

INSPIRE Issue 33

December 2019

Come and worship

*Wishing all our Readers
a Very Happy Christmas
and every Blessing for 2020*

The monthly publication for the Parish of Capel & Ockley

Free of Charge - Please take a copy!

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This issue is kindly sponsored by

Debbie & Hugh Von Bergen
Wishing all the Readers of InSpire
a very Happy Christmas

If you would like to sponsor an issue in 2020, please let Debbie or Suzanne know. Thank you.

Inspire is available to download from the church website:-
www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk/inspire-magazine/

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Dear all,

I love Van Gogh's painting 'Starry Night'! As I look and think about it I can hear Don McLean's haunting lyrics of 'Vincent (Starry, Starry Night)', written about the artist's life and struggles with mental illness and his struggle and passion as a painter. Apparently he only sold one painting in his lifetime. Simply amazing that now he is hailed as one of the most important post-impressionist painters! The painting was inspired by the view from his asylum room whilst recovering from a breakdown. Amazing too that during his time there he produced some of his most important paintings. We have a good view of the sky out here in our dark villages sometimes don't we? When you look up at the sky on a clear night and truly see the heavens they are inspiring aren't they. In fact Vincent Van Gogh is quoted as saying: 'When I have a terrible need of - shall I say the word - religion. Then I go out and paint the stars'. I like it!



Stars of course feature powerfully in the birth of Christ and the journey of the Magi in the telling of the story of Christmas. Always such a poignant conclusion to the Christmas events, these days the magi don't travel very far at all, just from one side of the church to another! Picking up the theme of the faithfulness of the Magi and the following of the star which brought them to Bethlehem as they journeyed searching for this new born King, the Church of England have once again produced another 'Follow the Star booklet - 12 Days of Christmas Wonder.' A lovely little resource, the booklet gives us 12 daily reflections based on that favourite Christmas Carol 'We three kings'. It begins on Christmas Day. Copies of this booklet will be available inside our churches at Capel and Ockley and we will be handing them out to all who join us at our Christmas Services this year. I do hope you will join me in using these reflections as the journey begins with a star and ends with discovery!

As you will see on our Church services and events page there is a lot to enjoy and be a part of once again this December. From Advent Sunday right at the beginning of the month I think we have anything and everything to help us prepare for and celebrate the festive season of Christmas and the New Year. Whether you like an early morning said Prayerbook Communion service, a traditional Matins or family holy communion with organist and choir or the more contemporary informal setting of Cafe Church and the band, there is something for everyone in the weeks ahead. There's Christmas Messy Church, a new Christingle event at the pavilion in Ockley, (not to be confused with our Christingle service in Capel at the beginning of February), an opportunity to dress up as an angel or shepherd even in our annual nativity service when our lovely donkeys come into church. There are loads of opportunities to sing carols whether outside when the Christmas tree lights are switched on in both villages, or inside at Capel Choral Society events at St Margaret's and St John's with a cup of tea thrown in, or our traditional 9 Lessons and Carols just before Christmas; we hope you will join us. Christmas itself truly begins at the crib service on Christmas Eve followed by 11pm Holy Communion, the first communion of Christmas. Christmas Day offers a choice of early Holy Communion at Capel and then this year we are all going to worship together later on Christmas morning at St Margaret's Ockley. There will be Holy Communion as part of the service but with our usual mix of the sacred and sometimes simply silly - in true Christmas style. Finally when you are fed up with Christmas fare why not join Bob and the Band at the Crown on Sunday 29th December for a special Cafe Church at 10.45am?!

We will be collecting gifts as usual to send to Christ Church in Brixton, for adults and children. Please label clearly for age and gender if appropriate. We will shortly be preparing hampers for those locally in great need and of course there are the collecting boxes in church for Leatherhead Start and Dorking Foodbank. Phew - it's exhausting isn't it - but great fun! So as well as all these opportunities to share and celebrate with one another, the whole point is that within all of these events there will be time for us all to reflect on what it is all about and as I began I encourage you to take a booklet and 'follow the star' into the new year and beyond. In the words of the opening prayer in Follow the Star (see right):

Happy Christmas!

With my love and prayers as ever

Rev Liz

*God of wonder,
as we follow the star,
open our minds
to search for you,
open our eyes to see you,
and open our hearts
to receive your love,
this Christmas and always.
Amen.*

CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2019

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SUNDAY	1st 8.00 9.30 10.30 3-5pm 6pm	Advent Sunday Holy Communion BCP (Capel) Matins at St Margaret's Ockley Family Communion Capel Teas in church - all proceeds to CMS with Christmas goodies... Surrey Weald Team Advent Service at St John the Baptist Capel Our Weald Team churches come together for an atmospheric service of Advent hymns and readings based on Alan Bullard's 'O Come, O come, Emmanuel. Followed by seasonal refreshments
TUESDAY	3rd 3.15 - 5pm 4.30 - 6.30	CHRISTMAS MESSY CHURCH Capel Memorial Hall - Lots of Christmas arts and crafts with a festive tea Youth Cafe - Ockley Cricket Pavilion (Cafe for young people years 7-11)
SUNDAY	8th 9.30 10.30 4pm	Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion at St Margaret's Ockley Cafe Church (Capel) Christingle Event at Ockley Cricket Pavilion
MONDAY	9th 7.30pm	Capel Choral Society Christmas Concert St Margaret's Church Ockley
TUESDAY	10th 4.30 - 6.30	Youth Cafe Ockley Cricket Pavilion (Cafe for young people years 7-11)
SATURDAY	14th 5pm	Carols on the Green Organised by The Ockley Society at Ockley Cricket Pavilion Seasonal refreshments, Carol singing and Father Christmas!
SUNDAY	15th 8.00 9.30 10.30 2 - 4pm 2.30pm	Third Sunday of Advent Holy Communion BCP (Capel) Matins at St Margaret's Ockley Nativity and Gift Service 'With love from God to you' and special guest appearances from Dolly and Louis the donkeys! Teas and Carols with Capel Choral Society at St John the Baptist Church Baptism of Albemarle Hall at St Margaret's Ockley
TUESDAY	17th 4.30 - 6.30	Youth Cafe Ockley Cricket Pavilion (Cafe for young people years 7-11)
SUNDAY	22nd 9.30 6pm	Fourth Sunday of Advent Parish Communion at St Margaret's Ockley Nine Lessons and Carols at St John the Baptist Capel <i>followed by Mulled Wine and Mince Pies</i>
TUESDAY	24th 4pm 11pm	CHRISTMAS EVE Crib Service at Capel Midnight Communion at Capel (<i>note service is finished just after midnight</i>)

WEDNESDAY 25th
8.30am
10.00 am

CHRISTMAS DAY
Holy Communion BCP at Capel
Christmas Day Celebration Service at St Margaret's Ockley
with Holy Communion

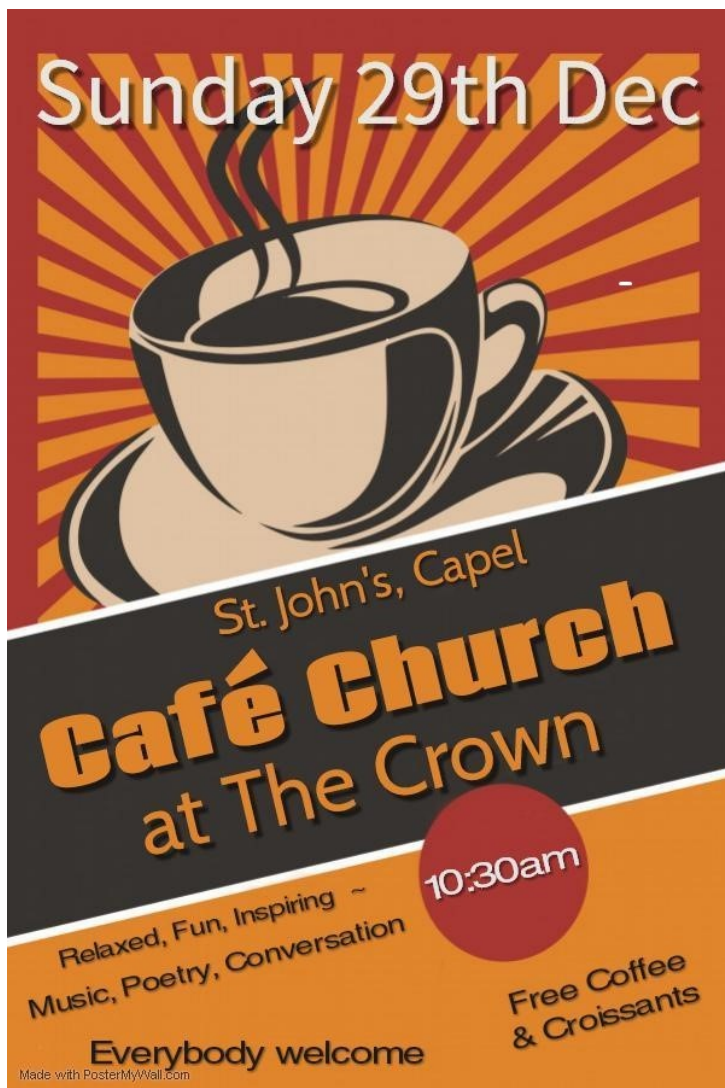
SUNDAY 29th
10.45 am

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS
Cafe Church at The Crown Pub Capel

JANUARY 2020

SUNDAY 5th
8am
9.30
10.30

THE EPIPHANY
Holy Communion BCP at Capel
Matins at St Margaret's Ockley
Family Communion at Capel



Join us on Sunday 29th December for a very special Café Church at The Crown in Capel.

We're taking church into the community and Vanda and her team at the pub have made us very welcome. Quite a change from the "no room at the inn" story we're used to hearing at this time of year!

It will be the usual mix of coffee, croissants, guitars, conversation, poetry, fun, the bible, some prayer and all the things that go into making these services welcoming and friendly.

There is the option of staying after the service to enjoy lunch together. If you'd like to do that - and have someone else do the cooking and washing up for you after a busy Christmas - then please let either Rev. Liz or Bob Cranham know so that we can book enough seats for everyone.

Look forward to seeing you all there.

Bob





Can you help stock 4 Hampers for local families?

