

# PARISH MAGAZINE

ABBHEY & PARISH CHURCH  
OF  
ST. PETER & ST. PAUL



SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF  
BOURNE, CAWTHORPE, DYKE & TWENTY

**WITH CHURCH & PARISH NEWS**

[www.bourneabbey.org.uk](http://www.bourneabbey.org.uk)

**LOCKDOWN EDITION - JANUARY 2021**

# **BOURNE ABBEY CHURCH PUBLIC WORSHIP SUSPENDED**

**Dear Friends,**

It is with a heavy heart that I have decided to suspend Sunday public worship at the Abbey Church during January. All the indices suggest that we are in a worse situation than last March, and with the additional worry of the variant strain of Covid being much more infectious, I feel that this is the right course of action to take.

I am also mindful of the Tier 4 advice that we should stay home as much as possible in order to reduce the possibility of transmitting or being infected by the disease.

As in the previous lock-downs, I shall post a written 'join-in-at-home' service on our website and our Facebook page on Sundays during January.

The position with regard to re-opening the church to Sunday public worship will be reviewed during the final week of the month.

With best wishes for the New Year, and with prayers that you may stay safe.

**Fr. Chris Atkinson, Vicar**

Please note: Private Prayer will continue on Saturdays.

## **The Julian Meeting**

The Julian meeting is a time for sharing silent contemplative prayer. It is held on the first Monday of each month in the Abbey Church at 10.00am. Everyone is welcome. **We will meet on January 4th at 10.00am in the Abbey church.**

*But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.*

*Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out “Abba, Father”. So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child: and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.*

*Galatians 4:4-7*

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion ‘Your God reigns’

Susan Macey

# **BOURNE FOODBANK**

Bourne Foodbank is run by Churches Together in Bourne, as a service to Bourne and the surrounding villages. The trustees and volunteers come from many different churches and give of their time freely to ensure that the Foodbank can assist as many people in crisis as is required.

The Foodbank is a registered charity and has more than 40 volunteers and trustees, and is always looking for more, if you think that might be you, please see the How To Help page to find out more.

Bourne Foodbank operates as a member of The Trussell Trust, a Christian organisation working to relieve crisis and suffering in the UK and elsewhere.

**Bourne Foodbank is currently in need of the following items: Tinned fruit, tinned potatoes, instant mashed potatoes, sandwich spreads - meat/fish paste etc, tinned pies, tinned custard, sponge puddings, long-life fruit juice/squash, washing-up liquid, deodorant, shampoo, shaving foam and razors, and Christmas goodies - chocolates, sweets, cakes, mince pies, puddings etc. We are so grateful for all the donations - we can't thank you enough.**

Thank you

## **Thought for the Month**

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

# New Star

Amongst the rich diversity of local human talent, we are fortunate in the community of Elsea Park to have a keen astronomer living nearby.

Apparently, he has taken advantage of recent clear skies to track the transit of the planet Mars as observed from our locality. When asked how best to spot the planet, he advised casting our early evening gaze low towards the horizon. Apparently the distinctive red tinged dot could be seen over the Tesco store. Someone asked him how long it would take it to get to Sainsbury's.



Locality can make a difference to celestial observations, depending on the viewer's perspective. The close-ups of our familiar surroundings are seen as a backdrop silhouetted against the vast view of the night sky, with its millions of distant stars and the nearer planets orbiting relatively closely to our earthly domain.

When the magi saw the star of Bethlehem, they must have applied their knowledge to what they saw, by whatever astronomical, or astrological skill was known to them at the time. Matthew records their curiosity and also the violent reaction of the ruling elite in Jerusalem when the visitors sought particular advice. [ Matthew 2: 1-20. *In the Bible, or Find on Google.* ]

If the star heralded a welcome newcomer, then local vested interests questioned the wisdom of forfeiting their protected place in the established political background. From their perspective, it seemed like the threat of regime change could compromise their position as vassals in the Roman Empire. If a new king moved into their favoured place, how long would it take for a complete revolution to eclipse the whole situation? Conversely, what universal blessings would follow ?

The Child of Destiny was a disturbing influence on the familiar paths of political accommodation. [ Psalm 2 ] Our own personal perspectives can also seem challenged by this new pathway, but can we afford to ignore his call ?

