

HOPE IS BORN

InSpire

Issue 22

December 2018

Wishing all our Readers
a Joyous & Peaceful
Christmas
and
a
Happy New Year

The monthly publication for the Parish of
Capel & Ockley

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I am always thinking of the Lord ... Heart, body and soul are filled with joy.

Psalm 16: 8,9

Walk by faith www.dayspring.com

This issue is kindly sponsored by

Sue & Phil Partridge and family
Our thanks to them

Wishing all our Sponsors & Readers
a very Happy Christmas



*I bring you the most joyful news
ever announced ... the Saviour - yes,
the Messiah, the Lord has been born.*
Luke 2: 10,11

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Rev Liz writes

Dear all,

On putting pen to paper so to speak, as I write, the weather has turned very cold! What a shock to the system after our beautiful autumn and the generally mild temperatures we have enjoyed. The central heating is definitely being turned up a bit! I wonder what this next month of December will bring? It is such a busy time of the year, although I think it's busy in Capel and Ockley all year round with the amazing range of activities, events and groups that offer such a wide and varied programme. However, as we approach Christmas it always seems there is virtually no time in December before the 25th and so this month we I hope will enjoy the various Christmassy events on offer. The churches in Capel and Ockley will be hosting and supporting much of these so do study the December services and events list in this magazine to find the detail. Everything is also on our Capel and Ockley website too. If you haven't visited it yet here is the address www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk So if your Christmas has to include donkeys, carols, Christmas trees, excited children, nativities, cribs, Father Christmas, mulled wine and mince pies, indoors or outdoors its happening in one of our villages or churches! That's without the traditional Christmas worship of course, throughout the month and into the season of Christmas which ends for churches on Candlemas Day when we hold our annual Christingle service in aid of the Children's society. Always a wonderful occasion! There is something about lighting candles isn't it that is so wonderful in winter time and we have plenty of that in church!



It's a letter from your church. They want to know if you've done the flower rota, if you've done the brass-cleaning rota, and have you ordered the mince pies for the carol singers Christmas party?

Last month we marked the end of the First World War, the signing of the Armistice, on Remembrance Sunday in both our churches. At St Margaret's in the morning many joined us in our commemorations, followed by refreshments in the village hall and an exhibition of memorabilia from that terrible time, along with biographies of the men from Ockley who lost their lives. Then in the afternoon things got a lot noisier at Capel as wreaths were laid at the war memorial, this year the two minute silence began and ended by ex-naval guns organised by Flight Lieutenant Andrew Davidson on behalf of the Military Show. It really brought it home to us just what our men went through on the front line and generally in battle. It was extremely loud, even though I am told it had been toned down! Thank you Andy and Johnny for organising this for our village commemoration and thank you to Iris Spruce for organising the special event at Ockley Village Hall. All in all it was a very moving day commemorating this special occasion at both our churches.

As we remember what happened 100 years ago, in a sense this month is a month of remembrance also. We remember something that happened over 2000 years ago and that is the birth of Christ which took place in a small town called Bethlehem. It was in contrast a fairly quiet event in a stable or cave attached to a pub which provided emergency shelter to the Holy family. That is I suppose if you discount the loud and joyful singing of the angels announcing his birth on the hillside to the shepherds; the background sounds of the animals sharing the stable, the exotica of the caravan of camels and wise men seeking and following the star which led them to Bethlehem; what a sight it all must have been, and in any case is any birth of a child ever quiet? Yet it would seem a strange way for God's Son to be born into his world. Shouldn't God's action be impossible to miss, like the way we jumped almost out of our skins when the guns were fired?! Had it all gone horribly wrong?

God's strange preparations are a tender mixture of the ordinary and the extraordinary. Just over 100 years ago on the battle fields in that terrible Great War, on Christmas Eve, hostilities ceased on both sides and French, German and British soldiers crossed trenches to exchange seasonal greetings and talk. Apparently there were joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, carol singing, football games, sharing of food and souvenirs. It has to be said that this was during the early months of the war when both sides were reconsidering their strategies, yet what an extraordinary occurrence this was and is remembered as a symbolic moment of peace and humanity amidst one of the violent events of human history. Ordinary men brought together by the extraordinary remembrance of the birth of Christ and what it had come to mean to them in that life and death situation very far from home. In Advent, those days before Christmas which the church observes, we remember the prophets from centuries ago who foretold that one day there would be a saviour who will bring great change to the world. The Saviour has come and we also look forward to the time when he will truly come again to take the world wholly to himself. Then there could be a really big bang! In the meantime we celebrate and remember that God is with us – Emmanuel – God with us who ultimately will bring peace to the world for all time. Have a peaceful and happy Christmas wherever you are and whatever your Christmas traditions are!

With my love and prayers

Revd Liz

Children's Society Christmas Coffee Morning held on Saturday 10th November

We are really pleased to be able to report back that nearly £700.00 was raised for The Children's Society (donations are still coming in) and Sue Partridge took £175.00 on the Traidcraft stall. A magnificent amount for just two hours - so a HUGE thank you to everyone who turned up to support us on the morning.

Suzanne Cole & Sue Partridge



The Pavilion Café at Ockley



This community cafe is held at the cricket pavilion in Ockley and opens each Wednesday from 9.00 am—12 noon.

Do pop in for delicious homemade cakes, freshly brewed coffee and a range of teas!

We hope to see you there!

Don't forget our next **Parish Half Hour of prayer** is at **9.30 am on Saturday 8th December** at St Margaret's, Ockley. NB: the next one is then Saturday 5th January 2019.

And

Please note there is **no Sunday Session** in December!

Donations for the weekend of 9th December

Don't forget to bring in any gifts wrapped and labelled (gender and age gift of recipient) for our friends at Christ Church, Brixton

ALSO

We are collecting gifts for hampers for local families. There is a list of items needed inside St John's. Please sign up FIRST saying what you would like to give and then place your donations in the church.

Thank you in anticipation!

Remembrance Sunday Collection for The Royal British Legion

We are very pleased to inform everyone that we raised the following at the Service of Remembrance.

£352.39

A huge thank you to everyone who gave so generously.

Debbie von Bergen



If you enjoy InSpire each month, would you consider sponsoring an issue of InSpire in 2019?

As we near 2019, we are looking for Sponsors InSpire. The current cost of a 24 page issue x 50 copies is £58.00. Occasionally, it is 28 pages and this costs £67.00 for 50 copies.

We would like to keep this magazine free of charge for everyone to enjoy.

If you think you could help, please speak to Debbie von Bergen or Suzanne Cole.

Thank you.

