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The Pinnacle

**A Magazine for the parish of
Kildwick, Cononley and Bradley**

***The Churches of St Andrew's,
St John's and St Mary's***

St John's is a Local Anglican/Methodist Ecumenical Partnership

Winter 2022

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Dear Friends,

Charles Dickens wrote in "A Christmas Carol", "***I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all year long.***" A narrative that contrasts with the commercial aspects of the month's countdown in days towards the public holidays of Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day on 1 January 2023 and time off in between. I welcome the countdown

of days in the season of Advent, which began on 27th November, Christingle and carol services around our villages as we look forward towards the celebration of the birth of Christ on Christmas Day, 25th December. However, what if we had the above celebrations throughout the year?

In the words of Charles Dickens, "***we honour Christmas in our heart all year long***". We would have enough time to reflect on the impact of peace and goodwill between village residents, our community and make a difference. Charles M Schultz said: "***Christmas is doing a little extra something for someone else***", that 'extra something' for every month of the year. In "Miracle on 34th Street", it was quoted that "***Oh, Christmas isn't just a day. It's a frame of mind.***" A frame of mind held and maintained throughout the year.

So with boldness we ask the following questions: "***Who do we notice? Where do we notice these things? What are we going to do about these things?***" We are emboldened to becoming Christlike (Courageous, Compassionate and Contemplative) in order to do something positive and lasting that comes from within us.

Christmas is a marker for goodwill not just of the holiday season but in perpetuity with, for example, our loved ones, family, neighbours, community, schools and church. After all, the most important two commandments in the Bible are summarised from the 12th chapter of Mark's Gospel to: "***Love God and Others!***" The impact of this goodwill is immeasurable – reaching beyond the boundaries of our villages one person at a time. We help someone and that blessing is passed on increasing within a multiplier effect. This is on the assumption that we are genuinely open to doing something new. The journey



begins with a greater self-awareness of Christmas from within the heart of God to ours, where change is most impacted.

On the 25th day of this month, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the reason for Christmas. This wonderful mystery of God's dwelling among us in the fullness of humanity as Emmanuel, historically foretold by the Old Testament Prophets and born of Mary. Also known as the Lord, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, He is recognised as a baby lying in a manger and wrapped snugly in strips of cloth. He was the light for people who walked in darkness, a light that shined on all where death casts its shadow, and He remains the light of the world for us in the present and the future.

Christmas is thus a timely reminder that we are not just celebrating the birth of Christ but the enduring outcome of His humanity. It is also a time to refresh our assumption that it is a state of mind to nurture rather than a date in the diary.

I do hope that you will take the time to join us in one or more of our Christmas Services in our churches. On behalf of everyone in our Parish, may I wish you and your families the love of Christ, His peace and goodwill this Christmas season and a new year of blessings.

Reverend Mike



Regular Service Times

This is the last time we'll be publishing a complicated timetable! From the beginning of February, all of Kildwick's services will be at 11.00am. That time is shared by St John's while all of Bradley's services will remain at 9.30am. A similar pattern of non-eucharistic services at the different churches will continue very much as before.

	<i>Kildwick</i>	<i>Cononley</i>	<i>Bradley</i>
First Sunday	11.00am	11.00am	9.30am
Second Sunday	9.30am	11.00am	9.30am
Third Sunday	11.00am	11.00am	9.30am
Fourth Sunday	11.00am	11.00am	9.30am

Most services are Communion or "Eucharist". Those in blue are Morning Worship, normally led by a lay member of the congregation. The Cononley service, led by a Methodist minister, is marked in green.

