

THE BRIDGE

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February 2017

[Sorry about the small print - this Edition - packed to the rafters!]

From The Rector

By the time you read this the Christmas / Epiphany season will be coming to an end (Candlemas – February 2nd), and Lent will be about to begin (Ash Wednesday – March 1st.)

This letter seeks to bridge the gap by looking at ways in which our understanding of the journey of the wise men can prepare us for the season of Lent.

The journey of the wise men can be understood as a journey from the first world to the third world. The wise men belong to the first world. They belong to an advanced society up to speed with the science of the day. They enjoy a high standard of living. They may not have enjoyed the 'summer palaces' and the 'silken girls serving sherbet' that the poet TS Eliot imagines, but the costliness of their gifts makes it clear that they were not hard up. The stable in Bethlehem represents the third world. It shows us a family far from well-to-do living, albeit temporarily, in a stable which they have to share with the animals. The kings do what people in the first world should do for people in the third world. They bring gifts.

But the journey of the wise men can also be understood as a journey from the kingdom of this world to the kingdom of God. The wise men belong to the kingdom of this world. Whether they are kings or not, they plainly enjoy a respected and high place in their

society. It is a hierarchical society, shaped by power which flows down from the king at the top to the subjects at the bottom. That this is the world they were used to is shown by the fact that when looking for a new king they automatically assume that he will be found in a palace.

The kingdom that the star leads the wise men to is the kingdom of God. This kingdom is shaped not by power flowing down from above but by love flowing up from below. Instead of a king in a palace we have God lying in a manger. What they find in this kingdom, thanks to this turning upside down of worldly values, is the broken communion between God, man, and God's creatures restored. Overwhelmed, they sink to their knees.

Both these understandings can serve to shape our actions and observation of Lent. We can reach out to help those in need. We can seek out charities that help people seeking to re-build their broken lives. The Children's charities operate nationally.

We can also take a fresh look at our own lives and attitudes by seeking to harmonise them with the values not of the kingdom of this world but of the kingdom of God. This aspect of Lent will be explored in this year's Lent Group held though out March called "Receiving Christ". Please come



The Rev. Jonathan Olanczuk

Telephone: 01728 638823

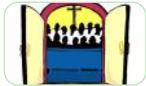
email: olanczuk@mac.com

Benefice Website: www.upperaldebefice.com

along if you and join the group as we reflect on this theme.

The kings journeyed from the first world to the third world and from the kingdom of this world to the kingdom of God. In Lent we are invited in our own way to make the same journeys.

With blessings and good wishes for 2017.



Jonathan

AGM

St. Mary's Church Sweffling Annual Meeting will be held in the church on Thursday, March 23rd at 6pm. If you would like to comment about church activities or you have views about the future of the church in Sweffling, then please come and make your views known. Everyone is very welcome to attend.

Christmas events 2016

Christmas has long gone, and we are well into 2017. However, with no "Bridge" in January, a short summary of the events that took place around Christmas seems appropriate.



The Christmas Market

...held in Framlingham on December 3rd was very successful. The stalls were laden with presents, toys, wrapping paper, cards, home-made cakes and preserves, crafts and wood turned Christmas tree decorations, table centre pieces and corn dollies, and beautiful hand-knitted items. There was a Christmas themed raffle and a well-supplied tombola and mince pies and tea/coffee were served. It was a very successful morning and £489 was raised for church funds. Book the date for 2017 – December 2nd

The "Christmas Brass" concert



... on December 9th was, as in previous years, a very enjoyable evening's entertainment. The Leiston

Royal British Legion Brass Band played an eclectic mix of music, concentrating in the second half of the concert on Christmas music and carols. The choice of programme and standard of playing was excellent and the audience enthusiastically joined in singing the carols. Refreshments during the interval and a raffle completed the evening. St Mary's Church is very grateful to Marshall Hatchick for sponsoring the concert. The Band has been booked for Christmas 2017 and the concert will take place on December 8th at 7:30 pm. in church

A Christmas Brunch

...was held in Sweffling Hut on December 10th. Bacon (and egg) rolls were served together with freshly brewed tea or coffee. The locally sourced bread rolls and bacon, and the eggs kindly donated by Sweffling Hall Farm, were delicious, so much so that no-one indulged in the continental breakfast option that was available! Similar stalls to those at the Framlingham market provided an opportunity for last minute shopping and there was, of course, a raffle. £393 was raised for church funds. Book the date for 2017 – December 9th



A very big thank you to all those who helped with the organisation of these events and to all who supported them.