Wishing you best post Christmas blessings,

**Malcolm Pugh**

malcolmpugh@btinternet.com

# **‘OUR MAD LIFE’**

## **UNDER GATHERING CLOUDS.**

My latest out of town expedition was a source of great anxiety, especially to my driver. November is when the first rains of the rainy season come. Each day there were telephone calls to Befandriana asking if there had been rain. There had been a couple of showers but the forecast was threatening. On the Friday morning of 13th November at 6 am Andry collected Mme Laurence (the MU president) and myself from Bishop’s House. Having only one metalled road out of the city means that the wonderful scenery is the same wonderful scenery one has seen on every journey. Thank goodness the light at different times of the day gives variety. Even as a passenger one learns where the major potholes are and one becomes quite obsessed with the avoidance techniques: simply go where there are most tracks, or straight into the hole slowly and up the other side (only when one can see how deep it is).

Andry drove on with determination not stopping until we reached Ampobibitika (where the church collapsed) where the priest was waiting for us. We marked out the ground for the new building. The heat was intense. The temperature keeps rising prior to the rains (and cyclones) and is now 38C. The priest got a lift with us into Port-Bergé where she has a little shop selling embroidered items. Embroidery here is massive. Just about everything is embroidered if you can afford it.

Another brief stop to see the foundations of a new vicarage which, thanks to help from our friends at Bourne Abbey is under way (see picture on the next page). The buildings around the site are the school, 360 on roll! With me are the rural dean, Mme Laurence and a young man, Tahiry, who came to tell me he had passed his Bacc.. Last month he came to see me about the possibility of Ordination and I had told him to first make sure he passed his Bacc and then come and see me. A joyful reunion.



Back in the car I was asked if I wanted to stop for lunch. I replied that the decision rested completely on the driver's stomach. Somewhat to my disappointment, it being my normal lunchtime, we drove on and didn't stop until 3.30pm at the town of Antsohihy. I treated everyone to lunch: total bill £3.20! Thus fortified we departed and turned on to a B road leading to Befandriana. Clouds came and clouds went but mercifully no rain. There were places on the road where there were craters 4 feet deep which fill with water and become pits of mud. The frightening aspect of these is that when they have turned into mud one cannot tell if it is 4 inches or 4 feet deep. Regular users of the road of course know which are dangerous. It was dark by the time we reached Befandriana and we telephoned ahead for someone to guide us. We were told to keep going and the priest would be waiting at the Total filling station. Relieved to know that fuel would be available we peered through the dark and eventually spotted the priest at the Shell filling station! He then guided us to where we were staying with a clergy widow.



**Pictured: The road outside the house with the (hired) episcopal limousine parked opposite. Note clouds!**

Would the bishop like a shower? The actual answer was no but I said yes as it had obviously been prepared with a great deal of effort. Since the steps to the shower place of the house were steep and uneven and it was now dark I was invited to take my shower on the veranda. Two buckets of water were provided and a plastic bucket and the priest to hold a torch. More embarrassed than clean I completed the operation and changed into clean clothes and was ready for what turned out to be a very good supper. And so to bed, so exhausted that I didn't stir until the 5 am alarm.

Saturday morning started with Morning Prayer in the church. The priest is one of our weaker brethren and I "have had words" with him about his prayer life. After the last session he promised to be faithful in his use of at least public Morning Prayer. I was not best pleased to see that he not only stumbled a lot but didn't know where to find the appointed psalm and readings. I had given him all that was necessary for this. The

worrying thing from my point of view is that this is the man who trains others to lead services!

Our hostess was up each morning to bake and cook for us before 4 am. We returned to the house to find beautiful fresh brioche and coffee! Mme Laurence then returned to church for an MU training session.

In the afternoon I had my session with the Confirmation candidates – at least with those who turned up. I had carefully prepared a Service for adult Baptism and Confirmation. No baptism candidates. Where are they? I keep forgetting that in Malagasy one answers the question as asked (not implied). Manantseva (the name of the next village) was the reply. What of course I meant was, why are they not here? I was assured all would be well on the day. I pointed out that the service would need major changes if they didn't come.

