



# Norton-in-Hales Monthly Messenger

## December 2018

Website: [www.nortoninhales.org](http://www.nortoninhales.org)



### Dates for your diary

- Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December      Lessons and Carols Service at St Leonard's Woore, 10:30am,  
**NO service at St Chad's**
- Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December      Morning Prayer at 11:15am, St Chad's  
(Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6; Psalm = Benedictus)
- Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> December      Family Service at 11:15am, St Chads  
(Luke 3:7-18)  
Christingle at 5:00pm
- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> December      Holy Communion at 11:15am, St Chads  
(Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55)
- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December      Memorial Candle service at 3:00pm  
Christmas Holy Communion at 11:30pm  
(Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20)
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> December      Christmas Morning Prayer at 11:15am  
(Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20)
- Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> December      Morning Prayer (short) service at 11:15am  
(Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-end; Psalm 148)

### Tuesday Coffee Mornings

The last coffee morning will take place on Tuesday December 11th, come and join us for festive cheer. We will then take a break until the new year and restart on Tuesday January 15th. We would like to thank all the people who have supported us throughout the year and hope to see you all again..

### St Chad's Flower and Cleaning Rota for October

	FLOWERS & BRASSES	CLEANING
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Advent Ring Julie Panter	Vaccant

Christmas Festival Flower arrangers please place your arrangements in church between the 19 and 22nd of December.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers on the Flower rota and the Cleaning rota for your hard work this year. The church always looks welcoming for our many visitors, thank you very much.

For any contributions to the Monthly Messenger, please email [hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk)  
Deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.



## ***A View from the Vicarage***

In our part of the world, as we enter the winter season, the most noticeable change is in the length of the daylight. "It's dark!" is often heard later in the afternoon and sometimes even in the morning. The gloom casts a shadow and lowers our spirits. It can be downright depressing!

What better time for God's bright light to come into the world. As the world looks bleaker and bleaker, and hope for the future seems to disappear into that grey darkness, God reminds us of His love and mercy with the birth of His Son Jesus. Just imagine the world into which Jesus was born. It was into a world of political oppression, ruled with an iron fist by Rome. Dissent was not tolerated and crushed with utmost severity. Taxation was heavy, thus limiting the financial prospects of most people (unless part of the hierarchy or ruling peoples). It was not a happy place.

Into that bleakness, God sent a ray of hope in the form of His light—His Son Jesus. The star which shone so brightly over his birthplace in Bethlehem attracted attention, from the lowliest shepherds to the foreign wise men. The angels told the shepherds that something wonderful had happened and they went to see. The wise men interpreted the appearance of this new star in the heavens as proclaiming the birth of a new king. As amazing as that was, no one could have understood the significance of this birth, probably not even his parents Mary and Joseph.

Who could have known who Jesus would become? Yes, there were some hoping and praying for their Saviour to come, but no one really knew what to expect. Many thought the Saviour would be someone to overthrow the oppressive Romans and re-establish the kingdom of Israel to its former glory as in the days of David and Solomon. That was their hope.

But God had more in store for us. It was not for the re-creation of an earthly kingdom, but the establishment of His eternal Kingdom! For there to be this eternal kingdom, there was a need to redeem the people who would live in it. Our sins, our wrong-doings in the eyes of God, deserve the death penalty. As no one is sinless, that would have made for a rather sparsely populated eternal kingdom! The Good News is that God loves us all and wants all of us to live with Him forever. For this to happen, we needed to be saved.

That baby boy born to Mary and Joseph in the little town of Bethlehem was to grow up to become our Saviour. He would go on to die on the Cross as an atonement for our sins. He would take the punishment we each deserve (the death penalty) and His death would free us from that punishment in the end. When Jesus emerged from His tomb on Easter Sunday morning, He proclaimed eternal life for all who believe in Him.

That is the greatest gift ever given! But Satan doesn't want us to know about Jesus and God's love, so he has managed to lead us astray with the excessive materialism we witness each year. It has sadly become all about the decorations and presents; the more the better. Instead of celebrating the birth of God's Son, we have lost sight of Him. But that darkness has not, cannot, and will not win. God's light is in the world and it will never be extinguished!

Not everywhere has succumbed to the world's festivities. We at St Chad's keep ourselves focussed on the real reason for the season. Through the month of December, we have various celebrations—a benefice Lessons and Carols service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (this year at St Leonard's Woore at 10:30am), Christingle on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, a Memorial Candle service and a BCP Holy Communion service Christmas Eve, and a short Morning Prayer service on Christmas Day, not to mention the usual Sunday Advent services. We'll also be doing our Carolling around the village on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> of the month, so look out for us those evenings, or better yet, come and sing with us!! Each is a time to come together to shut out the antics of the world and bask in God's love by celebrating the season of Jesus' birth. If you are tired of the hassles of the secular festivities, why not join us this year for something more fulfilling?