SATURDAY	1 ST 9.30am 5.00 pm	CHRISTMAS TREES EVENT – in Churchyard <i>Putting up and decoration in the morning 9.30am</i> <i>'Grand Switching On' at 5.00 pm with carol singing</i>
SUNDAY 2 ND	8.00 am 9.30 am 10.30 am 12.30 to 5pm 6.00 pm	ADVENT SUNDAY Holy Communion BCP (Capel) Matins at St Margaret's (Ockley) Family Communion (Capel) Soup lunch in church followed by the last Capel Teas of the season with lots of Christmas goodies! <i>All proceeds to CMS (Church Mission Society)</i> Surrey Weald Team Advent Service at St Mary Magdalene The Holmwood. All welcome!
TUESDAY	4 TH	CHRISTMAS MESSY CHURCH - 3.15pm onwards in the Village Hall <i>Lots of wonderful Christmas crafts and activities with party tea</i>
SATURDAY	8 TH 9.30 am 5.00 pm	Prayer half hour at St Margaret's Ockley Carols on the Green at Ockley (an annual event organised by The Ockley Society) <i>Lighting of the Christmas tree, festive music and carols, along with a visit from Father Christmas!</i>
SUNDAY 9 TH	9.30 am 10.30 am	2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT Holy Communion at St Margaret's Ockley All Age Nativity and Gift Service (Capel) <i>Children come and join in our nativity play where we will be joined by our donkeys. Costumes provided. We will also be collecting gifts which we transport to Christ Church Brixton. Please wrap and label with gender and age as appropriate.</i>
SUNDAY 16 TH	8.00 am 9.30 am 10.30 am 6.00 pm	3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Holy Communion BCP (Capel) Matins at St Margaret's (Ockley) Family Communion (Capel) Nine lessons and carols (Capel) <i>A traditional service of readings and carols; seasonal refreshments will follow!</i>
SUNDAY 23 RD	9.30 am	4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT Joint Parish Communion at St Margaret's (Ockley)
MONDAY	24 TH 4.00 pm 11.00 pm	CHRISTMAS EVE Crib Service (Capel) <i>Christmas really begins we place the Holy family along with shepherds, sheep, wise men in our Christmas Crib with all the usual favourite carols</i> Midnight Communion (please note start time is 11pm) <i>The first communion of Christmas on this holy night.</i>
TUESDAY	25 TH 10.30 am 10.30 am	CHRISTMAS DAY Christmas Celebration worship at St Margaret's Ockley Christmas Communion at St John the Baptist Capel
SUNDAY 30 TH	9.30 am	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS Favourite Carols Service at St Margaret's Ockley (Joint Parish service)
JANUARY 2019		
SATURDAY	5 TH	9.30am New Year Prayer half hour at Capel (and thereafter fortnightly, as per usual)
SUNDAY 6 TH	8.00 am 9.30 am 10.30 am	THE EPIPHANY Holy Communion BCP Matins at St Margaret's Ockley Family Communion (Capel)

Junior InSpire

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke chapter 2 verses 1-7

The Roman Empire charged the countries it had invaded taxes, based on the number of people and what they earned.

Emperor Augustus gave orders that all people in the Empire were to be registered so they could be taxed.



This census was before Quirinius became Governor of Syria* (* whose own census started riots - Acts 5:37)



When the order came, Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth.

But Joseph was descended from King David, who had been born in Bethlehem...



so Joseph took Mary to Bethlehem to stay with his family.

Come and meet everyone!



A normal home in Bethlehem.



stable with mangers

Animals were kept inside at night

Everyone lived and slept in the living room.

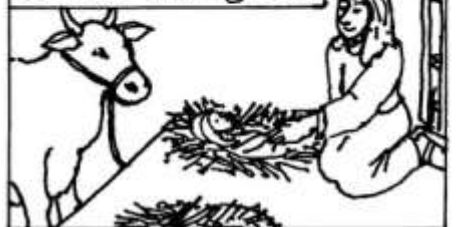
Room added for guests and visitors

While they were staying there, Mary's baby was born.



There was no space in the guest room to put a new baby!

So they made a snug bed for Jesus in one of the mangers.





Read the Christmas story in Luke 1:1 - 2:21

Work of Christmas Begins

"When the song of the angels is stilled,
 when the star in the sky is gone,
 when the kings and princes are home,
 when the shepherds are back with the flocks,
 then the work of Christmas begins:
 to find the lost,
 to heal those broken in spirit,
 to feed the hungry,
 to release the oppressed,
 to rebuild the nations,
 to bring peace among all peoples,
 to make a little music with the heart...

And to radiate the Light of Christ,
 every day, in every way, in all that we do and in
 all that we say.

Then the work of Christmas begins.

-- Howard Thurman, adapted

Loving God, Help us remember the birth of
 Jesus,
 that we may share in the song of the
 angels,
 the gladness of the shepherds,
 and worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
 and open the door of love all over the
 world.
 Let kindness come with every gift and good
 desires with every greeting.
 Deliver us from evil by the blessing which
 Christ brings,
 and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy
 to be thy children,
 and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
 with grateful thoughts,
 forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

-- Robert Louis Stevenson

Dear Lord,

We thank you for all that is good in our lives and all the gifts that we give and receive this Christmas. We thank you for the annual giving to our friends at Christ Church in Brixton and the hampers made for local families. We thank you for everyone's generosity and pray that these gifts will be well received. We pray that the recipients will also feel the love which accompanies all the gifts and that they will feel the peace of the Lord this Christmas.

We pray for all who are lonely or unwell. Let us look out for neighbours who may be lonely this Christmas and too proud to ask for our help. We pray for the following who are unwell or recovering - Julia Horrox, Alan Roberts, Briony and Irene Cole. We especially bring before you our very dear friends Chris and Gwyneth as Chris is currently in hospital. Also our friends Tony and Rosemary Goddard as Tony suffers a setback with his health. We thank you for the many years of service both Tony gave as organist and Chris as a serving Minister and we pray for your comfort and healing on them Lord. We also remember other friends who are not able to join us in church currently, including Ron Backhouse, Pat Wombwell, Peter & Mary Ede, Wyn Wright and Joan.

Lord, we bring before you those who have died recently and we remember those whose anniversaries fall at this time. We pray for those who are facing their first Christmas without loved ones.

Lastly, we bring before you Lord all those who are known to us personally and all who have requested our prayers in our Parish churches.

Send us out as a light in the world in this Holy season of Goodwill, to live and praise your name.

Amen





Do come and join Capel Choral Society for **'A Christmas Celebration'** on **Monday 3rd December at 7.30pm in Capel Memorial Hall** for an evening of seasonal music including: Adolphe Adam's 'O Holy Night' and Lauridsen's 'O Magnum Mysterium' - plus carols for choir and audience. The choir will be conducted by Stuart Longley and the accompanist is Anthea Smallwood.

