



The Office of Compline is gaining popularity among Christians of all denominations. Coming at the very end of the day it provides an opportunity for contemplation and reflection. Some of its prayers were incorporated into the 1662 Book of Common Prayer's 'Evening Prayer'.

"Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen."

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There is no scriptural evidence to say that Mary made the 80 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem [Luke 2: 4] riding on a donkey, but it is a reasonable supposition given that she was expecting a child at the time, and in no condition to walk that distance.

A Vicar, wishing to warn his confirmation class of the dangers of drink, posed the question that were the donkey to be offered two buckets from which to drink - one of water, one of ale - which would it choose. ? One bright lad said, "Obviously it would choose the water." And why would it choose the water, prompted the vicar; "Because it's a silly ass !" replied the boy.

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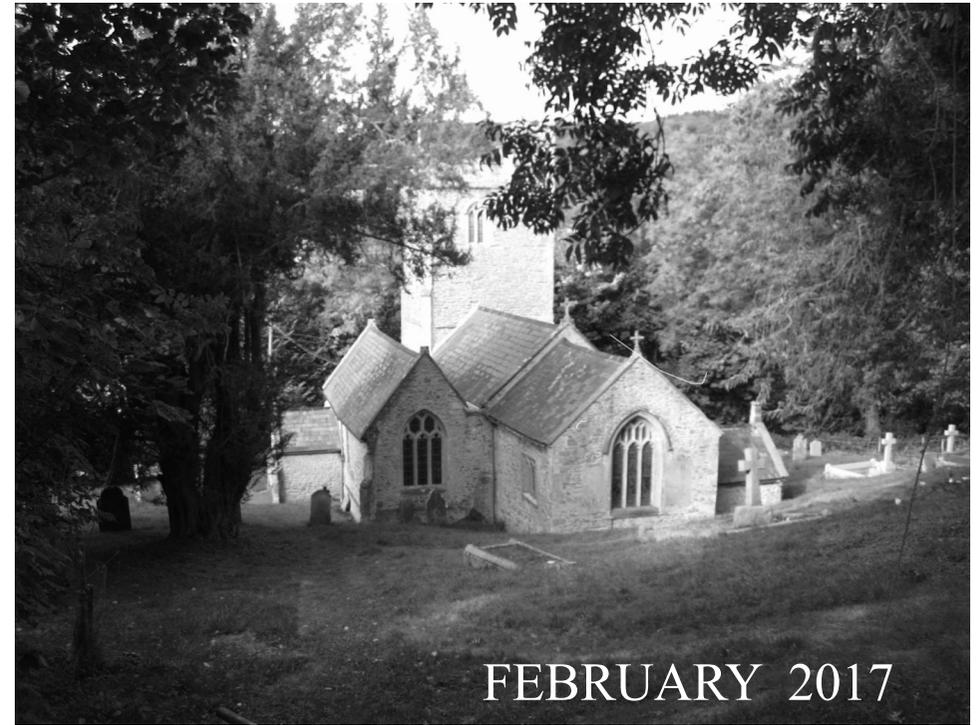
"He maketh wars to cease in all the world . . . [Psalm 46]
Evidently, the Psalmist is convinced that God is an interventionist !



St. Hugh's Church, Durlough, is a 'Prayer Book Church' as is our own at Aisholt. We treasure the liturgy of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer and are dedicated to keeping alive its beauty and spiritual depth. Tradition has it that St. Hugh's was originally built as a "Chapel in the Wood" - the wood being part of The Forest of North Petherton.

It is said that King John used to hunt in these woods and dedicated the Chapel to St. Hubertus, the patron saint of hunting; but later the dedication was changed to that of St. Hugh. [? to appease the 'League against Cruel Sports' ?]

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS , AISHOLT



FEBRUARY 2017

"He maketh wars to cease in all the world . . . [Psalm 46]

There are those who take the view that God does not intervene in human affairs - otherwise, they say, God would stop wars, saving countless of thousands of lives. But, it is mankind who start wars, and it is mankind who can end them. Should one pray for God's intervention, that one side or the other be victorious ? Or is God on the side of those who have the heaviest artillery, as Voltaire would say. Christians believe that God, as a loving Father, knows the needs of His children, and will fulfil their desires and petitions as may be most expedient for them - as the Prayer Book puts it so beautifully. What human father would not intervene on behalf of his children's well-being ?

