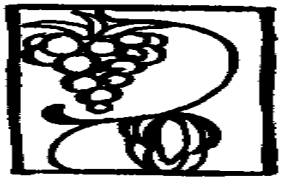
THE BRADFIELD GRAPEVINE



December 2024 No:230

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

At time of writing the sun is shining, the wind is a bit cooler and storm Bert has moved away. Yet again, here in the East we seem to have escaped the worst of the flooding and disruption. What a terrible time of year to have your home flooded and have to deal with insurance claims and clearing up when you should be looking forward to the festive season. Our thoughts are with people in other parts of the country who have to deal with the fallout of Bert.

Pat, is as usual, making her very generous gesture of erecting a Christmas Tree in the VIllage. Last year high wind rearranged the decorations several times, however that did not distract from the cheeriness of seeing the lights on as we drove or walked through the village. This year you are all invited to join in singing carols around the tree and enjoying some refreshments on **Thursday 12 December at 7pm.** That should provide a good start to all our festivities. Other festive occasions to get you in the spirit are our **Carol Service** in our Church on **Wednesday 18 December at 7pm** and the **Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 3pm. Enclosed with the Grapevine is a proforma of a Christmas Tree to decorate to help make the Church have that wonderful St Clare welcome to help us start our Christmas Festivities.**

If you are able to support the Food Bank Sue and Clive would be most appreciative, especially at this time of year.

j

Margaret Lovick
Tel: 01284 386662

Debbie Thomas
Tel: 01284 386302

Email: stclaregrapevine@gmail.com

PS May I take this opportunity of wishing Margaret and Sarah all the very best wishes for the future with the Grapevine Debbie xx

Letter from the Rectory

Dear Reader,

I cannot believe that we are already approaching the Christmas season, although my diary confirms it, and the church services are booked throughout December.

To many children the time between now and Christmas will feel interminable. For Christians however, the time of Advent, which begins on Sunday 1st December is a time of waiting. And waiting is a very biblical image, we find the story of Abraham and Sarah in the Old Testament, who waited for a child, Isaiah and the prophets waiting for judgement and redemption, John the Baptist whose role was to wait in the wilderness until the prophecies he foretold were realised and then Mary, whose waiting began in pregnancy and continued as she stood at the foot of the cross. We seem to have lost the ability to wait in our society, we live in a world where 'instant gratification' is expected in many areas of our lives. It is so nice sometimes to 'wait' for something, and when that something arrives or is achieved - what a wonderful feeling that brings!

In our church services we will reflect the waiting, the hopes, the fears and the joys of Advent and Christmas . You will find all the details of our services on the next page. Here in Bradfield St Clare, may I commend to you the Carol Service in church on Wednesday 18 December at 7pm, and our Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 3pm.

I look forward to meeting many of you at our services when we celebrate the incarnation – that wonderful gift from God – of himself in human form.
Wherever you are, whoever you are with, whatever your beliefs, I do hope you have a blessed Christmas time, and a great start to 2025

Yours in Christ,

Sharon

Rector, Cockfield Benefice
revsharon2@gmail.com
01284 828599 or 07825 086063

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events - December 2024

Sunday 1 December	10.30am Thanksgiving Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm Advent Christingle Service - Felsham
Friday 6 December	6.30pm Community Carols round the Christmas Tree (outdoors) - Felsham Village hall
Sunday 8 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare 4pm Advent Carol Service - Stanningfield
Wednesday 11 December	7pm Community Carols - starting in the Village Hall Car Park, Cockfield and processing to the Church
Thursday 12 December	12.30-4pm Village Friends Christmas Lunch (booking required - contact Rev Canon Sharon for more details)
Sunday 15 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Felsham 6pm Carol Service - Cockfield
Monday 16 December	7pm Carols by Candlelight - Lt Whelnetham
Tuesday 17 December	7pm Carol Service - Gt Whelnetham
Wednesday 18 December	7pm Carol Service - Bradfield St Clare
Thursday 19 December	7pm Carol Service with the Tudor Rose Choir - Gedding
Thursday 19 December	7pm Carol Service - Bradfield St George
Sunday 22 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 24 December Christmas Eve	3pm Crib Service - Bradfield St Clare 9pm Holy Communion - Felsham 9pm Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 11.30pm Holy Communion - Cockfield
Wednesday 25 December Christmas Day	10am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 10am Holy Communion - Stanningfield
Sunday 29 December	10.30am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare

