St Edmund King & Martyr, Dudley Church Magazine



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Welcome to the Church of St Edmund, King & Martyr, Dudley



Mass Times Wednesday 12.15pm Sundays 11.00am

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IN MEMORIAM DECEMBER



1st	Wilfred Marsh	22nd	William Joinson
2nd	Doris Wallace		Samuel Hadley
3rd	Herbert William Jones		Keith Foulkes
4th	William Martin		Kenneth Buckler
7th	Walter Diggett	23rd	Muriel Messiter
8th	William Enoch Bradford		Henzey Maria Hingley
	George Sefton Rowe		Elizabeth Little
9th	Harold Brown	24th	Frederick Richardson
	Edith Tennant		Jean Read
12th	Ada Emily Smith	25th	Arthur Moses Dodd
13th	Nellie Fielding		Hannah Bull
14th	Edith Rowbottom	26th	Margaret Rose Sefton
	Margaret Knights		Lilian Jones
15th	Willoughby Allway		Martha Jackson
	Margaret Martin		Ellen Blincow
16th	Anthony Gregory Walker	27th	Alice Helsby
17th	Irene Bishop		Ernest Overton
19th	Jeremiah Dudley		Albert Reed (Priest)
	Florence Louise Watson		Joseph Plant
20th	Hannah Charles-Jones		Doris Corbett
	Martha Whatmore	28th	George Edward Rowe
	Geoffrey Groves		John Cecil Wall
	Walter Sandland	29th	Dorothy Annie Wentworth
	David Stroyd		Taylor
21st	Joyce Elizabeth Allcock	30th	Cecil Trotman
	Thomas Davies		Marjorie Jesson Edwards-
			Lindon
		31st	Hilda Winifred Harvey

Rest eternal grant to them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory



don't know about you, but I rather dread turning on the news these days. It seems to have been particularly awful recently. The horrendous attack by Hamas and the taking of hundreds of hostages. The consequent attacks on Hamas in Gaza with such devastating consequences for innocent civilians living in that crowded land and unable to escape. The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has not gone away of course, and there have been tragic attacks on Christians in Armenia,

Pakistan and India that have gone largely unreported. If we add to these the costof-living crisis in this country, and the accelerating climate crisis affecting every country, it is easy to feel deep despair and a sense of hopelessness in the face of it all. As the psalmist said, 'I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where is my help to come?'

Christmas gives a message of hope, but not false hope. It speaks of the Logos or Word, the divine energy at the heart of all things, the dynamic force behind all creation, all that is. The source of inspiration for all human beings. This Logos is forever sustaining the universe and breaking into our consciousness, but in the birth of Jesus that Word was made flesh, once and for all. Jesus was born in Israel/Palestine in another dark time in that region's history. But God is as he is in Jesus, therefore we have hope. As St John says in the first few verses of his amazing gospel: 'In him was life and that life was the light of all people.'

Terrible things do happen in our world. Innocent men, women and children were killed in Jesus' lifetime too and yet he still preached and lived a gospel of peace and hope – right to the end and his death on the cross. But evil and hatred will never have the last word: 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.'

At Christmas we rejoice in God with us, Emmanuel. We rejoice in a hope for justice in this world, and for hope of a justice beyond this life too, when every wrong is put right and God is all in all.

May God be a blessing to you this Christmas time, and may you be filled with hope and love for God's world.

Loving God, we thank you for the message of peace that Christmas brings to our distracted world. We pray for peace in our world, peace in our streets, peace in our homes and peace in our hearts, as we celebrate the birth at Bethlehem of the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



The Matisse Chapel

In September of this year I was fortunate enough to stay in a villa in Vence, a town high up in the hills overlooking Nice.

The villa itself was evidently owned by art lovers, because it was full of paintings, including an original Joan Miro, tapestries, and even furniture by Alberto Giacometti.

What made it even more special was the fact that it was only five minutes from the renowned Chapelle du Rosaire, an innovative example of modern art and a remarkable place of devotion, designed by Henri Matisse.