Food	
Large box of tea bags (100 or so)	Jellies (4 for each hamper)
Instant coffee	Pickles (any)
Mince Pies	Pot of marmalade/jam
Christmas Cake	Long life milk
Fruit Juice	Christmas
Hot Chocolate	Christmas paper
Biscuits	Decorations
Chocolates	Decorative tea lights
Pasta (500g)	crackers
Rice (500g)	paper table cloth
Chopped tinned tomatoes (4 cans)	serviettes
Apple Sauce	Any other Xmas Goodies
Tins of Tuna	Xmas chocolate
Tin of Salmon	Xmas Biscuits
Tin of peas	Household
Tin of Baked Beans	Soap
Rtin of Sweetcorn	Shower gel
Tin of meat (Ham/corned beef etc)	Shampoo
Jar of pasta sauce	Washing powder
Tin of soup	AA batteries
Tinned Fruit	Energy saving light bulbs

The ticklist referred to below is in church. Please either indicate in there what you can donate OR email Debbie von Bergen so that she can add your proposed donations to the ticklist. Thank you.

Instructions:

To ensure that all the hampers are equally stocked we are producing a tick list (IN CHURCH), also to avoid having a glut of one thing and nothing of another. Hopefully we will have more than enough to fill the four hampers. Anything that either hasn't been ticked or hasn't arrived by **Dec 8th**, we will purchase.

Any surplus will go to Dorking Foodbank

Any queries please see Debbie or Jessie

Please drop off all good in the church by Sunday December 8th - thank you!

Dear Readers,

Well here we are again at the end of one year and the approach of another. But we have the exciting time of Advent in the meantime. So much to look forward to with the coming of Christ at Christmas. We certainly have plenty going on to celebrate. This Saturday 30th November is the day the Christmas trees go up in the churchyard with the singing and lighting up at 5pm. Then we have the Advent Service on Sunday 1st December at St John's, followed by Messy Church, Carols on the Green, Christingle at the Pavilion, Ockley, our annual fun Nativity, Nine Lessons and so much more! Bob Cranham is also leading a special Café church for the New year on Sunday 29th December at The Crown in Capel—see page 5 for further details.



"It's easy to tell when it's Nativity Play time – I can never find a tea-towel!"

Amongst all this excitement, joy and general merriment, it is important to remember that not everyone shares the joy or happiness. For some loneliness, sadness, isolation can lead to mental health issues such as depression. The Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Pause for Thought' recently broadcast on Radio 4 is published on page 19 of this issue. How brave of him to admit that he was depressed last year and how reassuring for anyone reading it to find that even an Archbishop and a servant of God can suffer mentally, just as the rest of us can. To quote:-

'Christians believe we have a saviour, a rescuer, who knows intimately what it means to suffer. Amidst all the brokenness, Christ weeps with us. In his resurrection, I believe Christ restores us. Not necessarily in the way we expected, but he makes us whole in a way that makes sense.'

'It is my prayer today that anyone who is walking in darkness knows this: you are not alone. You are truly valued and deeply loved. Reaching out and talking to someone can be the first step back into the light.'

What a message to impart to everyone in this time of Advent as we approach the light of our Saviour being born for us at Christmas. No-one is alone and everyone is truly valued and deeply loved. Let us hope that all of us can find a way to share that love with those that might need us right now. Whether it is the Parish Christmas cards that we will be posting through the doors, the gifts given to our friends at Christchurch in Brixton, the local hampers or maybe much smaller gestures such as checking on a neighbour who may be lonely? Or maybe you know of someone that is suffering and could help encourage them to seek help just as the Archbishop did? I am sure that the season of partying and jollity all around must be especially hard and I hope that we can all find a way to play a small part in just easing that darkness just a little bit for someone?

My very sincere thanks to everyone who helped us raise £482.60 at our annual Christmas coffee morning for The Children's Society. So many of you were very kind in donating hamper gifts, providing cakes and for giving up your Saturday morning to come along and support us. As usual, I'd like to extend a particular thank you to the team who help me make it happen: Joy, Betty, Wendy and Liz Wombwell. Without them, I simply couldn't have made it happen. I will be giving up as co-ordinator of the Society in the New Year once the houseboxes have been handed in. For more details on this, see page 21.

In the meantime, the New Year will see the beginning of the Vicarage Fete team beginning to organise the 2020 Fete and Debbie von Bergen and I are already actively planning a new Christmas Fair for Capel to take place on 14th November 2020 to fundraise for our Parish - particularly the costs of things such as the churchyard wall repairs. If anyone would like to join either the Fete Committee or Debbie and I for organising the Christmas Fair, we would very much welcome your input and help!

In the meantime, I wish you all the blessings of Christmas and a happy 2020. I leave you with the words of Mother Teresa ... ***It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you...yes, it is Christmas every time you smile at your brother and offer him your hand.***

Best wishes,

Suzanne

FOLLOW THE STAR Reflections

Get your FREE copy in church

They contain daily reflections from Christmas Day onwards.



Do pick up a copy!

Ockley Mothers and Toddlers Group

are starting a *“Mum to Mum”* market during the usual weekly sessions on

Thursday mornings from 9th January 2019 at Ockley Village Hall 9.30am-11.30am

Good quality clothes and toys available for exchange or a small donation to the Group’s funds.

‘Village Teas’

at Ockley Village Hall

(formerly known as TLC)

Village Teas 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

For further details, please contact Helen Burt for on 01306 711671 or helenmb0909@gmail.com

Harvest Entertainment

We are pleased to report that the two evening’s Harvest Entertainment with the Murder Mystery supper Raised just over £1,200!

A wonderful result! Thank you to everyone involved for all their hard work.

Until next year



After School ‘Youth Café’

Every Tuesday from 4.30-6.30pm, Ockley Cricket Pavilion will be open as a Youth Cafe. This is a donations (i.e. no fixed prices for refreshments) cafe with drinks and snacks available for youngsters aged 11-16 (school years 7-11) who are invited to come and chill with friends or by themselves - there are a few newspapers and board games but really this is just like any other cafe only exclusively for youngsters!

Any queries please telephone Helen Burt on 01306 711671 email helenmb0909@gmail.com

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!

From the Registers

We mourn the loss earlier this year of

Ivy Hilda Milam
10th February 2019

Doris Louisa Blower
27th July 2019

We remember them with love and pray for their families and friends.

This month's "Star of the Month" goes to

...



Doug Richardson

Who is celebrating a 'BIG' birthday and who we are sure is a constant support to Rev Liz!

We thank him for all he does and hope he has enjoyed the family celebrations away with Liz and their family.

Editor's Note: *Please help me by giving me your nominations from Capel & Ockley as to who needs a little thanks for everything they do! Let me know on*

Dorking Food Bank appeal

Sylvie has asked if we wish to make donations to the foodbank that we particularly focus on the following:

- Sugar
- Longlife semi-skimmed milk
- Christmas food
- Men's disposable razors
- Shaving cream
- Dog food



Please leave your donations in either church. Thank you.

Presents for our Friends at Christchurch, Brixton

We are continuing our tradition for donating gifts to our friends at Christchurch, Brixton. We would therefore welcome any donations **by Sunday 15th December.**

Please wrap your gift and indicate on the tag or label the following information:-

- * Whether the present is for male/female?
- * Age of intended recipient

Thank you!



In Loving memory

This month marks the first anniversary of the loss of two of our dear friends
Tony Goddard and Chris Drummond.

We remember them with great affection and pray for Rosemary & Gwyneth and their families.

We thank God for all they gave us at St John the Baptist in their lifetime and their fellowship with us.

Learn how to use your iPad / Tablet Smart Phone / Laptop/ Computer

If you are over 55 and live in the Mole Valley area, you can use Age Concern's computer courses based in either Dorking or Leatherhead.



The course runs once a week for 6-8 weeks. Topics covered will include: browsing on the internet, basic keyboard and mouse skills, using an iPad/ Tablet/Smart Phone/ Laptop, setting up and using your own email or Skype accounts and how to shop on the internet.

Before coming to the course, you must register your interest by telephoning 01306 899104 / 07442 017169 or by email: info@ageconcernmolevalley.org.uk

Registered Charity No 1111678

Communal Christmas card scheme

Every year many of us buy lots of Christmas cards and write to all our family, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, colleagues etc to wish them a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. Some enjoy the job of writing cards but, listening to the conversations, many more find it a chore. There is also quite an environmental price to be paid for all those cards: paper is produced from wood and not all trees that are used are grown with regard for our planet. Most cards come in single use plastic, at best in multi-packs but often individually wrapped.



As an ECO church initiative, we would like to try out something new that will also help decorate our church: a communal Christmas card scheme. This year, instead of each of us writing cards for many of our fellow churchgoers we suggest we all write one card to the whole congregation. We will display the cards in a creative way in our churches and we can all look at the cards and see what good wishes have been sent to each of us. Please check our ECO tip for this month for guidance on how to deal with this and other Christmas cards in a sustainable way.

It would be very fitting if all who take part would consider making a contribution to a charity of a value similar to the amount saved by sending fewer cards. This could be Tree-Aid, our own PCC or another deserving cause of your choice. Please don't go so far though as to not send a card to someone who would still very much appreciate a Christmas card.

Thank you!

Phil, Margaret, Judy, James, Donna & Dineke
aka ecoteam@capelandockleychurch.co.uk

Ever wonder why Jesus was born when He was? The Bible tells us that “when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son...” The Jewish people had been waiting for their Messiah for centuries. Why did God send Him precisely when He did?

Many biblical scholars believe that the ‘time had fully come’ for Jesus because of the politics of the time. The Roman Empire’s sheer size and dominance had achieved something unique in world history: the opportunity for travel from Bethlehem to Berwick on Tweed without ever crossing into ‘enemy territory’ or needing a ‘passport’.

For the first time ever, it was possible for ‘common’ people to travel wide and far, and quickly spread news and ideas. And all you needed were two languages - Greek to the east of Rome, and Latin to the west and north. You could set sail from Joppa (Tel Aviv) and head for any port on the Med. And the Roman roads ran straight and true throughout the empire.

So, the Roman Empire achieved something it never intended: it helped spread news of Christianity far and wide for 400 years. After that, the Empire crumbled, and the borders shut down. Not until the 19th century would people again roam so freely. The time for Jesus to be born, and for news of Him to be able to travel, had indeed ‘fully come’.

25th December: The story of mince pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

25th December: World’s oldest fake tree

Did you know that it is a family in Wiltshire, the Parkers, who claim to own the world’s oldest artificial Christmas tree? It was bought in 1886, and it is still put up every year.