There will be no morning prayer on Tuesday 31 Dec or Thursday 2 Jan For more details on services/events go to www.cockfieldbenefice.com or contact revsharon2@gmail.com, 07825 086063.

Cockfield Benefice Services and Events - January 2025

Sunday 5 January Epiphany	9.30am Holy Communion - Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm SixtoSeven - Felsham Village Hall
Sunday 12 January Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1	10am Morning Prayer - Cockfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St Clare 6pm Praise & Worship - Gt Whelnetham
Tuesday 14 January	11am Holy Communion - Felsham (soup and sandwiches served at the Village Hall from 12 noon)
Thursday 16 January	2-4pm Village Friends at Felsham Village Hall (over 65s friendship group)
Sunday 19 January Epiphany 2	9.30am Morning Prayer - Stanningfield 10am Praise God Together - Felsham 10.30am Holy Communion - Cockfield 4pm Evening Prayer - Bradfield St Clare
Saturday 25 January	Messy Church All children welcome accompanied by parent/carer(s) 3-5pm, venue tbc
Sunday 26 January Epiphany 3	9.30am Holy Communion - Gt Whelnetham 10am Worshipping Together - Bradfield St George 10am Communion - Gedding
Sunday 2 February Presentation of Christ in the Temple	9.30am Holy Communion - Stanningfield 11am Holy Communion - Bradfield St George 6pm Six2Seven - Felsham Village Hall

A service of Celtic-style Morning Prayer is usually held every Tuesday at Cockfield at 9am and at Stanningfield every Thursday at 9am.

Please note these services may be subject to change – for up-to-date service times see the benefice website at ***www.cockfieldbenefice.com***

VILLAGE FRIENDS
an over 65 friendship group
The next meeting will be on
Thursday 12th December
at Felsham and Gedding Village Hall
which will be our Christmas Dinner
at an earlier start of 12.30pm.
Booking essential!
If you would like to come please contact:

Canon Sharon 01284-828599 or 07825 086063
revsharon2@gmail.com

or

Susan Metcalf 07925 867221 or
st.metcalf@btinternet.com

Organised by the Cockfield Benefice

GATEHOUSE FOOD BANK

BURY ST EDMUNDS.

Firstly, many thanks to all who have left items for the food bank at intervals recently.

St Clare is a very generous village when it comes to the food bank and we know that your support is greatly valued.

Gatehouse are always in need of any non-perishable goods as well as items of toiletries and hygiene, especially feminine hygiene. They are unfortunately unable to accept “fresh” goods; ie fruit and vegetables.

The current list of items needed is available on their website. The only things they do NOT require at this time are breakfast cereals and dried pasta. Also, please note that all items must be unopened and in date.

Many thanks,

Sue and Clive Leal, Food Band coordinators for Bradfield St Clare.

Pat's Page

You will have all received a form with your Grapevine telling you about our 'Decorate a Christmas Tree' competition we are holding. We did this about ten years ago and it was a huge success, with people contributing the most amazing entries. So let's have a go! The competition is open to all so multiple entries are encouraged. So, get inventive, let your creative juices flow and let's have a veritable forest of trees to decorate our beautiful church. It will be independently judged and the winners will be announced at the **Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 3pm** in St Clare Church, and a prize will be awarded for each category. You can either take your entry home or leave them till the end of the month.

Talking of Christmas Trees I shall, as usual, with the help of John, Gerry and Glyn , be putting up my usual Thank You tree on the Village Green. I am immensely grateful to all the wonderful people who with their kindness, support and friendship keep me going - they know who they are!!