By now it was getting late and I returned to the house for a meeting with the chairman of the church council. We were just getting down to the nitty gritty when what Andry feared happened. There was an ear splitting crash and flash simultaneously and the lights went out. Moments later the rain started with a vengeance and so the storm continued for the next hour. There was nothing one could do except lie down and wait for it to calm down. A rather subdued party sat down to a late supper.

The Confirmation Service was due to start at 7.30 am with the candidates taking their places at 7 am. Andry, the MU president and I were at the church well before 7am and found no one there. So, as one does in this part of the world, you sit down and wait for things to happen in their own good time. The problem is, I do this with ever mounting levels of frustration verging on anger after a while. So when 7.30 am came and went I sat making a real effort not to be grumpy telling myself this was not the attitude needed for such an important event in these people's lives. I got a tap on the shoulder from the priest, "Sorry, Monseigneur, the baptism candidates aren't coming." Quick reorganisation of the Order of Service, luckily we don't have printed versions for all concerned. I did a head count and pointed out that we

were still a candidate short. “Her mother is here.” “Ask her Mother if she is coming?” The answer was in the affirmative so I had someone sent to check on what was happening. Five minutes later the damsel was seen mincing along towards the church much encumbered by a very splendid more than full length dress and the apparition completed by the tallest bouffant hair-do I have ever seen and all glimpsed through a splendid veil. Miraculously these Services become real times of prayer and thanksgiving as happily the Holy Spirit can transcend the circumstances!

After the inevitable photos and something to eat it was time to



hit the dreaded road again, anxiously watching the sky. On a lonely stretch of road we drove under great mango trees, crushing ripe mangoes lying on the road. The few pedestrians we saw were nearly all eating mangoes. It is towards the end of the season for them and they are going up in price. It was tempting to stop and scavenge! But nothing was going to hinder our rush home.

We reached Antsohihy and the main road without incident but

then encountered our first shower. A late lunch was clearly not on the cards and so I resigned myself to a late supper somewhere. Just as it was getting dark the storm really broke with lots of lightning, thunder and torrential rain. Eventually visibility was nil and we were forced to stop. It was like sitting in a very loud car wash with the rain lashing us on all sides. When it eased up enough to see the road Andry drove on. By this time I was prepared to pay for hotel accommodation in the happy event of our reaching Port-Bergé. When we got there Andry asked us how we were and did we wish to press on? Before I could say anything Mme Laurence emphatically replied she wanted to get home... And so more and more of the same: lightning, thunder and torrential rain sometimes stopping us while still having to navigate potholes, etc. At last we reached the town where I knew we could get a late dinner. I gasped as Andry turned in the opposite direction to the eating place. Sensing my feelings he assured me that there would be food for me at his home when we reached Mahajanga.

At long last at 1.30 a.m. we were in the familiar streets of the city, albeit under inches of water. I thanked Andry for his kind invitation to dinner but declined pointing out that I would be having breakfast presently. We discovered the next day that thanks to Andry's persistent driving though the storm we avoided armed bandits who had robbed everyone on three buses when the weather cleared. There is always so much to be thankful for. Eleven gendarmes were shot dead by bandits this November.

Yours  
+Hall

**hallspeers@gmail.com**

### **The Abbey Church Hall**

With a well-equipped kitchen, the Hall is available for hire at very reasonable rates for all regular groups such as Weightwatchers, karate, yoga and dancing, table-top and jumble sales, tea dances, coffee mornings, talks, slide shows and art exhibitions, lunches, anniversaries, receptions etc.

Children's parties are very popular at £30 for 4 hours.

**THE HALL IS CURRENTLY CLOSED**

## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

January 8th          Lucy Normington

January 9th          Ceri Guppy

January 12th        Joy Hicks

January 14th        Shayne Smith

January 17th        Marilyn Roberts

## **IN MEMORIUM**

January 30th        Morris Allen

January 30th        Margaret Normington

## **CANDLES**

**January 2021**

**In memory of Danny Dagger**

**31st In memory of Ian Darby**

**Thinking of making or up-dating your will?**

If so, please consider bequeathing a gift to Bourne Abbey. A legacy would help to secure the future of the church and its work with future generations. Don't forget that legacies to charities are free of Inheritance Tax. Thank you.

**YOUR PARISH CHURCH  
SERVES YOU**

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