

CROSSROADS

The magazine for
St George's Tuffley and St Margaret's Whaddon

Worshipping, Caring, Pioneering



Growing God's Kingdom

Comfort
and Joy



ST GEORGE'S

Sunday

Parish Communion at 10.30am

4th Sunday

(with prayers for healing)

Wednesday

Morning Prayer at 8.15am on Zoom

ST MARGARET'S

1st Sunday

Family Praise at 10.30am and

Evensong at 5.00pm

(with prayers for healing)

2nd Sunday

Parish Communion at 9.00am

3rd Sunday

Evensong at 5.00pm

4th Sunday

Parish Communion at 9.00am

Thursday

Parish Communion at 10.30am

WEBSITE:

www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk

FACEBOOK:

St. George's, Tuffley and St Margaret's Whaddon

CHURCH IN TUFFLEY: 3rd Wednesday

Refresh at 7.30pm on Zoom

DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021

50p

ST GEORGE'S TUFFLEY WITH ST MARGARET'S WHADDON

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Anyone who requires prayers to go on our Intercessions list for themselves or others could you please ring Linda Medwell on 01452 302590.

OUR TUFFLEY PIONEER WRITES...

Dear readers

We have entered Advent in a way that's not been done before. Staying home, some of us alone, some of us surrounded by chaos, wondering what is to become of the world.

We missed gathering together to begin our waiting for the joy of everything that Christmas brings with the birth of our saviour. The first candle we would have lit this last week on our advent wreath is the one representing hope.

Hope is just a four-letter word but it's implication can be life changing. People use the word in eager promise that things will turn out well; that maybe tomorrow will be better. Sometimes those things do come good and our hope is strengthened; sometimes they don't turn out so well and hope is diminished. We let each other down and our circumstances say to us that there is no hope. These things are not the way God intended for them to be.

But there is a real answer. Mary carried the baby Jesus, waiting for him to be born, knowing that he was the promised child that would bring hope. Jesus did indeed give us hope - hope that is real; hope that gives us a future with our heavenly Father; hope that gives us reason to live this life giving all the love we can, no matter what our circumstances say.

As I write, we don't yet know what the weeks leading up to Christmas will look like - will we still be in lockdown? Will we be allowed to see friends and relatives? Will we be able to meet to worship? And a question asked particularly now - will it be ok to come together in singing our beloved carols?

Well, unfortunately, I am no wiser than you and I have no answers. None of us knows yet how it will be. But I can tell you that God is not moving off his throne, Jesus is still the Saviour of the World and the Holy Spirit moves amongst us every hour of every day. God's mercy and grace do not come to an end. His love is poured out lavishly upon us. And whilst we live each day in this strange and weary world, we know that one day we will be with him and everyone will know Jesus is the Lord of all. This is hope is real. This is OUR hope.

So, I pray the words of Romans 15 verse 13

Now may God, the inspiration and fountain of hope, fill you to overflowing with uncontainable joy and perfect peace as you trust in him. And may the power of the Holy Spirit continually surround your life with his super-abundance until you radiate with hope!

HELEN

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS

OCTOBER CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES

Lorraine Best, Glenice Boots & Isabelle Leaverland

Our sympathies to the families and friends of:

Heather May Hodges RIP
Daphne Rose Greatorex RIP

TIME TO REMEMBER

This year All Saints Day fell on a Sunday. That made it a very good day to hold our annual Time to Remember service. I think this service must have started about ten years ago at a guess, and it has proved to be a good way of reaching out to people recently, or not so recently, bereaved.

Little did we know when we first started planning this year's service that it would be the last service of any kind at St George's, until this second phase of lockdown is relaxed... and who can say for sure just when that will be?

In fact, the service went very well. Not for the first time, we found that the Covid situation made us think differently, and some good ideas emerged in the process. As last year, the service was a joint effort by the Church in Tuffley, though let it be said that our Pioneer Helen did much of the planning and arranging.

As in previous years, people were invited to submit names, but instead of these being read out, the names passed silently across the screens, with recorded hymns being sung as we went along. A lot of people seemed to agree with my feeling that this worked very well indeed. I found it very moving to see the

names slipping past – so often it was someone I had known and had perhaps ministered to in their last years.

Of course, this year we could not sing as a congregation, but we did have one 'live' solo, from Sylvia Evans. She sang 'I watch the Sunrise' beautifully, in her relaxed and very natural style.

