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# TEMPSFORD TIMES

Issue 13  
Jan & Feb 2009

[www.tempsford.org](http://www.tempsford.org)  
The village magazine of Tempsford, Bedfordshire



**WELCOME  
MARGARET**

Meet her on Page 5

TEMPSFORD TIMES is published bi-monthly by Tempsford Parish Council and St Peter's Parish Church, Tempsford, and is delivered free to all households in Tempsford. Please support our advertisers mentioning TEMPSFORD TIMES whenever you do so. **Articles are accepted for publication on the condition that they are included at the publishers' discretion and may be edited if felt necessary. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Parochial Church Council or the Parish Council .** Articles for the next edition should be sent by February 20th to the Editor at 92 Station Road, Tempsford or by e-mail to [alant@atuffnell.plus.com](mailto:alant@atuffnell.plus.com); advertising enquiries to Jeff Cloughton on 01767 640624

## From Rev'd WILLIAM THACKRAY RURAL DEAN OF BIGGLESWADE

Dear Friends in Tempsford,

### “O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie ...”

In 1866 the Rev'd Phillips Brooks, Rector of Trinity Church, Philadelphia (and later to become Bishop of Massachusetts), was on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Christmas Eve found him in Bethlehem where, after visiting the fields of the shepherds, he attended the midnight Eucharist in the Church of the Nativity. It was such a memorable experience that on his return to America he wrote “O little town of Bethlehem”, mainly for the children of his Sunday School.

Two years ago six people from Biggleswade spent a week in the Holy Land among a larger group of pilgrims and of course we visited Bethlehem (current population 40,000). It is only a few miles from Jerusalem but the journey is far from straightforward because Jerusalem is in Israel and Bethlehem is a Palestinian city in the West Bank. The giant and hugely ugly wall, built recently by the Israelis, is crossed at a checkpoint where Palestinians wanting to visit Jerusalem clearly have a much more difficult time than we did as western Christian pilgrims travelling in the opposite direction.

The Church of the Nativity may not be the most beautiful church in the world but to Christian people its significance is immeasurable of course, marking the place where Christ was born. But what a story Bethlehem and its church have to tell! The Romans tried to disguise the place of the Nativity by building a pagan shrine on it in about 150AD; but in 325 the first Christian Emperor, Constantine (and his very remarkable mother, St Helena), built the first Church of the Nativity. Since then it has been knocked down and rebuilt, captured by Muslims and recaptured by Christian Crusaders, only to be argued over by Orthodox and Catholics. In the 1830s it was hit by an earthquake! When Phillips Brooks visited Bethlehem, the town was part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire. Bethlehem was captured from the Jordanians by the Israelis in 1967 but since 1995 the town has been one of the areas under the full control of the Palestinians. Happily they are always warmly welcoming to Christian visitors who currently are growing in numbers as the security situation continues to improve slowly.

## REMEMBRANCE SERVICE - 90TH ANNIVERSARY.

An excellently attended Remembrance Service was held at the Stuart Memorial Hall during which a wreath on behalf of the village was laid at the Village Cenotaph. The service was taken by Rev Christine Giles from Tempsford Methodist Church and Carole Gosling gave a reading. The church bells were rung by a local band before the service. It was a pleasure to welcome some visitors from outside the village, who came to remember their family members who died in World War 1.

A collection was made for the British Legion which raised an excellent £100.00. Thank you to everyone who gave so generously. Refreshments of homemade cakes and tea were served afterwards in the Committee Room.



Betty Mardlin thanked everyone for helping to make it a very special occasion, especially those who made cakes, did the flower arrangement and helped serve.

Our thanks go to Betty Mardlin herself for organising the event.

**Remembrance Day Service:** Did you lose a warm scarf around the time of the Remembrance Day Service? If so contact Carole Gosling on 01767 640289.

## YOGA CLASSES

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So our visit to Bethlehem was deeply joyful and memorable. Christ the Son of God was born into the rough and tumble of the real world. St John describes him as "the light which shines on into the darkness and which will never be extinguished". That surely is the real faith we treasure and share at Christmas.

Here is a Holy Land Blessing which I use quite often. Through these words I wish you and your families a very wonderful post-Christmas holiday and a Happy New Year, especially as you look forward to the arrival of your new parish priest.