As we shall not have the chance to meet in December due to the VIllage Hall renovations - so no Kit Cafe - we thought it might be a good idea to 'use' our village tree and gather round it to sing some carols and Christmas songs. We'll provide the music, Rev Sharon will help with this unless we have some budding Ed Sheerin's hidden in the village who would be willing to come forward and play guitar. We will also provide hot drinks and mince pies. You just need to provide yourselves, well wrapped up and please bring a torch with you - if anyone has battery powered lanterns they would be appreciated too. So come along on Thursday 12 December at 7pm for half an hour. *Come one, come all, and raise our voices and let the rafters ring.*

Please note it uneven underfoot on the green and we must be mindful not to stand on the road as we don't want a vehicular incident.

I have a large vat of festive Christmas marmalade waiting to be potted up but have not got enough jam jars - please if you have any 1lb jars, preferably Bonne Maman could you let me have them? This will be sold with my Ferrero Rocher Christmas Puds in aid of 'Crisis at Christmas' and the Bury Drop-In Centre. Marmalade will be 3.50 and puds will be 2.

And finally, a huge thank you to 'Post Box Bobbie", for lightening our days with her lovely knitted creations on the post box - just what the doctor ordered - wonderful.



And *finally finally* a very joyous Happy Christmas to you all friends and families and a peaceful New Year .

Pat Hipwell

Christmas Biscotti

A lovely Christmas biscuit recipe from Isabel this month - tried and tested…. And highly recommended!(Editor).

200g Plain flour
50g Self-raising flour
220g Caster sugar
2 eggs
Vanilla essence – to taste. I like lots
50g raw unsalted pistachios
50g dried cranberries or dried cherries

Whisk sugar and eggs together well until combined. Add flours, essence and fruit and nuts.
Knead dough on a heavily floured surface.
Form into two logs about 12 inches long.
Bake on oven tray for 30 minutes at 180C, 350F, Gas 4
Cool for ten minutes then slice diagonally using a serrated knife into ½ inch or 1 inch slices. (A bread knife is ideal)
Place slices on tray in single layer and bake again at 150C, 300F, Gas 2 for 30 minutes or until dry and crisp, turning over halfway through baking.
Perfect for dunking in your coffee!

Variation
Gingerbread biscotti – instead of the pistachios and cranberries, add 1 tsp cinnamon, ¼ tsp ground cloves, 3 tsps ground ginger. Can add chopped ginger in syrup.

Lee Jardine
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John Skelly Fish Limited

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When: Every Friday

Where: Bush Cottage @ 9.40am and Village Hall Car Park @ 9.50am

News from Homefield

Clearing up the allotment garden and fields are the jobs at the moment. In the allotment it's weed clearance which will involve a lot of digging over so maybe I'll save that 'til the colder days (without the winter fuel allowance you have to keep warm somehow!). I've just been told by the weather lady that we might get a dusting of snow overnight with a frost to boot. Time to find the fork out. I had to move my compost bin in the allotment as a large round hole appeared down one side. Lifting the whole bin with the front loader, an enormous (bigger than any spider that Debbie has found at least) rat ran out and into the hedge. Hopefully it will stay away. Talking to other people it seems that the rat population has been increasing this year. I appreciate that they clear up a lot of the mess we humans leave laying around but not in MY compost bin.

In the garden it's a bit of pruning to the trees. When we moved in nearly seven years ago we inherited several silver birch and conifer trees. All of them had been left to grow at will which made for very dark and sometimes unsafe areas. Gradually we have taken down or heavily pruned them so now no tree is over about fifteen feet. With a light prune every year they now remain manageable. This year the apple tree, which somehow escaped a prune last year, was first in line. No problem at all, off the ladder snipping away, get the big wheelbarrow and place it under a tree to catch all the trimmings. Everything is going well until the barrow is full. The same wheelbarrow that fitted perfectly through the little gate was now loaded and not very evenly, wouldn't fit. I thought by rushing the wheelbarrow through the gate, the load would bend its way through and remain fully loaded. The result will probably be featured on some game show "What happened next". At least it won't be on "Where's Wally", he was in plain sight.