In his Reflection, Fr Gerry from English Martyrs spoke very clearly about the questions which inevitably concern us after someone has died. He focussed on the reading we had heard from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, and ended with the lovely prayer attributed to Bede: "We give them back to you O God, who gave them to us, and as you did not lose them in giving, so we do not lose them by their return.

"For what is yours, O God, is ours also, for we all belong to you. And life is eternal and love immortal. And death is only our horizon, and our horizon is nothing but the limits of our sight".

The technology worked flawlessly until the very end, when we should have heard "Lord of all Hopefulness". Luckily, Helen was able to find the music quickly and played it from the electric piano instead. What a fine hymn this is – no doubt many were recalling at least some of the familiar words as Helen played. The words are now about a hundred years old. I have often wondered if this was the first popular hymn to have addressed God as 'You'. It takes us through the day from waking to sleeping and ends: "...give us we pray / your peace in our hearts Lord, at the end of the day". Amen to that.

A big thank you, not only to Helen, but to all who took part, and to those who came to remember their loved ones now in God's keeping.

JONATHAN

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

The Service of Nine Lessons and Carols has been popular for over 100 years. First created following WWI, the readings are some of the most familiar Bible readings even today. This Advent there's the opportunity to look at four of them and see how they are relevant in today's situation. Join Susan and others on zoom for the first four Tuesdays in December for one hour each beginning at 7:30pm. *Please contact Helen (details on front insert) for the link.*



Something really special is taking place on 5th & 6th December, 7pm each night! Thousands will tune into South West Carols which sets to be the biggest festive carols and nativity event in the South West. We all know 2020 has been WAY different than anyone imagined but there's one thing we can all look forward to - **Christmas!** Our first ever South West Carols event will be a celebration of all the GOOD things that take place at this wonderful time of the year as we remember the reason for the season.

With regional and headline musical performances including from London Community Gospel Choir, Wildwood Kin, Lucy Grimble, Exeter Cathedral Choir, South West Musicians, and more. Plus, the South West's biggest ever nativity with participants from schools all over the region. Watch LIVE at www.southwestcarols also Facebook and YouTube.

Speak to Helen if you would like more information

"WHERE ARE THEY NOW?"

Felicity Walters



Do you remember me? Some of you might. I was Fr. Hugh Broad's last curate, and I was ordained deacon in St George's on the feast of the Epiphany 2001, so I'm about to celebrate twenty years of being collared.

After St George's I had a brief spell as an associate priest at St Catharine's Matson before moving to my 'first post of responsibility' in the Forest of Dean. I needed to stay reasonably local as Richard

was in the middle of secondary school and had already had disruption enough. The remit for the job was 'mission in a rural context' and although it was a challenging posting in many ways, in the five years that I was there I saw more adults Confirmed than during the ten years prior to my arrival, and I'm still on Christmas card terms with a number of people from that time.

At the start of 2011, I took up my present post. We are in the fourth reorganisation since I arrived here [!] and I currently hold two incumbencies 'in plurality', and I am Vicar of Hadfield, where I live, as well as being Vicar of Charlesworth with Gamesley, in the north west territories of Derby Diocese, in total a 'cure' of about 18,000 souls. In reality we are an awfully long way from Derby in every sense, two hours over the hills and far away. Glossop is a post-industrial small town in the dramatic High Peak of Derbyshire with good connections into Manchester despite the rather slow commuter train...and the nearest station is seven minutes' walk away! I love living here. The Pennine Way crosses a corner of my parish and I have now walked quite a lot of it, in short stretches, sometimes alone and sometimes with friends. Until lockdown I was a regular visitor to Manchester's brilliant theatres and also enjoyed the art galleries there several times a year and have been to concerts at the Bridgewater Hall.

My 'patch' is an interesting combination of different social contexts. Charlesworth is a small rural village, but the parish includes a large estate of private housing in Glossop. Gamesley is a Manchester overspill estate with multiple indices of deprivation, and we celebrated fifty years since the church there was consecrated, back in September. Our bishop is Bishop Libby Lane, who was the first woman to be a bishop in the Church of England in her previous post as Bishop of Stockport. She actually grew up in Glossop and her faith was nurtured in the youth group at Charlesworth and she was Confirmed in Gamesley. We are comforted that despite necessary radical re-organisation in Derby Diocese as elsewhere, at least +Libby can visualise Glossop when it is mentioned at Church House! Hadfield used to be a mill town, at one point in the nineteenth century it was home to what was then the largest industrial complex in Europe. The Heritage Trail describes what William Blake spoke of as 'the dark satanic mills' in his hymn 'Jerusalem'. One mill owner was prosecuted for working children for more than the permitted number of hours back in the 1830's, and another for having a clock designed to go slowly so that he'd get more time out of the workers. Little is left of those mills now...an unremarkable modern industrial estate with the local Mr Fixit garage and workshops for

bespoke kitchen units and steel girders. Much of the housing is two-up two-down terraced stone cottages...think of 'The Last of the Summer Wine', as well there being extensive modern building.

