

Parish News

St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden

£ 1.00

December 2023 / January 2024



For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;
And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
Prince of Peace

St Peter and St Paul, Little Gaddesden HP4 1NZ

Berkhamsted Team

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We are in the Berkhamsted Team Ministry with Great Berkhamsted, Great Gaddesden and Nettleden with Potten End. Enquiries regarding Baptisms, Banns, Weddings, Funerals and Memorials in the Churchyard should be made to the above-mentioned email address. Messages can also be left with the Churchwardens. If the Vicarage telephone is on the answering service, please leave a message. It will be attended to as soon as possible.

All are welcome to our House of God. All have their place in His Kingdom and their part to play in His work

Phone numbers preceded by code 01442 those noted.

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SUNDAY SERVICES: 9.00am Eucharist Service or Café Church (2nd Sunday)

6.00pm Evensong at Nettleden on the 1st and 3rd Sunday
of the month

6.00pm Occasional Iona or Taizé services

5th Sunday – Joint Eucharist at one of our three churches

Please do check the website for up-to-date details

THOMAS FIELD HALL: email: tfh.bookings@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk

WEEKDAY SERVICE: Thursday 10am Said Eucharist

BELL RINGING: Sunday 8.30am Practice: Tuesday 8.00pm

Tower Captain – Virginia Westmacott 842428

CHOIR PRACTICE: Friday 7.00pm – John Leonhardt 843550

LG CoFe PRIMARY SCHOOL: We welcome all children aged 4 – 11. Contact the Head Teacher for more information on 01442 842464 or
admin@littlegaddesden.herts.sch.uk

PARISH NEWS EDITORS: Helene Hockings, Nick Murray, Mike Walsham.

See inside back page for contact details.

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WEEKLY UPDATES: PEW SHEET distributed each Sunday. Items for inclusion should be sent to Helene Hockings, a_dmin-church@outlook.com by 9am on Thursday

Vol 46 No.12

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I am reflecting on the fact that the world in which we live can no longer isolate itself from what is happening in other parts of the world, in ways it could, even 30 years ago. We cannot live in blissful ignorance, after all we are only a short flight away from some of the most awful conflicts and disasters imaginable, some of them happening right now. The notion of bad things happening in dim and distant lands no longer applies, the news is available for our constant edification: on tv, online, on the radio, in our newspapers; and the words of Pontius Pilate come to mind, when he asks the world in general, and Jesus in particular, 'What is Truth?'. (*John 18:38*).

Having survived the COVID pandemic, somehow or other, when many of us lost loved ones, the fear of immediate death seems at least partially, to have faded from the forefront of our minds, yet the grim realities of war in Europe and Palestine have reared their ugly heads, to remind us that this ever-changing world is still full of pain and suffering.

As Christmas approaches and we prepare ourselves in ways that must surely make us feel very fortunate, we may want to forget the reality of the suffering of the innocent, in not so far-flung fields. We may subconsciously want to push away thoughts of the young, the old and the innocent trying to survive in the face of massive adversity, but that would deny the realities of the world. Whilst we might like to imagine the world has never been so bad as it is now, don't make that mistake; when Jesus was born, the world was, in its way, just as unpleasant and brutal and many young children lost their lives directly because the saviour of the world was born in Bethlehem. Life was cheap then and it appears to remain so for many today.

So what is truth? It lies with God; our God, the one true God, the creator of everything we already see and experience and have yet to be discovered. God has created a world out of love. But love is a fickle thing, it cannot be controlled, it cannot be forced. It is, though, created out of the innate goodness of our creator which he has instilled into us; we who are the pinnacle of his creation, supposedly. To be aware of love, means also to be aware of hate and as our God has given us freewill, it means we have that choice to love or to hate.

I'm sorry if my letter seems grim this year, but it would be wrong to carry on with our celebrations apparently oblivious to all that is happening elsewhere in our world.

Some years ago, a North American priest visited a displaced persons refuge in San Salvador and wrote the following reflection:

This year I celebrated Christmas mass with more than 200 displaced people living in the basement of a church in San Salvador.

These people cannot leave the church. Many have been here for a year and a half. During this time, they have not seen the sunlight or taken a breath of fresh air. They have organized themselves into groups to cook, clean, take care of the children and stand watch. Nine children have been born here and the community is now expecting four more.