*May the baby of Bethlehem bring you peace;  
may the child of Nazareth bring you joy;  
may the man of Galilee bring you strength;  
may the Christ of Calvary bring you courage;  
may the Risen Christ bring you hope;  
and the Ascended Christ give you a foretaste of his glory.*

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## THE YEAR'S WEATHER

2008 was a year of mediocre weather on the whole. The winter months were milder than average, January was quite wet and February, contrary to popular belief, was the driest of the year with only half an inch of rain. March was quite cold though with the only significant snow of the year falling at Easter time when there were many gales too. May proved to be reasonably warm, but was also the wettest month of the year with over 3 inches of rain. The summer was very poor; the temperatures were lower than average and there was a significant lack of sunshine. Although it was drier than last year, because it was so dull it seemed as if we were always waiting for summer to arrive. There were higher than average amounts of rain during the autumn but about average temperatures. However the frosts started earlier this year, the first being on Oct 6th giving rise to some splendid autumnal colours on the trees. December, the first winter month, has been cold with the temperature up to Dec 15th not rising above 7.5°C. However things look to change around Christmas becoming warmer and wetter. Overall, a wetter than normal year (about 26 inches of rain) with a definite lack of sunshine—bring on 2009!

*Meryl Besant*

## PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

**Airfield Composting Facility** The County Council's Development Control Committee attended the proposed site for a composting facility on Tempsford Airfield on Nov 12th and then discussed the proposal in committee on Nov 13th. County Councillor John Scott and Parish Council Chairman Adrian Besant attended both meetings and were pleased to hear the strict restrictions that were imposed before permission was granted for the working of the site following objections from the Parish Council and various parishioners.

**Tempsford Churchyard** A plan of the trees is to be made so that tree specialists can tackle a maintenance programme that the Parish Council is requiring.

**Precept** The precept for the year 2009/10 was set at £12,000, an increase of £500, due to the increase in grass cutting and cemetery maintenance costs.

**Children's Play Areas** The Council is concerned about the state of these areas and is drawing up plans to improve the equipment and the areas themselves to make them more attractive to children and their carers.

**Next Council Meeting** The next meeting of the Council is on Jan 20th at 7.30pm at the Stuart Memorial Hall.

## RIVERSMEET BENEFICE SERVICES

### Sunday Dec 28th

Roxton 11.00 Christmas Miscellany

### Sunday Jan 4th

Blunham 11.15 Family Service

Gt Barford 09.30 Family Service

Roxton 11.00 Holy Communion

**Tempsford 09.30 Holy Communion**

### Sunday Jan 11th

Roxton 11.00 Holy Communion

**Tempsford 09.30 Holy Communion**

### Sunday Jan 18th

Blunham 11.15 Holy Communion

Gt Barford 09.30 Holy Communion

Roxton 11.00 Family Service

### Sunday Jan 25th

Blunham 11.15 **Benefice Holy Communion**

### Sunday Feb 1st

Blunham 11.15 Family Service

Gt Barford 09.30 Family Service

Roxton 11.00 Holy Communion

**Tempsford 09.30 Holy Communion**

### Sunday Feb 8th

Roxton 11.00 Holy Communion

**Tempsford 09.30 Holy Communion**

### Sunday Feb 15th

Blunham 11.15 Holy Communion

Gt Barford 09.30 Holy Communion

Roxton 11.00 Holy Communion

### Tuesday Feb 17th

Gt Barford 7.30pm *Licensing of our new Priest-in-Charge*  
**All welcome**

### Sunday Feb 22nd

Roxton 11.00 Benefice Holy Communion

### Wednesday Feb 26th

Roxton 7.30pm Ash Wednesday Service

## STUART MEMORIAL HALL

The Stuart Memorial Hall held a very successful **Open Evening on Friday 28th November**. Many of the regular users of the hall had a stand and some craft stalls were invited to display and to sell their goods. The Tempsford WI had a very interesting stall with memorabilia of the club together with an array of homemade cakes and cards for sale; Councillor Dan Clark was there to answer questions about the Parish Action Plan; Heather from the yoga class attended; the line dancers showed their skills; Annette and some of her pupils from Limelight, a dance school for young people, delighted the audience with their amazing talent of modern dance and almost acrobatic skills; knitted goods, edible chillies, cards, decorative window motifs, jewellery, cakes and Macmillan goods were also on offer. A 'guess the weight' cake, donated and made by Dorrie Munns and Mrs Pattison, was won by Gordon Odell. John Infield and Phil Russell were our regular raffle ticket sellers. The evening was not intended to be a fund raising event but £140 was raised to help with the continual maintenance of the hall.