Although part of the appeal of the job here was the range of church traditions locally, in the end the three churches for which I have responsibility are in the Evangelical end of the church tradition spectrum, and mildly charismatic if there can be such a thing....combined with some of the form and structure which I learned to value from St George's and St Catharine's. Like everyone else we've been challenged and stretched this year seeking to serve parishioners digitally yet mindful of a significant minority who are not on the internet. Our digital worship is on WhatsApp, and if you'd told me nine months ago that I'd become quite confident at doing selfie videos on my phone fixed to the window with blue-tac, I'd have found it hard to believe, and people have been willing to do likewise with readings and intercessions. As this only reaches a closed group, I've been posting short messages to a wider and less 'churched' audience via Facebook too.

I'm writing this in dark times, but on a good day I feel privileged and excited to be in ministry at the present time when all of the previously accepted norms have become null and void. What will the Lord do with us and through us? How are we to be salt and light for those amongst whom we live? As 2021 dawns how are we to declare our faith in Jesus Christ afresh for the next generation? As ever, we can only keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and trust him.

FELICITY

CHRISTMAS RIDDLE-ME-REES

- 1 If Santa Claus rides in a sleigh and the 3 wise men travelled by elephant, horse and camel. What do the elves ride around in?
- 2 Santa went to buy his sleigh, but he was surprised that it was free. How did Santa get his sleigh for free?
- 3 What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree?
- 4 Who is never hungry on Christmas Day?
- 5 When Santa Claus sets off from the North Pole on Christmas Eve, in which direction does he travel?

CHURCHES IN TUFFLEY

Advent Prayer Evening via Zoom on Wednesday 9 December at 7.30pm

For this special Advent prayer evening together, we would love it if everyone who joins us contributes something of their choice during the evening. This could be a prayer, poem, short reading/Psalm, or a hymn/song relevant to Advent. So that we can ensure a smooth-running order, please let me know well in advance by forwarding your contribution to me by Sunday 29th November. Many thanks

Nikki O'Neill

georgeandnikki@tiscali.co.uk

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Services will be as indicated in the diary later in this issue of Crossroads. We will do our best to make sure that they take place as published but any decision taken to shield us all from Covid 19 could well change things dramatically.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Donations for Christmas flowers, in memory of loved ones, can be given to either Gloria or to Jill at St Margaret's.

If you would like to make a donation towards St George's Flower Fund in memory of a loved one this Christmas, please use the envelopes that are at the back of the church and then give it to either Mike or Sylvia.

Thank you

"Resolve to make at least one person happy every day, and then in ten years you may have made three thousand, six hundred and fifty persons happy, or brightened a small town by your contribution to the fund of general enjoyment."



Questions based on the Gospel readings for October

- 1 On his way to Jerusalem how many lepers approached him?
- 2 After healing them, in accordance with the law of Moses, who did Jesus tell them to go and see?
- 3 One of these lepers came from a country that was named. Which country?
- 4 In the parable of the wedding banquet the king gave a banquet. In whose honour?
- 5 Those who had been invited reused to attend, indeed they killed the servants of the King. What was their punishment?
- 6 When Jesus sent out the 70. How many groups did He split them into?
- 7 He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but..." What are the next 4 words?
- 8 After telling them to cure the sick He said, "The _____ _ _ has come near to you". What 3 words are missing?
- 9 Jesus asked the Pharisees a question, "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son, is he?" Who name did the Pharisees give?
- 10 Jesus quoted, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I put your Enemies _____" What 3 words complete the quote?
Your bonus question, if you are right give yourself 10 more points
- 11 Which Old Testament scripture was Jesus quoting in Question 10?