Christmas Services 2016



The church was beautifully decorated for the service of Lessons and Carols by Candlelight on December 18th. The service was very well attended and it was good to sing familiar carols and hear again the Christmas story unfold in the words of scripture. John Tesh led the service and the Benefice Choir led the singing. After the service everyone enjoyed mincepies and coffee. Many thanks to Richard and Liz Pilgrim who donated the magnificent Christmas tree and to all those who helped decorate the church or took part in the service.

Christmas Eve Holy Communion

The midnight Benefice service of Holy Communion was a time for reflection and quiet before the excitement of Christmas Day itself. The Rev. Olancuk presided at the service and despite the start of the service being slightly earlier than in previous years a good congregation from the Benefice braved the cold and dark to celebrate the birth of Christ.

... and from across the river...



Rendham Mummers, joined by an enthusiastic audience, celebrated the Winter Solstice in style on Wednesday 21st December as they performed their latest play "A Mummer's Midwinter Night's Dream".

Despite forecasts to the contrary, revellers enjoyed a mild, still and dry evening, as they enjoyed the seasonal refreshments and watched the antics of Titania, Bottom, Faeries and the rest of the cast beneath the Sacred Oak on Rendham Knoll. A torchlight procession completed the celebrations as it accompanied the Straw Cart, with Lord Oberon and Young Mugwort riding high, down to the Rendham White Horse. A great night was had by all and thanks to everyone's generosity £600 was raised for the chosen local charity S.A.F.E.

The Mummers return in 2017 with their Oak Moon Tour which starts on Summer Solstice evening, Wednesday 21st June at Sweffling White Horse. Maybe a date for the new diary?!

The Speaker

So, here ends our retrospective.



Coming Soon!

Visit of Bishop Martin

 Sunday February 26th 6pm. Bishop Martin will visit Sweffling to lead a Benefice Service of Holy Communion. During this Service Dr. Anne Fitzgerald will be commissioned as an Elder of Sweffling Church. Everyone is invited to come and support Anne and meet the Bishop. Refreshments will be served after the service.

Ash Wednesday

March 1st - 6pm. Benefice Service of Holy Communion in St. Mary's, Sweffling. All welcome.

Lent Study Group.

The Lent Study Group will be held at Bridge Farm, Sweffling, commencing on Wednesday March 8th at 7pm. and then subsequent Monday evenings for 4 weeks, i.e. 13th, 20th, 27th March and 3rd April. The subject of the course will be "Receiving Christ" and everyone is welcome. We have plenty of chairs and good coffee.



Easter Memorial Lilies

We are again organising lilies to be placed in church at Easter in memory of loved ones. If you would like to purchase one or more lilies please contact Diana (663578) or Sheila T. (663518) with the names. The cost will be £3.50 per lily and the names will be written on the memorial scroll, which will be read at the Easter Day Service at 9:30am on April 16th in St. Mary's Church.



Orders must be placed by Friday March 31st at the latest so that the lilies can be ordered, delivered and be open in time for Easter, and the scroll prepared and written by Jill Abbott.

Coffee and Pancakes Morning

In aid of the MENTAL HEALTH Foundation, there will be a Coffee and Pancakes Morning with a Bring-and-Buy stall and Raffle on Saturday, February 25th - 10am - 12noon in the Sweffling Village Hut



This year Jonathan Tesh will be running in the London Marathon on April 23rd with this as his chosen charity. As a vet, he works in a profession that has a suicide rate four times higher than the national average and he has lost two amazing friends and colleagues as a result. It is in their memory and to help

support those that are still fighting their battles that he has decided to run the marathon, something he has never undertaken before. If you cannot come to the Coffee Morning but would like to donate, please visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JonathanTesh> and you can make a contribution there or contact Sheila Tesh (663518).

The Lent Soup Lunch

As part of its Outreach Programme, St. Mary's supports a hospital in a small community in the Gambia. In the past we have raised funds to purchase essential equipment such as beds and mosquito nets and also drugs for the fight against malaria.



Again we will be hosting a soup and bread lunch in aid of the Bakery Hospital.

Saturday, March 18th 12noon - 2pm in the Sweffling Village Hut Adults £4.50, children £2.00 for as much homemade soup and bread as you can eat. A wide choice of soups, including vegetarian and gluten free varieties. Bring and Buy stall and raffle.

Offers of soup or draw prizes very welcome, please contact Diana Smith (663578) or Sheila Tesh (663518)

[If you are interested, Jill and Geoffrey Abbott can provide up-to-date info' about the work of this hospital, as they have recently heard from the doctor in charge.]

Another AGM

The Alde Community Council AGM Is on Wednesday February 15th at 7:30pm in Sweffling White Horse. Members Draw will take place during the evening.