Even today Matisse is thought of as startlingly avant-garde, but he was born in 1869 into a conventional middle-class family in northern France. He first studied law, but whilst convalescing after an illness was given a box of paints, and from then on found his true vocation. In Paris he went to art school, and learnt technique by copying great artists. However, Matisse went his own daring way, experimenting with shape – eventually reduced to abstractions – and colour.

He lived a long and productive life, relocating to a suburb of Nice. He had surgery for cancer, and was nursed by Monique Bourgeois, who was interested in art and modelled for him. In 1944 she decided to enter a convent, joining the Dominican Order and becoming Sister Jacque-Marie. When it was proposed that a new chapel in Vence be built, she enlisted the help of Matisse.

By this time he was 77, and not in good health, but he became completely absorbed in, and enthused by, the project. At first he worked from his rooms in Nice, recreating the dimensions of the chapel. He often had to work from his wheelchair, or from his bed, using a paintbrush attached to a stick. Encouraged by the young architect and priest, Fr. Marie-Alain Couturier, he determined to break from old Catholic traditions of conventional and often gloomy ornamentation. This new chapel was to represent joy, life and light – always in abundant supply in this region of France. The colours he chose for the stained glass windows were yellow and blue, the colours of the Mediterranean, and the shapes he chose were abstract but organic, reflecting nature and the countryside.

The Stations of the Cross are a definite break from convention – simple black brush strokes on white tiles, and displayed not around the chapel but on one wall panel. However, the intensive study and the complex practice drawings he did, show how utterly immersed in the work he was – he said himself that he had to understand a little of Christ's suffering in order to depict it.

The whole project took four years, encompassing architectural design, sculptures, furniture, and church vestments – in the correct liturgical colours, but very modern. It is a wonderful place to visit – for the information and preliminary drawings on display, and the chapel itself, a place of beauty and peace.

It was completed and blessed in 1951, and Matisse died three years later. He said "Despite all its imperfections, I see the Chapelle du Rosaire as my masterpiece - it is the result of a life devoted to seeking the truth". JF









There will be no flowers in church during Advent, but donations for Christmas flowers will be gratefully received at any time.



Get ready for seasonal singing on Saturday 9th December, when Dudley Choral Society, combined with Brierley Hill Choral Society, will be holding their Christmas Concert at St. Mark's Church, Pensnett.

There will be a full programme of music, including the Christmas Oratorio by J.S. Bach, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Herbert Howells, and many other works. There will be carols too, with the audience invited to participate!

Refreshments, including mince pies, will be included with your ticket — available from Jane Fraser, or on the door. Please join us for this joyful start to the season



Fr Eric Brian Davies 1936 - 2023



Fr Eric was born in Manchester in 1936.

He had many interesting and varied occupations, mainly in sales, being involved in shoes, electricals and pharmaceuticals, among other things. He studied for the priesthood at St John's College, Nottingham; he was ordained Deacon in 1987 and priested in 1989. He served parishes in Leicestershire and Canterbury as curate, and as

Non-Stipendiary Minister in St Gabriel's Walsall, Caldmore with Palfrey and finally Kinver and Enville.

After his retirement we came to know him at St Edmund's, where he helped out by celebrating Mass on a regular basis until his health prevented him from taking services, then he often joined us as a member of the congregation.

Fr Eric completed his National Service in Germany with the Grenadier Guards. He was very proud of his association with the regiment. On one occasion he came to our Mothers' Union meeting and talked about his service with the Guards. It clearly meant a great deal to him.

He was very good company and there was a lot of laughter when he was around.

Fr Eric was married to his first wife, Joan, for over forty years and they had four children.

After she died, he took communion to a resident of a care home where Michelle was working, and in her words, "it was love at first sight." They married and enjoyed holidays, one of which was a cruise on the Rhine to show Michelle Germany, theatre and concerts; a favourite was the Alleluia Chorus which was played at his funeral.