Tickets are £7.50 to include a mince pie and mulled wine and are available from Yvonne Allmond on 01403 269884 or email: yvonneallmond@aol.com. You can also buy tickets from choir members or on the door on the night.

Appeal for Coffee Rota volunteers for St John's in Capel

We are getting short of volunteers on this rota, so if you think you could help or would like to find out more about what it entails please speak to George Ede, 01306 713247, george@nightlesscopse.co.uk. You could also shadow someone on the rota one week to see what is involved!
Many thanks. George



T.L.C. Teas @ Ockley Village Hall

TLC meets monthly for a friendly afternoon chat, scrumptious teas and lots of Tender Loving Care.

Normally held on the THIRD Monday of every month from 3.00—4.30 pm in Ockley Village Hall

Our aim is to provide a happy and relaxed atmosphere for those who just want to meet together.

For further details contact: **Judie on 01306 888456 OR emailthoroldfuters@aol.com**

St Margaret's Bible Study Group

Held every fortnight on a Thursday at 2.00 pm at Gill Christie's house:

'Elderslie', Stane Street, Ockley, Surrey RH5 5TD
Phone: 01306 711917 for more details.

Lord, may we be like the Wise Men who were guided to you by a star. Give us the wisdom to seek you, light to guide us to you, courage to search until we find you, graciousness to worship you and generosity to lay our gifts before you, who are our King and our God for ever and ever.
Amen.



...and if you scan it, you can download my Christmas sermon!

PASTORAL ASSISTANT JOURNEY BY SYLVIE BECKETT

Wow! What an incredible 15 months I've had! It all started with my sitting at the Church A.G.M. and the role of Pastoral Assistant was somehow mentioned. Something in that title resonated with me.

After the meeting I chose to have a chat with Doug about it. The following Sunday Rev Liz took me to one side and said "I think you and I should have a little chat" - the rest as they say is history!

It started with an application form to fill in, followed by an interview in Guildford last September. Luckily, both were successful! I then began my course in January at St Emmanuels, Staunton, nr Guildford and was most Friday mornings for six months. During this time, I also attended a Residential weekend at St Columba's, Old Woking.

The course consisted of a variety of exercises, many in listening and observing behaviours. We also had to submit an autobiography and a spiritual autobiography, and these proved to be very emotional exercises.

We worked mainly in small groups of five, with our own group tutor and it was truly incredible to witness the bond, trust and love that grew within the groups.

During the course, I had to have regular meetings with Rev Liz and she in turn had to issue me with a Parish assignment. The assignment had to consist of me visiting a pensioner needing pastoral support. There would be six visits, backed up by supervision from both my Incumbent and my group tutor. Rev Liz found me a wonderful 'case study' who for the purpose of this article I will call 'Madam X' (I know she will LOVE this title!). When I met her she had recently suffered a bereavement of a loved one. I think it's fair to say that on our journey together, we have experienced many truths, tears and a good deal of laughter, which is always a good medicine!

Once our six visits were ended, we discussed the next steps. She requested that I continue to visit, which I am doing and we are moving on with her journey together.

I now have two other parishioners that I am also visiting.

Then came the day ... 3rd November 2018 when I was due to be authorised in the role by Bishop Jo, the Bishop of Dorking at Guildford Cathedral. It was such a special day for both me and my fellow Pastoral Assistants. I was truly overwhelmed by the support I received by people in the form of being there on the day or by sending me cards and messages of support. I thank them all for their kindness.

I would also like to thank the PCC of Capel & Ockley for agreeing to fund my training. I am very grateful for their belief in me and for trusting me to work in a Pastoral role within your Parish.

The most thanks of all though must go to Rev Liz. She has been there for me on every phase of the training; giving love, support and guidance to me every step of the way. I look forward to walking alongside her and working with her on the next leg of my journey ... as they say "Bring it on"!

Sylvie Beckett
Pastoral Assistant



Sylvie pictured in another one of her roles at Dorking Foodbank where she volunteers.

Dear Readers,

Since last writing, winter has truly arrived and I'm sitting at the desk on a wet and windy evening and it's been dark since 4pm!

We have much to celebrate in our Parish and two churches and villages over the next month and so many people work hard to put on so many events for us - the annual Christmas trees, the Choral society Christmas concert, the Team Advent service, Carols on the Green, the Nine Lessons and Carols, our Nativity with gift giving for Christ Church, Brixton, the annual village Christmas party and much more besides!

There's something very comforting for me in the words and tunes of the Christmas carols that we sing every year and a feeling of so many gone before us who sang the same melodies and words. They have a timeless quality that every year brings us joy and comfort as we approach the birth of Christ. 2018 has been an interesting year with much change and for many there will be personal changes and loss. We are so lucky to have Sylvie Beckett as our Pastoral Assistant now and she particularly wishes to focus on the bereaved and enable them to begin to heal. You can read Sylvie's inspiring story on page 12 of this issue. To have a dedicated Pastoral Assistant to help Rev Liz is a real blessing to us all. I'm sure that as some people face their first Christmas without loved ones, Sylvie will bring comfort to those she meets. It's up to us as parishioners to support and love Sylvie as she goes out in our Parishes to spread the love of Christ. May God bless all she does and those she meets. And may we too bring a little of the gift of Christmas to those around us - our loved ones, neighbours and work colleagues. May we look out for those who need our love and comfort at Christmas - be they lonely, sick or grieving.



I wish you all the blessings of this special Season.

*Best wishes,
Suzanne*

Eco tip of the month from our Parish Eco team!

Our thanks to Dineke for the December tip!



This Christmas, why not choose a charity gift from Christian Aid to give to your loved ones. It will bring a smile to their face and to someone further afield who needs a little bit of help from a friend. A few examples: £9 buys a child a school bag with books and pens, £13 pays for fishing training and £15 donates a pair of hens. These and many more useful gifts can be found here charity-gifts.christianaid.org.uk/ You will receive a voucher representing your chosen gift to add to someone's stocking.

For more tips and info go to: <https://www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk/eco-church/>

OR email the team on: ecoteam@capelandockleychurch.org.uk

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Children's Society bringing Christingle to this country with a service held in Lincoln Cathedral in 1968.

To celebrate this landmark anniversary, the Children's Society is running its #Christingle50 campaign, which aims to support vulnerable young people through raising funds at Christingle events and a collaboration with The Royal Academy of Music.

Some 200,000 10 to 17-year-olds in the UK are experiencing emotional neglect on a regular basis, and many are also struggling with other difficulties at home. The charity found that:

11% of 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect also do not have their own bed; 21% 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect had also been homeless in the last five years; and 20% of 10 to 17-year-olds experiencing emotional neglect also lived in a household that had used a food bank in the last five years.