The Spring Flower Show

This year the Spring Flower Show is at 2pm on 1st April, and as usual, will be in the Sweffling Village Hut. Entry is just 50p to include tea/coffee. Presentation of cups and raffle at 4pm. Bring your exhibits between 9am and 10am. Judging commences at 10am sharp.

Entry forms in village halls and on village websites.

Andy Franklin writes:-



THANK YOU

"Lyz and I would both like to thank all the people who came to our aid, offered and gave help and even brought us an emergency supply of gob stoppers when I was taken ill on Saturday 28th January. In a world where the vast majority of people hardly know the people next door, it goes to show just what a special place Sweffling still is. Thanks again."



Heads Up!

After Feb.2nd, the next First Thursday meal is March 2nd. More details from Jill Abbott.

Sweffling Parish Council

The Parish Council will now be meeting ten times throughout the year. It is our intention to meet every month except August and December. So our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 7th February at 7:30pm in the Sweffling Village Hut.

Amongst our normal council business we will be discussing two items that may be of interest to many in the village. We will be considering a complaint concerning dog fouling in and around the village and we will also be discussing the issue of parking along The Street that has become a problem for some recently.

If you have a view or opinion on either of these matters and wish your voice to be heard you are welcome to come along on Tuesday evening. Residents of the parish are welcome at all our meetings.

John Stanley, Chairman of Sweffling Parish Council.

Nature Notes

A lesser-known aspect of bird Nesting Boxes is that some birds will use them in winter as roosting sites. As I have described before, Wrens will sometimes gather at dusk to share a box for the night. Tits however, at least Blue Tits and Great Tits, will roost for the night as single individuals. They just fluff themselves out on the floor of the box, in a corner. I have used a small nestbox camera to watch tits nesting in the spring, but a neighbour tells me he has watched these roosting birds in the same way in winter – it is fascinating to see these little insights into their lives. By February tits may already be beginning to prospect boxes for nesting purposes, so don't leave it much longer to clean them out.

I have had reports again of Nuthatches at garden bird feeders, both from Sweffling and Rendham, taking seeds or nuts. They are not particularly rare in the area, but are mostly seen and heard in woodland. For instance, they are always calling in spring around the Walled Garden nursery in Benhall. What intrigues me about them is the way they can cling to



tree bark head downwards, and also move downwards (unlike the other tree trunk climbers, Woodpeckers and Tree Creepers, which support themselves with their tails and so usually move head upwards).



Next concert: Saturday 8th April 2017,
7.30pm in St Michael's Church, Framlingham

Phoenix Singers

Tickets: £12.00 (£6.00 for under 18s)
available from Hall Farm Butchers, 25, Market Hill, Framlingham, William Glasse
william@glasse.org.uk,
07802 597071, choir members, and at the door. charity no. 1076549



JUBILATE!
Great cathedral anthems

A new year wander along the Alde (Sweffling/Benhall) turned up a Grey Wagtail feeding at the edge of the water. These birds are not common in Suffolk; they prefer fast-flowing streams further North and West for breeding, but they do turn up here occasionally in the winter. Indeed, there was one in December in a garden in Sweffling (perhaps influenced by the nearness of the drainage gull.) Look out for them. They are more colourful than their name implies, the 'grey' being an attractive warm blue-grey on the upperside. The underside is pale yellow but the rear end is a bright lemon yellow and is the feature that most draws attention.

Big numbers of Rooks and Jackdaws have been gathering in the middle of the winter to roost in the woods towards Benhall. By now the Rooks at least will be spending more time in their own rookeries in Rendham. They will be spending the night there, and showing signs of gathering twigs and other nesting behaviour. Rooks nest early – they will usually be laying eggs before the middle of March.

The Fallow Deer I mentioned recently have been more evident in the last couple of months, especially around the top of Holden's Lane and in the direction of Framlingham. They are very variable in colour: three are very dark, almost black, and one extremely pale, almost white. Finally, if you doubt that spring is coming, check out the catkins on the Hazel bushes. In many places they are already out, and the catkins of the Alder trees will not be far behind.

Geoffrey Abbott

SPRING

Suffolk Coastal Filling Station

The Riverside Centre, Stratford St
Andrew, IP17 1LL

You will find a very warm welcome at
The Filling Station's monthly mid-week

"celebration" meetings. The Filling Station is an informal way of expressing or exploring the Christian faith for those from any church background, or none, and offers delicious refreshment, friendship and fellowship, contemporary sung worship, high quality speakers and prayer ministry. Visit www.thefillingstation.org.uk or contact Robin Alderson at robin.alderson@btinternet.com or on 01728 688255 to find out more or just come along!

Dates for the Diary
Thursday, February 23rd and
Thursday, March 23rd
both starting with refreshments at 7pm.