25th December: Mistletoe’s smelly history

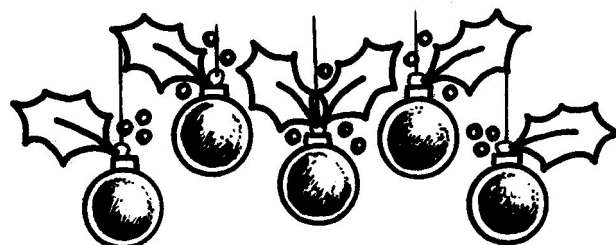
Did you know that the word ‘mistletoe’ means dung on a tree? The Anglo-Saxons thought that mistletoe grew in trees where birds had left their droppings. Mistel means dung, and tan means twig.

25th December: Why was Jesus born in a barn?

Our pretty Christmas cards do not do it justice – the stable that Jesus was born in would have been smelly, dirty, and full of mess. So why did God not provide something better for His beloved Son? Why let Joseph and Mary scrounge around until they ended up in a smelly stable?

Perhaps because the King of Kings being born in a foul stable is a perfect picture of redemption. Jesus came from glory into a world filled with the dirt, filth and darkness of sin. And Jesus was not put off by darkness in the least – instead, He came to be the Light of the World. Thank God for His unspeakable gift. No wonder the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2:14)

Source: Parish Pump
‘High Days and Holy Days’



“O FOR THE WINGS OF A DOVE” ... Musings of life as a chorister

by A Bass

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(also known as Andrew Forsyth!)

I have been singing in church choirs for over 60 years!! My mother was a very devout Christian and as such my 2 brothers and I were “volunteered” into the local church, although with the age gap I seem to remember not always at the same time. The church was 2 miles away with 2 practices a week and 3 services on Sundays – Matins @ 11am / Sunday School @ 3pm / Evensong @ 6.30pm.

My bike ride would take me across the A30 – even quite busy in those days but wouldn’t be allowed now - at the age of 8!! adventurous times - not quite sure how I managed this on cold winter days although I did manage to learn how to tweet like an owl whilst riding home one evening with no hands on the handlebars! ... not to be recommended! (a bit like the warning on the TV ‘don’t’ try this at home!).

Our choir master – Mr. Troop – was Canadian and quite severe. On the bright side we got paid 3d a Sunday and 2/6d for weddings. On the way cycling home Saturday afternoons after weddings, I always stopped at the local toy shop and bought the latest Dinky toy – usually a racing car. Some I still have and were well played with. In fact I’ve just sold two well-used examples for £50 each, a good investment and memories of happy days – all through opening my mouth!

Choir was an introduction to music and singing and whilst I could adapt to pitch quite well, I never did understand the intricacies and finer points of the various musical formats eg sharp / natural / flat etc or develop an acumen to playing a musical instrument – much better to play sport instead!

When my voice broke I was demoted to the back benches of the school choir to learn a whole new scale but at a much lower level. Harmony then reared its notes and was another new experience. Having already learnt the treble line and occasional descant it was not easy to develop this lower level, in spite of the ability to sing way down low!

Throughout my life and the various villages frequented, I have always entered into the spirit of the local church and more specifically the musical side of choirs.

Waltham, Kent was a small village 6 miles south of Canterbury – very old church – no choir – very small congregation. We actually lived in Anvil Green a small hamlet on the outskirts, famous for often being mentioned by Ian McCaskill on his weather report as being the coldest place in Great Britain – if you couldn’t see Siberia you could certainly feel it!!

Little Cornard in Suffolk (Martin Shaw / Hills of the North Rejoice), just outside Sudbury on the Essex border, was another small church in the middle of a farmer’s field with a regular choir of 6 and a vicar who looked like Buffalo Bill but answered to the name of John Cotton. He once had a shouting match from the pulpit with Rachel who was 3 years old at the time – Rachel won and had to be carted outside beyond hearing distance!

East Haddon, just north of Northampton, was in a benefice of 6 churches so there was a combined choir to do the rounds. This was great fun and united all the parishes – a rare and often unique practice within a benefice! Every year we got invited to Althorp to sing for the Spencers’ Christmas Party with the highlight one year being The Twelve Days of Christmas staged on the appropriate 12 levels of the huge main staircase, starting at the bottom with “a partridge in the pear tree” and going up. Level 10 actually had “10 Lords a Leaping!!”



Little Wayne couldn't sing a note, so they made him mascot

Every year at Peterborough Cathedral there was a gathering of the Diocese choirs to sing evensong. The numbers were so great that this usually resulted in the choir singing in the congregational seats and vice versa. The only downside was being surrounded by 150 other bass and whilst you certainly learnt your part, that is all you heard. One year I opted to sit with the congregation and just hear what the combined effort sounded like – pretty impressive!

And so to Capel. A small village in the Surrey countryside but for us probably “more suburbia” than we are used to in relation to all the previous villages.

I joined the Church choir back in 2002 when the vicar was (I think) John Maskell. The organist was Tony Goddard but can't remember too many members of the choir. Since then we have progressed (and improved) to the state we are in today. Since Anthea Smallwood took up the baton, we have furthered developed and are now so much more accomplished and challenged and even unite as a parish choir.

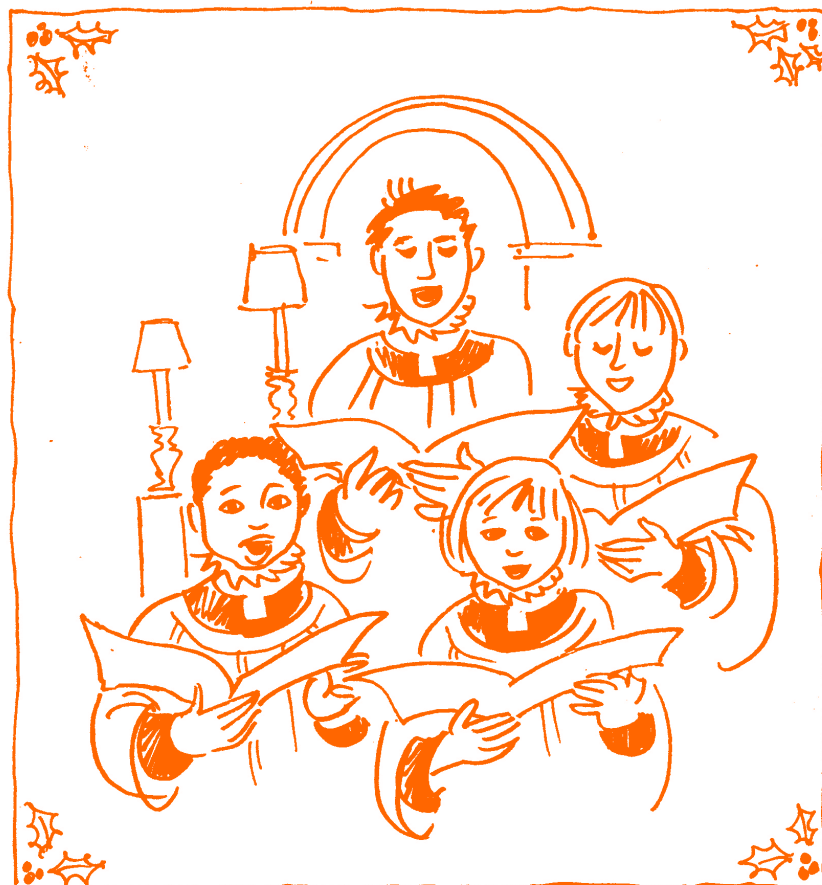
Singing is an important part of the church service, culture and worship – uplifting, invigorating and, dare I say it, enjoyable.

The choir is part of the congregation. We just dress up in glad rags from bygone days and are on display to lead the congregation in its music. Some may not know the hymns and anthems and voice their concerns accordingly but the church is open most Thursday evenings @ 7pm for choir practice, so everyone and anyone is welcome to come and try their voice – there's no charge - or just listen and learn for enlightenment.

So there it is – a life of singing. When it's good it's very good when it's not... well that's life!

Long may it continue.

A Bass



'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)



Approaching Christmas, we are very aware of the political and economic uncertainties that face us. The prophet Isaiah also lived in such uncertain times, as the Assyrians had just conquered the northern kingdom of Israel (734-732 BC). This fulfilled Isaiah's warnings to the people, who had turned their back on God and His ways. However, Isaiah is able to bring a word of hope, promising a Messiah who would come like a great light: *'The people walking in darkness have seen a great light'* (Isaiah 9:2). These words are fulfilled

in the birth of Jesus 700 years later and describe person of Jesus:

Wonderful Counsellor: He will give us the wisdom we need, especially when we have difficult decisions to make at work or home, or in dealing with our finances or future direction.

Mighty God: He will provide the help and strength to face a difficult diagnosis, family crisis or relationships breakdown, as we trust His plan and purpose for our lives.

Everlasting Father: He cares for us as a father cares for His children, so that we can come to Him when we feel alone or we are really struggling, knowing that He hears and will answer our prayers.

Prince of Peace: He has secured peace by His cross and resurrection, and so we can find in Him true acceptance, forgiveness and peace for our lives, relationships and future.

Christmas is the time to celebrate a God who is faithful to all His promises, *'the zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this'*

How to help someone who is lonely this Christmas

'It's gonna be a lonely Christmas'. The pressure to have fun with friends and family is real over the Christmas period. In fact, over nine million people in the UK say they're always or often lonely. (Red Cross).

When Mary became pregnant with Jesus, she probably felt very alone. Her situation would be seen as scandalous, as few believed that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit! Yet, God was with her: *"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call His name Immanuel' (which means, 'God with us').* (Matthew 1:23).

The true meaning of Christmas is that Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be with us. The separation we may feel from others is nothing compared to the distance that God has already gone for us.

Here are 5 tips for helping those who are lonely:

Take time to talk

Take time to talk to an older person this Christmas, at the supermarket, pub or on a walk. Just saying hello can make a big difference to someone who's lonely.

Give someone a call

Take the time to speak to friends and family that you won't be with this Christmas. A short phone call can have a big impact.

Give a neighbour a card Ring the doorbell and give your neighbour a Christmas card. Start a conversation and make a connection.

Having a party? Hosting a Christmas party or meal? If you know somebody who might be alone, invite them to join you!

Pray for Others

If you hear of someone who's on their own, pray for them. Pray that God would show you how to respond!