Matthew Reed, Chief Executive of The Children's Society explains: '*Too many young people will wake up on Christmas morning like any other - feeling alone and unable to cope.*'

The Children's Society has created an original song for schoolchildren, congregations or community choirs to include in their Christingle services. The song, 'Light a Candle', is available to download and listen to or learn for free from The Children's Society website.

You can support young people by donating to the #Christingle50 campaign, or by attending a local Christingle Service. For more information, visit www.christingle.org. * **Don't forget our annual Christingle service on Sunday 3rd February 2019 at 10.30am in St John the Baptist, Capel** *

How to survive Christmas

- ◆ *Remember the reason for the season.* It's Jesus' birthday, not yours!
- ◆ *Plan ahead.* How much can you realistically afford? Don't just head for the shops with your credit card.
- ◆ *Don't do the last-minute buying frenzy.* Shop early, when you can think clearly.
- ◆ *Christmas is an expensive time of year for everyone.* With some close friends and adults in the family you may be able to make a 'no presents' pact.
- ◆ *Try shopping with cash only* - that way you can't spend more than your budget.
- ◆ *Don't let children talk you into buying expensive items you can't afford.*
- ◆ *Don't go overdrawn* without telling your bank in advance. The penalties are high!
- ◆ *Don't go mad in the January sales,* and avoid the temptation of the numerous 'buy now pay later' offers.
- ◆ *Help other people whenever you can.* After all, it is the season of goodwill!
- ◆ *Be tolerant of visiting relatives.* They want to enjoy Christmas as much as you do, honestly. They don't mean to be quite *that* annoying.
- ◆ *Be grateful for your presents.* Even when they are hideous. Somebody, somewhere, will like them in the New Year.
- ◆ *Forget all of your worries for one day of the year.* Whatever they are, just relax and enjoy celebrating the birth of Christ!
- ◆ *Finally, if you do run into debt problems,* don't ignore them. Get advice as early as possible. Contact Christians Against Poverty or your nearest Citizens Advice Bureau for free, confidential, independent advice.

Editor: The Rev Dr Gary Bowness continues his letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

On two wise men, one three-legged sheep and a tipsy tree

The Rectory
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren



It really is time to get some new figures for the crib. After a series of accidents over the years, we are now down to two wise men, two shepherds, and one three-legged sheep that only remains upright if it is leaning against a shepherd.

Joseph, having been obliged to stand outside the shelter of the stable for the last four decades, is now comprehensively veneered with bat droppings. In a rather desperate effort to enlarge this rather frugal cast, Miss Timmins hit on the idea of introducing characters from the children's Easter garden. This would have all been very well if both sets of figures had been to the same scale, but we now have the shepherds apparently being threatened by two ten foot rabbits.

One of our local farmers – I am sure very kindly meant – donated far more straw for the stable than was necessary. Our decorators, refusing to let his generosity go to waste, used the lot. The result is that Mary and Joseph stand up to their waists, looking as if they are being engulfed by a straw snow drift. The crib, along with baby Jesus, has disappeared entirely. The latter is not entirely to be regretted, since no one can now see that Jesus has no nose and only one arm, the result of one of our children dropping Him on the floor at last year's Crib Service.

I am sure your ecologically appropriate Christmas tree, made of re-cycled dustbin liners will be much appreciated by your congregation, knowing that they are saving the planet for future generations. We however remain traditional, with a tree always donated by the local squire from his estate, even if it is at the cost of adding another degree to global warming. Not only does it look more fitting, but it gives our verger something to do on twelfth night, as he sweeps up several hundredweight of pine needles.

I sometimes wonder if it is entire coincidence that the tree is always delivered by the estate staff on a day when there has been torrential rain in the area. Carrying it into church up the aisle makes it look as if the parting of the Red Sea has unsuccessfully taken place inside St. James'. The major problem every year is getting the wretched thing to stand upright in the sanctuary. It takes so long that I sometimes feel it would be quicker to re-align all the church pillars to the same angle as the tree itself.

Last year's decision to have tree lights which flashed in succession was not a success. Those members who stared at them for too long while singing carols tended to fall over – although I suspect that Major Crump's inability to remain upright at the midnight Service was for rather different reasons. Not using flashing lights this year, the Major will have to find a different excuse.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

Prayer Diary for December

'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.' Isaiah 9:6

Pray for charity workers and volunteers during the Season of Goodwill.

POVERTY cont..

SATURDAY 1st

Lord Jesus, You came to be a comfort to the least, the lost and the last of people. Help us to be Your ears to listen to their cries, Your feet to walk beside them, Your voice to speak out love, and Your hands to clothe and feed them.

SUNDAY 2nd

Loving Father, we pray for justice within our government that they will prioritise the needs of the poorer families of our nation.

'God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them.' 1 John 4:16

ADVENT

MONDAY 3rd

God of Hope, who brought love into this world through the birth of Your Son Jesus Christ, keep our hearts aflame with the hope of Christmas and the promise of a Saviour.

TUESDAY 4th

Father God, help us to make this season of Advent an offering of praise to You. Help us to hear Your voice and be aware of Your grace in our lives.

WEDNESDAY 5th

Dear Lord, prepare our hearts to receive the gift of Jesus. We pray that we will not be distracted by the trivial things of this season but remain focused on You.

THURSDAY 6th

Almighty God, we pray for peace in a world where worry, fear, conflict and hardship prevails. May this season of Advent be filled with light instead of darkness.

FRIDAY 7th

Loving Lord, help us to prepare to welcome Jesus into our homes, into our hearts, into situations with friends and relatives and into our lives.

SATURDAY 8th

God of Heaven and Earth, we pray that the Carols sung on Ockley Green this evening and all carols sung in schools, halls and churches, send a clear message of joy and hope to all who sing and listen.

SUNDAY 9th

Gracious Lord, in this busy time, may we find the time to rest in Your presence and enjoy Your peace.

Pray for all who work in the emergency services. Pray they will cope with the seasonal workload.

HOSPITALITY

MONDAY 10th

Loving Father, as we warm our houses this winter, make our lives a place of warmth and openness and help us to overflow with spiritual gifts as we wait for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TUESDAY 11th

Father, we are truly grateful that we have a place we call home. We pray for all those who are sleeping on the streets in discomfort, cold and fear. Thank you Lord for those who work to provide shelter and food for them.

WEDNESDAY 12th

Lord of comfort and hope, help us to be God's hospitality in this world. May we remember to listen, smile and offer a helping hand whenever the opportunity arises.

THURSDAY 13th

Give us eyes to see the deepest needs of people. Give us hearts full of love for our neighbours as well as the strangers that we meet.

FRIDAY 14th

Father, You encourage us to be hospitable. Help us to open our homes to others, especially at this time of the year. Give us loving hearts of welcome and generosity.

