



# THE **Birches**

## **Community Matters**

**NEWSLETTER FOR KINGSTHORN, MUCH BIRCH  
LITTLE BIRCH, ACONBURY & WORMELOW**

First published 1977 **November 2021**



## **Thank You and Farewell**

Liz Hall has been a dedicated and creative editor of The Birches Newsletter for the past 12 years, but is soon moving out of the parish. She has provided a great service to the community and has made us smile with the jokes and riddles sprinkled through the newsletter.

Liz also shared her background in theatre and expertise in lighting to help with shows in Little Birch Village Hall, providing much of the equipment too. Liz' community spirit and sense of fun will be missed. We wish her well in her new home.

The Editorial Team

## **Christmas Market**

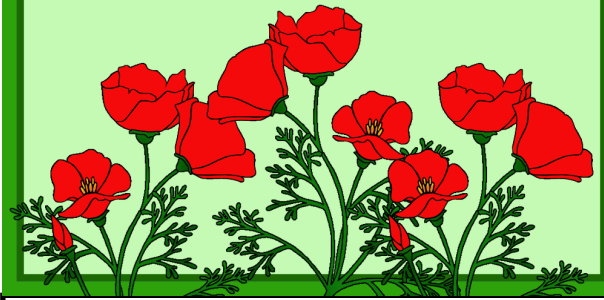
**Much Birch Community Hall**

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

**See page 3**



## **REMEMBRANCE DAY**



## **Wormelow War Memorial Thursday 11th November**

Please join Revd Mark and Rosemary Rigby at Wormelow War Memorial, Tump Lane on Thursday 11th November to remember those who gave their lives. We will be joined by some children from Much Birch C of E Primary School and we will lay wreaths and have some poems and prayers. Please join us at 10.30 a.m. so that we are able to observe the 2 minutes silence at 11.00am.



*Join us at the*

## **Community Café** **@ Much Birch Community Hall**

**Saturday 13 November 2021**

**10:00 - 12:30**

and continuing every 2nd Saturday of the month

**11 December      8 January      12 February**

For more information or if you are in need of transport contact  
Lydia on 01981 540323 or socialfabric@hotmail.com



*A local group who want to bring people together, strengthen community links  
and provide relaxed and fun events for all ages.*

## Parish Walks

A small group of us set out through Aconbury Woods on our walk down to Hereford. on Sunday 10th October. We walked over fields to Twyford Common, on to Bullinghope, through Saxon Gate and finally along the river and over Victoria Bridge. As we entered the cathedral, we heard the soaring voices of the choir in Evensong whilst we viewed the Thomas Traherne Windows in the Audley Chapel. A quick cup of tea by the river and then we headed home on the Kingsthorne bus. Such a lovely sunny day and well done for those who made it!

Our next Parish Walk on Sunday 21 November at 1.45pm will be a **Photography Walk** around the local area with **Nick Daly**, a retired professional photographer now living in Kingsthorne. Nick will be encouraging budding and seasoned photographers with an appreciation of light, shapes, and the natural world. Any form of capture device can be used - iPhone or similar, even the film camera. Start and finish at Little Birch Village Hall. Refreshments available at the Hall afterwards at about 4pm. We will discuss what to do with your images - from storage through to manipulation and retouching. The distance covered on the walk will be short and with frequent stops. All welcome!

Angela Middleton, Little Birch Voluntary Footpath Officer [ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ajbmiddleton@hotmail.co.uk) 01981 540377

## Much Birch Church

I would like to say a HUGE thank you to all those people who volunteered to help us tidy the churchyard on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> October. We trimmed the hedges, strimmed the long grass, tidied the non- attended graves, weeded, cleared away the leaves etc. so that at the end of the morning it looked really good and presentable. We are so grateful for all your hard work so thank you again. **Sylvia Jones**

arts alive **FLICKS IN THE STICKS** at Much Birch Community Hall

Thursday 18 November 7.30 pm  
**LOVE SARAH (12)**

A young woman wishes to fulfil her mother's dream of opening her own Bakery in Notting Hill, London. To do this, she enlists the help of an old friend and her grandma. *Starring Celia Imrie.*

Refreshments including hot dogs available from 7pm

Coming up in December...