The Lectionary for December and January

4th December	The Second Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 11.1-10, Psalm 72.1-7,18,19 Romans 15.4-13, Matthew 3.1-12
11th December	The Third Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 35.1-10, Psalm 146.4-10 or Cantic: Magnificat James 5.7-10, Matthew 11.2-11
18th December	The Fourth Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 7.10-16, Psalm 80.1-8,18-20 Romans 1.1-7, Matthew 1.18-25
24th December	Christmas Eve	<i>(probably)</i> Isaiah 9.2-7, Psalm 96 Titus 2.11-14, Luke 2.1-14[15-20]
25th December	Christmas Day	Isaiah 52.7-10, Psalm 98 Hebrews 1.1-4[5-12], John 1.1-14
1st January 2023	The Second Sunday of Christmas	Isaiah 63.7-9, Psalm 148 Hebrews 2.10-18, Matthew 2.13-23
8th January	Epiphany	Isaiah 60.1-6, Psalm 72.[1-9]10-15 Ephesians 3.1-12, Matthew 2.1-12
15th January	The Second Sunday of Epiphany	Isaiah 49.1-7, Psalm 40.1-12 1 Corinthians 1.1-9, John 1.29-42
22nd January	The Third Sunday of Epiphany	Isaiah 9.1-4, Psalm 27.1,4-12 1 Corinthians 1.10-18, Matthew 4.12-23
29th January	The Fourth Sunday of Epiphany	1 Kings 17.8-16, Psalm 36.5-10 1 Corinthians 1.18-31, John 2.1-11
2nd (5th) February	Candlemas <i>(Presentation of Christ)</i>	Malachi 3.1-5, Psalm 24.[1-6]7-10 Hebrews 2.14-18, Luke 2.22-40

Services for December and Beyond

Advent and Christmas bring their usual crop of carols and Christingles...

On **4th December**, we start with a **Christingle service** at **St Mary's** at **5.00pm**. This delightful family celebration shares the light of Jesus and spreads a message of hope. It features an orange (the world), red ribbon (the love and blood of Christ), sweets and dried fruit (all of God's creations) and a candle (Jesus's light in the world). With no fixed dates, we'll see several Christingles right up to Candlemas in early February.

11th December is the time for **Nine Lessons and Carols** at **St Andrew's**. In a move away from the "Candle-lit Service", this more traditional service is based on the format developed at King's College, Cambridge. It takes place at **6.00pm**.

The following Sunday, **18th December**, St Mary's join with Bradley Methodists for a **carol service**. There's a football match that day but with a 3.00pm kick-off, all should be decided before the service at **6.30pm**.

So we reach **Christmas Eve**. At **2.00pm**, the ever-popular **Crib Service** will take place at **St Andrew's** when young people can dress up as shepherds, kings and angels and help to build a Christmas Tableau. At **4.00pm**, the focus moves to **St John's**, where the folk of Cononley will hold their **Christingle celebration**. The late "**Midnight Mass**" beloved of a rather decreasing few will be held at **St Andrew's** – but it will be at midnight Bethlehem-time so we can gather at the earlier time of **9.30pm** to make our first celebration of the birth of Our Lord.

Sunday 25th is Christmas Day and the **Eucharist** (Communion) will be celebrated in all three churches at their traditional times: **9.30am** at **St Mary's** and **11.00am** at both **St John's** and **St Andrew's**. (*St Andrew's, normally open every day, will be closed after this service*)

2023 begins with the deeply significant and moving **Covenant Service** in the Methodist tradition on **1st January**. At Cononley this will naturally be in **St John's**, the shared church, at 11.00am. At **Bradley**, this will be in the Methodist church at 10.30am – and the congregation of St Andrew's is invited to join with either. There will be no service at St Andrew's that day.

We will all celebrate the Epiphany at our normal services on 8th January and will be gathering together at **St Andrew's** on 29th January for our "Fifth Sunday" joint celebration.

The season ends on **11th February** at **St Andrew's** where Candlemas will be celebrated as a **Christingle** at **11.00am**.

Opening the Doors



The visitor's book is an important part of our whole mission to those who cross our threshold. It helps to gauge numbers (they say about one in ten sign). It gives an opportunity for someone to leave a small footprint behind and, of course, it allows us to see ourselves through other people's eyes.

Since the Flower Festival in September, we've had some 120 entries in the book. Reading through them gives a fascinating glimpse into the many reasons why people come.

One big group has a connection with the church. There are several along the lines of ***"Baptised here in 1959. Still always feels like home"*** – and a number of ***"Married here"*** ones. Some of these seem to vie with each other for how long ago... 1774 wins the accolade, but they were 5-times great grandparents!