'The most important thing I can tell you is that we are never alone when we know Christ.' Billy Graham

Source: Parish Pump

Generous

Christmas is a time for giving, and we do it well. The British have been ranked among the most generous nations in the world, after a recent study found that six out of ten of us have helped a stranger in the past month.

The research, which surveyed 1.3 million people in 128 countries over a decade, found that despite a growing culture of charitable giving, there has been a downward trend in thoughtful behaviour in many of the world's wealthiest places.

However, the report, commissioned by the Charities Aid Foundation, found that the UK now appears 7th in the worldwide rankings for generosity.

60 per cent of us have helped a stranger in the last month, with 71 per cent of us giving money to charity, and 30 per cent offering even our time, in order to help a good cause.

The countries which topped the global rankings are: United States, Myanmar, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland and Canada. At the bottom of the table, ranked lowest in terms of generosity, were the State of Palestine, Serbia, Yemen and Greece. China was ranked the least generous of all nations.

Popular toys for Christmas?

According to the toy shop Hamleys, board games are going to be popular this Christmas – but not as you knew them. Instead, the 'smart' version of Pictionary has been called one of the 'must-have' toys this Christmas. It is just one of many classic board games which have been given a digital makeover, including Monopoly.

Another toy that is set to be popular is the Scruff-a-Luv Rescue Pet. The toy begins its life as a matted furry ball, and with love and care from the child, it is slowly revealed to be a pink or blue dog or cat. The toy features over 35 sounds and interactions with the child, from shivering and whimpering to feeding and even the hiccups.

Those newsletters inside their Christmas card...

Brace yourself – this is the month when many of your distant friends and relatives will be sending you their Christmas card with the Christmas Newsletter tucked inside.

You will read all about Grannie's arthritis and treatment, how Rupert's progress on the violin is amazing, how their summer holiday cruise of the Med was stupendous, exactly where the dog got lost for a day in Wales, how the kitchen has been re-furbished, and how extraordinarily well Helen is doing at university.

You may groan, but don't dismiss all those little bits of 'wonderful everyday' news. For of such minor triumphs and tragedies most of daily life is made. And don't blame your relatives/friends if they have somewhat 'enhanced' their yearly news roundup – this may be their one chance to star in a drama.

Just remember – there is nothing to stop you from sending a Christmas Newsletter back to them... and you can also write what you like!

Owning a dog is good for your heart

Thinking of getting your family a dog this Christmas? On the plus side, here is an interesting statistic: dog owners have a 24 per cent reduced risk of all-cause mortality and are 65 per cent less likely to die after a heart attack.

Such were the recent findings of researchers at the American Heart Association. They found that owning a dog can lead to better cardiovascular outcomes, especially for heart attack and stroke survivors who live alone.

On the minus side, dogs require a lot of time and care, so just make sure you have the time needed to properly care for one. Coming home to find that your dog has destroyed your sofa, through boredom and loneliness, is not good for your heart either!



At Traidcraft, we pride ourselves in being a sustainable and conscious shopper's one stop shop – with all of your everyday eco-needs available to be delivered to your doorstep, at the click of a button. This is why we've teamed up with our friends at Bio-D, to offer a full range of their award-winning cleaning products, with customers and the environment at the very heart of all they do.

Who are Bio-D?

Bio-D are the UK's leading manufacturer of environmentally responsible, ethically sound, hypoallergenic, vegan cleaning products. Independently owned, they create products that don't cost the earth, in any sense. Using naturally derived and plant-based ingredients, Bio-D leave out any ingredients that could be harmful to both wildlife, humans and the planet. They also have complete traceability on every single ingredient that goes into their huge and diverse product range, meaning that they can guarantee they're ethically and sustainably sourced. Plus, they make all their own products right here in the UK, in their factory in Hull, East Yorkshire.



'We believe that you shouldn't have to choose between the planet and your pocket'
- The Bio-D Team

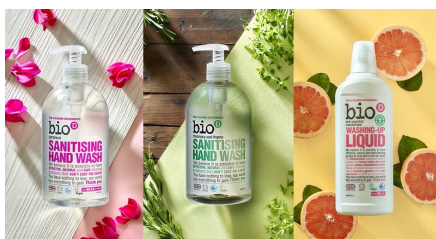
None of the raw, GM-free materials used by Bio-D have been tested on animals, and have been approved by **The Vegan Society, Naturewatch Trust, BUAV** and the **World Wildlife Foundation**. Likewise, all Bio-D products are free from added colour and are Paraben Free.

Bio-D's uncompromising standards have been recognised with a number of awards over the years, including **Best Green Business, Business Masters Small Business of the Year** and **Green Apple Environment Award**, to name but a few. They are also proud to be registered with both **Cruelty Free International** and **The Vegan Society**. Their fragrance-free laundry range is also endorsed by **Allergy UK**. To ensure their ingredients are ethically sourced, they have the [Sedex accreditation](#) and have a supplier approval process which ensures that all of their suppliers conform to the Ethical Trading Initiative.

Bio-D – How Did It All Begin?

Back in the 1980s, Bio-D founder, Michael Barwell, was working on commercial ships, cleaning and maintaining them. He found that it was tough work using the industrial cleaning products for which heavy-duty safety equipment, including a respirator, had to be worn. Michael looked into the ingredients which went into the heavy-duty cleaning products he was using and found that similar components were found in household cleaning products. As well as such ingredients filtering through into our rivers and oceans, affecting all wildlife coming into contact with them, many have also been tested on animals and can also be troublesome for many people with allergies or sensitive skin. All of these negative factors prompted Michael to look for naturally-derived alternatives which would clean just as well, without harming people or the environment... thus, in 1989, Bio-D was born.

From 1989 until the present day, Bio-D have been committed to using plant-based, natural ingredients in their cleaning products. They're also aware that natural ingredients can be much more expensive than their chemical-rich counterparts, but believe that **you shouldn't have to choose between the planet and your pocket** – which is why they make sure that their range is affordable, too.



'100% Hypoallergenic, Vegan, Eco-Friendly and Made in the UK.'
- The Bio-D Team

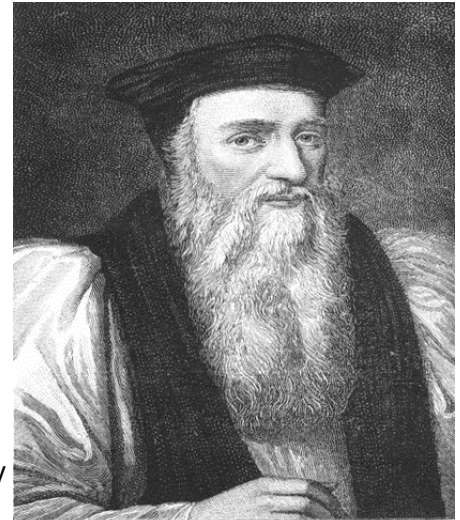
Article taken from the Traidcraft website.

If you would like to subscribe to Traidcraft's monthly bulletin you can do so by going online:- <https://www.traidcraftshop.co.uk/bulletin>



In October we sang a choral Matins to the music of Charles Stamford. When we were practicing the question was asked 'why do we have the Lord's Prayer twice and in slightly different forms?' A fair question that none of us present could answer. It is said twice in Evensong too, but I had never stopped to think why. It was just the way it was and the way I have always known it. When I started to look-up why I typed into Google something along the lines of the question, but there was no immediate answer – not even in Wikipedia.

The story begins with St Benedict and the Rule of Benedict that even today sets the pattern of prayer in monasteries based upon Psalm 119 verse 164 "I will praise you seven times a day" and verse 62 "At midnight I rise to thank you". So Benedict's Rule revolves around a pattern of eight services (Hours) - 2.00 am Matins, 5.00 am Lauds, 7.00 am Prime, 9.00 am Terce, 12.00 Sext, 3.00 pm None, 5.00 pm Vespers, and 8.00 pm Compline, and it was from these that matins and evensong were developed. Firstly, local priests in the Middle Ages started to merge some of these services together, probably to make their task easier, but then they added additional parts into those new services leaving them long and unwieldy. It was then Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) when he was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1533 onwards during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary. Cranmer who took the next big step. He thought that although the Hours were observed in monasteries and similarly in many places outside them too, they were unsuitable because of the number, they were in Latin, elaborate and contained insufficient scripture.



ARCHBISHOP CRANMER.
(From the portrait at Lambeth Palace.)

During the reign of Edward VI Cranmer wrote the forerunners of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. This became known as the First (1549) and Second (1552) Prayer Book of Edward VI. When Henry VIII died in 1547 Edward became king at the age of nine. The government was effectively in the hands of the Duke of Somerset and it was at this time that the English church started to take on a more protestant tone. Images of saints, crucifixes were removed and clergy were allowed to marry. Cranmer wrote his prayer book based upon the Hours and aspects of other European services. He skilfully merged what local priests had done before the two services of Matins and Lauds into his matins and Vespers and Compline into evensong. Whilst he was willing to be radical and use English rather than Latin he was careful not to lose parts of the old services. In the merging of these services we ended up with two Lord's Prayers.

So why are the Lord's prayers different? That is simply because in the Middle Ages the doxology was often used as a standalone part of the Roman Catholic Mass. It originally came from the Didache which was a very early version of the catechism, and appears to be based upon a prayer of David in the First Book of Chronicles chapter 29.

*Thine, O LORD is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:
for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD,
and thou art exalted as head above all.*

Some of the early English versions of the Bible erroneously included the doxology in the Lord's prayer in Matthew chapter 6 and it was this that was used as the first Lord's prayer. The second Lord's prayer was that from Luke chapter 11 which never had the doxology.

Nigel Beeton writes: 'I'm often struck by the fact that the events of that first Christmas would have passed almost unnoticed by the man in the street. The angels appeared in the night to shepherds out in the hills; Jesus was born up a back alley behind a pub that most people probably didn't even know was there. Was the star even distinguishable from the planets that people were used to seeing? Who actually knew what was happening?'

Who Knew?

Who saw the man and pregnant girl
Pressing through the crowded street
Struggling through the human swirl
On tired legs and aching feet?
Who knew?

Who heard her cries, in labour's pain
Deep within a battered shed?
Who cared for their impoverished shame
Who thought about her grassy bed?
Who knew?

Who, listening to an infant's cries
Hearing a birth, they thought it strange?
Expressed an int'rest, or surprise?
Who recognised that awesome change?
Who knew?

Who saw the shepherds rush along
Through sleeping streets at dead of night?
Who heard the angels' glorious song?
Or saw the star that shone so bright?
Who knew?