Tuesday 7 December, 7.30 - **LITTLE WOMEN u**

Tickets £4.50 (£3.50 under 16s)

Tickets available in advance or on the door - for further info or to book tickets please email [muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com](mailto:muchbirchflicks@hotmail.com) or call 01981 540097

For further information about films and screenings visit [www.artsalive.co.uk](http://www.artsalive.co.uk) (online booking available!)

## Coffee and Book Exchange

Little Birch Village Hall

10-12 noon

Saturday 20th November



## Bereavement Counselling

The Counselling and Bereavement Team from St Michael's Hospice can offer support to anyone in Herefordshire who has experienced loss, whether or not their loved one was cared for by the hospice. This could include a listening ear, coming along to a pub meal, an art group or joining in with one of our walking groups embracing our fine country air. To find out more please contact Sarah on 01432 852627 or email [sjenkins@smhospice.hereford.org](mailto:sjenkins@smhospice.hereford.org)





# Christmas Market

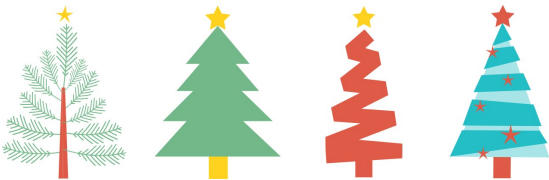
Much Birch Community Hall Management Committee is holding a Christmas Market on Friday 10th December from 2pm until 4.30pm. (Doors open for setting up from 1pm.) We have our usual stalls booked but would welcome anyone else who might like to hold a one-off stall at £5 per table. If you would like to book a stall please contact the Secretary, Sylvia Jones, by telephone on 01981 540980 or email [john.sylvia.jones@gmail.com](mailto:john.sylvia.jones@gmail.com)



## CHRISTMAS PRIZE BINGO

**LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL**  
**FRIDAY 10TH DECEMBER**  
EYES DOWN AT 7PM

Festive fun for the whole family  
Refreshments available



### LIVE MUSIC - BAR - FOOD

## NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY

DEC 31 | 8PM  
LITTLE BIRCH VILLAGE HALL

TICKETS JUST £10 PER PERSON TO  
INCLUDE A BUFFET

To reserve your tickets call:

Julie: 01981 541080

Alison: 01981 540791

Booking essential as tickets WILL NOT be sold on the door

**Table Tennis Tuesdays**  
**Little Birch Village Hall**  
7 December 2021

**ALL WELCOME**

7:00 - 9pm



# John Herbert Bryant BSc BEM 1933-2021

The well attended funeral and thanksgiving for the life of John took place at St Mary's church Little Birch Church on 7th October. It was taken by the Very Reverend Robert Willis Dean of Canterbury and included tributes relating to his upbringing, education, military service, working life and his outstanding dedication to Little Birch and Kingsthorpe. John grew up on the outskirts of Bristol and with his sister Mollie attended the Baptist chapel and school at the nearby village of Hanham. With his Mother and sister, he was evacuated to Fownhope for two years, during world war two, where he attended the one-room school. Later he continued his schooling at Kingsfield grammar school. After leaving school John studied at Reading university where he gained a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture. He then spent two years doing national service, which was compulsory at the time. His degree qualified him to become an army officer and he was appointed teacher in Maths and English to troops in Germany.

Following national service, John gained employment as Technical Manager with the Murphy Chemical Company, Wheathampstead, near St Albans, Hertfordshire. It was here that he met Betty who was working as a secretary. They married at Edburton Church, Sussex in 1967. John did not enjoy the office based job and so moved within the company to a position that involved travelling around the country advising farmers, especially soft fruit growers. John was well respected in the industry and by growers, which meant they were happy to be involved in trials of new products.