Michelle paid tribute to her husband speaking of his kindness, strength and humility which touched his family and all who knew him.

The funeral took place at Holy Cross Church, Bobbington where he was interred in the churchyard. A serving Grenadier Guardsman played the Last Post on a bugle at his graveside - a very moving moment.

May he rest in peace.



Marmalade



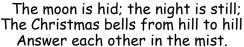


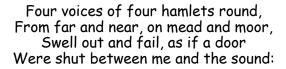
Phil Griffiths has made marmalade as in previous years. If you've had it before you'll know how delicious it is. It is priced at £2 per Jar and all profits go to the church.

> Hurry while stocks last! Only available at St Edmund's



The time draws near the birth of Christ:





Each voice four changes on the wind, That now dilate, and now decrease, Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace, Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

Alfred Lord Tennyson



Deck the Halls....

It has been customary to bring evergreen foliage into homes since

pre-Christian times. Originally it was associated with the winter solstice, when the days were shortest and nights were dark and long. The evergreen was symbolic of the continuation of life when other trees appeared dead.

When Christianity arrived, the holly was adopted as suitable for Christmas decorations as the sharp prickles on the leaves represented the crown of thorns, and the red berries, the drops of blood shed at the crucifixion.

Mistletoe was a holy plant of the druids in pagan times. It was cut in winter with a golden sickle as a thanksgiving for the forthcoming spring. As it could blossom even in the frozen winter it was regarded as symbol of life and fertility. This may be where the custom of kissing under the mistletoe started.





Ivy is another evergreen plant used decoratively in the festive season; this also originated in pagan times. It was one of the symbols of the Greek god Dionysus, the god of wine, often depicted wearing a crown of ivy.

Whatever their origin, evergreens brought in during the Christmas season add to the seasonal atmosphere.

The holly and the Ivy when they are both full grown Of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown.



Christmas Services at St Edmund's Sunday 24th Christmas Eve 11am Monday 25th Christmas Day 10am No service on Wednesday 27th.

Jon's Jovial Jottings!



It is no secret that I love fudge, especially Teddy Gray's and at approximately £1 a quarter (what's metric?) it is a mouth watering delicious delight, and if you ignore the millions of calories, good for you – not! But a little of what you fancy does you good. Last year a member of my family not living in our local area must have thought I needed feeding up, and sent me a 2kg container (4.4lbs) of fudge (not from T.G.).

This year the command has gone out - no sweets/biscuits/cakes for Uncle this Christmas. Having been told at my annual M.O.T. (by the Doctor not the garage) that I need to lose at least half a stone, I will obey.

Talking of sweeties, apparently Nestles Caramac bars are being discontinued. They have been on the market for about 60 years, but I can't remember the last time I bought one, probably about 59 years ago.

This article is being key-boarded two days after we had our Service of Remembrance in Church, with our All Souls' Altar suitably attired with poppies large and small. We had on display a number of sepia photos dating back to the 1st World War, and especially two of Private Thomas Talbot, one as a choir boy at St Edmunds, and the other in military uniform. Thomas never came back from that "War to end all Wars". We will remember him and all who lost their lives in warfare.

I do not have a dishwasher, and good luck to those who do, but apparently many households have two. The TV presenter and all round good guy Ben Fogle has admitted to four dishwashers in his family kitchen. That's right, four.

Not having seen the 2024 National Trust calendar, I can only comment from information gleaned when I access the papers online every morning. Apparently that great organisation has not specifically mentioned the Christian Festivals of Christmas and Easter by name, but lo, several other religions are by name and date event. Tut; Tut (and not the one from Egypt).

Here's a surprise - Yet again another falling out in our government, with the PM Rishi Sunak inviting one of the 'posh boys' (nickname for David Cameron by the press) to come back into the cabinet as a Minister. He is not an MP, and quite rightly the Speaker of Parliament has criticised this move for an unelected person being unable to answer questions from your MP or mine. The new Foreign Secretary will be earning at least £80,000 per annum plus about £300 plus per day when he sits in the House of Lords. Oh, didn't you know that he is now Lord Dave? It's a hard life – not for them. In the Black Country we call that a 'load of tommy rot'.