Who, fighting through the Christmas throngs
Or, settling down to watch TV
Eats Christmas food, sings Christmas songs
Who can the coming Saviour see?
Who knows?

By Nigel Beeton



Christingle - a generous present from the Moravians

It is the Moravians whom we have to thank for bringing us the Christingle. Especially one Moravian clergyman: John de Watteville.

On 20th December 1747, John de Watteville was taking a children's service in his Moravian church in Marienborn, Germany. He led the children in some hymns and read out verses which the children themselves had written to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Then he explained to the children that true happiness only comes through knowing Jesus. Jesus, said John de Watteville, "has kindled in each little heart a flame which keeps burning to their joy and our happiness".



John de Watteville then went on to illustrate that 'flame'. He gave each child a little lighted wax candle, tied around with a red ribbon. He ended his service with a little prayer: "Lord Jesus, kindle a flame in these children's hearts, that theirs like Thine become".

The visual aid was a great success with the children; for the Marienborn Diary for that day concludes: "hereupon the children went full of joy with their lighted candles to their rooms and so went glad and happy to bed".

The candle and red ribbon were remembered the following year, and the following after that.... The years came and went, and as the Moravians began to travel beyond Germany, so they took the custom with them: to Labrador, to Pennsylvania, to Tibet and Suriname, to the Caribbean and South Africa. In each country the Christians adapted it for their own use.

No one knows for certain when the word 'Christingle' was first used with regard to the custom. No one even knows where the word 'Christingle' comes from. Some people say it is from the old Saxon word 'ingle' (fire), meaning 'Christ-fire or light'. Another theory is that it derives from the German 'engel' (angel), meaning 'Christ-angel'.

In any event, the symbolism of Christingle gradually developed, until today the Moravians in the British Province use an orange, representing the world, with a lighted candle to represent Christ, the Light of the World. Nuts, raisins and sweets on cocktail sticks around the candle represent God's bounty and goodness in providing the fruits of the earth. Red paper, forming a frill around the base of the candle, reminds us of the blood of Christ shed for all people on the cross at Calvary.

In Moravian churches, the Christingle Service is usually held on the Sunday before Christmas or on Christmas Eve. The website for the Moravian Church says: "We are glad that the Moravian Church has been able to make this contribution to the wider Christian world."

See details of OUR Christingle celebrations on page 21 of this issue.



Editor: Below is the text of the Archbishop of Canterbury's 'Thought For The Day' on BBC Radio 4's Today programme broadcast recently .

Good morning. Last week was Mental Illness Awareness week. I was struck by the fact that people from all over the world and from all walks of life spoke on social media about their experiences of mental illness. Much has been made of social media worsening mental health issues. On this occasion it enabled people to share their stories, communicate honestly and feel connected to others.



We often think it's just us who are struggling, that everyone else is doing okay. That's because we don't talk about our mental health. The stigma is still there, so we feel more alone than we need to.

I know that being a Christian doesn't mean that everything's okay forever. In the Bible, there are people struggling with darkness and depression. There is a whole book, the Book of Job, in which we see someone experiencing terrible suffering.

Last year, I realised that I was depressed. I have a daughter who has been very open about her experiences with depression and she helped me see that it wasn't something to be ashamed of – it's just life, and I got help. Others still face that stigma and loneliness. Today we will be hosting a mental health conference at Lambeth Palace, looking at ways the church and others can encourage communities of love, support and openness.

Good communities are places where mental health issues do not prevent people from having authentic and honest relationships. Good communities are able to hold pain, honour and acknowledge it, whilst putting it within the wider story of God and His hope for His people.

Christians believe we have a saviour, a rescuer, who knows intimately what it means to suffer. Amidst all the brokenness, Christ weeps with us. In his resurrection, I believe Christ restores us. Not necessarily in the way we expected, but he makes us whole in a way that makes sense.

It is my prayer today that anyone who is walking in darkness knows this: you are not alone. You are truly valued and deeply loved. Reaching out and talking to someone can be the first step back into the light.

<https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/speaking-writing/articles/archbishop-gives-thought-day-mental-health>

Wise?

When I told my children the story of how the Wise Men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the infant Jesus, my six-year-old daughter was not impressed. "Mum, a Wise Woman would have brought nappies."

Namely...

The vicar had a standard liturgy for funerals. To personalise each service, he used the 'Find and Replace' command on his computer to replace the name of the deceased from the previous funeral with the new name.

One morning at a funeral, all was going smoothly until the congregation reached the Apostle's Creed. "Jesus Christ," the congregation intoned, reading from the programme, "born of the Virgin Edna..."

Lost

Just as I began my Christmas Eve service, the electricity in the church failed. The wardens and I found some candles and placed them around the sanctuary. Then I re-entered the pulpit, shuffled my notes, and muttered, "Now, where was I?"

A hopeful voice called out, "Right near the end!"



by Bob Cranham



Our final concert of the first year of Cottage Concerts featured Claire Robins and her wonderful Timeline Choir. An evening of “melodic dissent” was promised and the church was full of people eager to discover what, exactly, that meant!

It was a relief to find out that the “dissent” was not, in fact, coming from the alto section - the harmony of the choir remained solid both musically and personally throughout(!) - but reflected the choice of songs for their programme. A carefully curated selection of pieces reflecting the theme of “protest” through the ages. Whether that be worker’s rights, the suffragettes, war or the environment there was a wealth of interesting songs (many arranged specially for the choir) performed with enthusiasm and passion. “Hanging on the Old Barbed Wire” provided a particularly moving conclusion to the first half. Solo’s, duets and full choir pieces reflected the variety of styles and songs chosen and were a real credit to the creativity of Claire and her singers.

So, an enjoyable and memorable evening was had by all. And the music didn’t stop once the concert was over! Having finally locked the church Judy and I headed to The Crown for a quiet drink at the end of a lovely evening only to find the entire choir, glasses in hand, filling the pub with the glorious sound of their voices in full song. Fabulous.

On a personal note, can I just say at the end of this review a HUGE thank you to all of you who have supported the Cottage Concerts this year and all who have worked so hard behind the scenes to make each evening possible. With the profits raised through the concerts we have been able to fund a new P.A. system for the music group and two new radio microphones for Rev. Liz to use each week in the church. Thank you.

Details (and tickets) for next year’s concerts are already on the wonderful **Capel Box Office website** (<https://www.capelboxoffice.co.uk>). To whet your appetite they are:-

7th March - Jacqui McShee - the legendary voice of the acclaimed band, Pentangle.

13th June - Green Matthews - A Brief History of Music - 600 years in 90 minutes!

10th October - the return of Smith & Brewer - virtuoso guitarists, great singers and instant Capel favourites.

See you there.....

Bob Cranham

The Leith Hill Timeline Choir

The **Leith Hill Timeline Choir** rehearse at Forest Green Village Hall on Tuesdays at 7:30pm. Anyone is welcome to join. We are a non-auditioned choir of people who like to sing English music from medieval to the modern, performing specially arranged pieces and traditional folk songs and some of the works of English composers.

Our website is <https://www.timelinesongs.org>

If you would like to come you are welcome to come for a free trial session in the new year. Please email claire@robinsmusicroom.com for further details.

Claire Robins



Coffee Morning Thank you to everyone who contributed in so many different ways to make the annual Christmas Coffee morning a success. Many of you kindly donated gifts for the hamper prizes and we were lucky enough to be able to give away 9 hampers as prizes! Also several of you kindly baked cakes to be offered as refreshments on the day or sold on the cake stall. I'm pleased to report that we took £482.60 on the morning. The Society's Christmas card packs accounted for £243.93 and other revenue totalled from £238.67 from refreshments, raffle tickets etc. Many thanks to those who ventured out that Saturday to join us - it was wonderful to see so many familiar faces there!



The next events for The Children's Society in Capel are the houseboxes will be gathered in shortly, the contents counted and then the boxes returned to you. Please contact Suzanne for ways to exchange your box with her for counting!



Also, we have TWO Christingle events in the Parish. The first one is **Sunday 8th December in Ockley Pavilion 4—4.30pm. Then on Sunday 2nd February 2020, we have our annual Christingle service at 10.30am in St John the Baptist, Capel.** We have a guest speaker from the Society coming to join us at that service so we hope you can join us and hear all about the Children's Society's ongoing work around the UK.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY CO-ORDINATOR FOR OUR CHURCH GROUP?

After nearly 7 years of being the Church group representative, I have decided it is time to move on. Rita Ball did a wonderful job for approximately 30 years so I really am a 'lightweight' in comparison! I feel that I would personally like to do more fundraising for The Motor Neurone Disease Association as it has personally helped me throughout my father's illness and subsequent death. It hasn't felt appropriate to do that as well as support The Children's Society.



The main aspects of the role are:-

- ◆ **Co-ordinate the gathering in of houseboxes each year** (once a year). Count the contents and return to the box holders. The numbers of box holders has diminished significantly in recent years.
- ◆ **Co-ordinate the Christingle service preparations** and liaise with Rev Liz and the uniformed groups of guides & Scouts and their younger counterparts as they have traditionally been involved in collecting before the annual service. It is usually your role to order any resources but this is very straight forward as many are now available to download. But you do still need the components to make up the orange Christingles for the service.
- ◆ **Any other fundraising events you would like to put on!** The new one I introduced was an annual Coffee morning in November.

If you would like any more information on this role, please speak to either myself or Rev Liz.

Thank you

Suzanne Cole

slc@ansford.me.uk

The
Children's
Society

Church engages millions through apps and social media

Page 22

Church of England prayer apps were used more than five million times over the last year as a record number of people sought Christian contemplation and reflection online, according to new figures published today.

Apps allowing users to pray the ancient 'Daily Office' of morning, evening and night prayer were used 4.2 million times on Apple devices alone in the last 12 months, an increase of 446,000 on the year before, new figures show.

The figures do not include other social media prayers, reflections and posts by the Church of England, which now have an average reach of 3.6 million every month, an increase on 2018.

The digital figures were published alongside the Church of England's *Statistics for Mission 2018*, and showed that some 4,400 churches – more than a third of those responding – run courses teaching the basics of the Christian faith.

These included the *Pilgrim Course*, launched in 2013, and the *Alpha Course* which introduces participants to the Christian faith through a series of talks and discussions.

The figures showed 3,200 churches reported running activities such as youth groups or youth-focused services for children and teenagers aged between 11 and 17 years old.