The answers to this month's Bible Quiz can be found later in this issue of Crossroads

To have your **FEBRUARY 2021 CROSSROADS** ready for publication on Sunday 31 JANUARY 2021

ARTICLES NEED TO BE IN THE EDITORS' HANDS PREFERABLY BY EMAIL BEFORE, BUT NO LATER THAN... ..WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY

The earlier you can get your articles to the Editors the greater chance of getting it published. **Thank you for your help in this matter**

TUFFLEY CHRISTMAS WINDOWS

Our community are lighting up their windows this Christmas with their own window advent calendar. Each night in December a new window will light up on the journey to Christmas. Anyone in the Tuffley community can take part, just book a date, and decorate your window. It's not a competition – just a lovely way to engage with each other bringing smiles, oohs, and ahs and maybe even a wave from passers-by. Contact Helen or follow our Facebook page (Tuffley Christmas Windows) for more details or look out for our Tuffley Christmas Windows Map which will be available at the end of November.



"There's nothing sadder in this world than to awake Christmas morning and not be a child."

PETER'S CHRISTMAS posers

- 1 In the Dr Who Christmas special in 2017, which actress made her first official appearance as the 13th Doctor?
- 2 Alphabetically, which of Santa's reindeer comes first?
- 3 Who is generally recognised as writing the poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (also known as "T'was the Night Before Christmas")?
- 4 Snowflakes are often portrayed as being 6 sided but studies suggest that less than what percentage of snowflakes exhibit the ideal six-fold symmetric shape?
a) 0.1% b) 1% c) 10%
- 5 A Bellini is flavoured with which fruit?
- 6 From the Morecambe and Wise Christmas Special of 1971 can you complete this quote - 'I'm playing all the right notes but ...'?

- 7 In 'The Gingerbread Man' fairy tale, who or what devours the gingerbread man in the end?
- 8 What stick would you put into a mulled wine?
- 9 In the 1947 version of Miracle on 34th Street, who plays the little girl Susan Walker?
- 10 Who wrote the Band Aid song 'Do They Know It's Christmas'?
- 11 The Australian external territory of Christmas Island is in which ocean?
- 12 Modern Christmas trees originated in the 16th century in an area now known as which country?
- 13 In the novel A Christmas Carol, which is the first ghost to visit Scrooge?
- 14 Driving Home for Christmas, was written during a car journey back to which town?
- 15 In the Christmas song 'Let it Snow' what has happened to the lights?
- 16 In the film Scrooged starring Bill Murray, which actress plays the Ghost of Christmas Present?
- 17 Which Christmas hit for Harry Belafonte in 1956 is now widely performed as a Christmas Carol?
- 18 Port, the Portuguese fortified wine, often drunk at Christmas, is produced exclusively in which valley in northern Portugal?
- 19 Which famous scientist who developed the three laws of motion, was born on Christmas day 1642?
- 20 Which wordless children's picture book by Raymond Briggs was first published in 1978?

ANSWERS TO PETER'S NOVEMBER POSERS

1 Et cetera: 2 Achilles: 3 Capillaries: 4 Jenson Button: 5 Church: 6 James McAvoy: 7 Rwanda: 8 B&Bs: 9 Elephant: 10 Minerva: 11 Saoirse Ronan: 12 V&A Museum: 13 Gordon Brown: 14 Royal Ascot: 15 1066: 16 Hey Duggee: 17 Creed: 18 Taramasalata: 19 Shaftesbury Avenue: 20 Ken:

*Christmas day is a day of joy and charity.
May God make you very rich in both."*

The Messenger, December 2020

Comfort and Joy



Christmas will be different for many people this year and uncertain times are all around us. But amid all the media messages and confusion, one thing we do know is that Christmas will never be cancelled. Jesus Christ came to earth as a tiny baby and nothing can undo that message of hope and love stronger than death.

We can all make Christmas magical by sharing God's love and hope with those around us. Simple acts of dropping off some flowers for a neighbour, writing a letter to someone stuck at home or providing a home cooked meal for a friend who's on their own, all make a difference.

Sharing is part of the joy of Christmas. Whatever position you are in, there will be something you can give to others; time to listen to someone, a donation to the local food bank, a smile and a compliment to the person you see on your walk, or a card for someone spending the season alone. These acts of kindness, no matter how small, can bring so much joy to ourselves and others and bring that Christmas spirit to life.

Five ways to celebrate Christmas at home

The Church of England is providing an online service for each Sunday of Advent, (www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/church-online/weekly-online-services), a Christingle with the Children's Society, nine lessons and carols, and midnight services.

For those who are not internet inclined, Daily Hope is a free phone number (0800 804 8044) offering music, prayers, and reflections as well as full worship services from the CofE.