Our next event will be a **Quiz and Hot Supper Evening on Saturday February 28th** with the return of the ever popular question master Chris Ebeling. Teams of up to six are welcome, and if you don't have a team please let us know as we can make one up on the evening. Please book your teams in with Eileen on 640858 or Linda on 640986. Tickets cost £5 each.

It just remains for me to say a big thank you for supporting the hall during 2008. It has been a very successful one and every year we go from strength to strength. We wish you a happy and prosperous New Year - keep warm and keep well! We hope to see you at the hall during 2009, either at one of our events or why not organise one of your own.

You can get information regarding the hall, how to book it and future events on our web site

[www.tempsford-stuart-memorial-village-hall.co.uk](http://www.tempsford-stuart-memorial-village-hall.co.uk)

## WOODWORKING TOOLS FOR AFRICA

During a trip to Zambia earlier this year I was able to carry out some carpentry training with two groups in Eastern Province, with the tools which had been donated and sent out some 18 months earlier. The picture shows one of the groups that I was involved with at Msoro Mission who have formed a small team to try to improve their skills in woodworking.

There a great shortage of tools locally available and I would very much like to get another consignment out to them. I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has woodworking tools they no longer require and would be willing to donate. Age and condition are not important as long as they are able to be refurbished and re-sharpened ready for a new lease of life in Africa. If you think you are able to help please give me call on 01767 640624. Many thanks.

*Jeff Claughton.*



## WELCOME TO THE REV'D MARGARET MARSHALL

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Margaret Marshall as priest-in-charge of our benefice. She will be licensed at Gt Barford Parish Church on **Tuesday 17th Feb at 7.30pm.**

It would be wonderful to have a full representation from Tempsford to welcome her. Everyone is invited. Margaret has sent a letter introducing herself and telling us some of her back ground.

*Dear Everyone*

*I write to introduce myself as the Priest-in-Charge designate of the Riversmeet Benefice. I will be joining you in mid-February and am looking forward to it very much.*

*I was born in what used to be called 'British West Hartlepool', to parents who were both teachers - and Methodist local preachers. We moved to the south of England (Letchworth) when I was five years old, but two moves later we arrived in Eynesbury, St Neots, where I have lived ever since. I attended St Neots Church of England Primary School and later Longsands School. I was the third person in the school to win a place at Cambridge, where I studied Classics (Greek and Latin). After University I began work at a printing consultancy in South London. I had a break from working while my only daughter, Lydia was small and, on my return, trained in the use of computers. My career included posts at Papworth Hospital and Capita Education Services at Cardington, as well as becoming a self-employed designer and copy writer. I worked as Parish Administrator in St Neots when I entered training for the ordained ministry, also doing the pastoral work of a curate when our curate moved on. As I entered the last year of my training, my beloved husband, Bernard, died from cancer. I was ordained deacon nine months after his death and became full-time stipendiary curate at St Neots.*

*Four and a half years later I am ready to take on new responsibilities and look forward to meeting and working with you. Happy New Year!*

Rev'd. Margaret Marshall

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## **CHAT CLUB**

On 26 November 2008 members met in the Chapel Schoolroom at 2.00pm for their 'in-house' Christmas Party. The afternoon got underway with a wonderful concert provided by the Sandy Singers – the Chapel rang with laughter on a number of occasions during the entertainment and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. Everyone then made their way into the Schoolroom for a Christmas tea party. A special thank you must go to all those who helped on the day and those behind the scenes who made it possible. Then two weeks later.....

On Wednesday, 10 December members met for their annual Christmas Lunch at "The Wheatsheaf". A special thank you must go to Mr. Jim Sawford for his generosity and kindness in providing drinks for the Club and also two Christmas Cakes which were won at the end of the day. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed their meal and had a really good time amongst friends.

Next get-together will be Wednesday, 28 January 2009 from 2.30pm until 4.00pm. Come along and join us in the New Year and find out what we get up to; you will be made most welcome.

## **METHODIST CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE**



The annual Christmas Fayre held at the Methodist Chapel on Sat 6 December raised the magnificent sum of £946.20. Our grateful thanks go to everyone who came along to support the Chapel on the day and to those behind the scenes who worked so hard to make it possible.

