

# **St John's Church**

*serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde*



*October / November 2024*

**£1**

## Photos from St John's School



### Photos

**Top left:** Sandpipers class watching the Ladies' Golf competition at Brockett Hall.

**Top right:** Rev'd Kathryn - blessing of our school bags at St John's

**Bottom Left:** Young Leaders training for year 6

**Bottom Right:** A procession at the start on one of our Thursday morning Collective Worship services at St. John's

**Cover Photo:** Poole Pottery medieval plate, designer Tony Morris

## *A time to blaze...*

I'm on a mission at the moment to be a bit more mindful. So rather than rushing through Welwyn Garden City to complete my jobs this week, I allowed myself to stop and gather a beautiful bunch of the first autumn leaves.

As I admired their incredible range of colours and complexity, I found myself wondering... We often assume people are like flowers—growing from bud to bloom, then fading as they age. But what if some of us are more like leaves? Living quiet lives of usefulness, blending in, feeling unremarkable or even unfulfilled, until we suddenly blaze into glorious colour towards the end of our lives.

Is the beauty of autumn leaves wasted because it comes at the end? Do we think, "All that colour and loveliness kept hidden, only to appear now—if only it had been revealed sooner"? Of course not! We accept that the leaves' glory comes in its own time, after their steady part in sustaining the tree.

So why don't we often expect – or notice – older people flourishing? Why don't we generally greet the later stages of life with joy, excitement, and celebration?

In society, there's an assumption that older people can't or don't need to learn new things, perhaps



reflecting a workplace attitude that avoids recruiting or promoting those nearing retirement. In church, we may assume the older generations won't want change, or might tut if a child makes a noise.

But at St John's, this couldn't be further from the truth, with older members often best placed to connect the new with the old. Our All-Together services, where 90-year-olds rejoice in worshipping with young children, are just wonderful!

Of course, most churches would love to have more young adults full of energy and fresh ideas. But the beauty of church life is that we value everyone, whatever age they are.

So, a question for us to ponder as a church and a parish: how can we equip and celebrate older people in a way that's right for them?

*(Continued on page 3)*




# SUNDAY CLUB FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES

Join us on the second Sunday of the month  
for Bible stories, crafts, friendship and fun.

During the 11am service

**13th October**  
**10th November**  
**8th December**

This term we'll be meeting some amazing  
Bible heroes from the  
Old Testament



*(Continued from page 1)*

Maybe a discipleship course for those in their later years? Or leadership training for those whose wisdom has grown? Or a quieter, more reflective outreach—like the deep conversations at Friendship Tea on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (2:30–4 pm)? Let me know!

Whatever ideas we come up with, let's celebrate the truth that in our church and community, whatever our age, there is still time to blaze brightly and make our most beautiful and fruitful contributions together.

With love

Rev. Kathryn

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## News and People

### Macmillan Tea, Coffee and Cake Afternoon Report

Thank you to everyone who supported our Macmillan Tea/ Cake Afternoon, on Friday 20th September where £421.40p was raised. Special thanks goes to Gina, Dawn, Jean, Jenny, Brian, Carole, Faye and Kym for their time and effort and all those who came ate our cakes and donated so generously  
- Jackie Spry

### Service of Thanksgiving & Remembering - 13th Oct at 4pm A Time to Remember...

All are very welcome at our summer reflective service for remembering those we've loved and lost.

The service will be held in the Garden of Remembrance if the weather is fine.

We'd love you to join us for refreshments afterwards.

### Edna Stephens wites about her life and times with 'Steve'

In Andy Chapman's Lemsford Local History Group article towards the end of this edition there is a lovely article which Andy provided unedited from Edna Stephens where she tells of her life and that of her husband 'Steve' including how they came to buy Cress Cottage and 'The Island' - Lemsford.

## St John's Church Annexe

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Well, after last year's Bike n'Hike was too hot and the year before it was too cold (and wet) this time the porridge was just right!! It was a perfect day for a cycle or walk and the only shame of it was that we only had a small group, with Lucy and I on bikes and then Paul and Frank joining us for the long-ish walk around all the churches of Hertford.



We visited about 14 churches by the end of the day and had a few enjoyable chats with church hosts as well as a few delicious home made snacks offered at some of the churches. Once all the money is collected we should have raised about £320 so a huge thanks to all those who sponsored us this year. Next year we are thinking of a route change to St Albans. Although rather hilly there are many churches to visit so it might be an ideal destination. I hear that they have a few decent places for lunch too!