Mary and Joseph, the journey

Choose a couple of toys, or ornaments to be Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem. Each day they can do something along the way—sing songs, have a picnic, look at the stars, feed the donkey, sleep in a tent, tell jokes, cross a stream, read a map, play I Spy, listen to Christmas music... Imagine the journey they might have taken and join them in the experience.

1. Light a candle

The soft glow gives a new perspective and can be calming and reassuring. Remember those who cannot be with you and let the light shine into the darkness. If you're not in a space where real candles are appropriate, you can light a virtual candle on the Church of England's website churchofengland.org/our-faith/light-candle.

2. Take a virtual tour of Bethlehem

See the place where Jesus came to earth and imagine what it might have been like to have been there. Try https://youtu.be/aLCBQ_w8BQQ. You can move your screen around the room and see for yourself the place Jesus was said to have been born.

3. Get moving

Everyone loves a Christmas stroll—get your coat and shoes and head out for some fresh air, exercise and to appreciate the natural world. If you've overdone it on the lockdown chocolates or if you've missed company and want to see some smiling faces, get up and get out there.

4. Follow the story:

The @glosdiocschools Twitter account is providing four short videos, released on every Tuesday in December, with each week telling a different part of the Christmas story. From Mary being visited by the angel to the birth of Jesus, these videos will help to create an individual response to the Christmas story. Every day they will tweet with links to stories, songs, and ideas to bring comfort and joy at this very special time of year.

Events and training

More details for all these events at gloucester.anglican.org/events

At the time of going to press (10 Nov 2020) there was much uncertainty about what would be possible under Covid restrictions this Christmas. Please do continue to check websites and local information for the latest updates.

Christmas services 2020 #fromyourcathedraltoyou

Gloucester Cathedral will provide a programme of live streamed services, including Midnight Mass and Christmas Day Eucharist. There will also be on-line family and traditional carol services to enjoy. We hope, in these uncertain times, that public services will be able to take place in the cathedral in December, but if you are not able to come for whatever reason, the cathedral will bring Christmas to you.

Look out for their interactive digital Advent Calendar on Facebook and follow the Cathedral on Twitter and Instagram where they will be spreading comfort and joy to all.

Please visit www.gloucestercathedral.org.uk for the latest news on services and events for December.

The Church of England's weekly Sunday online service can be viewed at churchofengland.org/news-and-media/church-online/weekly-online-services

What's happening near me?

Visit AChurchNearYou.com to get local information. If the arrangements for local services aren't clear then please do feel free to contact the local priest or the churchwarden, who will be delighted to share joining details with you.

Have your say

Visit [Facebook Diocese.of.Gloucester](https://www.facebook.com/Diocese.of.Gloucester), email [Katherine kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk](mailto:Katherine.kclamp@glosdioc.org.uk), follow us on Twitter [@glosdioc](https://twitter.com/glosdioc), view videos on YouTube [Diocese of Gloucester](https://www.youtube.com/Diocese%20of%20Gloucester) or visit our website gloucester.anglican.org

A 2020 NATIVITY BY REV RACHEL DALE

Mary was sitting in her garden with a cup of tea and a slice of homemade banana bread. She had finished her lockdown chores and had even squeezed in a quick Joe Wicks PE session, so she had a little bit of free time before her Microsoft Teams meeting at 11.

As she sat, suddenly there was an angel standing 2 metres away (he didn't have a mask on but that was okay, as they were outside). The angel told her she was to have a baby. He would be God's son, a light for all the people of the world, and she was to call him Jesus. Mary was a little confused at first, but then

everything is a bit confusing at the moment. She wondered if this was fake news, but with a bit of Googling and a lot of praying, she realised that this really was God's plan. And so, she said 'Yes'. She had to tell her fiancé, Joseph, though, and he was not best pleased – at least not until the angel paid him a visit too. "Don't worry" Joseph said to Mary. "We can bring the wedding forward – after all, the banns have already been read. We'll need to cut down the guest list – but we can livestream the service to everyone else on Facebook".

A few months went by, lockdown was eased a little and then tightened again, and it was almost time for the baby to be born. The Prime minister said that Mary and Joseph needed to go to Bethlehem to be counted (even though, last week, the PM had also said they shouldn't make unnecessary journeys, which confused them a little). They wondered and wondered and wondered what to do – but they knew that if they didn't get counted, they wouldn't be able to get Universal Credit, and with the carpentry business struggling, they really needed the help. So, they agreed, reluctantly, to go – even though Bethlehem was in a higher tier than Nazareth. They decided they would be safer if they avoided public transport, so they went by donkey instead. If anyone stopped them, they would say they were doing their daily allotted exercise.