Over the table that served us as our altar, the people hung a large newspaper photograph of Archbishop Romero.

(NOTE: Born in 1917. Oscar Romero was an ordained priest, known as a quiet and unassuming pastor. By 1977, amidst the political and social turmoil suffered in his country, he was seen as a neutral choice to be its Archbishop. Courageously, however, he began to speak out against violence, and his homilies supported the demands of the poor for economic and social justice. He refused to be silenced and continued to preach even under threat of assassination. On 24th March 1980, whilst presiding at Mass, he was assassinated by a gunman. He has since been widely regarded as a martyr for the faith.)

Even in death Romero continues to be present to the people. 'Monsignor visited our village,' they told me. 'He was one of us. His memory is our most treasured possession.'

Next to the photograph of Archbishop Romero was a faded image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Both images served as silent acolytes during our Eucharistic celebration. People offered petitions and thanks and prayed for their dead. They prayed for their children and relatives, and for the nuns who share their lives with them. They also thanked God for many things, especially for life.

It was evident from their prayers that they find encouragement and hope in their belief that Jesus loves them. They believe in Jesus the liberator and saviour.

As I shared the Christmas celebration with these displaced people, it was easy to imagine Jesus being born in a church basement like this one,

amidst the smell of tamales and the strumming of two old guitars. Here, Jesus would have been at home.

From: El Salvador: A Spring Whose Waters Never Run Dry.

This Christmas, let us celebrate life in all its fullness and pray God may help us always to reject hate and know love, for that is where truth lies; as St John wrote in his first letter: *God is love and those who live in love, live in God and God lives in them. (1 John 4:16).*

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and I pray that 2024 may be a year to truly celebrate life.

I am yours in Christ,
John.

RNLI SOS DAY

“SAMPLE OUR SOUP DAY”

plus a “crumble” pudding
on

SATURDAY 20th JANUARY

12 noon – 2.00pm

in

THE VILLAGE HALL

Donations to RNLI please

AN ANGRY CHURCHWARDEN

In late December 1721, an angry churchwarden of Little Gaddesden took out a ruler and drew lines across a page at the back of the book of Churchwardens' accounts. His frustration with the conduct of his rector had finally boiled over and he wanted to make a permanent record of what he thought was unforgiveable behaviour and ensure it did not happen again. (He clearly took pride in the quality of his handwriting with its large, elegant loops, and it is still easy to read today). 'Memorandum', he began and thickened the gothic lettering, before returning to a more modern style of writing.

"This 20th day of December, 1721. I, Wm Ellis one of the Churchwardens for the Parish of Little Gaddesden in the year aforesd. Did sometime before Christmas observe that at the end of the Communion Service in the Common Prayer Book It was ordered that the Offertory money given at the Sacrament should be distributed to the poor by the Minister and Churchwardens after the service was ended. And being inform'd that the former Officers during" (Here there is a gap, presumably to be filled in later when Ellis had checked the dates) "years that Mr Eddows had been Rector never see the said moneys given away I thereupon demanded of Mr Eddowes the distribution of what moneys mought be given at the Christmas Sacrament in mine and the other Churchwardens presence, which he accordingly did to some poor people who I ordered to attend the church for that purpose.

And so I intend by God's permission to see the like done when I am in that Office according to my solemn duty. And by this warn all succeeding churchwardens that they do not omit so material a part of their Duty".

William Ellis, (c1700-1758) was, of course, the most prolific writer about English agriculture in the first half of the eighteenth century, and his books were read around Europe and in North America. He lived in Church farm, Little Gaddesden. (Some locals thought he was better at writing than actual farming).

If Ellis was born about 1700 then he was a young man of 21 when he wrote what almost amounts to a diatribe, and it does read like the work of a very young man who sees most things in black and white. There is a mystery about the rector Ralph Eddowes, however, his dates are given as 1662 to 1728, which would make him almost 60 when he came into conflict with his

much younger churchwarden. But how long had he been rector of Little Gaddesden?

Some records say he came here in 1703, succeeding George Burghope, who became rector of Burton Agnes in Yorkshire in that year. Others say it was 1713. However, his gravestone, now illegible, but recorded in the 19th century, says that he did die in 1728 and that he was "Once the Most Worthy Rector of this church for 5 years".

