

Meridian Benefice

People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God
Luke 13:29

Roadmap

The government recently produced a roadmap to guide us through the easing of restrictions as we come out of lockdown. I am sure you will agree with me that it will be wonderful to reach the end of this particular journey. The tantalising thought of being able to meet with family and friends, to share meals, go on holiday ... I could go on!

Of course, our church family is longing to be back together again in our church buildings to celebrate and worship God together. So, with conditions permitting, we are excited that we will be able to do so at Easter, the most joyful day of the year for Christians.

EASTER SERVICES

GOOD FRIDAY

11.30am **Meditation**
St Mary's church,
Bluntisham cum Earith

EASTER DAY

9am **Holy Communion**
St John the Baptist's church,
Holywell cum Needingworth

11am **Holy Communion,**
St Mary's church,
Bluntisham cum Earith

If you would like to attend, please let us know.

For services at Bluntisham cum Earith, contact Sheila: email sheila@saintintraining.co.uk; telephone 01487 740456

For services at Holywell cum Earith, contact Stephen York: email stephenyork@flagholme.net; telephone 01480 465120

THE HERALD

The Herald is a monthly newsletter from the Meridian Benefice; the parish churches of Bluntisham cum Earith, Colne and Holywell cum Needingworth

It's Friday but Sunday's coming

What extraordinary times we are living in. A year-long pandemic has affected people in all parts of the world. Many people have died or are suffering; many have lost jobs or are facing uncertain futures. Mental health is a rising problem. A meteorite has landed on a drive in the sleepy village of Winchcombe in Gloucestershire. Volcanoes erupting around the world. Oprah Winfrey's two-hour interview with Prince Harry and his wife Meghan has rocked the royal family, this country and the commonwealth. The sky grows dark, the earth begins to tremble; it all seems very dark and bleak and perhaps even frightening.

One Friday 2000 years ago, the sky grew dark and the earth began to tremble as Jesus hung on a cross to die. For those who had followed Jesus, all sense of hope had left them. It was dark and bleak and frightening.

However, on Sunday three days later, everything changed. Jesus rose again in glorious splendour. This is the Easter story. Jesus is alive. It's not a myth; it's true. There were many witnesses. He talked with his disciples; he ate with them; he prepared them for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If you aren't sure then it's worth reading an excellent book called 'Who moved the stone?' by Frank Morison which investigates the evidence surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus.

On the cross Jesus broke the power of wrongdoing in our lives. His actions enable us to start a new life, a spiritual life in relationship with God. That's why Easter is the most joyful day of the year for Christians. Jesus broke through the despair, the pain, the suffering, death itself to show the world that there was more. Jesus' death on the cross broke the power of sin, broke the power of evil around us and opened the way to an eternal relationship with a loving God. Love wins!

'For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.' John 3.16

I pray, whatever difficulties, sadness or fears you may be going through, that you find the joy of Easter Day. Jesus has opened his arms on the cross for you. This is a wonderful gift to every one of us to take. Will you take it?

Blessings, Sheila



From Easter we will be resuming some services

11 April	11am All Age	Bluntisham cum Earith
	3pm Holy Communion	Holywell cum Needingworth
18 April	11am Holy Communion	Bluntisham cum Earith
25 April	11am All Age	Bluntisham cum Earith
	3pm Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)	Holywell cum Needingworth

If you cannot come to any of our services you are warmly welcome to join us online every Sunday for a short talk and prayers.

Go to your website at meridianbenfice.org.uk and click the link which will redirect you to Youtube

A Heavenly Experience

*A true experience of someone
who lives in this Benefice*

January 9th 1977; only a couple of weeks after my 13th birthday. It was pitch black. Silent, but the silence was a comfortable silence, a gentle silence, no fear, no pain, just black. I felt reassured in my infancy and the not knowing that came with that innocence. An intense but peaceful gaze was constantly upon me as I lay, guarding me as a mother would a new-born. I was content. I began to move, silently, gently, my trusted guard at pace with my progress, their unseen eyes fixated in stare.