John and Betty moved to Little Birch in the 1970s. John continued his work but they both soon became involved in village activities. At that time the village hall, built in 1951, was disused so John, with others, applied himself to it's re-opening which happened in 1977. The hall was registered as a charity and John and Betty are named in the Declaration and Trust deed as trustees. The charity document has stood the test of time because it is still used as the constitution for management of the hall. The hall has been run successfully ever since. John was active in both the administration and social activities. Many photographs exist of John and Betty in the hall including one of a very smart looking John in a straw boater playing a part in a musical show looking very much like Maurice Chevalier.

When he gave up chairmanship of the hall committee in 2018 to live in full-time care at Holmer he left it in a sound financial position with a capable management committee. An apple tree selected by John and plaque were placed on the parish field in appreciation of his work. Many will always regard Little Birch village hall as a monument to him.

John had a huge influence on the content and production of the Birches and Aconbury newsletter that started in 1977 and has appeared monthly ever since. He posted most of the obituaries, often with previously unknown and interesting details of their lives as well as information about church services.

He - with a little help - personally made paper copies and arranged circulation to homes around Little Birch, Much Birch and Aconbury for many years. When new people moved into the area John paid them a welcoming visit and gave them a copy of the latest newsletter. Nobody asked him to do this. He did it because he thought it the right thing to do.

During this time John and Betty also ran the Kingsthorpe Post Office and shop for several years. John joined with village friends to play bowls at Wormelow and the St Martins club in Hereford. He also managed a strawberry field whilst continuing his organising and involvement in numerous other village activities, being a churchwarden and helping with most funerals, making regular contributions, including a gardening column to the church magazine, the Wormelow Hundred, chairmanship of the gardening club and organising the very successful annual horticultural shows.

He was chairman of the local history group and wrote the chapter on churches, chapels and schools in the 2006 book *Little Birch on Aconbury Hill* and the Millennium project in 2000 for which almost all homes and residents were photographed (the prints were collated and deposited in the Hereford records office. Digital copies are also available) and the two day celebration for the Queen's diamond jubilee in 2012 that attracted a crowd thought to be the largest ever assembled in the village.

Following all this work for community benefit it was really good news when John was awarded a British Empire Medal in the 2013 Queens new years honours list. The medal ceremony was performed by the then Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, Lady Darnley, in a packed village hall. It was a proud but emotional event for John and he modestly displayed the medal pinned to his immaculate blazer. Photographs taken at the event are framed and hung on a wall in the village hall. It must have been the only event of it's kind ever to be held in the hall's 70 year history.

As a final tribute, these are extracts from some of the messages posted on Facebook by local residents.

.... he was a giant of our community and a very great man indeed....

John's life was all about service to the community, and service to everyone

John was a truly wonderful and faithful servant to us all...

Knowing John for the short time I did, was a privilege.

He was a remarkable man the likes of which we rarely see.

He did so much to make this parish such a special place.

John, farewell and thank you for everything.

We will miss you more than words could ever begin to describe.

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### Art Space for Adults

Art Space is returning.

Time- 2-00 till 4-30 PM

Place - Little Birch Village Hall

Please note Art Space will start with alternating Thursday 's at first.

Everybody welcome.

For further details contact Sally Nichol at. [sally.nichol@btinternet.com](mailto:sally.nichol@btinternet.com)

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**UN CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
CONFERENCE  
UK 2021**

Climate justice will be under the spotlight as Hereford joins the global day of action around COP26 – the world climate summit being held in Glasgow from 6th November.

Herefordshire Friends of the Earth are calling for local groups to join the event which aims to unite all climate activists and groups around a common goal: to demand that governments and corporations limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C and deliver real and just solutions to the climate crisis.

Events will start at noon in Hereford’s High Town in solidarity with cities around the world which will be calling for stronger and focussed action on climate breakdown. Herefordshire has its own recent experiences to add to the list of climate related disasters that are causing havoc around the world and the event will give people the opportunity to relate their experiences to others.