When they got to Bethlehem, it was busier than they expected for a little town in lockdown. No wonder the R number was so much higher here than at home! They tried to find somewhere to stay, but it was hopeless. The first inn they came to had closed, and all the staff had been furloughed. The second inn was open, but only for takeaways, which needed to be pre-booked online and collected from the car park at a set time. They were really tired as they approached the final inn in town. 'We are open' said the innkeeper 'but we're full of keyworkers who are away from their families'. Mary was close to tears she was so tired, and the innkeeper noticed her eyes filling up. 'But I can see how tired you are' he continued. 'How about the garage round the back? It'll be quiet, and you'll be safe for the night'.

And so, Mary and Joseph (and, of course, the donkey) settled down for the night. And, in the middle of the night, the baby was born – which meant that Joseph could be there, which was good. He couldn't have been there, could he, on a maternity ward? And at least the garage was Covid Secure. They called the baby 'Jesus' just as the angel had said, and they placed him in a wooden crate, wrapped in a blanket.

There were some shepherds in the fields nearby, watching their sheep (after all, they couldn't work from home, could they?) They'd been in a bubble since the second lockdown began and were watching "I'm a Celebrity" on their phones with a wry smile – they knew just how cold hillsides could get at night at this time of year. All of a sudden, a heavenly host appeared, singing. Well, not quite a host – more a heavenly trio, standing 1 metre plus (with mitigations). And not quite singing, either – more of a muted humming behind their visors. The shepherds were used to hearing things from across the fields, though, so they had no problem making out what the angels were 'singing'. A baby had been born – he would be their King - and they could 'meet' him on Zoom. After a bit of a tussle with their rural broadband, they managed to connect. They could see the baby king, but they couldn't hear anything - and they weren't sure whether you could tell a king's mum that she was on mute!! It was soon all sorted out, and they were able to sing to the new baby (because you can still sing on Zoom). How amazing was that! Then they Zoom-waved goodbye (for quite a long time) and left the meeting.

Quite a long way away – not part of the travel corridor – there were three kings. A star had told them about the king (the angels would have had to spend too long in quarantine if they'd gone there). They made the journey to Bethlehem, too, walking at a safe distance from one another, only stopping for the occasional Greggs' vegan sausage roll. They didn't want to travel by camel (camels had been super spreaders of MERS virus a few years ago, and so the kings thought they'd better be safe than sorry). Llamas were a pretty cool replacement, though - everyone loves llamas!

When they got to Bethlehem, they found the garage. They sanitised, scanned the test & trace QR code on their apps and – one at a time – were able to go and meet the new baby, Jesus, who was safely tucked up behind a Perspex screen. They texted Joseph the Hermes tracking code for their gifts (these were due to arrive in a couple of days and would need to be left for 72 hours before opening). Finally, they bowed down before Jesus and said goodbye. Then they each whipped out a handy pack of antibacterial wipes to make the garage door handle safe for the next visitor.

And the baby? He smiled, yawned, and went straight back to sleep. Because that's what babies do.

(Of course, some of the details would be different if Jesus was born this

Christmas, not in the 1st Century. But the truth of Christmas - the importance of Christmas - is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow: A heavenly king - born into our earthly mess. A shepherd king – for kings and for shepherds. An eternal king – promising eternal life for each of us. May the peace of the Christ child be yours, this Christmas and always.

"It is the personal thoughtfulness, the warm human awareness, the reaching out of the self to one's fellow man that makes giving worthy of the Christmas spirit."

JILL'S JOTTINGS

from St Margaret's

Well, here I am again, that batty person who does the cleaning at St Margaret's Church, with her two mates Marilyn and Dianne. We decided that we would be doing the cleaning every two weeks, as our church is not being used by so many people. It's just not necessary during the lockdown. We thought that the time we were there we would give everything a really good clean.

I've been looking to see how our cleaning materials were shaping up. We have quite a few tins of spray polish but not enough wax polish which we use on the wooden floor between the pews. We only had a little left so I went to the market to Mr Aladdin's Cave and he ordered it for me. I know that it was a bit pricey but it was worth it. Kath always used the wax polish on the doors of the pews and the floors. She said that the spray polish was alright for the rest of the pews but not the doors. I always bowed to her greater knowledge as she just loved making the doors look good.