# ***A View from the Vicarage...continued***

We think of Christmas as a time for family and friends to come together in love. That's what church is all about all the time! It is God's family meeting weekly and on special occasions to join in celebrating God's love through His Son Jesus. It is a time of strengthening and refreshment to face the darkness around us. We remember that Jesus has won the ultimate victory over evil. We are freed from our sins which lead to death and are granted God's mercy and grace which come in the form of eternal life in God's Kingdom. That's the Good News of Christmas. That's the Good News we celebrate! That's the Good News we share with you and invite you to join God's family and receive the gift of Jesus this Christmas.

Merry Christmas and God bless you in 2019!!

Rev. Don Alcock  
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## **Messages...**

### **Thank you Crafty Ladies and Gentlemen!**

About 6 months ago when I thought 'a few knitted poppy arrangements might be nice' for the Armistice Centenary and 'perhaps people might be willing to help', I had no inkling that the idea would receive such tremendous support. **Thank you** everyone for your knitting, crocheting, woodwork and papercraft, your thousands of poppies covered the church and green and made a big statement of Remembrance and impressed everyone who came through the village. I know friends and families in other places were roped in to help so please pass on thanks to them also. A special thanks must go to Bev and Carol who carried the idea forward with enormous enthusiasm, and their band of helpers, who spent hours (days?) stapling, sewing and plaiting poppies ready for placement. Also to Rags for assisting with the installation from the tower.

### **Proposed Poultry Unit**

Those wishing to make representations on the planning application for the proposed 32,000 egg-laying unit to be situated between Betton and Norton in Hales may wish to know that the date for representations has been extended to 3 December 2018. There are now around 300 objections and one support received by Shropshire Council in addition to over 3,000 on the online petition. You may make your representations now to [planningdmne@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningdmne@shropshire.gov.uk). Please quote application ref: 18/04555/FUL.

### **St Chad's Church clock and carillon**

I'm doing some research into the Church Clock and the Carillon - well-known and loved features of Norton in Hales - and would like some help researching the history of the Griffin family who lived at Brand Hall in the mid 19th century. The church clock, according to an inscription on it, was given to St Chad's by the Griffin family and I'd like to know more about their involvement. Anyone help? If you can, please respond: [jim.vallings@btinternet.com](mailto:jim.vallings@btinternet.com) thanks!

### **Did you know? Returned from the front**

In St Chads above the plaque remembering the fallen of the Great War there is a plain wooden cross. It is one of the original grave markers that came from France-Flanders when the markers were replaced with Portland Stone headstones. Whenever possible, families were offered the markers but had to pay for shipping so very few returned, there are 15 known in Shropshire. The one here in Norton is commemorated to Capt Henry Coulson Colville KSLI, the son of Hugh Colville of Bellaport Hall. Further information can be found on the website (returned to the front)



# Norton Nature Notes

22<sup>nd</sup> October to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Chris Green

During early morning light in late October across the maize stubble near Tunstall Hall a small flock of greylag geese came in to land together. This was a lovely sight and I have seen them on here most days since. Lapwing are also now gathered in small flocks and anything between 10 and 20 can be seen at all corners of the village. Nigel and Sally P report seeing them on the field adjacent to Forge Lane on the 27<sup>th</sup> October.

Veronica and Colin G spotted a pole cat running out along the main road near Betton on the 30<sup>th</sup> Oct. It was white faced and approximately 2 ft long.

Dick W reports seeing 24 common gull in the field behind his house on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. They were attracted to the field and feeding for 10 minutes. Although not a rare bird they have a nice plumage and are worth watching as they probe around for food.

Jon N has reported to me that an otter has been seen in Betton during early November. This is excellent and again indicates the value of the wildlife rich corridor that the River Tern provides in our Parish– we have had kingfisher, barn owl, bullfinch, skylark and green woodpecker using the habitat. I am sure the otter fed well on crayfish.

Redwing are now moving around in mixed flocks with fieldfare and I first saw them at the end of October. Also moving around in search of food are tit flocks in which chaffinch and nuthatch can also be seen.

Finally, and I am sure you have seen them as well, our resident starlings have certainly been having their fill. The rowan in my garden had an abundance of berries until the starlings found it – now it is near bare except for berries that hang on the smallest branches on which starlings can't settle. I counted one bird eat a one berry every second for half a minute! My house sparrows then moved in to clean up any morsels left behind on the stalks.