People come from near and far. We have had visitors from Australia and, of course, several from the States. One page caught my eye. One entry was from Priest Bank Road; as close as it gets while the next records a trip from Massachusetts. And the address on the third one could be anywhere. Narrow Boat Raggedy Ann, may be based on the south coast but if she's cruising the Leeds and Liverpool canal, does this count as a very close distance visit –or a rather long one?

People come to pray. Maybe it's linked with family history; ***"Married here in 1995; visiting Mum and Dad's grave. A very special place for our family"***. Some come, perhaps with little thought about prayer but wrote: ***"Thank you for inviting us in ... We took time to pray. We will be back!"*** And, yet others come with a very definite purpose; ***"Today our niece is being celebrated at her funeral in Oslo. Her grandparents are at rest in front of the church. We came (from Oakworth) to celebrate her life and be near her today."***

What unites almost all of the entries is delight that the church is not just open but also, as many say, so well cared for. There are lots of comments about the history, the beauty, the calm and the peace. There is a deal of appreciation of the guides and notices but, perhaps, even more from those who had the joy of meeting a real person to tell of the history and the organ. Thank you, David!

Chris Wright

Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

I recently attended a very good seminar on Safeguarding organised by the Yorkshire Association of Change Ringers for "Tower Captains, deputy Captains and Significant Youth Trainers" and led by the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer from the Diocese of York.

Most, but not all, bellringing happens in Church of England churches, but many ringers are not church goers and may not necessarily be aware of the strong safeguarding measures in force in the CofE. I leave you with some quotations which I found both interesting and thought-provoking. The first one is bellringing focussed, but I suggest you might look at the others and perhaps think about them in the context of safeguarding both within and outside church.

"Most incumbents, churchwardens and congregations don't know what goes on in Bellringing" York Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer

"Good decisions are based on good relationships"
the Most Revd Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

"Be curious, not furious" Karen Treisman

"When we touch someone, whose needs are being met?"
Sir Roger Singleton, CBE

"Never do nothing" Lord Laming

Jill Wright



A Christmas Prayer

Eternal God, this joyful day is radiant
with the brilliance of your one true light.

May that light illuminate our hearts
and shine in our words and deeds.

May the hope, the peace, the joy, and the love represented by the birth in
Bethlehem fill our lives and become part of all that we say and do.

May we share the divine life of your son Jesus Christ, even as he humbled
himself to share our humanity.

Bless us and the feast that you have provided for us,
let us be thankful for the true gift of Christmas, your son.

Amen

Eco-Engineering – Joy to the World

I have been seriously depressed this year, like a lot of us, by the unrelenting gloom on both political and environmental fronts. The love of the world and its peoples, that all religions place at the heart of life on earth, is being superseded by a depth of hate not seen since the end of WWII. Political discourse has become so strident, rude and ideologically driven that compromise and mutual understanding don't stand a chance. Discord, distrust and refusal to meet in the middle dominate.

And how come that decades of economic growth, the holy grail of modern life, which has lifted populations from poverty to material bliss, has actually resulted in a rise in depression and discontent, amongst the people who have benefited as well as the "left behinds" and the "just about managing"? The lives of countless millions around the world are being devastated by geophysical disasters, by war and famine, much of it caused by the dominance of the Western lifestyle with its super-erosion of natural resources and indifference to the fate of those most affected by it.

I have no idea what the solution is, but I know that it interferes with my ability to wholeheartedly enjoy my life. Politicians' inability to even discuss these issues is probably down to the fact that they know what they should do, but have no idea how to do it.

I'm still optimistic that the values that Jesus espoused, love, tolerance and forgiveness, will prosper in local communities like Cononley, whatever happens on the global scene. I have my own source of comfort and succour, and, of course, it involves compost.