## HISTORY GROUP

Are you interested in history - local or otherwise - family history or buildings history or any other sort of history? After a long covid break we few remaining members are hoping to form a new larger group and that anyone with interest/expertise/enthusiasm/ideas etc. Would like to join us.

If you feel you would like to be part of this new group please come along to a get together on Thursday November 18th at 7.30 in Little Birch Village Hall.

See you there! **Alison Clarke**

Ruth Stanier of Friends of the Earth said “Of course the pandemic may impact some people's ability or wish to take part. We shall have to do what feels most comfortable and follow all COVID measures in place on the day. There are many ways to get involved in the day. The COP26 Coalition is calling on organisations and networks to help make the demonstrations happen.’

If you would like more information, please email [melo-die4foe@gmail.com](mailto:melo-die4foe@gmail.com)



## Update from Herefordshire Advanced Drivers

Despite the relatively warm temperatures and limited rain for much of September and the first half of October, the reduced hours of daylight have signalled the impending change in seasons. Leaf fall, reduced until now by the lack of cold weather is beginning to take place in earnest and combined with heavy rainfall is causing slippery road surfaces. Other hazards include flooding, strong winds, dark days and low sunshine which can be blinding. There is also the likelihood of frost and ice in the near future.

Anticipation, concentration and constantly checking the road ahead and behind are vital. Windscreens and side windows, mirrors and covers of lights should be kept clean to ensure good visibility. Additionally, windscreen wipers should be checked frequently to ensure they are operating effectively. Vehicle lights should be switched on when visibility is low and drivers should look out for walkers, cyclists and other road users as well as animals. Equally important is to ensure cars are serviced in accordance with manufacturer’s schedules together with regular checks of tyres and their pressures, lightbulbs, battery charge, engine oil and other liquids.

We have continued to concentrate on mentoring those who had started the Advanced Driving Course before the lockdowns and good progress has been made with many test passes. We are now finalising our programme for 2022 and we are planning Driver Refresher Days spread across the county together with continuing recruitment and mentoring for the Advanced Driver Course. It is worthwhile emphasising that the aim of the Course is to make candidates safer drivers for the benefit of themselves and other road users.



## Jobs for the Garden in November

You have probably been enjoying the fruits (and vegetables ) of your labours during the last couple of months together with all your flowers, and wondering how much taller all your plants and hedges are going to grow. Vegetables seem to have done well although talking to numerous growers it appears that there are big variations in the crops of onions and tomatoes. Now for November.



Plant Tulip bulbs.

Rake up leaves or use your mower. Either compost them or if you have a large quantity compress into empty compost bag(s), tie up the top and puncture the bag. Set aside for a year or so and you will have some good leaf mould.

Raise containers off the ground to prevent water logging – use bricks, wooden batons or commercially manufactured ‘feet’.

Take care not to over water plants outside, in the greenhouse and indoors. Look over house plants and move to a lighter position.

Check greenhouse heaters, if used. An electric fan heater has the advantage of keeping the air moving which can help to reduce fungal disease.

Bubble wrap the interior of the greenhouse at the end of this month to insulate – despite climate change we can still get some very cold nights.

Empty fuel from mowers and other power tools (if you think you aren’t going to use them again until Spring).

Prune grapevine after leaf fall but in any case by the end of December.

Earth up carrots , parsnips and beet (mini version of potatoes) if over wintering in the garden. Still time to sow broad beans (Aquadulse variety) in sheltered gardens. Be prepared protect young plants if a period of frost and/or snow is forecast.

Net sprouts, kale, cabbage and cauliflower to keep pigeons off them.

Check stored fruit throwing out rotting items on the ground outside for the birds. Likewise, check for, and discard rotting potatoes.

Garlic needs a chilling period so plant now. However if you have wet/heavy soil start growth in seed trays or modules, keep in a cold frame and plant out in Spring.

If you still have a few tomatoes on their vines, pick them, no matter what colour and ripen them indoors or make chutney with the green ones.

Clean out nest boxes and rehang. Put a bit of straw or hay in the bottom of the box.