So, was he rector for 25 or 15 or 5 years?

A possible explanation is that for the first 20 of the 25 years he was at Little Gaddesden he was deputising for an absent rector, George Burghope, who had kept hold of the rectorship and the money that went with it when he headed north, and that it was only a few years before Burghope's death in 1727 that Ralph was granted the official title of rector.

Which might explain why, as a relatively poorly paid curate, Eddowes might have wanted to hold onto money which should have been distributed to the desperately poor, much to the disgust of young Mr Ellis.

ROGER BOLTON

From the Registers:

30 th October	Burial of Ashes	Rita Humphreys
9 th November	Burial of Ashes	Alan Paul Pritchard



BRITISH HUMANITARIAN AID (BHA)

GIFT SERVICE

SUNDAY 10th DECEMBER

AT 9.00am

Followed by Advent Breakfast. Delicious produce including croissants, bread, preserves, tea and coffee

EVERYONE WELCOME

If you are able to donate goods, the requirements are:

Clothing and shoes for all age groups, bedding, toiletries, nappies (including adult), colouring books and crayons, small toys, washing powder, candles, matches, torches, tinned and dried foods (not cereals), long life milk, tea and coffee. Crockery and cutlery, kettles, wheelchairs, crutches, wheeled walkers and sleeping mats.

Please label bags clearly.

Labelled bags may be left by the front from Friday 8th December.



Travelling Crib

Mary, Joseph and the donkey will be travelling around the village during December. Would you like to host them for the night? This is open to everyone in the village. Please let Debbie McMorran know on email:

travelling-crib@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk if you would like to take them in. Many thanks.

Christmas Carol Service and Celebration

**Saturday 16th December at 6pm
in the church**

**A celebration of Christmas
with biblical and secular readings, carols,
anthems and entertainment**

**All welcome
Refreshments**

Carols at Ashridge Chapel

**Monday 18th December
at 6pm**

All welcome

Carols on The Green

**Tuesday 19th December at 6.00pm
Carol Singing round the
village Christmas Tree**

**Mulled Wine
All welcome**



WILLIAM ELLIS – LOCAL FARMER WITH AN ENQUIRING MIND

I would like to recommend a new book published in 2022: “William Ellis – Eighteenth-century farmer, journalist and entrepreneur” by Malcolm Thick, published by Hertfordshire Publications – University of Hertfordshire Press. William Ellis of Little Gaddesden had been a famous writer on farming and other rural matters in his own day, but was perhaps forgotten here until Vicars Bell brought him back to life in his history “Little Gaddesden” in 1949. As this book was reprinted recently by our local Rural Heritage Society, it is probably the source through which those of our village who already know about William Ellis got their information. Vicars Bell devotes an 18-page chapter to him and his books and a reference to him as Churchwarden.

In this book, Ellis’s story gets very bound up with that of a Finnish visitor, Pehr Kalm, who spent 3 weeks here observing everything and was very disappointed in his discoveries about Ellis. In 1956 Bell produced another book conflating Ellis’s work with Kalm’s visit, “To Meet Mr Ellis”. This time everything is concentrated on rural life in the second quarter of the 1700s.

A few words about our subject:

William Ellis was born between 1680 and 1690 in Kent.

After working as a brewer in London he started farming at Church Farm Little Gaddesden in about 1718.

He started collecting information about all aspects of farming from other farmers, their wives, maids, workmen and countrymen generally, many of whom he visited personally in travels around southern England. By 1733 he started publishing his observations in periodicals and complete books. His own farm suffered as he spent so much time travelling and writing, but what he wrote has been judged by many as important in the spreading of agricultural improvements in his lifetime. He also traded in supplies of seeds, young trees, and machines. He tried experimenting with attempted improvements in machines such as ploughs and drills.

In 1748 he was visited by Pehr Kalm looking for ideas for improving agriculture in Finland. Kalm was put off by the bad condition of Ellis’s own farm, and in his diary he harmed Ellis’s reputation.

William Ellis died in 1758.

Could anything else be written after Vicars Bell’s accounts? Well, yes. Ellis himself had written so much that a study of his books could reveal much that was worth telling. Copies of these can be traced in various libraries and

archives including the Hertfordshire County Hall Rare Books Collection and the British Library. A particularly accessible one is a facsimile of his “Country Housewife’s Family Companion” (1750) published in 2000 (Dewy classification number 640942).