To me, compost is the epitome of true prosperity. It is a miracle of sorts, transforming yucky stuff to "black gold", nature's way of recycling honed to perfection over millennia. I turn my compost from Bin 1 to Bin 2 every six months. This year it's been delayed because I was waiting for the seasons to change and it had become one of those tasks that lingers accusingly on the to-do list. Within a few spadefuls I was transported, my spirits lifted. It was Joy to the World. The stuff was teeming with life, slugs, woodlice, centipedes and of course worms – the sight of them all in their eco-engineering glory was joy to my heart. This is a fundamental process on which all life depends. As we contemplate the fate of human life on earth, let us rejoice and protect the life in the soil, wherein rests our salvation.

Joan Nicholson

Prayers for and Ja

Father, just as you sent John the Baptist
to prepare the way for Jesus,
help me to clear the path in my heart, too.
Show me the distractions in my life that block me
from all-out worship of you this Advent.
Lord, I await your coming—
As I celebrate the first Advent—the first coming—
I look toward the day where I will see you face to face.
I imagine what it will be like.
Give me a heart, Lord, that looks for your coming
on a daily basis.
Help me to live my life where I'm constantly
seeking your presence.
My offering to you today is my righteous life
for I know I am only clean because of Jesus.
Show me today how I need to be refined,
purified, forgiven.
Give me the strength to ask for forgiveness
and to then change my ways.

Father, I pray that you will turn our hearts
toward you as Christmas approaches.
Let us not get caught up in the hustle and
bustle of the season this year
and miss the chance to celebrate the gifts of
hope, peace, joy, love, that you sent to us
on that first Christmas.
That first Christmas, you gave us the gift of
hope wrapped in swaddling clothes and
laid in a manger.
Thank you, Father, for your immeasurable gift.
In Jesus' precious name, we pray.

December January

Praise and adoration be to our God, for he is good.
His grace and mercy fill the heavens and earth.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving,
and joyfully praise our creator.
As a father, he loves us, his children.
Sing his praises with joyful thanks in love and
devotion!
Let us love him who has loved us since the world
began.
Who would not love God from the heart?
We cannot give him adequate praise.
Still, in heaven he receives with good will our joyful
songs of praise and pours much joy into our
souls,
whenever we thank him, whenever we live in him.

Sing to Jesus Christ praise, thanks and glory,
for he came from heaven to destroy sin and death
for us
and by his precious, willing sacrifice,
restored innocence and peace.
Already here on earth he renews joy and life to us
by his grace.
Still greater bliss is prepared there for those
who love him when one day they will be
renewed in his image, made new and holy,
and awakened from death.
Let us rejoice in our holy God!
Let us rejoice in our eternal God!
How blessed it is to praise him here,
and then in heaven.
He is our holiness! He is our life!
He always loves us, his children.

Cononley WI



Hello! You have a new WI contributor this month – my name is Julie Cawood and I'm the new Cononley WI President!

For those of you that don't know me – I was born in Cononley, went to Cononley Primary School (yes, I'm on the school photograph in the New Inn!), my parents were Jack & Ethel (Poppy) Hayes – who you may recall from village cricket, football and The Evergreens (and the WI) and many of the village WI and a few church members have known me since I was born... I was christened at St John's, went to Sunday School when it was on the New Inn Fold and was a church choir member for a while... I'm a big hill walker, work part time as an interior designer specialising in care home interiors for people living with dementia and I'm also a school Governor at Cononley Primary school.

It is a great honour and privilege to have been voted in as the new WI President. Pauline Link, our outgoing President has been incredibly supportive and caring over the last few turbulent years of the pandemic and has left very big shoes to fill. I promise that I will do my absolute utmost to continue in her footsteps.

Our November meeting was the AGM – which was quite emotional as Pauline handed over the President's silver badge to me – however, our tears quickly dried as we enjoyed the wonderful food supplied by our members in the Jacob's Join, followed by our monthly raffle draw.

All eyes are now on our Christmas Party – this year on the 1st December at the Sports Club when we will be enjoying lots of great food (again!), playing party games and generally being able to relax and enjoy one another's company – something I don't think any of us will ever take for granted again.