In the fields it's time for some hedgecutting. I like to have hedges at different heights and widths around the field, partly for

wildlife and partly for the width of the hedgecutter. My main angst is how many times can I reverse up to cut that one branch that repeatedly gets brushed over and springs back up about three feet above the rest of the hedge. Like the lawnmower with daisies, it's not really a problem but how many passes should I/can I make!

It will soon be time to thin the lambs out of the 'flock'. They are all weaned and ready for finishing so it's time to move them on. It does sound rather harsh but I'm comfortable that they have had a good life. Even the two sheep who so say, whilst grazing in the hedge near Pitchers Green, slipped down the bank towards the dry pond and escaped. To their credit they returned easily enough but with only eleven sheep on six acres of grass why were they in the hedge looking for more food!

I know it's far too early but I'm going to start my new year resolutions. Do I start under the headings Priorities, To Do, Goals or wait til they happen naturally, so much easier I think.

Glyn

The First Christmas

It never snows at Christmas in that dry and dusty land.
Instead of freezing blizzards, there are palms and drifting sands,
and years ago a stable and a most unusual star
and three wise men who followed it, by camel, not by car,
while, sleepy on the quiet hills, a shepherd gave a cry.
He'd seen a crowd of angels in the silent starlit sky.
In the stable, ox and ass stood very still and calm
and gazed upon the baby, safe and snug in Mary's arms.
And Joseph, lost in shadows, face lit by an oil lamp's glow
stood wondering, that first Christmas Day, two thousand years ago.

– Marian Swinger

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MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING QUIZ

Many thanks to all who took part in our Towns and Cities Quiz for the Macmillan Coffee Morning. There was only one all correct entry returned and the winner was Phil Conner from Rattlesden who won a bottle of prosecco and box of chocolates. For those of you who would like to check the answers they are as follows:

1. **Crewe**
2. **Motherwell**
3. **Dundee**
4. **Carlisle**
5. **Warwick**
6. **Stirling**
7. **Hull**
8. **Aylesbury**
9. **Newcastle**
10. **Taunton**
11. **Fort William**
12. **Downpatrick**
13. **Peterborough**
14. **Durham**
15. **Exeter**
16. **Oxford**
17. **Morpeth**
18. **Maidstone**
19. **Bedford**
20. **Liverpool**
21. **Derby**
22. **Chester**
23. **Antrim**
24. **Wakefield**
25. **Cardigan**
26. **Ramsgate**
27. **Aberdeen**
28. **Swanage**
29. **Belfast**
30. **Cardiff**
31. **Blackpool**
32. **Leeds**
33. **Livingston**
34. **Lerwick**
35. **Reading**
36. **Dover**
37. **Oban**
38. **Bolton**
39. **Manchester**
40. **Trowbridge**
41. **Eye**
42. **Bristol**
43. **Stafford**
44. **Nottingham**



Bradfield Weather

October 2020	October 2021	October 2022	October 2023	October 2024
99.5mm	95.5 mm	38 mm	168 mm	64 mm
Nov 2020	**Nov 2021**	**Nov 2022**	**Nov 2023**	**Nov 2024**
42 mm	34 mm	109.5 mm	99 mm	[5mm -18th]

Looking back at last year's report for this month I was commenting (I never complain?) on how much rain we'd had – little did we know that we were set for wet for months on end! I write this as Storm Bert has blown himself away but once again I think in our little corner of the world, we got away lightly. Perhaps not an ideal day to plant 200 Camassia bulbs, which were such a bargain I couldn't refuse, but entertaining to watch them fly off course as Christian tried to throw one to me (or was it at me?). It was weirdly warm and there was talk of it being the warmest November day on record.