We divided the jobs up, so we don't fall over one another, we do keep to the social distancing, but we do enjoy leaving the church smelling nice and looking even better.

Of course, we do make ourselves a nice cup of coffee and tea, but after that it's back down to work. We get people in the churchyard who pop their heads around the door and ask if they could have a look round. We never say No, and just carry on with our jobs. Currently, I'm doing the floors and doors for as we all know we are into another lockdown but we must still do our bit to keep our little church clean and tidy.

We were looking at the lectern whilst we were doing the cleaning and I remembered about the inscription...

**'In loving memory of Captain Hugo St Helier Jeune
12th Gloucester's Regiment
Born 7. 1. 1894 - Killed Nr Fresnay, France 12. 5. 1917
Our Glorious Dead'**

I thought I would tell you what it said as you know I have a head like a bucket at times but never mind. Our Church Service have been well attended so far; Thank you to our regular congregation and to our visitors as well. We hope to see you again when lockdown ends,

Goodbye for now
Lots of love and best wishes
JILL PONTER

Editor's note: *Captain Jeune is buried in the Bruay Communal Cemetery Extension in Bruay-la-Buissière, France. He was born in Lynmouth, N. Devon.*

RIDDLE-ME-REE ANSWERS

1 A minivan: 2 Because the sleigh was on the house: 3 A pineapple: 4 The turkey, because he's always stuffed: 5 South. Everywhere is south from the North Pole.

PLEASE NOTE

That there will not be an increase in the cost of Crossroads for 2021 issues will remain at 50p per issue or £4.00 for the year if you pay in full by the end of January.

Remember that if you have access to the internet you can read Crossroads for free and in full colour by visiting the St George's and St Margaret's website. But please let us know if you decide to view Crossroads via our website so we don't print or deliver copies needlessly.

www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk



OVER THE GARDEN FENCE

Maya, Maya where are you Maya. Trixie, I'm over here. What you doing over there. Just looking Trix, just looking. What's there to look at Maya. Our Mum keeps telling me to leave the birds alone, well Trixie, I've been watching them for ages, and every time I try to get near them they fly off. Maybe that's because our Mum keeps coming to the door and shouting at us. You could be right there, Trix, come on let's try and go inside, I think it's starting to rain again.

Trixie, where have you been, I've been looking for you for ages. Maya, I've been up on the bed having a nice long sleep. It was lovely, but now I'm starving, has our Mum put anything in our bowls yet? I think she has Trix, its not much but it will do for now.

Who on earth is that, Trix. I don't know Maya, another new member of the Thoresby Ave feline establishment do you think. Don't know about that Trix, lets go and say hello, shall we; maybe this cat won't spit at us! Come on then lets introduce ourselves. Hello, my dear, we're Trixie and Maya Ponter and we live at 34, who are you and where do you live? Well hello girls, my name is Star because I have a star shape on my chest. I haven't been here long and I haven't a clue what number I live at, but I know that I walked quite a little way to get here. So, what goes on around here? Well, not a lot really, we meet up with the Gingers, and there's Harry of course and Duke, he comes in the mornings, has his breakfast and then decides to wander off. Then there's Harry's girlfriend, Yasmin; we don't see much of her because her Mum won't let her out to play with us. She's too posh you know. Well, my word, speak of the Devil, here she is coming down the fence. What on earth happened to her face? Somebody squashed it? Star, you can't say that, she was born like that, it's the breed she is. Well I'm glad that I've got my face and not hers! I'd never hear the last of it. Now Star, just shut up a minute and let me introduce you. How are you Yasmin and how is your Mum? Which door did you manage to get out of this time?

Well, Maya, we had visitors today and the lady didn't quite shut the door, so I slipped out. I expect she's in the middle of a blue fit because I'm not in the house, but I don't care, I wanted to see my friends. Have you seen Harry lately? I haven't, mind you I don't care much anyway. Nice to meet up with you again and this little Munchkin is? Star's the name and star by nature, so pleased to meet you. Oh, blimey, here comes the Gingers. Start you must let us introduce you to these characters. Star, this is little Ging and Ginger, they live down the road a bit. Guys, this is Star, she's new to the area and she needs to be given the guided tour. So, please be gentle, none of that rough and tumble that you two enjoy. Have you seen Harry, guys? Not today Maya, mind you his Mum does keep him on a short lead, you know, because of his face being so sore. Yes, Ginger, I do know, does he still have to go to that place, Ging. I don't think so, Trix, he just doesn't want to come out at the moment. That doesn't seem like him, but then it has been coming down like stair rods lately, hasn't it! You never said a truer word and its started raining again. So, I'm sorry guys, it's time to get inside, so until the next time, come on Trixie, it's time to say tata to everyone. I know, Maya, tata everyone and it's goodbye from me until the next time.