If anyone would like to join the WI – or simply sample a meeting to see if "it's for you", then we would love to meet you. We meet on the first Thursday of every month at the village Institute at 7:30pm. January's meeting is our Charity Auction – always great fun! If you don't fancy walking in on your own – give me a ring on 07802 807815 and we can meet up and walk in together.

Julie Cawood
President – Cononley WI

Cononley calling

Hello and here we are heading towards the middle of November and it has rained and rained some more; it even hailed yesterday and not just small insignificant things but ones you could almost see the crystal formation with the naked eye!



However, I say, hooray for the rain (but not the miserable grey clouds) as the fields are deliciously green and the reservoirs are filling up.

The dog walking is not great in terms of - wellies are the order of the day and Shady Lane and the Long meadow are out of bounds – mud and muck spreading are not a good combination!

Other wild life such as the sheep and the tup in the field look soggy but otherwise unperturbed; our son sent a video message showing sheep on his forecourt at Candelisa and whilst that explained all the droppings it looked quite bizarre. Perhaps they had planned some form of meeting to discuss who had the best garden for some tasty herbage.

Do you think that the leaves are hanging on longer than usual? Certainly, our Privet hedge is shooting – a good six inch and we still have colour in the garden from the Nerines and some Roses that have missed pruning.

Halloween and bonfire night came and went with just one or two window, vibrating fireworks near to us – our dog was fine indoors; it was our first bonfire night together. In truth I can recommend telly viewing with a bit of dog snuggling as the weather gets cooler; the down side is - our dog snores – loudly!

Happy days.

I've just realised it will be into the New year before I put pen to paper again so here's wishing everyone peace, joy and lots of feeding the birds. Robins rock!

Carolyn Scarr

The meaning of Christingle



The **orange** represents the world and the **red ribbon** the blood of Jesus.

The **fruits and sweets** on the four cocktail sticks represent the four seasons.

Finally the **lit candle** symbolises Christ, the light of the world.

Living in the Past

*This is the second half of an article by Cononley resident, **Jean Swainston**. The first part was in the November magazine.*

The best time to go flinting is in the Autumn, when the farmer has harvested his crops and ploughed his land for the coming season. Many farmers living in these rich areas are aware of the presence of flints on their land and a few even have collections of their own. Most of them are quite willing to allow small groups on their fields as long as permission is sought first.



Early one particular Sunday morning, in the Hambleton Hills it was drizzling slightly and four of us had split up looking for erosion patches, bare areas where wind and weather has worn off the heather. Along the skyline the dark humps of several burial mounds stood out against the sky. Suddenly far on the left came a shout and a small figure frantically waved his arms - a sure sign of a good find.

The heather had been burnt off by a small fire and there in a circle between three large boulders was a flint chipping site! Around the base of each rock was a small semi-circular pile of flint chippings with one or two larger worked pieces in the centre.

Immediately in my mind, I could picture three men sat around on these boulders, perhaps talking as they chipped away, fashioning arrowheads and other tools. The site, flakes and implements had been completely undisturbed for several thousand years before the fire burnt the heather away to reveal it! I wonder why they hadn't taken away their flints?

Perhaps the approach of another and maybe hostile tribe, or maybe bad weather had suddenly driven them to take shelter.

With several months of experience, one can learn to identify not only the different types and functions of flint artefacts but also (and most importantly) the era to which the tools belong.

In Britain the earliest tools to be found are termed Palaeolithic. Only a very few sites have been recognised and these are mainly in the South of England. The majority of the flints found in Yorkshire belong either to the Mesolithic or early Bronze age. The Mesolithic is characterised by crude but efficient implements, the Neolithic has handsome leaf shaped points and barbed and tanged arrowheads, and the early Bronze age shows fine polished axe heads and long laurel leaf spear points. All these eras overlap tremendously and to say that a certain piece belongs definitely to such a date is open to question.