If I'd been writing this a week ago I'd be saying what a mild autumn we'd had – the mower has hardly had time for its engine to cool down between cuts. November has been a month of everything – the anticyclonic depression that sat upon us during the first week was gloomy, followed by some lovely cold bright days and the first proper frosts causing a great scurrying of bubble-wrap-covering in the greenhouse (always only ever just in time), the tiniest smattering of snow last week and then the warmth of blustery Bert, stripping the trees of their remaining leaves.

And so another year has almost galloped past. I'll do a full round up of 2024's weather in January but in the meantime huge thanks to Debbie for her gentle nagging and eternal patience in waiting for these reports to come through (my usual excuse of waiting for the Storm to pass!). Happy Christmas to all.

Alice Ward-Thomas 25th November 2024

Public Footpath Matters

Having lost our beloved flat coat retriever Luka, both Dianne and I have walked less on the public footpaths around the village and in particular the footpath that runs parallel to the drive down to Saint Clare Hall, which continues and then crosses a field linking to Elm Green Lane. Another reason for not using this footpath was that it had roots extending through its surface and it sloped down to the adjacent ditch. After rain it became slippery in places for those of my age who are not as nimble on their feet as they were 40 years ago! Because I had noticed that my daily step count was often less than 5000 I've recently embarked on walking around the village in order to increase it. I decided one of my first walks would be to use the path mentioned above. When I arrived at its western end I was more than pleasantly surprised that someone had spent a great deal of time and money in providing boards along the edge of the footpath so that it could be levelled and overlaid with granular material, making it a firm and non slippery surface to walk upon. Furthermore, when I continued on and noted that the field had recently been ploughed, I realised that the footpath that crosses it to join with Elm Green Lane might be difficult use with the shoes I was wearing. To my surprise again the area ploughed across the line of the footpath had been smoothed over and rolled so that walking along this route was as expected in the summer months. As a highway engineer I am aware that it is the duty of the landowner to reinstate and maintain footpaths that cross their land but in my experience this does not always happen. I would like to say thank you on behalf of myself and other walkers who use these paths for the work undertaken in making them so pleasant to use at this time of year. Public footpaths are generally what they are described as. They can only be used by members of the public to walk on. It is illegal to ride a bike on a public footpath. Not only can bicycles make footpaths muddy

and difficult to walk on but riders wearing high viz jackets can also spook horses in adjacent paddocks. This has happened in the village and I have seen video evidence of this so I hope people will not object to this reminder. Talking of high viz jackets, which I do consider to be essential when walking or cycling on the public highway they can unfortunately lead to unforeseen consequences. An accident recently happened in the village where a runner wearing a high viz jacket ran close to a thoroughbred horse that was being exercised which was spooked causing the rider to be thrown off and injured. I have noted horses being exercised in this and neighbouring villages where the riders themselves are wearing high viz jackets so their horses are clearly used to them. Other horses, especially thoroughbreds, are more vulnerable to being spooked so I would just like to advise runners to give such horses a wide berth when they encounter them.
Gerry Bullard (dog lover, horse lover, walker and non runner)



The Library Van Dates 2025

Contact: help@suffolklibraries.co.uk Telephone: 01473 351249
The Library Van will call at Bradfield St Clare Village Hall from **9.40am until 9.55am** on the following dates:

Wednesday 8 January	Wednesday 23 July
Wednesday 5 February	Wednesday 20 August
Wednesday 5 March	Wednesday 17 September
Wednesday 2 and 30 April	Wednesday 15 October
Wednesday 28 May	Wednesday 12 November
Wednesday 25 June	Wednesday 10 December

BIN COLLECTIONS

Tuesday 3 December	Brown Bin
Wednesday 4 December	Black Bin
Wednesday 11 December	Blue Bin
Tuesday 17 December	Brown Bin
Please check website for **Christmas** Collections/ or local press	Please check website for **January 2025** collections

www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/bindays

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Or bishops.farm@yahoo.co.uk or pop along and see the cattle.

Order early to avoid disappointment as prime cuts sell out fast!