I skip over Canon Howard Senar’s history “Little Gaddesden and Ashridge”, 1983, except to point out that he has erroneously indexed William Ellis as *Ellis, Hugh*, in case you are looking for him. He has very little to say.

In 1984 Paul Stanbridge produced a work which he felt was needed to restore Ellis’s reputation. Paul was farming between Gaddesden Row and Redbourn, and teaching science part time at Hemel Hempstead School. He gave me a photocopy of his typescript to read through and give my comments. It was a thick bundle full of interesting details. It was never published but a copy is now in the Museum of Rural Life at the University of Reading, entitled “William Ellis, the Forgotten Improver”. It is listed in the biography appended to Malcolm Thick’s new book.

In 2003 I had gathered enough information to give a talk on William Ellis to our Over-60s Club which still existed for meetings at that time.

And so to Malcolm Thick’s 2022 book.

Here we have a very well-researched and systematically presented critique of Ellis’s life and work. Malcolm Thick is a scholar of agricultural and horticultural history who has written several other books and papers on these subjects. He is well acquainted with Ellis’s period and, significantly, with many other writers of that time on comparable subjects. Ellis clearly compares very favourably with some of these.

Thick does not shrink from reporting Ellis’s faults which are chiefly being very susceptible to unreliable anecdotes and being over-zealous in self-advertising.

A list of the subjects of his writing would include methods of cultivation of various crops and the different soils on which to grow them. (His own farm has the usual different soils and aspects of our village, such as heavy clay with greater or lesser amounts of flint and well-drained chalky slopes leading to wet valleys.) Manures and other soil improvers. Animal husbandry, especially sheep. Cures for both human and animal ailments (typical of his time, some probably doing more harm than good). Much about grasses and other herbaceous plants for grazing and haymaking. Fruit and timber trees. Cider-making and brewing beer. Useful recipes from ingredients accessible to farmers’ wives.

Finally, I would like to recommend one more book: “Pehr Kalm – A Finnish Visitor to the Chilterns in 1748” by W.R. Mead published in the year 2003. Here you will find a fuller translation of all his descriptions of rural life in the neighbourhood of Little Gaddesden. His comparisons with his home country lead to such precise details that would have been ignored by local historians including the way in which all kinds of construction and other work was done. He describes the ordinary habits of ordinary people including their food, clothing and pastimes. He was a scientist with botanical training direct from his fellow countryman Carl Linne, known to us as Linnaeus, the father of biological binomial classification. As an example he analysed a sample of hay from a haystack in Hudnall and found 29 species, of which 12 were different species of grass. His use of Latin names was so similar to or the same as those still in use today that it is easy to understand. In describing farm machines he measured exactly all the parts. He also kept daily weather reports including temperature readings. The book starts with his life in Finland and concludes with the results of his visit to North America and its benefits to Finnish agriculture. Kalm was appointed Professor of Economics at Abo Academy.

W.R. Mead is Professor Emeritus of Geography at University College London, and a member of the Finnish Academy of Arts and Sciences. (I met him by chance while visiting Drayton Beauchamp church on a cycle ride near Tring in 2005 and that is how I heard about this book, which I now have.)

John Leonhardt

God’s World

Edna St Vincent Millay (1892 - 1950)

O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!

Thy winds, thy wide grey skies!

Thy mists, that roll and rise!

Thy woods, this autumn day, that ache and sag

And all but cry with colour! That gaunt crag

To crush! To lift the lean of that black bluff!

World, World, I cannot get thee close enough!

Long have I known a glory in it all,
But never knew I this;
Here such a passion is
As stretcheth me apart, - Lord, I do fear
Thou'st made the world too beautiful this year;
My soul is all but out of me, - let fall
No burning leaf; prithee, let no bird call.

The wonderful autumn colours in the last few weeks made me think of this poem. Edna St Vincent Millay's reputation has swung wildly over her lifetime as a poet and since her early death: in the 1920s she was considered the leading American female poet by no less than Thomas Hardy (and many others), and the first woman to receive the Pulitzer prize for poetry. She was known as the modern Sappho but this was as much a reflection of her highly independent nature and outspoken views on female sexuality. In the 1930s and 40s the excitement about her poetry decreased considerably – the word 'doggerel' was even used by some, but she remained an important figure socio-politically and in due course an icon of feminism and women's liberation. More recently her poetic star has risen again to some degree.