In our collection we also have several Clactonian flints, washed from the cliffs at Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. For many years the sea has been washing out objects that belonged to the people who may have been the first inhabitants of Britain about 300,000 years ago. Some of the implements are sharpened along one edge to form a knife or scraper for dressing animal skins or for trimming wood. Clactonian flints have been found at many other sites but so far no human remains have come to light. As one's collection grows the whole chronological order of development unfolds: from the early Palaeolithic Clactonian flints through to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze age. Among other things we have found in the Cleveland hills is a blue bead from the La Tène culture of the late Bronze age. The La Tènes originated in Switzerland and West Germany and were a warlike yet very artistic people who were experts producing glass jewellery and yet rode to battle in fearsome bronzed wheel chariots. We also possess a Celtic Stone Head (a House God) that we salvaged from Heaton in Bradford. The Archaeology Department at Cartwright Hall has photographed and verified it as of Celtic origin from a village that has long since disappeared.

In a cave in the Yorkshire dales, while potholing, we discovered a bone toggle used for fastening the cloak of a Romano-British tribesman. Pieces of pottery, crematorial remains, fossils and geological specimens too, have all been found in the course of our travels. Flinting and collecting is more than a hobby - it forms a pattern that becomes a way of life. Therefore it is very satisfying to know that in our small way we can, through our leisure time and by keeping a record of artefacts and sites, preserve the history of man for posterity.

Fighting Hygiene Poverty

My sewing machine has been on high speed yet again making more hygiene packs , this time to go with a friend to Uganda where she will stay for a while to teach the girls how to make and sell the packs themselves.

The packs I sent to Zimbabwe in September are still stuck in customs. How annoying is that?

Very! I sent them to an organisation called Zimbabwe Education Trust who spend approximately £1,500 a year purchasing hygiene wear so instead of making packs I will hold coffee mornings to raise money which I can then gift aid to this organisation for this purpose.

Our coffee morning in October raised £350 and last Sunday I had a table at the Glusburn Makers Christmas Market and raised a further £275. Combining the two monies together I will be able to send £500 to ZET and have enough left to buy more of the special PUL fabric essential in the making of more packs.

I have discovered I can send these packs to an organisation in the UK called Pachamama. They then distribute them all over Europe and beyond where they are desperately needed. My postage costs will therefore just be for the UK and not overseas. So much better for me.

I have just donated ten quilts to another organisation who will be taking them over to Ukraine

The new packs I am making use blankets and towels. So I am now on the scrounge for old towels (any size or colour) and blankets which will be cut to size and stitched inside a pad to provide wadding. Good flannelette sheets are used too.

Can anyone help please ?

Thank you for reading this and for your support



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PCC Report

The Parish Church Council met at Kildwick this month – in the Parish Room as that was considerably warmer than church! As always, attendance was good and discussion lively. All the usual (and necessary) business items were dealt with and as always, we picked up items from the previous meetings. The main part of the meeting was taken up with consideration of the Mission Action Plan for the parish, which Mike has put together using the responses from his questionnaire. It's a very comprehensive document, showing how we achieve our vision for the next five years of our parish life. Central to this work is the establishment of Teams, all of whom will have a very clear remit and who will be accountable to the Vicar, Churchwardens and PCC. Mike will introduce this Plan to the whole parish very soon: you'll then have the chance to see what you can offer to bring God's kingdom to Kildwick, Cononley and Bradley (and beyond!!). Obviously, the Plan will be reviewed and adapted as we go along – but it's an exciting beginning to the new year!

I mentioned at the start that Kildwick church is pretty chilly! In fact, with the current cost of living crisis, not only churches but very many places, including peoples' homes, are pretty cold. The Church Commissioners have responded by granting funds to churches to be used specifically for heating costs. St. Mary's, St John's and St Andrew's will each receive £700, plus a further £400 for use in the parish. Mike wants to use this to establish a weekly "warm place", initially at St John's using the Tuesday "Tea and Toast" session and also at St Andrew's on a Thursday morning in the Parish Rooms. Bradley Methodists are looking at providing a space in that village. If you'd like to help with these sessions, please get in touch with Mike or the Churchwardens.

Some of you may remember that St Andrew's received a very generous legacy from the late Miss Kathleen Auty. Legacies are not spent on day to day running costs and the plan is to use a part of this one to buy a nave altar to replace the current, very basic and uncomfortably low current table. Designs have been commissioned, so watch this space!