SATURDAY 15th

God of all, help us to see Your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless.

SUNDAY 16th

Father, thank you that You have given us homes that are places of refuge. We may find it difficult to share, but Your Word directs us to be generous. Guide us and help us to share our homes whenever appropriate so that others may find in our homes a place of solace.

'The Lord watches over you - the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.'

Psalm 121:5-6

GIFTS

MONDAY 17th

Lord, as we prepare for the holiday and gifts to be given, remind us of the gift You gave us when You sent Your Son. Restore us to the wonder that came with the birth of Jesus and make us like the Shepherds, obedient to Your call.

TUESDAY 18th

Loving God, help us all to pause and reflect on the gift of Your Son at this busy time of year and not just the presents we will be given.

WEDNESDAY 19th

Generous Father, we pray that the Christmas shoebox gifts will reach the children all over the world who would otherwise receive nothing. We pray that those children will come to know Your love through these gifts.

THURSDAY 20th

Merciful God, as we are reminded of the gift of life, we open ourselves up to Your Spirit and give You thanks.

FRIDAY 21st

Father, in this season of celebration at the birth of Your Son, may we be reminded of those who don't yet know You. We ask for Your gift of wisdom so that we may share the Good News.

SATURDAY 22nd

Father, we thank you for all who have organised fundraising events this season and for those who have given generously. We pray that the money raised will be distributed fairly to those who need it.

SUNDAY 23rd

Generous God, thank you for those who will be spending some time helping others who are less fortunate than themselves over the holiday period. We especially thank you for those who leave the comfort of their homes on Christmas Day to help provide a Christmas meal for the hungry and the forgotten.

Pray for doctors and nurses on duty over Christmas

FAMILIES

MONDAY 24th

Loving Lord, with great joy may we prepare to welcome Jesus into our homes, into our hearts, into situations with friends and families and into our lives.

TUESDAY 25th

Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given! Thank you Heavenly Father for this most precious of gifts and all it means in our lives. We pray for the ministers in our parishes as they preach the Good News today. A very Happy Christmas to us all!

WEDNESDAY 26th

Lord Jesus, You came to be joy in our sadness. Comfort all families who are separated from each other, who mourn or who are troubled.

THURSDAY 27th

Heavenly Father, thank you for bringing joy into the world by the miracle birth of Your Son. Thank you for the assurances that all who believe in Jesus can know that we will spend eternity with You.

FRIDAY 28th

Lord, we give thanks for the courage, faithfulness and obedience of Mary and Joseph. We pray that their example might be the pattern of the lives of all parents.

SATURDAY 29th

Almighty God, we pray for families living in poverty, families that are hungry or homeless. Let us not forget them while we spend time with our families this Christmas.

SUNDAY 30th

Loving Father, we know that You have plans for us and for our families. We pray that You will reveal Your purpose to us over the coming year to guide us in all that we do.

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;' Proverbs 3:5

RESOLUTIONS

MONDAY 31st

Lord of Life and Love, may we give thanks to You for all that You have done for us over the past year. May we confess and acknowledge our shortcomings and resolve to trust in You with all our heart.

In the News



Traidcraft Update

You may have heard concerning news about Traidcraft over past weeks and months, but we would like to reassure you. We've faced severe financial difficulties recently, but following an extensive consultation process, we're thrilled to be able to say that we've created a plan to move the business forwards. Many of our customers, friends and supporters were kind enough to contribute to this process, and for this we thank you.

TRAIDCRAFT IS NOT CLOSING. INSTEAD, WE ARE EVOLVING.

The new Traidcraft will be slimmed down, and the product range will be smaller. This does mean that we won't be able to work with as many producers as we have previously, but the good news is that we will still be able to work with some of the groups that we've developed relationships with over the years. We're working with our sister charity Traidcraft Exchange to help those groups who are worst affected.

It isn't going to be easy, but that's why you - our customers, friends and supporters - are crucial to Traidcraft's future. Next year is our 40th birthday, and we're planning to approach it like the fair trade revolutionaries we are.

So what are we going to do?

We're going to re-imagine how trade is understood and practised.

We have an aspiration to make transparent the costs, prices and profits involved in every Traidcraft product that we sell, which carries on the fair trade tradition of challenging and disrupting the market.

CEO Robin Roth said: "We want our members to be co-conspirators in changing how trade is understood and practiced. We want to tell consumers who gets what from the Traidcraft products they buy. We want to annoy and irritate those who profit unduly through the non-transparency of their trading activities."

We've come full circle.

Over the years we've caused some pretty good trouble, and we're getting ready to do it all again from 2019 – just as those six fair trade pioneers who started Traidcraft did back in 1979.

Want to know more?

Go to: <https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/traidcraft-update>

Keep your eyes open for more Traidcraft updates that will be coming your way over the coming weeks.

How Silent Night first began - 200 years ago

One of the most popular Christmas carols, *Silent Night*, was performed for the first time 200 years ago this month, on 24th December 1818, at midnight mass at a parish church in Oberndorf, near Salzburg, Austria.

The carol was originally a poem, written in six verses by priest Joseph Mohr two years earlier. Because the church organ was broken, he thought it would be nice to turn the poem into a simple carol that could be played by a guitar, and so he asked church organist Franz Xaver Gruber if he could write a suitable tune. Gruber did so in a matter of hours.

That night Mohr and Gruber sang the new composition, with Mohr playing guitar.

Karl Mauracher, an organ builder working at the Oberndorf church, took the carol home with him to the Zillertal, about 100 miles away, where it was taken up and popularised by two travelling families of folk singers, the Strassers and the Rainers.

They eventually sang it in New York, where in 1859 Episcopal priest John Freeman Young wrote and published the rather free English translation that is most frequently sung today, using only three verses and changing the rhythm slightly. The carol has been translated into about 140 languages.

!Smile lines

!With Christmas in mind....

- !What do you call a cat in the desert? Sandy Claws.
- !What goes oh oh oh? Santa walking backwards.
- !What did the dog get for Christmas? A mobile bone.
- !Who delivers presents to sharks at Christmas? Santa Jaws.
- !What did Adam say in the Garden of Eden on December 24? It's Christmas, Eve.
- !Why do turkeys never go hungry at Christmas? They're always stuffed.
- !Which Christmas carol is most popular with new parents? Silent Night!
- !Where do mistletoe go to become famous? Holly-wood
- !Why is turkey so popular at Christmas? Because the weather is a lot warmer over there.
- !Why do Mummies like Christmas so much? Because of all the wrapping!
- !What is the best Christmas present in the world? A broken drum - you just can't beat it!
- !What's impossible to overtake at Christmas? - The three wide men!
- !How do snowmen get around? On their icicles.
- !What does Santa call reindeer that don't work? Dinner.
- !I sent my girlfriend a huge pile of snow. I rang her up and asked, 'Did you get my drift?'