Answers to last month's crossword

Across

1 In the open air (3,2,5)
7 Padre (8)
8 Virtuous (4)
9 Apiece (4)
10 Left out (7)
12 Campanologists (11)
14 Play or film with songs (7)
16 Young sheep (4)
19 Item of footwear (4)
20 Splendid (8)
21 Evaluation (10)

Down

1 Pigment made from clay and iron oxide (5)
2 Characteristic (7)
3 Be afraid (4)
4 Trinket, decoration (8)
5 Correct (5)
6 Groups of twelve (6)
11 Three-sided figure (8)
12 Branches (6)
13 Scrutinise (7)
15 Notions (5)
17 Not sharpened (5)
18 Male offspring (4)



How The Grinch Stole Christmas

…So he paused. And the Grinch put his hand to his ear.
And he did hear a sound rising over the snow.
It started in low. Then it started to grow.
But the sound wasn't sad! Why, this sound sounded merry!
It couldn't be so! But it WAS merry! VERY!
He stared down at Whoville! The Grinch popped his eyes!
Then he shook! What he saw was a shocking surprise!
Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the small,
Was singing! Without any presents at all!
He HADN'T stopped Christmas from coming! IT CAME!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!
And the Grinch, with his grinch-feet ice-cold in the snow,

Stood puzzling and puzzling: "How could it be so?"
"It came with out ribbons! It came without tags!"
"It came without packages, boxes or bags!"
And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore.
Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before!
"Maybe Christmas," he thought, "doesn't come from a store."
"Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!"…

Christmas Quiz

1. Which country first started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree?

2. Which popular Christmas beverage is also called 'milk punch'?

3. How many ghosts show up in *A Christmas Carol*?

4. What do people traditionally put on top of their Christmas tree?

5. Where was baby Jesus born?

6. What Hollywood actor played six different roles in *The Polar Express*?

7. What colour are mistletoe berries?

8. Which fairytale was the first gingerbread house inspired by?

9. Who invented the **Christmas wreath**?

10. Where did the tradition of Christmas stockings come from?

Useful Local Contacts

Anglian Water - Emergencies	03457 145145
Borough Council	St Edmundsbury Offices - 01284 763233
Local Member	Sarah Mildmay-White - 01359 270580 Sara.Mildmay-White@stedsbc.gov.uk
Bradfield St Clare Village Halll Bookings	Mrs Val Nunn - 01284 388830
Bra dfield Grapevine Magazine	Mrs Debbie Thomas - 01284 386302 stclaregrapevine@gmail.com Mrs Margaret Lovick - 01284 386662
Bury Stray Cat Fund	01284 388455
Charity for the Relief in Sickness	Secretary: Mrs Vicky Spall - 01284 386357
Suffolk County Council Switchboard	01284 763233
Local Councillor	Mrs Karen Soons - 07864601887 Karen.soons@suffolk.gov.uk
Dentist (Emergency)	By appointment Sat and Sun pm 0300 130 3065
Doctor – Suffolk Doctors on Call	Ring your own Surgery
	Or alternatively call 111
Electricity	UK Power Networks Supply Faults 0800 783 8838
Footpath Warden	Mrs Fenella Fraser - 01284 388310
Gospel Hall	Mr Keith Arknett - 01359 240910
Mobile Library	Mr Carl Bell - 07721 879855
Member of Parliament	Peter Prinsley - Labour peter.prinsley.mp@parliment.uk
Neighbourhood Watch Contact	Mrs Dianne Bullard - 01284 386598
Parish Council Clerk	Mrs Nicola Sturgeon - 07817170906
Parish Council Website	http://bradfieldstclare.one Suffolk.net
Police	101 (non-urgent) 999 (urgent)
Post office Delivery Office	01284 358201
Schools:Cockfield Primary	01284 828287
Thurston Community College	01359 230885
West Suffolk College	01284 701301
St Clare Church	Rev. Canon Sharon Potter revsharon2@gmail.com 01284 828599 / 07825 086063
St Edmunds RC Church	Fr David Bagstaff - 01284 754358