The statistics showed 1.12 million regular worshippers at Church of England churches in 2018.

There were nearly eight million attendances at Church of England Christmas and Advent services combined in 2018, including special services for civic organisations, schools and local communities. The Church's reach on social media throughout

Advent and Christmas 2018 with the *#FollowTheStar* campaign was 7.94 million – up by 1.14 million from 2017.

On average, 871,000 people attended Church of England services and acts of worship each week, 2.6% lower than in 2017. A further 175,000 people attended services for schools in Church of England churches.

Other figures from the digital report show that *ACHurchNearYou.com*, the church finding website, received more than 38million page views in the last 12 months, a big increase on the year before.

Since launching in May 2018, the Church of England's Alexa skill has been asked more than 100,000 questions by Christians and people exploring the faith.

The Bishop of Ripon, Dr Helen-Ann Hartley, said: "The Church's digital innovation is enabling people to hear the good news of Jesus Christ in ways that weren't previously possible alongside regular Sunday worship and at significant moments such as Christmas and Easter.

"It is also really striking just how many churches are running courses in the basics of Christianity. This shows a readiness to explore the Christian faith."

Source: Parish Pump

You may or may not be aware that we have several pages on Facebook as a Parish

- ◆ **Capel and Ockley church**
- ◆ **@capelvicaragefete**
- ◆ **@inspiremagforcapelandockley**
- ◆ **@childrensocietysupportgroupcapel**



Do logon and follow us on Facebook!

Call for prayer for Christians in Pakistan

UK-based Release International has made Pakistan its focus for prayer this year, and continues to be deeply concerned for Christians in that country.

As a spokesman for Release International explains, “Most Christians in Pakistan are poor, illiterate and vulnerable to abuse, especially young women and girls. Believers face discrimination in education, employment and the law. Pakistan’s blasphemy laws have been used to make false allegations against Christians, often to settle personal vendettas.”

Release has helped Christians who have been falsely accused of blasphemy and given support to families of prisoners like Asia Bibi, a mother who spent 10 years in jail on charges that were later thrown out by the Supreme Court.

Speaking recently from Canada, the 54-year old called on Christians everywhere to remember others behind bars.

In a YouTube video, she says: “I, Asia Bibi, believe in Jesus. My belief is strong. I never let my belief weaken.”

And Asia gave this a message to the world: “Stay true to your beliefs. Even if you have to face the sword, please hold firm to your faith. Even if you have to sacrifice everything.”

Asia was picking berries in a field when she brought water for her Muslim co-workers to drink. But they refused, calling her and her water unclean, because she was a Christian. They went on to accuse her of committing blasphemy against the prophet Mohammed.

The Supreme Court ruled the charges against Asia were false and malicious, and threw out the case – after eight years on death row. You can read more of Asia’s story at <https://releaseinternational.org/asia-bibi-speaks-out-from-canada/>

Release has long campaigned for Pakistan’s blasphemy laws to be repealed. It is working with partners in the country to support and care for prisoners of faith.

“Yet despite the persecution in Pakistan, the church remains strong in faith and hope,” says Release CEO Paul Robinson. “Will your church support them in that?” (See below for prayers for Pakistan and reconciliation).

Source: Parish Pump

You can pray ...

Brother Andrew, the founder of Open Doors, says, “Our prayers can go where we cannot... There are no borders, no prison walls, no doors that are closed to us when we pray.”

A PRAYER FOR Pakistan

Lord Jesus, please protect Christian women and girls at risk from abduction, rape, forced marriage and forced conversion to Islam. Please give Christians in Pakistan the courage to stand up for their faith and stand alongside others who are suffering. May Your gracious presence in the lives of Muslim-background believers be winsome to others.

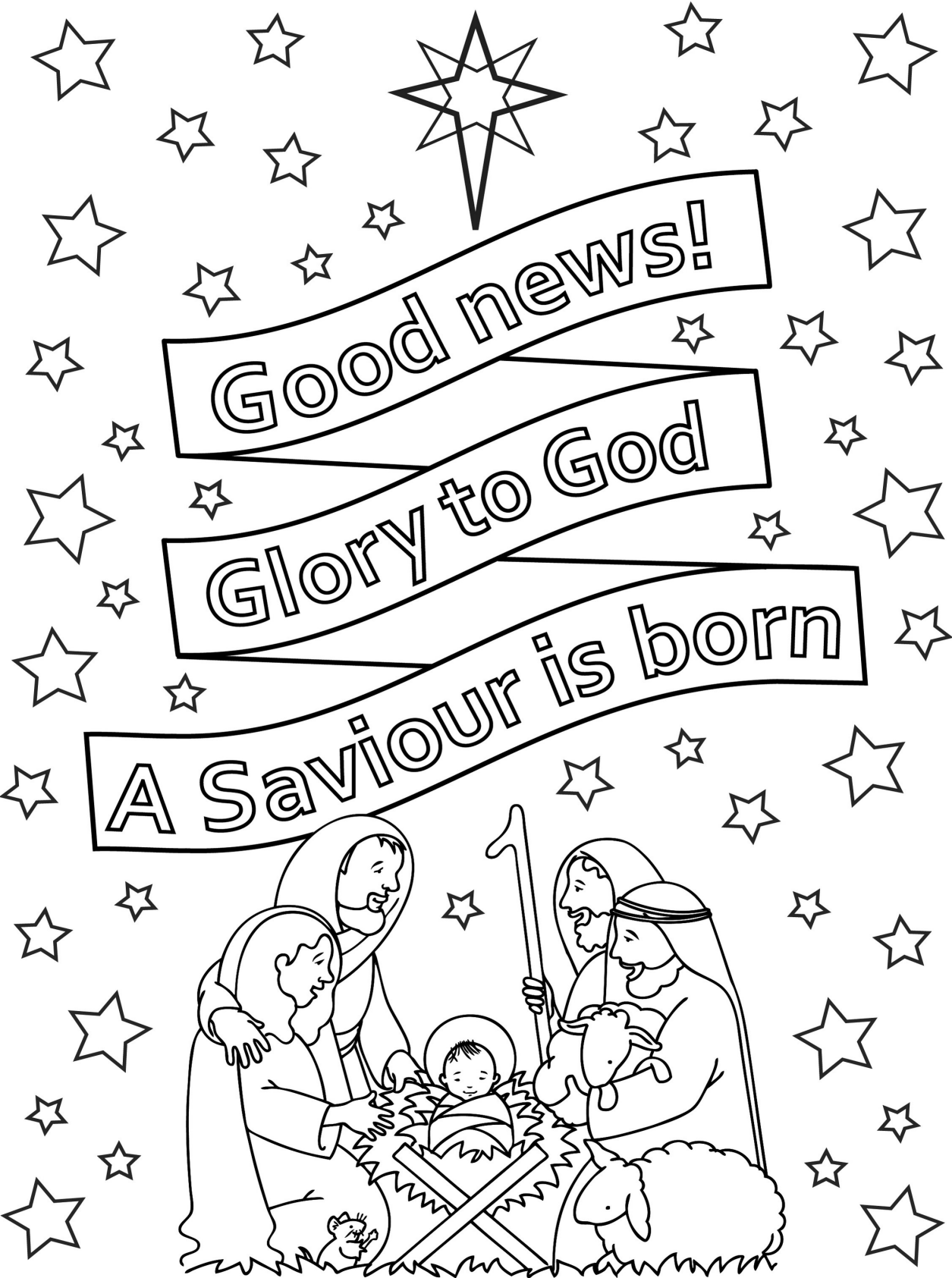
In troubled times

God of love,
turn our hearts to your ways;
and give us peace.
Amen.

For justice

Living God,
deliver us from a world without justice
and a future without mercy;
in your mercy, establish justice,
and in your justice, remember the mercy
revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Happy Christmas to our Young Readers! We hope you enjoy colouring in this page!

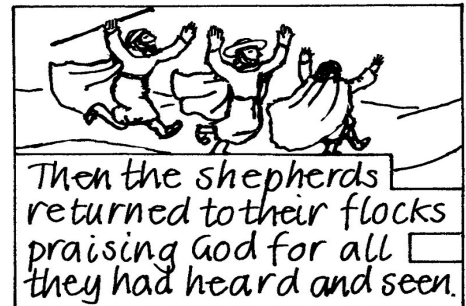


Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke chapter 2 verses 8 to 20

Shepherds were paid to look after the flocks out on the hillside. Uneducated and rough, they were usually avoided, or overlooked.



Chimney

Why doesn't Father Christmas suffer from claustrophobia when he climbs down the chimney? Because he has had his flue jab.

Reindeer

What did the reindeer say before launching into his comedy routine? 'This will sleigh you.'



Capel Horticultural Society
Christmas Wreath Making
Thursday 12 December
Capel Parish Hall
7.00 for 7.30pm

Yes, it's that time of the year again – so much to think about and never enough time in which to accomplish it all. Take an evening out and join us for mulled wine and mince pies and the opportunity to make a beautiful Christmas wreath.

Local florist, Vickie Edwards, will be showing us how to decorate ready prepared moss filled rings. She will also demonstrate some traditional and modern table decorations providing plenty of ideas for us to replicate at home.

All you need to bring is a pair of secateurs, although should you have some greenery from your garden or special decorations that you would like to include, bring these too.

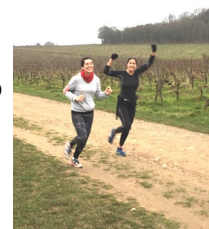
The evening is always great fun. Vickie is terrific at helping those of us that need a little inspiration and you might even win a prize from our Christmas themed raffle.

Spaces are limited. To avoid disappointment book now. Tickets are £25.00 each which includes all materials, a glass of wine (or tea/coffee) and mince pies.

Contact Jane Major oldjoinery@gmail.com 01306 711170

CAPEL & OCKLEY CHURCH RUNNERS

A few of us from Capel & Ockley churches and community have started an informal running group. We meet and join in with the Park Run at Denbies on Saturday mornings at 9am. If you are not familiar with Park Run you can find out more here: www.parkrun.org It is free to join, you register online [very quick & easy - go to register & our Home Run is the **Mole Valley Park Run**], print up your bar code and turn up at Denbies 8:45am on a **Saturday for a 9am start** and do a lovely 5km run (circa 3.1 miles) around the vineyard .



Anyone can join in:- it is completely inclusive all ages, speeds, experience. It is great fun and a good way to start the weekend!