!What she wants for Christmas

- !A little girl was in the kitchen watching her mother busily preparing for the following day's Christmas dinner. She asked, 'Mum, can I please have a cat for Christmas?'
- !Her mother replied, 'No, you'll have turkey like the rest of us.'

Wordsearch

The nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas is Advent. It means 'coming'. It refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at his 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace. Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for twelve days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6 January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

four
weeks

advent
coming
Jesus

first
baby
return
triumph
second

establish
perfect
justice
new
order

peace
eating
drinking
celebrations
days

gifts
epiphany
twelfth
decorations
revive



ALL PUZZLE SOLUTIONS
ON PAGE 27

Crossword

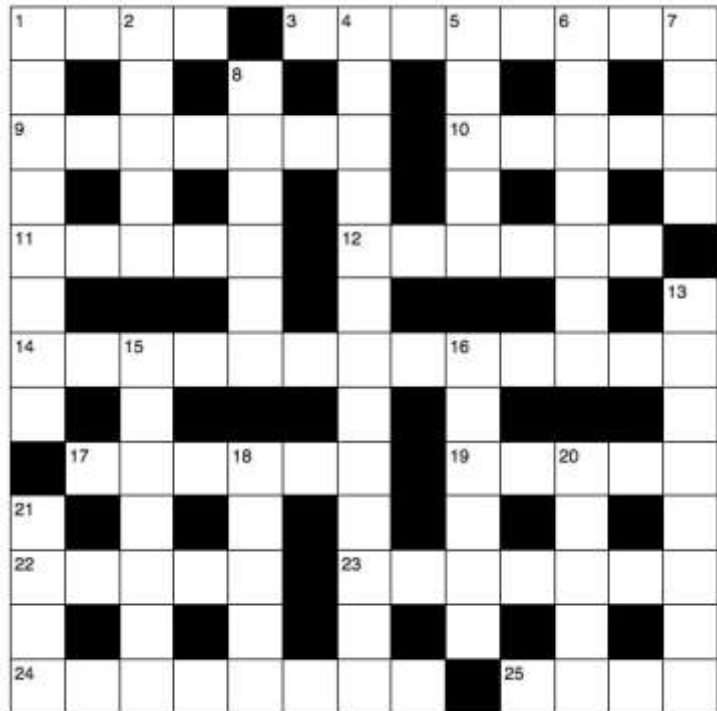
Clues

Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
 9 Shish sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)

Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — — ' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)



**All Puzzle Solutions
can be found on page 27!**



NEWS FROM THE BELFRY



Season's Greetings

A very Happy Christmas to everyone!

As 2018 draws to a close it is a good time to look back at the year and reflect on the most notable events. Most unusually we rang for no weddings at Ockley this year, though Capel had several. Both towers scored quarter peals for the Guildford Guild Quarter Peal Day in October and were visited by a number of ringing groups during the year.

In September we opened for Heritage Open Days in a rolling programme starting at Newdigate then Ockley and finishing at Capel, giving different aspects of interest at each and attracting a good number of visitors.

The biggest event of the year though was the Armistice Centenary last month when bells were rung several times on the day; half muffled for the Remembrance Services and then in celebration for the national ring at 12.30pm. The Ringing Remembers campaign to mark this occasion aimed to recruit 1400 new ringers to represent those ringers lost in the Great War.

In fact Over 2000 people have signed up, and received specially commissioned badges including 2 recruits at Ockley. Our new ringers started learning in June after reading about the campaign in this column and have put in great effort



attending extra practices to be ready to ring on the day.

Many consider ringing to be their contribution to church life, others do it for the pure pleasure, the company it brings and the endless opportunity to learn new things. If you would like to have a go and perhaps learn to ring please come along and join us on a practice night. We meet every

Wednesday, 7.45 pm to 9.15 pm, alternating between Ockley, first and third week of each month and Capel, second, fourth and fifth.

Please note there will not be a practice on Wednesday the 19th or 26th December though we expect to ring for the Christmas Eve and **Christmas Day services and on New Year's Eve**, depending on individual availability.

For more details call Sue on 01306 627168 or email ockleybellringers@btinternet.com



Ode to St Margaret's Church written by Charles Holden

It stands remote from the village scene
An ancient church, peaceful and serene
A place of worship from a bygone day
Where Ockley people come to pray.
A place for laughter and for tears
Throughout it's nine hundred odd years
Where bride and bridegroom made their vows
To live together with joy and rows
Where tears were shed when someone died
And passed away to the other side.
But the past has gone and the present's here,
And times have changed, not for good I fear.
Congregation's dwindled, people stayed away,
Fewer and fewer came to pray.
Young people found other things to do,
Better for them than sit in a pew.
Television and discos were better fun
The age of pop music had begun.
For tuneful hymns and organ sounds
The beating drum pounds and pounds.
Flashing lights spin and daze
Through deafening noise and smoky haze.
Then the church alarmed that this should be
Thought out a plan as a remedy.
Take out the pews, bring in the chairs
Carpet the floors, dissenters are squares.
Have toilets, tea urns and trays
All things to get 'in line' with modern ways.
And later on a wine bar maybe
For we all know that Christ drank water not tea.
With guitar, clarinet and drum
They could really make the church hum,
With clapping hands and tapping feet
This would suit the youth a treat!
The church would fill to overflow
And coffee and tea bring in the dough
Instead of a church another village hall
But why have two in a village so small?

Editor's note: The above poem written by Charles Holden, the local Ockley plumber. It has been supplied to InSpire by Kathleen Peters who has had a copy in her possession for several years now. She wanted to share it with us as she "thought it caused us to reflect on how an ordinary family man was able to compose such a unique piece of poetry, having attended the little school now closed on Ockley Green". Our thanks for Kathleen for sharing it with us.

It was:

200 years ago, on 24th December 1818 that the popular Christmas carol 'Silent Night' was performed for the first time, at midnight mass at a parish church in Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria. It had been written just a few hours earlier by teacher and church organist Franz Xaver Gruber, to lyrics by priest Joseph Mohr. (The lyrics were actually a poem Mohr had written two years earlier.)

175 years ago, on 19th December 1843 that Charles Dickens' novella *A Christmas Carol* was first published.

150 years ago, on 9th December 1868 that Franz Haber, Polish-born German chemist was born. He was winner of the 1918 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for developing synthetic ammonia. He was known as the 'father of chemical warfare' for his work on poisonous gases during World War 1.

100 years ago, on 14th December that the historic British general election of 1918 took place. It was the first time that women (over 30) and all men (over 21) were eligible to vote. Lloyd George's Liberal coalition was re-elected.