Kevin Earl

[Editors note: Above, Below and left are some photos from our venture. In the photo above, from left to right, are Lucy, Kevin (who wrote the above text) Paul with Rosie the dog. The selfie below is me (Frank). Now you may be wondering why the fishmonger photo is in there? Well we thought it was pretty attractive, but they apparently did not get planning permission and will have to take the 'decorations' down, so we have a memory of it here. I particular love the shark coming out of the wall.]



## Services

### October 2024

#### 6th Trinity 19

8 am MP (BCP)

11 am 'All Together' HC Service with Harvest Festival, followed by bring and share lunch \*

#### 13th Trinity 20

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC with Sunday Club

4 pm Service of Thanksgiving and Remembering

#### 20th Trinity 21

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am Reflective Worship

#### 27th Last Sunday After Trinity

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC

### November 2024

#### 3rd 4th Before Advent - All Saints Sunday

8 am MP (BCP)

11 am 'All Together' Service \*

#### 10th 3rd Before Advent - Remembrance Sunday

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC with Sunday Club

#### 17th 2nd Before Advent

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am Reflective Worship

4 pm Connect@4

#### 24th Next Before Advent - Christ the King

8 am HC (BCP)

11 am HC

**\* Services especially suitable for children, and all other ages!**

*HC Holy Communion; MP Morning Prayer (Matins); BCP Book of Common Prayer; NB Kathryn's day off is Friday each week*

## 100 CLUB - July, August & September Results

Thanks to everyone, parishioners and friends, who are supporting the '100 Club'. If you'd like to join contact Nigel Johnson—see directory.

Month	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
July	Number 45 - £101.70	Number 79 - £61.02	Number 81 - £40.68
August	Number 28 - £101.70	Number 43 - £61.02	Number 55 - £40.68
September	Number 9 - £100.80	Number 48 - £60.48	Number 7 - £40.32

[Note: the prize amounts vary with the number of participants]

## Connect@4 informal all age worship gathering

17th November, 4pm

We'd love to see you at this **relaxed, interactive worship gathering designed for all ages**. Come join us for a time of faith, fun, and friendship. What to Expect:

- **Engaging Worship** - Enjoy lively music and singing that everyone can join in.
- **Interactive Activities** - Participate in creative activities that bring faith to life.
- **Message for the Day** - Explore a message that speaks to all generations.
- **Community Connection** - Spend time with friends, family, and make new connections in a welcoming environment.
- **Refreshments** - Enjoy light refreshments, often involving delicious cake!

Whether this is your first time at St John's or you're a regular attendee at other services, we look forward to welcoming you!



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“I had a number of cards for my 92nd birthday recently but one of them was very special! Thank you to all of my friends from St. John’s who kindly signed the card.

It was a lovely surprise and I was very moved to read all the messages. This is even more special as I have been away from Lemsford for 22 years!

When I was invited in 1979 to take a post with the National Council of YMCAs we needed a house! I had thought I may join a team and help out occasionally but Bishop Runcie could only offer the small parish of Lemsford – a parish that they ‘did not know what to do with’! If willing, he said, I was to ‘keep it ticking over’.



*Rev Ron at 92*

In spite of a full time post which took me all over the UK and Europe (finishing with 24 visits to Romania) I accepted. It was one of the best decisions of my life.

The help and support I received from everyone at St. John’s was wonderful and I have always been grateful for this.

The names on the card brought back so many memories of those years.

Thank you once again. Perhaps I shall be able to come to St. John’s next year and even take a service!!”

Ron

[Rev Kathryn replies - We’d love to see you Ron!]

# Photos from Connect@4 on 22nd September



St John's Church  
All-Together Holy Communion  
for

# Harvest Festival

6TH OCTOBER, 11AM  
FOLLOWED BY BRING AND SHARE LUNCH  
IN THE SCHOOL HALL

A decorative illustration at the bottom of the poster featuring several pumpkins in shades of orange and yellow, along with green and autumn-colored leaves and small red berries.

It's a perfect early autumn afternoon – all golds and bronzes, warm sunshine and falling leaves (now the torrential rain has stopped for a bit). We've picked the pears, put the pool away, and bought a regulation weatherproof coat for school. We're all set for winter! Although the year is waning, these are the last two months of the church calendar. We start afresh on Advent Sunday, this year 1st December. Between now and then though, there is Harvest Festival and Remembrance, times for quiet and thoughtfulness, and times for joy and celebration, all bound together in this glorious autumnal in-between time.