The final piece of business was to appoint Jane Hall as a Governor for Kildwick School. It's a big job, so thank you, Jane, for being willing to take it on!

Our next PCC meeting is on January 24th next year. If you have something you'd like to ask or suggest, please contact Mike or me in good time.

Jill Wright

Columbidae - Pigeons



This is a family of some three hundred species, most of which are found in the tropics. You may love them or hate them, but they are everywhere! The distinction between pigeons and doves is not a taxonomic one, with the term dove tending to be used for the smaller varieties.

Pigeons are famed for their homing ability; from Roman or even Persian times, via the siege of Paris to World War 2, they were used to carry messages. When far from home they use the sun as a compass and can compensate for its movement across the sky; closer to home it seems they use local landmarks to navigate.

Feral or city pigeons are found in cities the world over and are derived from the Rock Dove. Such has been their success that true Rock Doves probably only exist in the wildest corners of northern Europe and Asia. They chose to desert their natural habitat and associate with mankind due to the ready availability of food combined with the breeding and roosting potential offered by buildings, which resemble the cliff faces on which they naturally breed.

Woodpigeon courting is particularly obvious in spring, with much cooing and preening together with explosive nearly vertical short flights and much clapping of wings. Their breeding season never seems to end, and they are regularly recorded having young in their nests from February to November.

This extended breeding season is only possible because, like all pigeons, Woodpigeons produce 'crop milk' which is similar to mammalian milk in its composition. It is produced in the crop, a sac-like structure normally

used for storing food. This allows the young to be fed even when suitable food is not available.

Pigeons like to eat cabbage, sprouts, peas and grain and one reason for their recent

proliferation is the availability of autumn sown brassicas, such as oil seed rape. They will also eat buds, shoots, seeds, nuts and berries, and in autumn can often be seen sitting on cotoneaster or pyracantha hedges.



The Collared Dove, another of the commoner birds in Britain, is pinky-grey with a distinctive black band on its neck. They first bred in the UK in Cromer in 1955, having spread naturally from their ancestral haunts in Turkey and the Middle East. More recently their numbers have fallen: results from the BTO's Garden BirdWatch show that the Collared Dove has declined by a quarter in the last decade while the Woodpigeon population has increased. Are the two changes linked or is something else responsible?

Woodpigeons have done particularly well in south-east England and East Anglia, probably due to altered agricultural practices. Autumn rather than spring sown cereals and oil seed rape have led to green foods being available all year round, improving overwinter survival and allowing a longer breeding season.

The Collared Dove population, on the other hand, has been declining throughout the country since 2005. One reason for this could be the increasing Woodpigeon numbers, the two birds perhaps competing for similar food and habitat. We can't completely blame the Woodpigeon though. Around the same time as the decline started, trichomonosis, a disease that only affects birds, spread from pigeons and doves to Greenfinches and other small birds, increasing its prevalence in the environment. It is thought that Collared Doves could be more susceptible to trichomonosis than Woodpigeons and that the rise in disease incidents might be having an effect on the Collared Dove population

If you find the lives of our garden birds to be of interest, and would like to join in and count the feathered occupants of your garden, please visit the BTO Garden BirdWatch website (www.bto.org/gbw). If you know of a local organisation near York which would like a talk on garden birds contact Mike Gray gbwmike@gmail.com.

The Back Page



*...no I don't think you're the real Father Christmas!
I think you're up there pinching lead off my roof!!*

A Christmas Tip

When all the festivities are done and you're packing away your decorations and lights, make sure you don't rush the job. Take time over tricky items like Christmas tree lights; you'll be thankful you did when next Christmas comes around!

Wishing you all a Peaceful Christmas
Pauline Link

Deadlines

Pinnacle Towers goes into hibernation over Christmas. You'll have no copies with old mince pie stains or rings from the editor's glass of mulled ale.

We'll be back for the February edition, so get your tales of Christmas activities in by:

Monday, 23rd January 2023