Matthew 25: 14-30 "The Parable of the talents".

A talent, as mentioned in the New Testament, was the largest unit of currency at the time. The landowner gave five to one servant, two to another, and just one to a third. Our Lord, of course, was not talking about cash, but of special abilities or aptitudes one may possess, and how we should use them to the best advantage rather than hiding them away. At Aisholt we have each been given a five-pound note and asked to use our ingenuity to increase its value. A tall order, but it will be interesting to see the schemes people come up with.

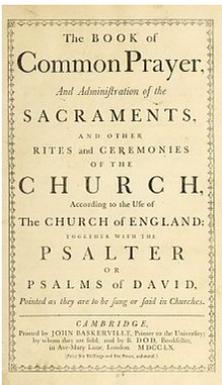
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There are just a tiny handful of villages in England where all those who served in either the first or second world wars returned home safely. They have become known as 'thankful villages'. Of the 52, only fourteen of them can claim to be doubly thankful, having lost nobody in either war.

Stocklinch (near Ilminster) and Wooley are two such 'doubly-thankful' villages in Somerset, as is our own Parish of Aisholt. If you have information of anyone who returned safely from either war, please let us know for the record.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Sirs, I cannot agree with those who say that the Church of England needs to be more innovative, exciting and relevant. The problem of diminishing congregations could be resolved if all Churches used the 1662 version of the Book of Common prayer rather than having to struggle with an endless variety of modern interpretations. Yours, T. Cranmers.

Sirs, I completely disagree with the view of T.Cranmers. Most of the benefices I know have at least one Parish using the 1662 Prayer Book services. Worshippers can go there if that is their preference. The strength of the Anglican Church lies in its diversity. Yours, J. Knox.

Dear Sir, Do you find the word 'catholic' is used somewhat loosely? Most people seem to use it when referring to Roman Catholicism, whereas Anglicans are equally part of the universal church as those in communion with the See of Rome. That's why, in the Creed, we say "I believe in the holy catholick Church" Ys. faithfully, Henry Pusey. Keble College, Oxford.

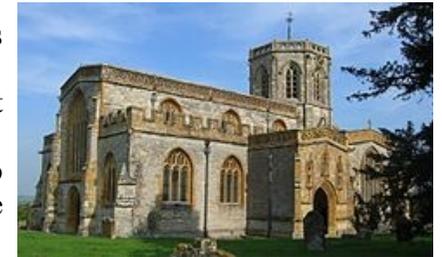


We have visited several local Churches during the year: The Church of St. Pancras at West Bagborough, St. Mary's Church at Bishops Lydeard; The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Over Stowey; St. Andrew's Church at Stogursey; St. Bueno's at Culborne; Muchelney Church (also dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul); and not least, of course, our own dear Church of Aisholt. We also took a look at St. Lawrence's, Bradford-on-Avon, and St. Mary's at Chedzoy.

Quiz. 1. Which one has a fine 16C rood screen? 2. Which is said to be the smallest medieval church still in use? 3. Which has a ceiling covered with pictures of Angels? 4. Which one has fine Romanesque arches? 5. Which has stained-glass windows designed by the pre-Raphaelite, Edward Burne-Jones? 6. Which one has several statues of St. Mary and the infant Jesus? 7. Which has a rare organ by the maker Samuel Parsons, and said to be one of only three in the country?

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This Church at North Curry is sometimes referred to as 'The cathedral of the Moors'. It dates from about 1300, having been built on the site of an earlier Norman Church. The Reformers weren't at all keen on too much ornamentation, and wouldn't have taken kindly to the altar.



In fact, they would probably had an apopleptic fit. At Aisholt, we generally just use four candles.

"And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together." [Acts 20: 8]

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Seven was a sacred number among the Jews and occurs on numerous occasions in the Old and New Testaments. In the New Testament alone it occurs at least sixty times, mostly in the Book of Revelations. Seven loaves, seven deacons, seven devils, seven stars / angels / candlesticks, to mention but a few. Following the Jewish custom of reciting prayers seven times a day, the Christian Church adopted a similar pattern - Matins, Lauds, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline. Archbishop Cranmer used Matins and Lauds when compiling 'Morning Prayer' (of the Book of Common Prayer), and Vespers and Compline as a basis for the Service of 'Evening Prayer'.