We have set up a **WhatsApp Group** so please contact Tom who will add you to it and will confirm the runs on here as well.

Tom Chambre

Any queries, please contact 0771 890 2345 or tom@chambrepm.com

20 years ago, as 1999 drew to a close, the Church of England marked the Millennium by distributing thousands of young yew trees across England. In all, about 7000 seedlings were given to parishes requesting them.

It was explained that the yew tree could be seen as ‘a metaphor for the life of faith in this country over the last 4000 years’, as well as a symbol of the spiritual life, ‘with its dormant periods and its coming to life’.

David Shreeve, director of the Conservation Foundation, said that the yew trees were “planted in the spirit of a living link with the birth of Jesus, and as a symbol that, if we wanted this millennium yew to live for another 2000 years, we would need to care for and cherish our local environment.”

Mr Shreeve believes that the project made an impact on the Church, helping to pave the way for a greater emphasis on caring for Creation, including the appointment of more diocesan environment officers.

Yews are the oldest living things in Britain. The Woodland Trust explains that a yew is not even considered ‘ancient’ until it is over 900 years old. The oldest tree in the UK, the Fortingall Yew, is estimated to be between 2000 and 3000 years old.

Editor’s note: Does anyone know if any of our local churches received a yew tree?

Article source: Parish Pump

Christmas Day

Why not light a candle in your home today and commit to saying a prayer of thanksgiving each time you pass it?



A prayer for new ventures

As the year draws to an end Lord,
I ask for your blessing on any new ventures
that next year holds for me.

Amen

A prayer for those who have lost loved ones this year

As you pray, ask God to comfort those who
have lost a loved one during the year.

At the end of a year

As a prayer focus, spend time reflecting upon
the highlights and challenges of the past year.
Hand them over to God as moments of learning
as the year comes to an end.

New Year’s Eve

You are on a journey of faith which continues
all the days of your life. Thank God today for
the ways in which your life has been enriched
this year by a more active prayer life.

In the busy lead up to Christmas ...

**Go placidly amidst the noise and haste
and remember what peace there may be
in silence.**

Max Ehrmann

Source: *365 Days of Prayer* by
Victoria Lorenzato

‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!’ 2 Corinthians 5:17

ADVENT

‘Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.’ Isaiah 42:1

SUNDAY 1st

Almighty God, prepare our hearts to receive the gift of Jesus. We pray that we do not get distracted by the trivial things of this season but remain focused on You.

MONDAY 2nd

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

TUESDAY 3rd

Father God, in this very busy time, may we find the time to rest in Your presence and bring Your peace to our homes, to our churches, our workplaces and our hearts.

WEDNESDAY 4th

Loving Father, in a season where every heart should be happy and light, many struggle with the heaviness of life. We pray for Your peace for everyone.

THURSDAY 5th

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.

FRIDAY 6th

Merciful Father, we need Your peace in a world where worry, fear and doubt prevail. May this time of Advent be filled with light instead of darkness, kindness instead of hatred and friendship instead of loneliness.

SATURDAY 7th

Lord, as we prepare for the holiday with gifts to be bought and wrapped, remind us of the gift You gave us when You sent Your Son to bring justice to the world. Restore us to the wonder that comes with the birth of Jesus and make us like the shepherds, obedient to Your call.

SUNDAY 8th

God of Heaven and Earth, we pray that the carols sung in churches this day and in schools, halls and venues throughout the week send a clear message of joy and hope to all who sing and listen.

JEALOUSY

‘For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.’

James 3:16

MONDAY 9th

God of Power, help us to be free of all envy and jealousy. May we look to You alone for all we

need. Guide our thoughts to Your ways.

TUESDAY 10th

God of us all, set us free from the thoughts that consume our minds causing jealousy to arise. Substitute the negativity in our hearts with Your peace and Your love. May we rejoice when good news comes to others as Elizabeth rejoiced when Mary shared the wonderful news of God’s special blessing.

WEDNESDAY 11th

Father God, help us not to be envious of our neighbours, our families or our friends but rather to encourage them. Cleanse us of anything that breaks Your heart and help us to live a righteous life.

THURSDAY 12th

Loving Lord we know that the jealousies of the flesh are ruinous and evil and are abhorrent in Your eyes and yet You display a good and godly jealousy over Your children, and the things that are precious in Your sight. Thank You Lord that You are jealous in that way over Your love for us.

FRIDAY 13th

Loving Father forgive us for feelings of jealousy which are not righteous but detrimental to our wellbeing, our health and our relationships. May we not look at the attributes and achievements of others and wish we had their gifts and graces. Help us to develop an attitude of contentment and peace, which only comes from You.

SATURDAY 14th

Father God, forgive us for our jealous thoughts and help us to develop an attitude of gratitude for all that we have. We pray that You would give us the grace to change our thoughts from those of envy and jealousy to right thinking.

SUNDAY 15th

Loving Father, we know that all good things come from You and we pray that in Your grace You would seek out those that do not yet know You but who desire to turn from their envious and jealous attitudes. Draw them into a saving relationship with You, Lord Jesus.

HOPE

‘Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about which we do not see.’ Hebrews 11:1

MONDAY 16th

God of hope who brought love into the world with the birth of Your son Jesus Christ, be the love that dwells between us. Keep our hearts aflame with the hope of Christmas and the promise of a Saviour.

TUESDAY 17th

God our Saviour, in this season of Advent, inspire us to be people of hope. Encourage us not to be greedy for material possessions but for justice and truth. Lord, be with us we pray.

WEDNESDAY 18th

God our Creator, in this season of Advent, inspire us to be people of hope. Stir within us a desire to fight for the survival of Your creation and to appreciate

THURSDAY 19th

Loving Father, in this season of Advent, inspire us to be people of hope. Enflame us with a love for others that crosses boundaries of race, religion and nationality. Lord, be with us we pray.

FRIDAY 20th

Father God, in this season of Advent, inspire us to be people of hope. Fill us with strength and boldness according to your promises, that we might reach out to others with Your love. Lord, be with us we pray.

SATURDAY 21st

God our Comforter, we are promised that everything, even discomfort and inconvenience, has meaning in Your plan. Like Joseph and Mary, may we live each day by faith, trusting that You are in charge.

SUNDAY 22nd

'May the God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.'
Romans 15:13

Lord, we pray for the Holy Spirit to fill us every day so that we can experience Jesus' love and guidance and share the hope in our hearts with others.

Pray every day this week for residents of the local care homes

JESUS CHRIST**MONDAY 23rd**

God our Father, every year we rejoice as we look forward to this feast of our salvation. May we welcome Christ as our Redeemer, and meet Him with confidence when He comes to be our judge,

TUESDAY 24th

Lord Jesus, You took on the weakness of our human condition, be light now for those who do not see, strength for the wavering and comfort for the troubled of heart.

WEDNESDAY 25th

God of Love, on this day when we celebrate the birth of Your Son, may we take another step closer to each other in friendship and love. With Your guidance, help us to be more loving and thoughtful. Bless us with the warmth of Your great love for us and help us to remember to look for the light of Your love in each other.

A very happy Christmas to us all!

THURSDAY 26th

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

**FRIDAY 27th**

Lord of all, 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.

SATURDAY 28th

Jesus Christ, born in a stable, be with the poor and homeless this Christmas time. As we pray, shine your everlasting light on those who are suffering from cold, loneliness, pain and discomfort.

SUNDAY 29th

Jesus Christ, born of Mary, be with young mothers across the world this Christmas time. Be with those who fear for their lives, and those who have left homes and families this Christmas.

BUSINESS/EMPLOYMENT/WORKERS/JOBS**MONDAY 30th**

Almighty God, we thank You for all jobs and employment. May we find joy in toil and difficulty as well as in pleasure and success.

TUESDAY 31st

Lord, fill all employees with physical and spiritual energy so that they will be the best employees they can be in this coming year. Give them eyes of faith to see from a heavenly perspective as they do their work.





How much damage to the earth will we manage to do this Christmas? Those hundreds of millions of presents we are going to buy come from somewhere – usually raw resources. Are the presents worth the strain on our already struggling planet?

Here are some alternative presents, that are eco-friendly, useful, and fairly traded.

Christian Aid (christianaid.org.uk/christmaspresents) invites supporters to send them a donation, and in return, they will send a 'lively' personalised card to your friend or relations, describing the gift you have chosen to give on their behalf.

Send a Cow (sendacow.org/gifts) also invites supporters to send a donation for a range of practical gifts, for use in helping people from Ethiopia to Zambia.

Traidcraft (traidcraftshop.co.uk) offers everything from bamboo tights to clocks to food and cosmetics.

WaterAid (shop.wateraid.org) provides sanitation equipment (such as taps to promote hand washing) to villages in Africa, Asia or Central America. The person you nominate will receive a card to let them know this has been done in their name.

World Vision (musthavegifts.org) offers you the choice of sending various specific items from mosquito nets to garden tools, all of which they say are specifically asked for and needed.

With **WWF** (wwf.org.uk) you can adopt a wild animal, from a dolphin to an orangutan. WWF will send your nominated person an adoption certificate and even cuddly toy.





C of E's Environment Group calls for greater action on Climate Change

The Church of England's Environmental Advisory Group has called for all parts of the Church to recognise the Climate Crisis and step up its action to safeguard God's creation.

In guidance sent recently to bishops, dioceses and church leadership teams, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) points to the ambitious programme of action required, covering everything from the Church's buildings to its investment assets.

The paper also highlights future mission challenges including a need for churches to be ready to provide sanctuary for those affected by extreme weather events in this country and beyond as the impact of climate change accelerates.

With work already underway to develop an Energy Footprint Tool and to offer local energy audits for churches, schools and houses, the EWG says the assessment of our carbon footprint must extend to all areas within the overall Church of England portfolio such as investment holdings in farming and forestry.

The EWG brings together experts who oversee the Church's Environmental Programme. They plan to bring a motion to General Synod in 2020 proposing revised carbon targets for the Church with an ambition for net zero emissions by 2050.

The work of local Diocesan Environment Officers is also identified as key, and they can help resource parishes and local communities.

Canon David Winter on the 50th anniversary of the abolition of capital punishment.

A life for a life

When do you think capital punishment was abolished in Britain? It was actually *50 years ago this month*, in December 1969. It ended the macabre ritual of a judge donning a black cap, solemnly declaring that the accused was found guilty and would 'be taken hence to a place of public execution...and there to be hanged by the neck until you be dead.' On the day of execution, a crowd would gather outside the prison waiting to hear the eight o'clock bell confirming the execution was complete.