As always it's going to be a busy term for children and families at St John's. Explorers groups for children, at school and church, are up and running (talk to Kathryn if you'd like to know more) and in **Sunday Club** we've started exploring stories of our ancient Bible heroes – Joseph, Moses, Joshua. There are ups and downs, joy and pain for each of them, but through it all we can see the faithfulness of a saving and loving God. In our September **Connect@4** we also heard Elijah's story, another Bible hero, and thought about how God, as he did Elijah, has led us, fed us, cared for us, and spoken to us throughout our lives. Our next **Connect@4 is on Sunday 17th November** at, yep, 4pm!



**Sunday Club is at 11.00 on 13th October and 10th November.** We meet in the annex for a Bible story, games, crafts, friendship and fun. Children of all ages welcome.

Then there's **Harvest Festival on Sunday 6th October - 11am**, when we all come together to thank God for all his good gifts; children from school will be singing and praying with us, then we'll have lunch together afterwards. Do join us!

If you'd like to know more about what we offer at St John's for children and families, get in touch with Kathryn, or with me [joholi-field@gmail.com](mailto:joholi-field@gmail.com).

Jo

[Ed. Note: You can see left that **Connect@4** welcomes 'big children' too - that's Michael & me 'jigsawing']

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## Lemsford Church Flourishing

Rev Ron did not just keep St John's Lemsford Ticking over! (see p11) In fact it went from strength to strength. To keep that up in these changing times we have our church flourishing group. Here are some photos from our recent 'Flourish and Feast' event on 8th September:



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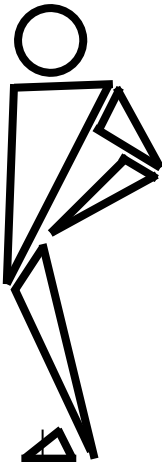
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We have had a super start to the new school year. Our fifteen new **Reception children** have settled in well and are already coming along to our Friday Celebration assemblies as well as playing with the older children at break and lunch times. Our buddy system of pairing an older child with a much younger one works so well. It is lovely seeing them playing together and looking out for one another.



We have now **renamed our classes** with a focus on a **bird** theme:

Class 1 are now called Robins

Class 2 are now called Starlings

Class 3 are now called Kingfishers

Class 4 are now called Sandpipers

Our wrap-around care provision is now called Treetops and our library/nurture space is the Nest!

Our focus values for this half term are **Hope and Aspiration** which we have explored in Collective Worship at church and in school. We would like our children to be aspirational not only for themselves but for the world around them. We began the school year with Revd Kathryn blessing all our school bags!

We will soon be thinking about **Open Days** for prospective new children and their families. These are opportunities to look around our school with a view to begin with us in September 2025. Our Open Days

are:

- **Tuesday 22nd October 1.30 p.m.**
- **Wednesday 23rd October 10.00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday 5th November 1.30 p.m.**
- **Thursday 7th November 10.00 a.m.**

If you know families with Reception aged children do please tell them about our lovely school and direct them to our website or forward to them this link:

<http://bit.ly/3Y00pH1>

We have had lots of lovely things going on at school in September already. These have included Kingfishers and Sandpipers classes visiting Brockett Hall to watch and to play golf, year 5 taking part in a Fun Run at Stanborough, Young Leaders training for year 6 and voting for our School and Eco Councils. Clubs have started again

*(Continued on page 18)*

*(Continued from page 17)*

including Badminton, Choir, Skills, Netball, Lego and Revd Kathryn's Explorers Club!

With summer turning once and for all to autumn we are looking forward to joining you for the **Harvest** All-age service on Sunday 6th October as well

coming to St John's Church for our own school Harvest festival on Thursday 10th October.

Best wishes,

Michelle Boylan

Headteacher at St. John's Church of England School

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The **Then** photo on the inside back cover is Cress Cottage in the 1950s showing a simple two up two down semi-detached cottages and the **Now** photos show Edna and Steve outside number 13 and Stan and Maureen outside number 15.

As promised from our last edition of the Parish magazine, I will reveal the history of Cress Cottage. In 1831 Lord Salisbury granted the land to William Clark, who built two cottages on the plot of number 13 and 15. In 1845 his daughter Emily inherited the cottages and in 1854 sold them to George Timms (a watercress grower – the watercress beds were in Stanborough where the nature reserve is located. The subject of a future article)

Various members of the Timm family occupied the cottages up to 1948 when number 15 was sold for £300 to Mrs Hetty Joyce Locke. In 1949 number 13 was sold to Herbert George Hale. In 1954 Mrs Locke sold to Stanley Forsyth Borrie for £1000. In 1957 the cottages called number 1 and 2 Cress Cottage were renamed number 13 and 15 Lemsford Village. Number 13 was sold to Bill Davies (date not known) and in the late 1980s to Steve and Edna Stephens. I asked Edna to provide me with her story about Cress Cottage. She sent me a wonderful article which I will let you enjoy unedited.