It is said (surprisingly to my mind) that Millay was the first person to write of burning the candle at both ends, in an early collection of her works from 1921. First or not, she certainly worked at it.

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night,
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends --
It gives a lovely light!

Written many years later, the following fragment of another poem sums up how she saw her life:

Those hours when happy hours were my estate, --
Entailed, as proper, for the next in line,
Yet mine the harvest, and the title mine --
Those acres, fertile, and the furrows straight,
From which the lark would rise -- all of my late
Enchantments, still, in brilliant colours, shine.

Nick Murray

BUMPER FAMILY QUIZ

NATURE QUESTIONS.

1. Name the odd one out.
 - a. Boscoop giant
 - b. Whinham's Industry
 - c. Baldwin

Answer: b. Is a gooseberry; you know, "Two's company, three's a crowd".
Worth 20 points!

2. Where do babies come from?
 - a. From under the gooseberry bush
 - b. They arrive by stork
 - c. Special offer from Fairy washing up liquid

Answer: a. no points, but several thorns worth 2 points.

3. What is the best fruit for making wine?
 - a. Grapes.
 - b. Melons.
 - c. Blackcurrents

Answer: a.b.c. 3 points. (deduct one point for melons as they are hard to tread).

4. Which is the most embarrassing fruit?
 - a. Ugli fruit
 - b. Gooseberries
 - c. Raspberries

Answer: c. Duh!. 1 point.

5. Which is edible?
 - a. Cep
 - b. Fairy ring champignons
 - c. Honey fungus

Answer: All. But no points for b and c as they're not so nice as ceps.

6. Which is a fungus?
- a. May ball
 - b. Puff ball
 - c. Farrow & Ball

Answer: b. 1 point.

7. Which of these are not fungi?
- a. Sulphur polypore
 - b. Fungus the bogeyman
 - c. Cauliflower fungus

Answer: Easy-peasy. b. so no points.

8. The latin name Glis glis relates to which of the following?
- a. Fat dormouse
 - b. Mongolian gerbil
 - c. Minnie Mouse

Answer: a. take 25 extra points if you have them.

9. Which of the following bats are not nocturnal?
- a. Serotine bat
 - b. Noctule bat
 - c. Tennis bat

Answer: Trick question: a and b are nocturnal bats, but there is no such thing as a tennis bat, silly!

10. Anything here that's not a mammal?
- a. Killer whale
 - b. Natterer's bat
 - c. Lesser white toothed shrew

Answer: Nope. Take an extra point for a.

11. Who is Matt Hancock's greatest fan?
- a. Matt Hancock
 - b. Mr M Hancock
 - c. Matt Hancock's Mum

Answer: All (c not verified). Can't be bothered to award points.

12. Most popular Christmas present doll this year?
- a. Barbie. Saves the world
 - b. Greta Thunbug. Glues herself to plate of Ikea meatballs
 - c. Matt Hancock. Assassinates Ken, Barbie's boyfriend and claims his prize

Answer: Oh go on, you choose. No point anyway.

13. Which long standing Heritage Trust 'forgot' to mention Christmas and Easter in its charity volunteer calendar?
- a. Al Qaeda Stately Caves Trust
 - b. Dim sum users Heritage Trust.
 - c. The National Trust

Answer: Duh! No points but space for unbridled comment.....

14. (With apologies to Nicky Haslam's most common list). Choose the most common of the following:
- a. Lord D. Cameron. For giving shepherd's huts a bad name
 - b. Salt 'n vinegar crisp sandwiches
 - c. Matt Hancock signed tea towels. Tinsel decorated dodgy PPE. Signed hidden camera pics.

Answer: Difficult one this. Hmm. Oh, you decide and award something fitting.

15. Who famously said the following: "Goodnight children everywhere"?
- a. Princess Elizabeth
 - b. Uncle Mac
 - c. Horrible Henry

Answer: b. Who remembers 'Children's Hour'? Have a point.

16. 'Happy as Larry'. Who did it relate to?
- a. U.S. expression referring to con.artist, Larry Smith (until he was jailed, that is).
 - b. Aussie expression relating to boxer Larry Foley.
 - c. Irish. Author unknown: actually 'Happy but beery'..