Check bonfires have no hibernating wildlife in them before lighting.

We are being encouraged not to be too tidy in our gardens these days so leave a pile of sticks, stones or other debris here and there – it does not have to be a ‘mountain’ – for small creatures to hibernate.

Clean bird baths and feeders and replenish.

Remove fallen leaves from ponds and thin oxygenating plants. It may be advantageous to remove pump if there is one, overhaul it and store in the shed.

**Derek Scrivens**



# Little Birch Parish Council

Your Little Birch Parish Councillors are:

**Cllr Peter Rees** Chair  
**Cllr Janet Gwinnett** Vice Chair  
**Cllr Kate Dillon**  
**Cllr Michael Davies**  
**Cllr Kate Robbins**  
**Angela Middleton** Volunteer Footpath Officer  
**Sophie Glover** Clerk 01432 617306

For updates and notifications of future meetings  
please check out the website –  
[www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org](http://www.littlebirchparishcouncil.org)

lbpcclerk@gmail.com

Please send copy for the December Newsletter to [editorial@birchesnews.org.uk](mailto:editorial@birchesnews.org.uk) or contact Elisabeth Taylor 07854 629193 if you want to send in paper copy. Deadline 18th November.

## Little Birch Parish Facebook Group



Find the latest news, events and business listings all in one place.

You are welcome to promote your local business, advertise a local event or post news or information of interest to the village and surrounding area.

Search for *Little Birch Parish Group* on Facebook

**Emily's CAKES AND BAKES**  
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## The Nightmare

### Bar and Events

We are a mobile bar set up on a semi permanent basis opposite the closed country pub The Castle Inn in Little Birch. Offering a range of cask ale and Draught products as well as a wide variety of hot and cold drinks.

Whether you want a quiet drink in our fairy light grotto or a good old chinwag with our friendly patrons, you can come and relax after that stressful week in one of our heated gazebos. Let all worries float away in to the night sky because you and I know we all need it after the last two years.

We welcome all here.

**Friday 1800 till 2200**

**Saturday: 1500 till 2200**

**Sunday 16.30 till 2100**





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## Autumn

I love the fitful gust that shakes  
 The casement all the day,  
 And from the glossy elm tree takes  
 The faded leaves away,  
 Twirling them by the window pane  
 With thousand others down the lane.

I love to see the shaking twig  
 Dance till the shut of eve,  
 The sparrow on the cottage rig,  
 Whose chirp would make believe  
 That Spring was just now flirting by  
 In Summer's lap with flowers to lie.

John Clare

## W.M. PARTINGTON

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EXTENSIONS		

RING FOR A QUOTATION

MUCH BIRCH  
 07774 805369 / 01981 541109

## PILATES

with Alison Allan

### Alison Allan is back!

I have been Zooming away in the summer but am now back at Little Dewchurch

Social distancing is a must and we can do this with 10 people per class – which means I can keep my eye on everyone!

Rollers, soft balls and circles makes for a varied and fun workout whatever our ability.

After our Lockdown Blues we all need to get moving with Pilates for our physical well-being and our mental health - and while we do this, we will improve our posture, balance, strength and general fitness.

My clients are aged between 18 and 95 so there is no excuse! Just give me a call!

Tel: 01432 840491 Mob: 07947 011707

Email: [Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com](mailto:Alisonpilates2016@gmail.com)

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growing tree for cutting  
closer to Christmas.





**Much Birch Parish Council**  
Parish Clerk Mrs Alison Wright  
Longfield House, Gooses Foot, Kingstone,  
Herefordshire HR2 9NE  
Tel. 01981 250860  
Email: [muchbirchclerk@gmail.com](mailto:muchbirchclerk@gmail.com)

**Much Birch Parish Council**  
**16<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**PARISH MEETING** - at the Parish Council Meeting held in the Much Birch Community Hall on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 from 7.30 pm.  
The Parish Council looked at three further planning applications and agreed on comments to be made.  
The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council will be held on **Thursday 2nd December 2021 from 7.30pm** at the Much Birch Community Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Please see notice boards and website for agendas. As always the public and press are more than welcome to attend the meeting and will have the opportunity to speak directly to their representatives.