*'My husband Roger David Stephens, who sadly died 2 years ago today, was always known to his friends as Steve. He was born in Portsmouth to a single mum, and had the great, good fortune to be adopted by Fred and Eileen Stephens, who brought him up in Bristol surrounded by love and good humour. They encouraged his love of nature and passion for fishing. They were Methodists and believed firmly in education. Fred worked for BOC and sold Oxygen to the whole of the West of England, rising to be the Manager for this area. Steve went to Bristol Grammar School until his father's work took him and the family to Manchester. Steve finished his education there and gained a place at Nottingham University to read Law.*

*(Continued on page 20)*

*(Continued from page 19)*



*I was born in the Black Country surrounded by heavy industry and mines. My earliest memories are of the sky at night turning orange as furnaces were let out, and of search lights arcing across the sky looking for enemy 'planes. The few areas of green were fascinating and a great escape from the grime of everyday life. My family were poor working-class Methodists, and Conscientious Objectors with a strong work ethic and belief in education. I was lucky enough to pass the 11 plus examination; go to the local Grammar school; was the first in my school, and family to go to university, in those enlightened days when students had their fees paid by the local council, and even given a small grant for living expenses.*

*I went to Nottingham University to read Botany. In my second year there I was asked to show groups of Freshers round on their first day. Steve was in one of the group and the rest as they say is history. We were engaged on his 21st birthday which was also the day he graduated as LLB (Hons) Law, and I gained my MSc in Mycology.*



*We both had our first jobs in London, and married a few months later in the Congregational Church in Chelsea. A year later we moved to new jobs in Stevenage New Town lured by the prospect of a New Town Development Corporation house to rent. Steve went to Ether Engineering, and I became a teacher at Alleyne's Grammar School for Boys. 1966 was a busy year. Our son Nick was born. Steve was offered an interesting post with Roche Products in London and became a commuter to a job he loved. I carried on teaching at Alleyne's.*

*When Nick was 3 years old, I was offered the Head of Biology post at Sherrardswood School, and Nick was able to start in the nursery class there. On their first day at school first day he met Alex Davie. Alex soon invited Nick for tea at his home in Lemsford. The boys loved the*

*(Continued from page 20)*

*river and were rarely dry. They have been firm friends ever since. I fell in love with Cress Cottage (then known as Toad Hall) pretty much at first sight and knew that we would have to find a way to buy it if it ever came on the market. When Steve came to know the place he felt the same way too.*

*In the late 1980s Bill Davie's lovely mother passed away, and he inherited her substantial properties in Aberdeen. We came to an agreement to buy, and have lived here ever since. We were able to buy 'The Island' from the Roberts family in Bridge House when they moved to Hong Kong in 2000. Bill Todd, the charismatic Rector of St Etheldreda in Old Hatfield, came to bless the Island. Since then, the village has supported all sorts of charity fund raising activities there- such as - Open Gardens, Snowdrop Walks, Easter Egg hunts, afternoon teas and of course Jazz on the Island.*



*(Continued on page 22)*

*(Continued from page 21)*

*During the 1980s Steve became a Justice of the Peace rising to become Chairman of the Bench. He believed passionately in justice and worked hard in that voluntary role until he retired on reaching 70 years old.*

*Meanwhile he had set up his own recruitment business (which continues to thrive under our son's care. He had the great honour of being elected to be the first non- medically qualified member of the Royal College of Pharmaceutical Medicine.*

*We were able to travel all over the world finding wonderful places to watch the wild life where Steve could fish .After 37 years of teaching I retired as head of the Senior school at Sherrardswood , and I put my time energies into our much loved family helping in the business, and supporting a school for more than 50 orphan and abandoned girls in Nepal (the school has two sites high in the Himalayas - the girls spend the summer near their nomadic families on the border with Tibet near the ancient city of Lo Mantang, and move to warmer winter quarters in Pokhara) I have been fortunate be able to visit both of these amazing schools which transform the life and expectations of the girls.*

*Steve died in 2022 after a long illness watching the sun set over the river and island. I will carry on (with lots of help from my friends) to use the house and gardens for charity events as long as I am able.*

*Lemsford Village is a good place to live, surrounded by*



*(Continued on page 23)*



*(Continued from page 22)*

*good neighbours, and this house has been a great place to spend our lives and bring up our family. It has a timeless sense of peace and serenity, which I hope, it will be allowed to retain.'*

Thank you, Edna, for sharing your life with the Parish and for the 'giving' you have endlessly provided over many years supporting all sorts of charity fund raising activities there such as - Open Gardens, Snowdrop Walks, Easter Egg hunts, afternoon teas and of course Jazz on the Island. You are a 'local hero'

The group is happy to share its archive and research with the community and provides walks and talks to groups for more information contact us on [info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk](mailto:info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk). The same email address is available if you want to share memories or nominate your own Local Hero in Lemsford Parish.