Answer: b. 3 pints to winner.

17. Who famously came out with this: "I do not like this game"?
- a. Harry Kane
 - b. Phillip a phrighthened pheasant
 - c. Bluebottle (from the Goonshow)

Answer: c. I'll get you, bludnok! 3 points.

18. What is the Congestion Charge?
- a. A hanky tax.
 - b. To discourage you from joining a manned till queue in Tesco's
 - c. Fee for daring to join traffic jams in cities, especially London.

Answer: c. Boo. 1 point.

19. Who had a hit with 'Rock me Amadeus'?
- a. Falco
 - b. Falsie
 - c. Ipso facto

Answer: a. A weird German pop group. Take 3 rocking points.

20. Who recorded 'Sail On'?
- a. The Admirals
 - b. The Commodores
 - c. The Pirates

Answer: b. (before Lionel Richie left them). Worth another point.

21. Bonus Question!.
Who wrote the following poems: (3 point answer)
- a. Snow. March 2018
 - b. Junior school in the forties. 2011
 - c. Phamily History. Jan. 2016

Answer. Trick question. a. Me. b. Me. c. Me! Lots of points.

Winner. Whoever has most points.

Josie Jeffrey 2023.

The Ark of the Covenant

(continued from November 2023's issue)

The teaching and spread of Judaism in Ethiopia increased rapidly once the Ark had arrived on the island of Tana Kirkos in the 5th. century BC. The Axumites, under their rulers, established a powerful civilisation that was renowned for fine architecture, crafts and skills. The empire established trade links with many nations including: India, Arabia, Egypt, Rome, Persia and Greece; their navies went as far afield as Ceylon and China. They extended their control over the whole of South Arabia and much of Sudan. From the 1st. to the 6th. century AD, the empire, centred on the city of Axum, could rightly claim to rank amongst one of the most powerful and prosperous in the known world.

The terrain of the mountainous highlands barred the way to hordes of armed invaders for many centuries. Others, however, with religious motives rather than aggressive ones, were more persistent and did find their way to the larger, central cities. In about 330AD, a trading ship on its way back from India (of Egyptian origin), was seized off the Red Sea coast by Ethiopian vessels and a number of the crew were killed. The remainder were captured and taken to Axum where they were brought before the king, Ella Amida. Rumours had been brought to Ethiopia by traders and migrants of the development of Christianity in Israel and elsewhere to the extent that the king took a particular interest in two of the captives, Frumentius and Aedesius, who were Syrian Christians. The two Christians were housed near the king's palace and, after a comparatively short time, Frumentius, who was the more intelligent and sagacious, was appointed the king's secretary and treasurer.

The king died shortly after Frumentius' appointment and the Syrians very badly wanted to return to their homeland as they felt considerably ill at ease without the king's sponsorship and support. The king's widow, however, begged them to stay on until her infant son, Ezana, came of age and to continue to run the finances of the empire. With other reassurances, they agreed to stay and Frumentius, in addition to his financial tasks, was allowed to wander throughout the country and actively promote Christianity. At about the time Ezana became king, Frumentius journeyed to Alexandria (the centre of Christianity in Egypt) to persuade ecclesiastical leaders to appoint a worthy man as bishop over the many Christians in Ethiopia. The elders deliberated for only a brief few hours as they quickly realised that no better man could be considered than Frumentius, who was then consecrated bishop of Ethiopia.

On his return to Axum, the Syrian Christian, now a bishop, succeeded in converting King Ezana, who promptly ordered in about 372AD the design and construction of the first Saint Mary of Zion church in Axum. This was quite possibly the earliest Christian church in sub-Saharan Africa and was regarded as the most sacred place in all Ethiopia. The king then declared his kingdom to be a Christian state (the first in the world) and that the Ark of the Covenant should be brought from its resting place on the island of Tana Kirkos and placed in the new, grand basilica in Axum in its Holy of Holies. Churches started to be built in many places – particularly in the north of the country – and, as each one was completed, a replica of the Ark was installed in the Holy of Holies. Another feature attributed to Ezana's reign is the introduction of new coinage depicting the King's head on one side and a Christian Cross on the other.