A movement against capital punishment had grown steadily during the 1950's, fuelled by 'public' shock at the execution of a woman for a crime of passion. Her name was Ruth Ellis and she was found guilty of shooting her lover, David Blake.

Though Ruth's story was tragic the incident that remains on my mind is that of Timothy Evans. Found guilty of murdering his wife and infant daughter he was hanged in March 1950. Subsequently it emerged beyond any doubt that the murder, and several others, was the work of John Reginald Christie. Christie lived with his wife in the ground floor flat of his property 10 Rillington Place, Camden.

Evans, who was mentally immature, had been persuaded to confess to a murder in which he was not, in any way, involved. It was a grave miscarriage of justice. Years later a friend gave me a book which told the whole appalling story. He had been one of the lawyers in the team that had tried to defend Evans. Today, Evans would have been released, pardoned and paid compensation. But we cannot bring someone back from the dead.

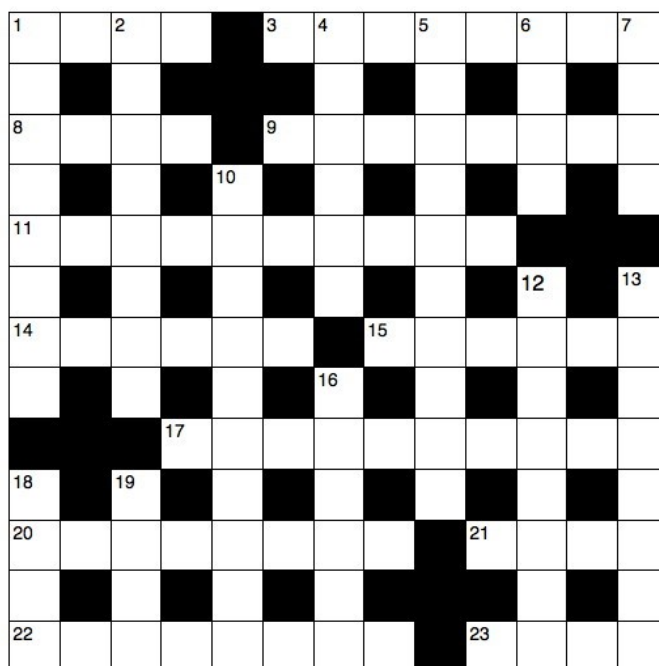
Source: Parish Pump

Puzzles Pages

Crossword Clues & Answers

Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
- 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)
- 20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)
- 21 Rite (anag.) (4)
- 22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)
- 23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)



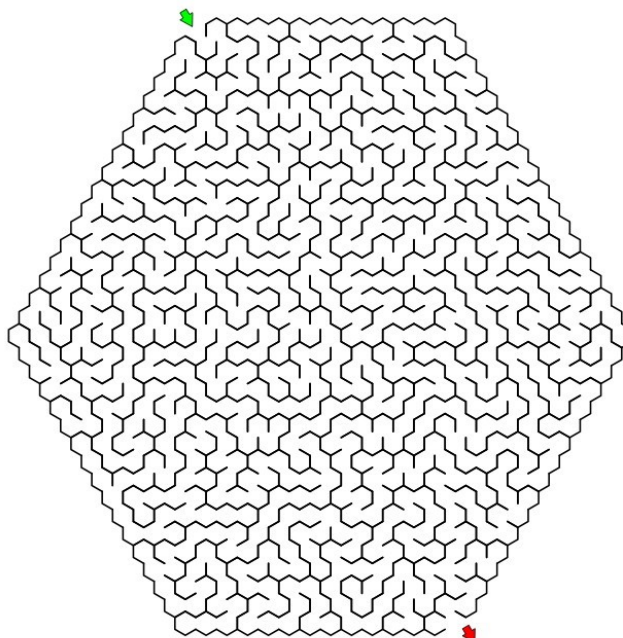
Down

- 1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)
- 2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)
- 4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)
- 5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)
- 6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)
- 7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)
- 10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)
- 12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)
- 13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)
- 16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)
- 18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)
- 19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)

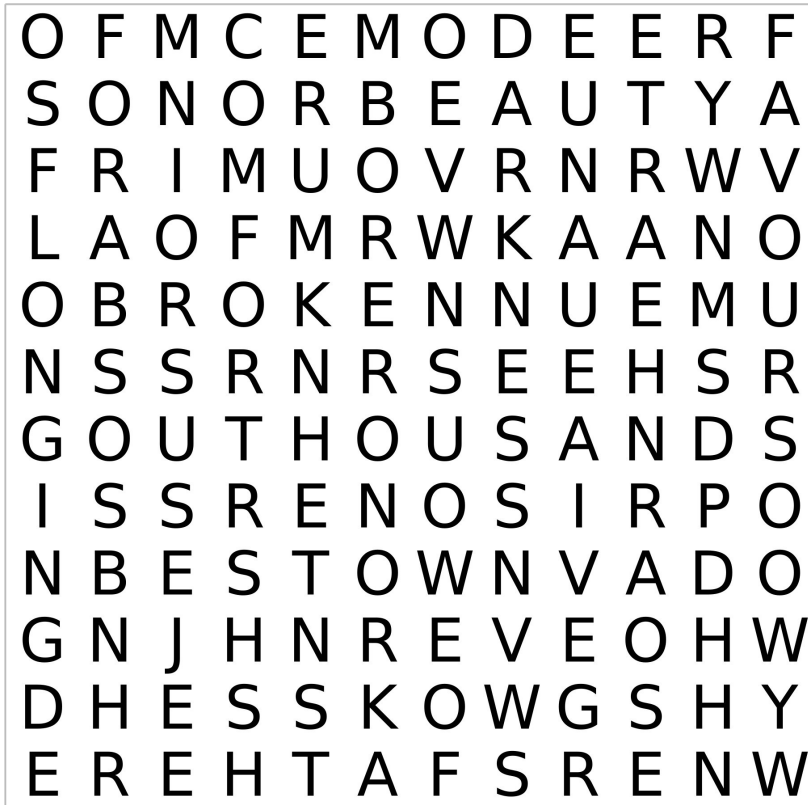
Medium Level Sudoku

		1		7				3
			8					7
		5				6		
1				4				3
9			7		6			5
	8			3				1
		6				5		
	9				4			
4				8		7		

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Christmas is nearly here! More than two thousand years ago the Jews were longing for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament had promised that when He came, He would preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, comfort all who mourn and to bestow on His people a crown of beauty instead of ashes. Jesus did all those things. He was and is the Son of God, and whoever has seen Him has seen the Father. Whoever believes in Him will have the best gift of all – His Spirit within them, which gives them eternal life.



Messiah
Broken
Heart
Freedom
Darkness

Favour
Prisoners
Comfort
Mourn
Bestow

Crown
Beauty
Ashes
Son
God
Jesus

Seen
Father
Whoever
Longing
Thousand

Puzzle Solutions

ACROSS: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

DOWN: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

Wordsearch solution

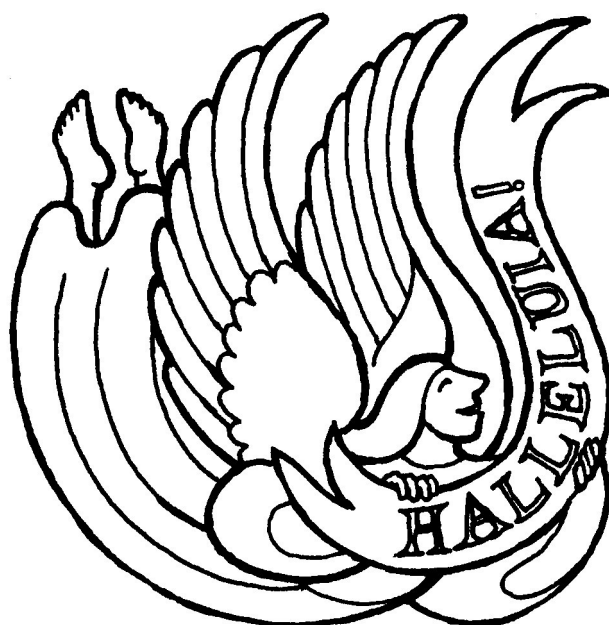


Crossword solution



Medium Soduku solution

6	2	1	4	7	9	8	5	3
3	4	9	8	6	5	1	7	2
8	7	5	1	2	3	6	9	4
1	6	2	5	4	8	9	3	7
9	3	4	7	1	6	2	8	5
5	8	7	9	3	2	4	6	1
2	1	6	3	9	7	5	4	8
7	9	8	2	5	4	3	1	6
4	5	3	6	8	1	7	2	9



Funding InSpire for 2020

In order to save our Parish the printing costs of InSpire, this year we have two options ...

Sponsorship or advertisements

Sponsorship If anyone would like to continue (or begin!) sponsoring an issue of InSpire for 2020, please do let Suzanne or Debbie von Bergen know?

Would you like to advertise in future issues of InSpire?

We are going to be seeking carefully chosen advertisers, but in the meantime, would you or someone you know like to advertise in a future issue of InSpire?

There will be no obligation to advertise every month.

We are aiming to keep the cost of adverts as reasonable as possible, whilst offering an advert that can feature a colour logo amongst other things.

Currently box sizes will be as follows:-

7cm x 7cm (approximately a sixth of a page) £10.00 per month or £100.00 per annum

Half page ad approx. 17.5cm w x 13 cm deep £20.00 per month or £200.00 per annum

Inside back cover (in colour) whole page: £30.00 per month or £300.00 per annum

Back page of selected issues (NOT June or December) £50.00 per month

This gives any advertisers the opportunity to reach a new audience of readers and we very much hope to increase the circulation as we move forward.

We are particularly keen to support local businesses wherever possible.

If you or anyone else you know would be interested in advertising, please contact Suzanne Cole or Debbie von Bergen. (Contact details on the inside front cover)

SAMPLE 7cm x 7cm advert

The opportunity to have your colour logo included in your advert



Text

Web address:

Contact details: 12345



**Thanks be to God for his
incredible gift!**

2 Corinthians 9:15



Your contributions would be most welcome and any copy for this publication should be sent to
Suzanne Cole editor@capelandockleychurch.org.uk **By 25th of each month please.**

If you would like to receive *InSpire* by email, you can subscribe to InSpire via the church website:-
www.capelandockleychurch.org.uk