"Juniper Barn - near the Village Hall in Rendham - is here to serve our local and wider community – we have plenty of new stock in store including local jams and sauces, beer and cyder as well as fresh and frozen meat, milk, eggs and daily fresh bread. We now have medicines and essential household goods. We take orders for bread and can also supply local veggies, such as onions and potatoes. We are considering having organic veg' boxes delivered to the shop – please contact us if you would be interested in joining this scheme. If we get some bad weather or you need food delivered, we are happy to do that.

We love seeing all those who support us regularly or occasionally and look forward to meeting more of you soon."

Geoffrey and Katie.
Tel: 01728 663773.

Pruning Made Easy and Gardeners' Question Time

- ◇ Friday February 24th 7:30pm
Rendham Village Hall
- ◇ Helpful guidance from Matthew
Tanton-Brown of The Place for
Plants
- ◇ Advance booking essential from
Albert Lain, 01728 6634567 or
Geoffrey Boulton; gpboulton@gmail.com
- ◇ £10, inc Wine (first glass free)
and finger food
- ◇ Free large Sunflower seed for
tallest Sunflower competition, to
be judged at Rendham Village
fete on July 1st

Raising funds for hearing loop and
projector for village

Spring Breakfast Walk

- * Sunday April 2nd
- * Leaving Rendham Village Hall Car
Park at 8:30am
- * 2½ miles south of the village,
some field headlands, farm track
and through two woods. Shorter
version available.
- * Full English Breakfast at 10am in
Village Hall cost £6.00 per person
(Lighter version available)
- * You don't need to do the walk to
enjoy the breakfast
- * Booking essential to Albert Lain
01728 663567 or Frances Hill
01728 664021

Raising funds for Rendham Village Hall
equipment

A Winters Exhibition

Great Glemham Village Hall, Low Road,
IP17 2DH



25th-26th February 10am-
5pm. Free entry.

An Exhibition of local artists
work featuring Ceramics,
Mixed Media, Paintings,
Drawings, Jewellery,
Textiles, Woodwork, Wire Sculpture.

Do come along - All welcome!

Stick 'em up!



Sweffling residents having fun.
Spotted by Anthony Wilkinson.

Do you have any photographs
you can share in "The Bridge"
or on the website?
Please send them, and any
other item to

sweffling@outlook.com

THE SWEFFLING WHITE HORSE



Tunes, boots & bhajis

Live music, charity walk & curry night
local singer/songwriter Jonathan
Skeates will be playing in the pub this
Saturday (4 Feb). Jonathan is an
acoustic singer songwriter who writes

Dates in Feb+

Sun 05 Feb	Holy Communion. 9:30am. Sweffling
Tue 07 Feb	Parish Council Meeting. 7:30 Village Hut
Sun 12 Feb	Holy Communion. 11am. Rendham
Wed 15 Feb	ACC AGM. 7pm Sweffling White Horse
Sun 19 Feb	Morning Prayer. 9:30am. Sweffling
Fri 24 Feb	Gardeners Question Time. 7:30pm Rendham Village Hall
Sat 25 Feb	Coffee and Pancakes Morning. 10am Sweffling Village Hut. A Winters Exhibition. Great Glemham Village Hall 10am-5pm [also Feb.26]
Sun 26 Feb	Bishop Martin will lead a Benefice Service of Holy Communion. 6pm Sweffling
Wed 01 Mar	Ash Wednesday Benefice Holy Communion.6pm Sweffling

pop songs with a folky twist & he'll be playing original songs as well as covers.

Two more exciting events coming up:-

Curry night Sat 11 Feb

Local chef Nick Lingard will be bringing his amazing Authentic Tandoori to tempt your tastebuds.

Having sampled his wares, I can honestly say that his food is amazingly tasty & his onion bhajis are the best in town! There will be some amazing curries including a goat vindaloo as well as a meat-free option.

Although we're not taking table reservations, it's handy to get an idea of numbers so please call us on 01728 664178 if you're thinking of coming. Please also let us know if you have any special dietary requirements.

Charity walk Sunday 5 Feb

Inspired by all of Mat & Kelly's great work (& our recent walk here) as part of Mat's walk and talk challenge, one of our regulars suggested we take up the mantle and arrange some more walks. And hence, the 'Sweffling Sunday Stroll' was born! We'll do one a month, on the first Sunday of every month - with the first one being this Sunday. Meet at the pub at 10.30am for a gentle circular walk, (approx. 4 miles) ending up at the pub for refreshments. We'll be continuing to raise money for The Brain Tumour Charity so there will be a collection pot for you to donate. We'll vary the walks but they'll all start and finish at the pub.

Hope you can join us!

“Beer is made by men, wine by God.” (Martin Luther)