**Your Much Birch Parish Councillors are:-**

**Cllr Alison Cook** (Chair) Jasmine Cottage, Wrigglebrook Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AW, e mail [thecooks@wyenet.co.uk](mailto:thecooks@wyenet.co.uk) Tel. 01981 540703

**Cllr Andrew Crum** Anfield House, Barrack Hill, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AX, e mail [a.crum@btinternet.com](mailto:a.crum@btinternet.com)  
Tel. 01981 540002

**Cllr Roisin Burge** The Old Hall, Barrack Hill, Little Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8AX  
[roisinburge@hotmail.com](mailto:roisinburge@hotmail.com) Tel. 01981 540724

**Cllr David Baldwin** The Granary, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HS  
[baldwin79@btinternet.com](mailto:baldwin79@btinternet.com) Tel. 01981 541198

**Cllr Chris Pickering-Grey** 4 Court Farm Barns, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HT  
[chris@pickering-grey.uk](mailto:chris@pickering-grey.uk) Tel. 07712 813218

**Cllr Joseph Goldsmith** Quantock House, Hollybush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HX  
[josephgoldsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:josephgoldsmith@hotmail.com) Tel.07967 728590

Full minutes of the meetings and information etc. can be found on the Parish Council website following the link found in this summary. [www.muchbirchparish.org.uk](http://www.muchbirchparish.org.uk).

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Contact Lucy for more information on 07974 053804 or [lucymason@hotmail.com](mailto:lucymason@hotmail.com)



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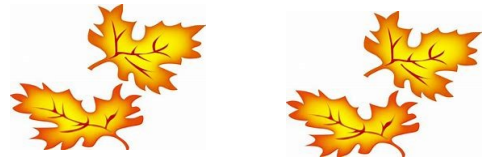
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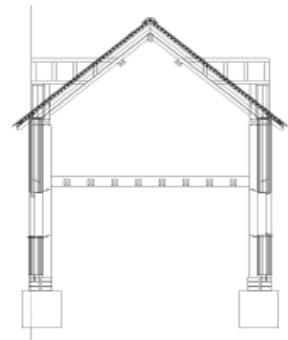
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## The power of music

Since the invention of the transistor radio (in the 1960s) it has been possible to have music wherever you go. Everything from listening to Radio Luxembourg on Long Wave and the newly instituted pirate radios to the output of the Home Service and then Radio 1, 2 etc.

Digital radios have just given us more choice – more stations to listen to, more variety and, sometimes, the same records just played in a different order.

What I want to highlight though is how music has the power to lift up and enthral. I was at Hereford Cathedral for an evensong. Not something I regularly attend, but we were there for the meeting of the Canons of the Cathedral. After we had processed in and were settled in our stalls, the choir began to sing. And what a glorious sound it was too, pure, exhilarating, filling the space around me with an intensity I could hardly believe.

COVID had forced the church to stop singing and, while we had returned to singing in churches, this was the first time in 2 years or so that the perfection of the Cathedral Choir just hit me. Every note was in tune, the start was immediate and the sound suddenly lifted the whole worship around me.

I was so glad to be there and just revel in that moment, truly a moment of inspiration!

### **Revd Mark**



### Services for November

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November (Third Sunday before Advent)

11.00 a.m. Little Birch - Holy Communion

3.00 p.m. Much Birch – All Souls service (a service for all who have lost someone in the last few years. If you would like a name remembered, -please contact Revd Mark)

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November (Remembrance Sunday)

9.15 a.m. Much Birch – Holy Communion with Remembrance

10.50 a.m. Little Birch – Morning Worship with Remembrance

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November (Christ the King)

9.15 a.m. Much Birch – Morning Worship

11.00 a.m. Little Birch – Holy Communion in Traditional Language

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> November (Advent Sunday)

6.30 p.m. St. Weonards' – Carols and Readings for Advent

