Harvey*

### **CLASSIFIED ADS**

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### **The Snowdrop**

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

Many, many welcomes,  
February fair-maid,  
Ever as of old time,  
Solitary firstling,  
Coming in the cold time,  
Prophet of the gay time,  
Prophet of the May time,  
Prophet of the roses,  
Many, many welcomes,  
February fair-maid!

### **To a Snowdrop**

*William Wordsworth*

Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they  
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend  
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,  
Like an unbidden guest. Though day by day,  
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, waylay  
The rising sun, and on the plains descend;  
Yet art thou welcome, welcome as a friend  
Whose zeal outruns his promise! Blue-eyed May  
Shall soon behold this border thickly set  
With bright jonquils, their odours lavishing  
On the soft west-wind and his frolic peers;  
Nor will I then thy modest grace forget,  
Chaste Snowdrop, venturesome harbinger of Spring,  
And pensive monitor of fleeting years!

### **Snowdrop Time**

*Mary Webb*

Ah, hush! Tread softly through the rime,  
For there will be a blackbird singing, or a thrush.  
Like coloured beads the elm-buds flush:  
All the trees dream of leaves and flowers and light.  
And see! The northern bank is much more white  
Than frosty grass, for now is snowdrop time.



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Please feel free to contact me, as I would welcome the opportunity to help you build your own fond travel memories.



**Rob Kennedy**

01608 696555

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