The most important festival in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church's calendar is the celebration of *Timkat*. This takes place at Epiphany on 19th. January and there is no other time that the relic replicas –wrapped in rich brocades – are carried out in an impressive procession for a religious ceremony. There are around 25,000 Orthodox churches in Ethiopia and each one has to have a replica of the Ark in its Holy of Holies before it can be consecrated. For centuries after Frumentius, the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (the *Abuna*) had to be an Egyptian; hence, the name Coptic Christians is often given to followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church: Coptic being the Greek for Egyptian. The practice of having an Egyptian Patriarch continued until Emperor Haile Selassie, on his triumphal return from exile in England after the Italian surrender in 1943, decreed that the *Abuna* from thereon would always be an Ethiopian priest.

The followers of Judaism in the Axumite empire quite naturally were very troubled by the declaration of the Christian state and the confiscation of their holy relic. Many Ethiopian Jews, calling themselves *Beta Israel* or Falashas (outsiders) by others, would not agree to being converted so they fled to the mountains, and the less accessible areas around Lake Tana, where they continued the practice of Judaism. They had no churches or synagogues as such, but used circular, thatched buildings with the Star of David at their apex that were used for meeting places. Over time, the followers of Judaism and Christianity learnt to live alongside each other reasonably amicably. But around 600AD, the Prophet Mohammed and his band of followers were establishing Islam in Arabia and would have an interesting influence on Christianity in Ethiopia. How did this influence manifest itself?

(to be continued in February 2024's issue)

Mike Walsham

HOW MUCH WISDOM?

In November 1900 new buildings were opened at the Girls' Grammar School in Berkhamsted and the Rector of Little Gaddesden, the Rev. Dr Woods, was invited to give a sermon. According to the Deanery magazine it was 'striking' and 'has been printed, by request, for private circulation'. (It is likely that the future wife of Winston Churchill, Clementine Hozier, then living in the High St, and a pupil at the school, was in the audience).

Dr Woods was quite a catch for Little Gaddesden. He had been President of Trinity College in Oxford and went on to become Master of the Temple in London. He was 'resting' in our rectory in the clean air of the Chiltern Hills, because of his wife's ill health.

His sermon was on 'Wisdom's House'. The magazine said that 'the following passage is of more than local interest'. I wonder if that is the case today? Here it is:

"There has been an amazing progress in the education of girls and women during the last thirty years (the girl's school had been founded in 1888) and the advance in the quality of the teaching and work has been still more striking than the increase of numbers.

I do not think – I should be sorry to think – that the result of this great movement will be any loss of true womanliness. We do not want mannish women; we do not want the new woman; we do not want a one-sided intellectual development which unfits women for home duties, or makes them hard and unsympathetic. When this is the result of women's education, we may be sure that something has been wrong in the methods of training. We pray that this may not be the case here. We pray that from this school may be sent forth successive generations of true, tender hearted, pure, broad-minded maidens and wives, ready to carry out and realising that they hold a commission from Wisdom herself to carry out, the special work in life for which their training here has fitted them".

I wonder how this went down with Mrs Woods, the daughter of a Dean of Westminster, and an author herself, and what it was about the idea of the 'New Woman' that so disturbed her husband?

The term seems to have entered the language in around 1894.

It was used by a novelist, Sarah Grand, in addressing the double-standards inherent in Victorian marriages, which insisted on impeccable sexual virtue on the part of the wife but not on that of the husband. Once coined, the term became popular shorthand to describe the new breed of independent, educated, women. Rather like Clementine Churchill, in fact, as her sometimes tempestuous relationship with her husband reveals. (See their loving, but turbulent, correspondence).

ROGER BOLTON

IS IT HERE ALREADY?

Where has it all gone? All those weeks! All those days!
Those times of brisk, damp walks, Days immersed in summer's haze.
Time to sit back, soaking up the autumn sun's last warming rays,
Or weeks, it seems, not catching up on all those wasted rain delays.

Stoking lethargy, an encouragement to 'relax', to laze.
What happened to, all those 'things to do' that seemed to drift their
separate ways.

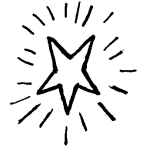
It seems to surprise, and sometimes to amaze,
that the season is upon us, 'oops, it's panic stations' to coin a
panicked phrase.
But it's never too late for some panic buying for enthusiasm to
blaze,
Christmas is saved! Carols will be sung, with hosannas and many
relieved Hoorays!