## **TEMPSFORD METHODIST CHURCH**

### **January February Services**

4<sup>th</sup> January 3.00pm Section United Service Berkley Street  
11<sup>th</sup> January No Service  
18<sup>th</sup> January 3.00pm Preacher: Rev. Christine Giles  
25<sup>th</sup> January 6.00pm Preacher: Rev. Katy Dunn  
1<sup>st</sup> February 6.00pm Section United Service Great Barford  
8<sup>th</sup> February No Service  
15<sup>th</sup> February 3.00pm Preacher: Mr. Tom Rowe  
22<sup>nd</sup> February 6.00pm Preacher: Rev. Christine Giles  
Everybody is assured of a warm welcome at all our services

## **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

### **SHOEBOX APPEAL:**

A total of 99 boxes were received and dedicated by Rev. Christine Giles at the Methodist Chapel on Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> November - followed swiftly by a further 5 boxes, making a grand total of 104. This year our boxes are going out to Serbia, Kyrgyzstan and Swaziland. Children living in orphanages, in sewers and on the streets, will know they are not forgotten. Children who have never had anything to call their own will have their lives touched by your love and care through the filling of a simple shoebox. A heartfelt thank you to all who helped us achieve this wonderful result.

**FOOTNOTE:** The co-ordinator at St. Neots Methodist Chapel – Bill Ashdown – will be travelling to Kyrgyzstan in February 2009, so in 2009 we may learn a



little more about the impact our shoeboxes have made. Watch this space!!

*Carole is lost behind all the donated boxes*

## **PEOPLE NEWS**

Our best wishes go to the two members of the village being cared for in nursing homes. Best wishes also go to Sam Knott, Betty Ingram, Barry Fitzpatrick, Dorothy Munns, and to Wendy Bettles. Special good wishes go to John Bettles who is recovering from an accident.

Our deepest sympathy goes to:

Claire and Jess Lawrence and family after the death of Claire's father recently.

Also to Maureen Gore, her sister Valerie and their family following the death of their mother Olive Abrahams who died recently at the age of 95

Elaine and Simon Franklin of Bakers Lane are delighted to announce the arrival of a new Tempsford resident on the 13<sup>th</sup>. November – Ralph Alexander Paul, a sister to Lydia and Josephine.

## **POLICE SURGERY DATES**

The mobile police surgery will be in the village on Tuesday 13th January and Tuesday 17th February between 1.15pm and 2.15pm on both days (emergencies permitting!)

PC Ross Paterson will be in attendance and will be available to security mark property if you require.

## **MOBILE LIBRARY DATES**

The Mobile Library will be opposite the telephone box in Station Road at 9.45am on the following Fridays in January and February

**Jan 9th, Jan 23rd, Feb 6th and Feb 20th**

**Please note there may well be a change of date and time of the Mobile library visits from April onwards.**

**Please watch out for details**

## TEMPSFORD WI

Why not start the new year by joining the Tempsford WI. For just £29, it represents excellent value for a whole year of WI activities that you can embrace at your discretion. In other words, come when you like or join our successful darts team if you want to. If there is a speaker you would be interested in, just come along that evening. You are not obliged to do everything that is on offer. You will be given a warm welcome, a cup of tea and friendship.

Sue and Betty attended the autumn federation meeting at the Corn Exchange, Bedford. Mr. Paul Whittaker entertained. Paul is profoundly deaf. It was awe inspiring to watch and listen to him. He put able-bodied people to shame. How humble we all felt, but also very uplifted by this very talented young musician. At our November meeting, we had a speaker from the East Anglian Air Ambulance. This project was started in January 2001. There is no government funding – it relies on sixteen charities and the general public for funds. Their quick response has saved many lives.

Fifteen members enjoyed their Christmas meal at the Wheatsheaf on 8<sup>th</sup> Dec. The next meeting will be on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 at 7.30 pm in the Stuart Memorial Hall, when Anne Doody will speak on Flowers, History and Legends.

## CAROLS AT ST DENYS

The mid-December gloom was lifted for an hour on 14<sup>th</sup> December for the congregation which met at the “church in the fields” - St Denys, Little Barford - for the service of readings and carols, fore-telling the message of Christmas.

The Christmas decorations were beautiful, the candles were magnificent and the singing of the congregation, supported by Blunham Choir, was uplifting - and after the service there were mince pies aplenty for all!

A collection of £180.05 was taken which will help the work of The Redundant Churches Trust which looks after the fabric of this church.

Thanks are due to those who worked so very hard to prepare this very special service.

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