75 years ago, on 22nd December 1943 that Beatrix Potter, the children's writer and illustrator, died. She had created animal characters such as Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin, Mrs Tiggly-Winkle, Jemima Puddle-Duck and many more.

70 years ago, on 19th December 1948 that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

60 years ago, on 5th December 1958 that Britain's first motorway, the Preston By-Pass, was opened. It is now a part of the M6 motorway.

30 years ago, on 21st December 1988 that a Pan Am jet exploded and crashed onto the Scottish town of Lockerbie, killing 259 passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground. The bomb had been planted by Libyan terrorists.

20 years ago, from 16-19th December that Operation Desert Fox took place. US and British forces launched a major four-day series of sustained air-strikes against Iraq after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein refused to cooperate with UN weapons inspectors.

10 years ago, on 19th December 2008 that during the 2008 Financial Crisis President George W. Bush approved a \$17.4 billion loans package to rescue the troubled car manufacturers General Motors and Chrysler.

New Year's Eve

Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to.

Christmas stamps

Maria went to the Post Office to buy stamps for her Christmas cards.' What denomination?' asked the clerk. 'Oh! Good heavens! Have we come to this?' said Maria, 'Well give me 50 Methodist and 50 Church of England ones please.'

Horatius Bonar 1808—1889

Those of you that attended the 3pm Remembrance service at Capel this 11th November will have heard the choir sing Only Remembered. It was originally written in 1870 by Horatius Bonar and was originally set to music by Ira Sankey a year later. The words and the original tune were used in War Horse.

There are a number of different versions with additional verses to Bonar's original. The one sung was commissioned on behalf of the Royal Army Medical Corps in a composing competition in 2015. The brief included - 'a musical setting of Ira Sankey's words remembering fallen soldiers for solo, choir or congregational singing'. This was the winning setting by Judy Lane and has since been used both in this country and the USA. Her work is mainly for class and choir singing at school in concerts, assemblies and parents evenings or just for fun as well as sacred music for church choirs and church solos.

Fading away like the stars of the morning
Losing their light in the glorious sun
Thus would we pass from the earth and its toiling
Only remembered by what we have done.

Chorus

Only remembered, only remembered,
Only remembered by what we have done;
Thus would we pass from the earth and its
toiling,
Only remembered by what we have done.

Shall we be missed, tho' by others succeeded
Reaping the field we in springtime have sown?
Yes, but the sowers must pass from their labours
Ever remembered by what they have done.

Only the TRUTH, that in life we have spoken
Only the seed that on earth we have sown
These shall pass onward, when we are forgotten
Fruits of the Harvest and what we have done.

Oh, when the Saviour shall make up His jewels
When the bright crowns of rejoicing are won
Than shall His weary and faithful disciples
All be remembered by what they have done.

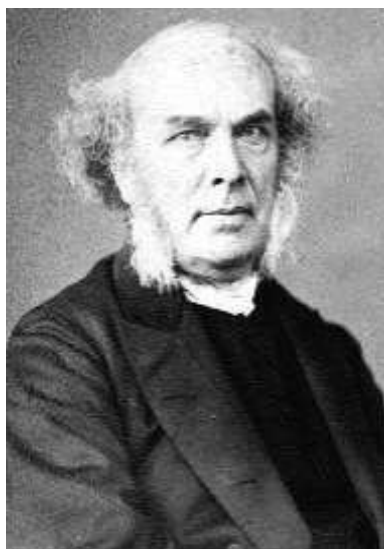
Dr. Horatius Bonar (1808-89) was a prolific writer of texts, and hymns and is probably best known for 'I heard the voice of Jesus say', and the communion hymn 'Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face'. He was the parish minister in Kelso in 1837, where he remained there after the Free Church split in 1843 until 1867, when he moved to Edinburgh. He took an active part in the formation Free Church of Scotland, and became Moderator of the Free Church Assembly in 1883. He died after a long illness on 31st July 1889 and was buried in Canongate Cemetery, Edinburgh.

I HEARD the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, thou weary one, lay
down
Thy head upon My breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, and worn, and sad;
I found in Him a resting-place,
And He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Behold, I freely give
The living water --- thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live."
I came to Jesus and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul
revived,
And now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's light;
Look unto Me: thy morn shall rise
And all thy day be bright."
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun;
And in that light of life I'll walk
Till travelling days are done.

Here, O my Lord, I see thee
face to face;
here would I touch and handle
things unseen;
here grasp with firmer hand
eternal grace,
and all my weariness upon
thee lean.



This is the hour of banquet and of
song;
this is the heavenly table spread for
me; here let me feast, and feasting,
still prolong
the hallowed hour of fellowship with
thee.

Here would I feed upon the Bread of
God,
here drink with thee the royal Wine
of heaven;
here would I lay aside each earthly
load,
here taste afresh the calm of sin for-
given.

I have no help but thine; nor do I
need
another arm save thine to lean up-
on;
it is enough, my Lord, enough in-
deed;
my strength is in thy might, thy
might alone.

Feast after feast thus comes and
passes by;
yet, passing, points to the glad feast
above,
giving sweet foretaste of the festal
joy,
the Lamb's great bridal feast of bliss
and love.

High days & holy days in december

3 December Birinus – an apostle to the English

Thousands of our churches are currently involved in various mission initiatives across the UK. If it is tough going at times, we should spare a thought for poor Birinus, a priest from Lombard, who was sent here on his own 14 centuries ago. Pope Honorius 1 gave him the daunting task of being the apostle to Wessex. It was about 635 that Birinus first sailed across the Channel. He planned to convert all of Wessex, and then press on into the Midlands, where no Christian preacher had ever yet been. But once he began ministry in Wessex, Birinus found the West Saxons so pagan that he decided he better just stay among them. So Birinus began his ministry, endlessly travelling around Wessex, and preaching to whomever he encountered. Gradually he became known, and his message began to seep through. Then a great breakthrough occurred: the King of Wessex, Cynegils, asked Birinus for instruction in the Christian faith. His daughter was going to marry Oswald, the Christian king of Northumbria, and for political reasons Cynegils now wanted to convert. So Birinus taught and baptised Cynegils and his family, and in return they gave him the Romano-British town of Dorchester as his see, and Birinus became the first bishop of Dorchester. It was an excellent strategic move: Dorchester was on a main road and river in the centre of an area of dense Anglo-Saxon settlement. From his new 'headquarters', Birinus spent his last 15 years going on to build many churches around Wessex, and to baptise many people. Towards the end of his life Birinus dedicated a church at Winchester, which later became the ecclesiastical centre of the kingdom. (There is no record of Wessex bishops at Dorchester after 660.)