Andy

## **Bible Apps Magazine by Jo Brooks**

Someone once described to me that the week can be a bit like a washing line. A strong prop at each end but tends to sag in the middle. The props were Sundays and the joy and encouragement of church. The sag was obviously the pressure and busyness of the week – work, school, home, family - that tended to draw her away from sunny uplands of the weekend's worship and fellowship. I don't know if that describes your life too? And if that is you, and you're not lucky enough to be able to enjoy church midweek (Thursdays at 10 at St John's for example) and hoist the line skyward again, do you have ways of your own to connect with God during the week?

For many of us, time is a precious resource and the idea of sitting down comfortably with a Bible and a cup of tea for a good read and pray and quiet time is frankly a remote dream. I have great Christian fellowship group at work and a husband at home to pray with, and that's great for propping up the sagging washing line of my faith. Despite all that, it can be a struggle to make time alone to connect with God. But help is literally at hand!


*(Continued on page 24)*

## Bible Apps Magazine - Concluded

*(Continued from page 23)*

The Church of England, and many others, now provide daily reflections for the busy Christian in the form of phone apps. Let me share with you two: **Our Daily Bread**, and, new from the C-of-E, **Everyday Faith**. They are easy to download (android or iphone, usual routes, and also available on a website), offer a short Bible reading, a story and reflection, an opportunity to think and respond and a prayer. You can read them, or you can listen to them. 3-4 minutes tops. So if you ever see me sitting in my car after the school run, apparently doing nothing – this is what I'm doing! Taking a breath, a pause, a moment from all the doing, to connect, listen, draw closer to God and be lifted up again.

Here are some useful links, but check them out in your app store too. And if you prefer your reading on paper, do get in touch and we can help you find what you need.

Our Daily Bread Ministries <https://odb.org.uk/>  Our Daily Bread.

Everyday Faith: <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/everyday-faith-portal> - Jo



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An infrequent visitor arrived at Lemsford this summer: a Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera*. It was spotted, with others nearby, by a lady who joined the village outing to Windsor and mentioned it to Lyn Trevis. Lyn and Barry have lived in Lemsford for 47 years and had never seen them before; how spectacular they looked. Lyn immediately contacted WHBC to try and ensure the area was not mowed and the Orchids were allowed time to flower and seed. It took a good few phone calls/emails and messages. It was in fact a good news message for the Council with their No Mow May Policy. Lyn also enlisted the help of some neighbours to keep a look out for the mowers just in case the message did not filter through to the 'guys on the ground'. One (Edna - see LLHG article - p19) did spot some mowers arriving but immediately went out to make sure no cutting took place.

Bee orchids are rather special plants; they get their name because they have developed flowers that are identical to the female of a particular species of bee, in size and colouration. Not only that, but they also produce scents that mimic those of the female bee. The result is irresistible to male bees who plunge into the flower in a vain attempt to mate. In so doing they get pieces of pollen stuck to their furry heads, which they then pass on to an adjacent bee orchid when trying the same trick.

There is more; the orchid requires a



particular sort of fungi growing around and within it to germinate. The fungi benefits by getting carbon from the bonds it forms with the orchid. (This mutually beneficial system is called symbiosis).

It is a wonder that these special orchids survive here as the type of bee they pretend to be is only found in southern climes. Instead, they have to rely on the wind to self-pollinate. They like grassland and flower in this country in June and July which is why they are at risk of being mown down.

Hopefully the orchid will return to Lemsford but it takes several years to reproduce. If it does, it will be a great reward for Lyn and her neighbours.

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## Prayer for Peace and Hope

**O God, we pray for all the children of Abraham in Israel and Palestine and in every country of the world.**

**We pray for Muslims, Jews and Christians that we will draw on the best of our traditions to guide us away from words and acts of division and discrimination so that everyone may be free to live in safety.**

**Protect the vulnerable, strengthen the fearful and comfort the grieving.**

**In Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

**Amen.           The Church of England**

**And finally .....**

**[Think about it -  
Ed.]**





**Then:**

Cress Cottage in the 1950s showing a simple two up two down semi-detached cottage



**Now:**

Edna and Steve outside number 13



**Now:**

Stan and Maureen outside number 15

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