Another new Minister Without Portfolio is Esther McVey MP who is giving up all her jobs (honestly) outside of being an MP to concentrate on the new post. Downing Street has said that the new(ish) Cabinet will bring a touch of "Common sense" for us all to see. Such fun!

I get more joy from 'Last of the Summer Wine" with Howard chasing Marina in such a loveable way.

You wait or have waited ages in a queue for a bus and suddenly three come along. On Sunday 10th December we have a similar situation with two Bishops at our 11am service – Dudley to Preach and Oswestry to Celebrate the Mass, so we hope for a goodly crowd to greet them.

Finally: the foodbank relies on the contributions from you and me, so can we please make an extra effort now that Christmas is almost upon us; God loves a cheerful giver, but the hungry will love you even more.

JH.

Diocesan Prayer Diaries for November to March are now available at the back of church



At the recent MU Council Meeting the following report was received from the MU Prison Project. It is reproduced here:

Christmas Behind Bars

Report from the Prison Projects

Christmas can be the happiest time, spending time with family and friends; or it can be the worst time, especially for prisoners and their families who are separated from each other. There are no visits on Christmas Day or Boxing Day so the only contact that they can have with each other is a phone call. There are visits on Christmas Eve, but since the Covid pandemic, visits have reduced from 55 visits per session to 35 and also the number of visit sessions has decreased making it more difficult for families to book a visit. This makes it all the more important that Mothers' Union supports the Children and Families team at the prison to provide meaningful visits especially at Christmas. So what do we do?

We support families by providing Christmas Presents for the Family Day events that take place usually the week before Christmas. Traditionally I have gone out with my Credit Card and my husband's van to meet at a Toy Shop with a member of the Families Team who knows who is going to the Family Day and we get the appropriate presents for each child. As families also include teenagers we then go to somewhere like TK Max and get appropriate gifts for them. These are then loaded into the van and taken to the Visitor Centre at the prison ready to go into the prison to be wrapped and given to Father Christmas who gives them out on the Family Day. Mothers' Union also provides a small Selection Box for each child who attends Family Day and also a few for the children who visit on Christmas Eve as a special treat.

As you can imagine, Christmas Family Day is a joyous event and I always try to go and help out. Lots of activities are available for families to do together and then the prison provides a Christmas lunch and pudding which families can eat together. After lunch Father Christmas arrives with much Ho Ho-ing and everyone is very excited. As Father

Christmas gives out the gifts and Selection Boxes, most of the children excitedly rip the paper off to find out what they have got. Last year, one little girl wanted to save her present to put under the Christmas Tree and open it on Christmas Day, but Dad was so disappointed because he wanted to see what she had been given. You see the fathers are just as excited as the children! Once the presents are distributed each family has a photograph taken with Father Christmas, one copy the family takes home and one copy for Dad. When people are in prison, generally there are no family photographs, so this too is very special and much treasured.

We have also provided resources for the Children and Families Team to help make Christmas a special time. One year we provided 'Clear Baubles' which were sent out to the families of prisoners who had engaged with Family Centred Courses, they contained a photograph of Dad to hang on the Christmas Tree and then put on the table so that he could be with them for Christmas lunch.

Although this is all good work, it only scratches the surface of the prisoners held at HMP Hewell which actually holds over 1,000 prisoners! So what do we do to support the rest of prisoners' families?

Supported by some MU branches, Churches in the Diocese and also Churches of other Dominations we provide Christmas presents to EVERY child who visits the prison over the festive season. These are new toys donated by MU members and the congregations of various Churches which are delivered to the Visitor Centre at the prison where they are sorted into ages and gender and then wrapped. Once wrapped the Children's worker would check the Visit list for that day and sort out presents for each of the children who are visiting, then after their visit when they are back in the Visitor Centre they are given a lovely gift.

