

An Open Letter to our Parishioners

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning, Great is your faithfulness. (Psalm 118)

In conversation last week the Archdeacon passed on some advice from a wise clergy friend of his: don't try to do everything the same. There is no way with Covid restrictions in place that we will be able to celebrate Christmas in the ways that we have done in the past, so we need to think differently and be prepared to be a little more creative. This will apply to Christmas just as it did for Easter, although we have more time to plan for it this time, but it will also apply to all the other events leading up to December 25th.

This weekend Over Wallop unveiled the refurbished War Memorial and rededicated it. It wasn't the grand celebration that the 'They Also Served' team had in mind when plans were first made: no large gathering, no band, no hymns sung, no party to celebrate our sense of community and the end of the Great Wars of the last century, but it did still happen and was very moving.

The Order of Service reflected the original from 101 years ago (you can see it on the news page of website). As we read through Psalm 23, The Lord's My Shepherd, I was struck by those verses,

**Though I walk through the darkest valley ('the Valley of the Shadow of Death'),
I fear no evil for you are with me.**

This year feels as though we have very much been walking under that shadow and it hasn't lifted yet; but God is with us.

But back to those thoughts of Christmas, I need your help! In conversation with Winton Nursing Home we have come up with a plan to bring Christmas to the residents. The teams who regularly go into our nursing homes haven't been able to visit since March, and Carol Services and Christmas Communion will not be possible this year. Part of our plan in the Wallops is to present each resident with a Baby Jesus doll and the card attached will include the words to Away in a Manger. I have been putting my limited sewing skills to the test and the result is more muppet than Saviour. If you are looking for a crafty project for the autumn, perhaps you would like to have a go at making some? They can only be an improvement on my attempts!

Love and blessings,

Vanessa

PS don't forget that this evening is the last of our sessions on the words behind Compline:

The Apple of an Eye. 6.30pm St Peter's Over Wallop or www.facebook.com/thewallopingvicar/live