Gradually bright, then brighter still, a glimmering white. The comfort was like nothing before, the peaceful tranquillity, the tangible love, the unquestionable honesty and surety of peace, and the peaceful surety and tranquillity of truth. As the cushion of air carried me further still, brighter and brighter the path ahead shone. Surely this gathering of happiness had an end point? Surely it couldn't continue?

Then it stopped. The brightness turned dark, not suddenly, but at pace. The dark was no longer comfortable, and as the silence was discourteously ushered away, the noise became hurried and meaningless. I was somewhere I shouldn't have been, an intruder in someone else's affairs, and I wasn't happy. I was most certainly not happy. I wanted to return to the light; to the beautiful time and place whence I had just been, protected by my loyal guard.

I went back once, but again was denied that final step into what I now know was heaven. Heaven is real, and I just about got to the doors, but, as the saying goes, it just wasn't my time. It was a car accident that I was in that night in '77, along with my brother and my mother and father. My brother survived also, but my mum and dad ..., well, they did make it through the doors that night. God bless.

Our villages have built up wonderful community networks to help others. Sometimes it's hard to ask but remember we are all affected and together we will get through it. You don't need to feel isolated. If you are struggling and would like a chat with someone or you need help and not yet connected with anyone, please contact us. We will be really pleased to help.

The Herald: editor John McAngus email: herald@meridianbenefice.org.uk or john.mcangus@gmail.com

*Please contact us if you have something you would like to include in the Herald
or if you would like to receive a copy by email.*

Revd Dr Caroline Yandell

I am delighted to announce that Caroline was licensed on Saturday 13 March as an Associate Minister in our Benefice. This will be on a part-time basis, however, it means she can be fully involved in all aspects of Benefice ministry



Carol Peilow a newly Licensed Lay Minister (LLM)

At the end of August, all of a sudden, two years of dedicated study was over! Social restrictions meant that the course didn't quite finish as expected with lectures via Zoom



and a placement with the Hinchingsbrooke Hospital Chaplaincy on hold. The 'on line' theme continued when in early October my Licensing Ceremony took place via Zoom – not quite the ambience of Ely Cathedral where we would have all preferred to be! However Bishop Dagmar (Bishop of Huntingdon) gave the service the dignity and solemnity it needed, and friends and family were able to join in from across the UK. So, as a newly qualified LLM, still in the midst of a lockdown (thank you COVID!), getting started is a challenge. Nevertheless I am very much looking forward to serving our community of Holywell cum Needingworth in this new role. There is of course, more studying to be done, but a ministry such as this is a lifelong learning and growing experience. Please keep me

in your prayers as I start the next phase of the journey.

A BIG ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR EVERYONE IN THE EARITH CAFE COMMUNITY WHO HAVE NOW DONATED OVER £5000 TO CHARITY IN 2020!

Can you help to deliver the Herald in Bluntisham, Earith or Colne?

For various reasons, some volunteers have had to step back from doing their deliveries and as a result we would be grateful to hear from anyone who feels they might be able to help deliver in their immediate area. *The Herald* is produced ten times a year.

Contact john.mcangus@gmail.com 0771 540 6412 if you can help.

Contacts:

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St. John the Baptist Church 200 Club

Winners for November 2020

£25 Mrs D Stocker
£10 Mrs E Strickland
£10 Mrs D Dighton

Winners for December 2020

£25 Mrs S Dawson
£10 Mr S York
£10 Mrs D Dighton

Winners for January 2021

£25 Mrs J Weir
£10 Mr R Dawson
£10 Mrs G Lee

Winners for February 2021

£25 Mr M Williamson
£10 Mrs D Dighton
£10 Mrs N Bailly

The 200 Club costs £13.00 per year and you could win £100 (twice a year) or £25 or £10 (ten times a year.)
Call Sue Dawson
01480 509483