Denise Bayliffe

Next M.U.meeting on:

Monday 8th January 2pm at St Francis
Weather permitting

LOOKING BACK

Some of you may know an old song that goes:-

"Remind me to remind you, we said we wouldn't look back - we said we wouldn't look back."

Well, in this article, I am going to ignore that and look back at the year 2023. I am not alone in this: there are many T.V. programmes and newspaper articles and magazine articles that comment on the year just about to pass.

Where to begin? Let's list the good things in the life of St Edmund's parish. The major achievement was the opening of the long-awaited ramp and it certainly exceeded all my expectations. Now there is easy access for wheelchair users and those of us whose legs have seen better days. (And how wonderful to see Susan in church again).

Not only this but the church doors have been beautifully repainted in St Edmund's colours (red and green). Also the steps have been edged in white. The latest welcome addition is the absolutely splendid noticeboard outside. (I saw a passerby admiring it the other day). If it encourages people to come inside it will be well worth the money spent. Anything else? Yes, new service books and an updated sound system.

All of the above hasn't been cheap but was possible through the generosity of a friend of our church who remembered us in his Will.

But in the wider world things have not been so rosy. The Ukraine war wages on, now joined by dreadful events in the Middle East. We can only pray for peace. We did this recently on Remembrance Sunday when the names of the dead (including Thomas Talbot, a former young choirboy) were read out.

A week later we held our Patronal Festival service remembering the young King Edmund of East Anglia, crowned at the age of fifteen on Christmas Day.

After his martyrdom, an architectural mountain of stone was erected over the place of his burial but was eventually pulled down by locals and used for wall-building.

Looking back is really a form of time travel. We should celebrate our successes and learn from our mistakes. We have a good record of fund raising here at St Edmund's thanks to the generosity of the congregation. Recently, more than £500 pounds was raised for Multiple Sclerosis work.

We have maintained our twice-weekly worship even when a priest has not been available and many thanks are due to Jon whose ever -open diary is ready to receive bookings for the priests who are kind enough to celebrate Mass for us.

So, we have a lot to be grateful for and we thank God for all who support us here in this church. May they continue to do so in the coming year.

Well we did look back and we didn't turn into a pillar of salt like Lot's wife in the Bible. The Bible also says:

"Speak ye to the children of Israel that they may go forward".

We in St Edmund's will go forward into the future with God's help and the continued support of our congregation.

Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Janet Lambert



Bishop John Commends Archbishop's Appeal

The Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem and Archbishop Justin are encouraging support for the Anglican ministries in Gaza, Palestine and Israel through donations to the friends of the Holy Land.

Bishop John writes:

The situation in Israel and Palestine is heartbreaking. Having been there with our diocesan pilgrimage earlier this year brings home how everyone will be suffering as income from visitors disappears.

I went to Gaza on behalf of Christian Aid six years ago and went to the Anglican hospital which has been so terribly damaged. I described Gaza then as the most depressing place I had ever visited. Now it is a living hell.

Israel has a right to defend itself and prevent heinous attacks by Hamas whilst innocent inhabitants of Gaza must have their human rights respected. We must pray for peace with justice.

I commend you to the Archbishop's Appeal. Please pray and please give.



HOLY DAYS IN DECEMBER

Wednesday 6th - St Nicholas

Wednesday 13th - St Lucy, Martyr

Thursday 21st - St Thomas the Apostle

Sunday 24th - Christmas Eve

Monday 25th - Christmas Day

Tueday 26th - St Stephen the first martyr

Weneday 27th - St John the Apostle

Thursday 28th - the Holy Innocents

Friday 29th - Thomas Becket martyr

SUNDAY SERVICES 11am Mass

3rd Fr Tony Hutchinson

10th Celebrant: Bishop of Oswestry

Preacher: Bishop of Dudley

17th Fr Tony Hutchinson

24th Fr Doug Chaplin

25th Fr John Oakes at 10am

31st Fr John Oakes

CHRISTMAS PERIOD:

Christmas Eve 24th December 11am Fr Doug Chaplin

Christmas Day 25th December 10am Fr John Oakes

Wednesday 27th December 12.15pm No Service

NOTABLE DAYS IN DECEMBER

Friday 1st - World Aids Day

Saturday 2nd - International day for the abolition of slavery

Saturday 9th - Victims of Genocide

Sunday 10th - Human Rights Day

Monday 18th - International Migrants Day

Friday 22nd - Winter Solstice the shortest day

Tuesday 26th - Boxing Day Bank Holiday



IN MEMORIAM JANUARY



1st	Edward John Hobbs	15th	Barbara Lewis
2nd	Frederick Thomas Morton		Elsie Wakelam
	Diane Ratcliffe	1 <i>7</i> th	Elsie Robinson
	Vera Lewis		John Mills Keeling
3rd	Thomas Sefton (Priest)		Kenneth Rowe
	Mary Hanson		Dennis Hickman
	Elinor Smith	18th	Martha Dutton
4th	Sarah Jane Matthews		Florence Price
5th	Arthur George Betteridge		Evelyn Gittins
6th	Nora Flavell	20th	Eli Walker
7th	Mary Jane Garbett	21st	Carmen S. Lehmann
	Ethel Forth	22nd	Albert John Harvey
	Elsie Fowley		Joyce Weston
8th	Joel Herbert Clarke		Beatrice May Woollams
9th	William P. McIntosh	24th	Lawson Messiter Price
	Sydney Jones		Sarah Ann Harper
	Claude Alfred W Russell		Lawson Meese Price
	(Priest)	25th	Thomas Wright
	Daphne Muriel Wilcox		William Stephenson
	Harry Salter	26th	Thurza Mary Clarke
10th	Roy John Allcock		Doris Robinson
11th	Clifford Rowsell (Priest)	27th	Philip Smith
	Isobella Messiter		Harriet Sarah Dudley
12th	Clifford Williams		Thomas Siviter
13th	Teddy Gray	28th	Graham Colston
14th	Albert Wood		Arthur Hunt Williams
	Bella Smith-Campbell	31st	Emma Ellwood
15th	Florence Eliza Cliff		Joseph Davis

Rest eternal grant to them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Readers for JANUARY

7th Mr A Baillie

Mrs A Mullaney

14th Mr G Smith

Mrs J Fraser

21st Mr M Simpson

Mr F Sheppard

28th Mrs J Lambert

February 4th

Mrs J Alderman-Rowe

Mrs M McGraghan

M/s M Glazzard

Intercessors:

7th Mrs M McGraghan

14th Mrs J Lambert

21st Mrs A Mullaney

28th Mr J Harcourt

February 4th Mrs M McGraghan

Thought for the Month

There are far better things ahead than any we left behind.

C.S. Lewis

NOTABLE DAYS IN JANUARY 2024

Monday 1st - Bank Holiday Sunday 7th - Plough Sunday

Thursday 18th - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins

Sunday 21st - World Religion day Thursday 25th - Burns Night

Saturday 27th - Holocaust Memorial Day Sunday 28th - Homeless Sunday

also World Leprosy Day

HOLY DAYS IN JANUARY 2024

Monday 1st - The naming and circumcision of Jesus

Saturday 6th - The Epiphany
The manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles

Sunday 7th - The Baptism of Christ

Friday 19th - Wulfstan Bishop of Worcester

Thursday 25th - The Conversion of St Paul

Friday 26th - St Timothy & St Titus

JANUARY SERVICES:

Sunday as usual at 11a.m.. Clergy cover to be announced.

Wednesday as usual 12.15pm EXCEPT NO SERVICE 3rd JANUARY

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Winter Talks are held on the first Saturday of the month at 10:30am for an 11:00am start.

Cost for Visitors is £2 per talk, or £10 for annual membership.

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