

No 27 January 2019

Hilfield Christmas 2018



We had a wonderful Christmas at the Friary, which we celebrated with around 40 people.

Some memorable aspects were the international nature of our celebrations. On Christmas Day we sang the familiar carol tunes in English, Tamil and German, and read the Christmas story concurrently in several languages to emphasize the Christmas message is given to the world.

On Christmas Eve, the Crib Devotions took place in the Guest Common room. Kennett, from India, glued on a woolen beard, and Hannah, from Germany, put a pillow under a blue shawl, and together they acted out the well-known story, as Joseph and Mary negotiated with the Innkeeper: “Wake up! Wake up! I need help now! My wife’s having a baby and we don’t know how!”



None of us “foreigners” really know what Boxing Day is about, but we decided that boxes were important. Everyone wrote a slip of paper, listing and offering their gifts to the Christ child, and each took from the crib a box with some candy and a Scripture verse.



I am very grateful for the rich contributions our volunteers make in every aspect of our lives: chapel devotions, meals and working together. *Brother Clark Berge (Guardian)*



The Hilfield Community

Continuing the Franciscan witness, long-established at the Friary, the Community consists of both vowed Franciscan Brothers of the Anglican Society of St Francis and also lay community members who seek to nurture and share the Franciscan values of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Inspired by St Francis of Assisi, the Community offers hospitality to people of different faiths and no acknowledged faith and works for a more gentle and respectful care for the earth.

News from the Land



Who says winter is dull? At Hilfield, and elsewhere, snowdrops are emerging from the leaf litter, and there's loads of colour in Chantal and Richard's garden and elsewhere in January. Try out our 'Winter Trail' for other delights.



Introducing .. our 3 new heifer calves



Oriens, born on 21st Dec, the shortest day of the year, and her Mum, Clarissa



Bonny, and her Mum Molly



And Marjorie, born on 9th December, with her Mum Lizka.



Fruit of the vine ...

You may have noticed a vibrant vine growing in the Polytunnel in the summer . Katie and Jonathan



worked hard, with the help of some alchemy, are now waiting patiently as the grape juice converts into Communion wine.

Conservation and wildlife

Our Conservation Cloister has become a source of information and inspiration for visitors to Hilfield. It's on the N side of the courtyard, with displays about the land, wildlife, surveys you can join in with. Note the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch in late Jan, and the Tawny Owl survey—they can be done anywhere, great to spend time outside, looking and listening. Sara has put information also on our website, and Richard has made a new Hilfield Conservation group on Facebook—take a look.

As part of the High Stoy Conservation Cluster, Richard together with two of our neighbours produced an action plan to encourage new habitats for the Duke of Burgundy butterfly across the escarpment. Great things result from working together.



Br Cristian Michael's Life Profession 15th Jan



A powerful, moving, and celebratory event all in one!

Br Cristian Michael's sister Helen flew in from her home in the Lebanon, and 40 people gathered at 1 p.m. including the Minister Provincial Brother Benedict and several SSF brothers from other houses. Bishop Stephen, the Bishop Protector of the Society of Saint Francis presided and Brother Sam preached the sermon in which he explored the words of Jesus 'take my yoke upon you and learn from me ...' His sermon is on our website. Then we repaired to the Refectory to a scrumptious meal of vegetarian cottage pie and fresh salad, and, a beautifully decorated celebratory cake!

Up-coming events for the rest of this winter and the spring

7th—10th March A 'Craft Week' with Suzi Herbert

Saturday 9th March: A Lenten Quiet Day with Br Clark Berge, on 'Trust'.

22nd—24th March: A folk weekend with Alan and Gill McIntosh

16th—21st April: An invitation to join the Community in the journey to Easter Day

4th and 5th May: Hilfield Secret Garden is open

10th—12th May: 'What did you say?' A Retreat weekend led by Br Clark Berge

Please see full information in the programme available on-line or in Reception, and please take care to book early, as events tend to get booked up—the Advent Retreat was completely booked up and many people were disappointed.

Comings and goings

Before Christmas we said farewell to Hee **Hong Kyung-hee** who returned to South Korea for a while to see her family. She hopes to return as a full volunteer in the near future.

We mentioned in the last Update that **Kennet** was shortly to arrive as a volunteer from India. She arrived in October, to a very warm welcome. Kennet is a member of the Church of South India, and has completed a degree in Electronics, but came here to experience something new. She enjoys all the work here, as all is new to her.



A big welcome to **Nathan**, an Episcopal Priest from Maryland in the United States. He has come here for a time of work, prayer, and discernment in a Franciscan context.

Brother Chris Martin moved to Hilfield in October from the Brothers' houses in London, where he had been living for the past year. He has been in SSF for 8 years, and is the Provincial Bursar, responsible for all financial and legal aspects for the brothers in Europe. He will need to spend some of his time away from Hilfield, as he travels round the houses, but is greatly looking forward to making Hilfield his new home. He writes: "I am excited about all the new possibilities that Hilfield will bring and being in a much larger and more mixed community. I realise this will bring many new challenges, but also wonderful opportunities for me to grow as a person in Christ and to offer my gifts to the community here." He will be helping initially with the library, chapel and social media.



We once again participated in the HOST programme at Christmas— a programme to offer hospitality to newly arrived international students, and one of our volunteers did the same and enjoyed it hugely. See www.hostuk.org/

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