Josie Jeffrey

CHILDREN'S PAGE

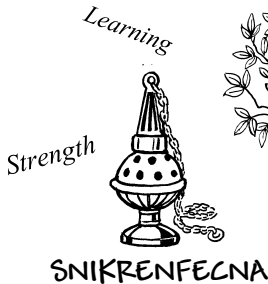
In some countries Christmas is celebrated on January the 6th. We call it EPIPHANY when we remember traditionally the wise men who journeyed from the East to Jerusalem, following a star, looking for a newly born king. They brought presents which were symbolic. We too have gifts to bring, but not things you can buy. Find the words to complete the poem, then live your gifts.

The Wise may bring their L _____,
The Rich may bring their W _____,
And Some may bring their G _____,
And Some their S _____ and Health;
We too would bring our treasures
To offer to the King;
We have no Wealth or Learning,
What gifts then shall we bring?



LODG _____
For a king.

Learning



SNIKRENFECA

Burnt to give off a
sweet smell.



Wealth



follow



Greatness

HERCLIOM _____
His gift was _____ for a king



Thankful

RASCAP _____
His gift was _____
For a God

Treasures



Love

RATHBAALZ

His gift was _____
for a saviour who would
sacrifice his life.

RHYRM _____
A bitter spice used
in preparing a dead
person for burial.

We'll bring him H _____ that L _____ him,
We'll bring him T _____ Praise,
And S _____ for ever striving
To f _____ in his ways;
And these shall be the T _____
To offer to the King,
And these are gifts that ever
Our grateful hearts may bring.

Souls

Hearts

PRAYER PAGE

Sweet child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in the
profound mystery of Christmas.
Pour into the hearts of men and women the peace which they sometimes seek so
desperately,
and which you alone can give them.
Help them to know one another better and to live as
brothers and sisters, children of the same Father.
Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness, join them
together in your love; and give us all your heavenly peace.
Pope John XXIII, 1881-1963

II 14 th January – Epiphany 2		
9am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9am	Café Church	Little Gaddesden
11am	Café Church	Great Gaddesden
III 21 st January – Epiphany 3		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
IV 28 th January – Presentation of Christ in the Temple		
9am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
I 4 th February – 2nd Sunday before Lent		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
Mid-week Services		
Tuesday	9am Holy Communion	Great Gaddesden
Thursday	10am Holy Communion	Little Gaddesden
Please note, there will be no mid-week services between Christmas and New Year, nor on Tuesday 2nd January 2024 at Great Gaddesden		

Parish News Editors:

Helene Hockings, Nick Murray, Mike Walsham
editor-pn@littlegaddesdenchurch.org.uk
Deadline Date: Friday 19th January

CHURCH SERVICES – DECEMBER 2023 and JANUARY 2024

I 3rd December – Advent Sunday		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden
6pm	Advent Service of Light	Little Gaddesden
II 10th December – Advent 2		
9am	Morning Prayer	Nettleden
9am	British Humanitarian Aid Gift Service followed by Advent Breakfast	Little Gaddesden
11am	Gift Service for DENS	Great Gaddesden
Saturday 16th December		
6pm	Christmas Carol Service & Celebration Refreshments available	Little Gaddesden
III 17th December – Advent 3		
9am	Sung Eucharist	Little Gaddesden
11am	Sung Eucharist	Great Gaddesden
3pm	Christmas Carol Service	Nettleden
Monday, 18th December		
6pm	Carols at Ashridge	Ashridge Chapel
Tuesday, 19th December		
6pm	Carols on The Green	Little Gaddesden
Saturday 23rd December		
4pm	Christmas Carol Service	Great Gaddesden
IV 24th December – Christmas Eve		
3pm	Crib Service	Great Gaddesden
5pm	Crib Service	Little Gaddesden
11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Little Gaddesden
25th December – Christmas Day		
9am	Family Communion	Nettleden
9am	Family Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Family Communion	Great Gaddesden
V Sunday 31st December – Christmas 1		
9am	Joint Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
I 7th January – Epiphany		
9am	Parish Communion	Little Gaddesden
11am	Parish Communion	Great Gaddesden
6pm	Evensong	Nettleden