



FRIENDS OF HOLY TRINITY BLYTHBURGH

1 November 2023

Dear Friends



Someone knitted Holy Trinity for us!

It's time to write to you all, reporting on our year so far and looking ahead to our plans for Christmas – yes, it's that time of year!

**Open Afternoon 2023.** Everyone present agreed that our spring Open Afternoon was a great success. Our speaker, Alan Mackley, took us on an entertaining virtual motor tour based on the charmingly illustrated diary of a 450-mile joyride kept by the 19-year-old Janet Becker. Janet, who is memorialised in the church, was the daughter of acclaimed local artist Harry Becker and an expert in church conservation.

**Celebrating a milestone.** Almost every Thursday morning at 11am, Blythburgh resident Colin Huggins can be found lurking in the church porch. He's waiting for visitors to arrive for a free church tour. He seldom knows how many people will arrive, but almost every week, someone does – often quite a number. Colin started these tours in 2018 and he has just welcomed his 1,000<sup>th</sup> visitor! We celebrated this milestone with tea, cake, and a special tour for members of the village. Congratulations Colin!



**Help from the Men's Shed, Halesworth.**

As members of the Friends know, Holy Trinity has embarked on a project to install clear glass in all its windows, and we have supported this undertaking by contributing towards the stonework needed for the installation of the glass. Six windows have so far been renovated, thanks to a number of kind donors. The Parochial Church Council wanted to

acknowledge these valuable gifts. However, it's difficult to add permanent features in a Grade 1 listed building, so, they decided to commission a moveable plaque for each window. And the Halesworth Men's Shed have ridden to the rescue. Their skilled participants have lovingly created a series of oak blocks to hold brass plaques, which are then placed on the church windowsills to commemorate the windows' donors.

**Animal magic.** August saw another hugely enjoyable **Blessing of the Animals** service. Over 100 people and their animals gathered. Seventy-eight dogs were joined by six horses, a solo cat, a single chicken, a collection of moths and Jamie the 90-year-old tortoise.



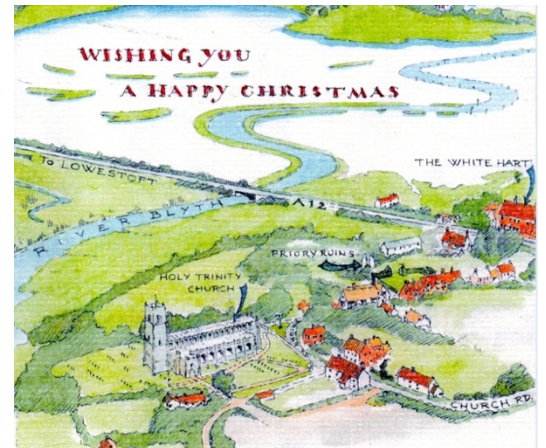
**Harvest Festival** on Sunday 17 September was followed by a hearty Harvest lunch, featuring a special loaf baked by Graham King.

**Welcome to the new Rector and his family.** As many of you know, we are preparing to welcome Revd. Russell Gant as Team Rector to the Sole Bay Benefice, together with his wife Jenny and their daughters Annabelle and Elizabeth. His Induction Service will take place on **Tuesday 21st November at St Edmund's Church, Southwold at 7.30pm**, led by the Right Reverend Mike Harrison, Bishop of Dunwich.

**Local author.** Blythburgh resident, writer, artist, volunteer priest (and my husband) Malcolm Doney has a new book out. Co-written with Martin Wroe, it is called ***Hold On, Let Go: How to find your life***. It is published by Wild Goose, the imprint of the Iona Community, and features a cover painting by Malcolm and his line drawings throughout. The Southwold and Halesworth bookshops have copies in stock, or it's available to buy online or from the usual outlets.

**And now for Christmas! The Christmas Market** is a must-visit event in many local people's calendars. Plans are shaping up for a bumper event this year. As ever, it will be held in the church on **Saturday 25 November from 11.00am to 3.30pm**. There'll be 38 stalls and a great mix of preserves, crafts, cards, and Christmas gifts, etc. You can look forward to mince pies & mulled wine, bread & homemade soup, sausage rolls, delicious cakes, tea and coffee – and it will be the perfect time for you to buy all your Christmas goodies.

**New Christmas Card.** This has been drawn and designed by our honorary member, Charles Morris and features a delightful bird's-eye-view of Blythburgh and the church. Sold in packs of 5 with envelopes, they cost £5 per pack. They will be available in the church and at the Christmas Market. If you live further afield, you can order yours directly from me by email or letter.



**Christmas services.**

**Advent Carols**, Sunday 3 December at 6pm

**Carol Service**, Saturday 16 December at 4pm

**Carol singing around the village**, Friday 22 December at 6pm

**Crib Service**, Sunday 24 December at 5pm

**Midnight Mass** at 11.30pm on Christmas Eve

**Christmas Day Family Service** at 10am

With very best wishes

Meryl Doney, on behalf of the Friends of Holy Trinity

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