Any lesson in all this? Bloom where God plants you, and be faithful to your calling, however tough things may look at first, and however obscure the place. Birinus' obedience and faith planted Christianity in a key part of Britain, and so helped shape British history for centuries to come.

4 December Osmond – an immigrant before Brexit

Osmond is the saint for you if you regret Brexit, and believe that immigrants can bring good to Britain. Osmond came to England from France back in the days before EU regulations. It was shortly after 1066, and he was a Norman, following William the Conqueror.

Osmond himself was no soldier, but a gifted and godly man, with a great gift of administration. He became royal chaplain, and then chancellor in 1072, producing numerous royal letters and charters for the king. In 1078 he was made bishop of Salisbury. As such, he completed and consecrated the cathedral, and formed such an outstanding chapter and constitution that it later became a model for other English cathedrals.

Osmond took part in the preparation of the Domesday Book, and was present when it was presented to William in April 1086. He died in 1099, well respected for his purity and learning, and his lack of avarice and ambition.

24 December Christmas Eve

How do you celebrate Christmas Eve? It has its own customs, the most popular of which is going to Midnight Mass, or the Christ-Mas. This is the only Mass of the year that is allowed to start after sunset. In Catholic countries such as Spain, Italy and Poland, Midnight Mass is in fact the most important church service of the entire Christmas season, and many people traditionally fast beforehand. In other countries, such as Belgium and Denmark, people dine during the evening, and then go on to the Midnight Service.

The British are behind some countries when it comes to exchanging presents: in Germany, Sweden and Portugal the custom is to exchange on Christmas Eve. But the British are ahead of Serbia and Slovakia, where the Christmas tree is not even brought into the house and decorated until Christmas Eve.

Yule logs are not so popular since the decline of the fireplace, but traditionally it was lit on Christmas Eve from a bit of the previous year's log, and then would be burned non-stop until 12th Night (6th January). Tradition also decreed that any greenery such as holly, ivy or mistletoe must wait until Christmas Eve until being brought into the house.

25 December Christmas: The story of the Christingle

The word 'Christingle' actually means 'Christ Light', and celebrates the light of Jesus coming into the world. Stories of how the Christingle began look back to the Moravian Church, which is found in the Czech Republic. The Moravians have held Christingle services for more than 200 years, and according to them, this is how the first Christingle might have been made:



Many years ago the children in a village were asked to bring a Christmas gift to put beside the crib in the church. One family was very poor, and had no money for gifts, but the three children were still determined to take something. The only nice thing they had was an orange, so they decided to give the Christ-child that.

But then they discovered the top was going green, so the eldest cut it out, and put a candle in the hole. To add some colour, one of the girls took a red ribbon from her hair and tied it around the middle of the orange. It was hard to make the ribbon stay still, so they fastened it in place with toothpicks. The toothpicks looked a bit bare, so the youngest child added some raisins to them.

The children took their decorated orange lantern to the church for the Christmas Mass. The other children sneered at their meagre gift, but the priest seized upon it with joy. He held it up as an example of the true understanding of the meaning of Christmas, for the following reasons: the orange is round, like the world; the candle gives us light in the dark, like the love of God; the red ribbon goes round the 'world', as a symbol of Christ's blood, given for everyone; the four sticks point in all directions, and symbolise that God is over all: North, South, East and West; and the fruit and nuts remind us of God's blessings.

The Children's Society first introduced the Christingle Service to The Church of England in 1968, and it has since become a popular event in the church calendar. This candlelit celebration is an ideal way to share the key messages of the Christian faith, while helping to raise vital funds to help vulnerable children across the country. Visit: www.childrensociety.org.uk

See article on page 12 about Christingle at 50.



25 December Why does Christmas begin at midnight with Holy Communion?

The hour was first chosen at Rome in the fifth century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight—a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the hour of His birth.

Certainly in recent times, Holy Communion at midnight on Christmas morning has proved popular with modern families. One British writer pointed out its "domestic convenience" in 1947: "for where there are children and no servants, husband and wife may be unable to communicate at any other time." (So things don't change, then!)

Source: Parish Pump

New Books from Redemptorist Publications who supply our weekly Reading sheets

Who do you say you are?

A companion for readers living with a chronic illness and for those supporting someone with a chronic illness

This book is an exploration of identity and what makes us who we are. It encourages us to reflect on our own identity and where this is rooted. Chronic illness disrupts lives and can lead to identity loss. This book is a companion for readers who are living with a chronic illness and struggling with their identity as a result. It also deepens the understanding of readers who are trying to support someone who has a chronic illness.

Price: £9.95 Product code: 1760 ISBN: 9780852314838

The author Lucy Russell has a keen interest in education and completed a PhD in this area at Goldsmith's College, University of London in 2005. She writes regularly for Redemptorist Publications and was diagnosed with MS in 2003.

Dementia: hope on a difficult journey

by Dr Adrian Treloar

Many people with dementia, whom we care for, carry with them a strong Christian foundation. This book will provide some clues as to how their spiritual needs can and should be met.

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*After the first candle fiasco, Brian
took no chances*

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Answers

ACROSS: 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Foreknowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod.

DOWN: 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.

H	I	D	E		D	I	S	G	R	A	C	E
I		O		S		M		R		L		A
S	O	N	S	H	I	P		O	A	T	H	S
S		O		R		R		A		E		Y
T	U	T	T	I		I	G	N	O	R	E	
A				N		S				E		S
F	O	R	E	K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E
F		E				N		A				A
	A	S	H	R	A	M		M	E	N	O	R
J		T		E		E		E		E		C
A	R	O	M	A		N	I	N	E	V	E	H
D		R		C		T		T		E		E
A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T		T	R	O	D

Wordsearch Solution

H	T	E	P	I	P	H	A	N	Y	E	S	J
C	P	N	Y	E	S	S	E	C	O	N	D	E
B	E	M	E	B	Y	I	I	I	O	U	E	S
K	T	A	U	V	A	L	L	I	A	E	I	U
R	W	C	E	I	D	B	T	N	C	N	A	S
C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	I	O	N	S	K
P	L	T	F	F	R	T	T	F	M	E	S	E
E	F	U	U	O	R	S	G	N	I	T	A	E
A	T	A	C	R	U	E	T	U	N	R	V	W
C	H	E	E	J	N	R	P	J	G	I	S	R
E	D	R	I	N	K	I	N	G	V	M	S	T
S	T	F	I	G	W	I	R	E	D	R	O	E
I	F	R	U	K	N	E	R	T	W	H	R	I

Happy Christmas to you all

Luke 2:1-20 New International Version (NIV)

The Birth of Jesus

2 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



Your contributions would be most welcome and any copy for this publication should be sent to Suzanne Cole
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