TRIXIE AND MAYA PONTER

GOSPEL TRUTH BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS

1 10: 2 Priest: 3 Samaria: 4 His son: 5 the kings troops destroyed them: 6 35:
7 The labourers are few: 8 Kingdom of God: 9 David: 10 Under your feet:
The Bonus question 11 Psalm 110:1:

*"The old year has gone. Let the dead past bury its own dead.
The New Year has taken possession of the clock of time.
All hail the duties and possibilities of the coming twelve months!"*



CLEANING OF ST GEORGE'S CHURCH

Our Churchwardens at St George's are to my knowledge trying to put together a rota for the cleaning of our Church. So, if you can help speak to either Mike or Sylvia as soon as you can. The number of people who come forward will decide whether you're asked to clean once a month or possibly once every two months; a couple of hours each time is all you're being asked to do on a rota basis.



THROUGH THE WINDOW

Hello everyone,

It's your friendly feline here again. It's been ages since I last wrote to you, but not a lot has happened really. Hasn't it been flippin' cold; I went out the other morning and there was white stuff everywhere: My Mum said it was frost. I don't care what it is but my paws were so cold, I tried warming them up on my Mum but even she told me off, because my feet were so cold. What did she expect when it was her fault that they were cold, she made me go outside, fair enough I needed to go out but, she didn't have to leave me out there! My Mum doesn't go out much these days, I think she and Auntie Jill have been to see Auntie Lynne. I haven't seen Auntie Lynne for months and months, maybe she's forgotten all about me. I haven't seen anybody else either. I will have forgotten what everyone looks like and maybe they will have forgotten me too. I do like to welcome everyone who comes. I see my Mum's sons now and again, but I don't get too close to them though. I give them a sniff now and again. The other day it was really windy, and I needed to go outside, but the wind was howling, and it was raining heavily. I thought to myself "I'm not going out there,

I'll get blown away". Eventually I had to be very brave, I was desperate. I couldn't wait to get back in the warm. Eventually it stopped raining so I could go out again. It was still blowing a hooley, so it was a quick out and in again. When my Mum goes out, I hide under the shrubs to stay reasonably dry. I haven't seen the other two felines either, I don't know what's happened. I try and chase the birds and get shouted at by my Mum. A couple of nights ago there was a lot of noise going on outside. My Mum wouldn't let me go outside to see what was going on. It has been two or three nights now with whooshes, bangs, and crackles and I just wanted to see what was going on out there, but I wasn't allowed. I don't suppose Maya and Trix were allowed out either. Mean I call it, but my Mum says it's for my own good.

Well 'bye for now everyone.

Your friend JO JO WHITTLE

Rosie and Bruce send their greetings to everyone for Christmas and new Year. They thank everyone for your astounding generosity in their leaving gifts. Bruce intends to use his to buy an inflatable canoe next season; and Rosie is getting to know the garden over the next few months before she starts spending the garden tokens! They assure us of their ongoing prayers for the new vicar appointment process, and in these testing times meanwhile for everyone to flourish and thrive in God's rich blessings.



NOVEMBER

Sun 29		ADVENT 1	
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DECEMBER

Tues 1	7.30pm	Advent Bible Study	Z
Wed 2	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	7.00pm	Joint PCC with Archdeacon Hilary	Z

Thu 3	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Sat 5	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
	7.00pm	South West Carols live on the internet see Crossroads article	
Sun 6		ADVENT 2	
	10.30am	Family Praise	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion	
	5.00pm	Evensong	*
	7.00pm	South West Carols live on the internet see Crossroads article	
Mon 7	10.00am	Speakability (tbc)	MH
	7.00pm	Centre Management Committee	Z
Tue 8	1.00pm	Bluebird Care (tbc)	MH
	2.30pm	Mothers' Union 'Christmas Social' (tbc)	MH
	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
	7.30pm	Advent Bible Study	Z
Wed 9	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	9.00am	Mission Group	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions (tbc)	MH
	4.00pm	Vacancy Steering Group	Z
	7.30pm	Advent Prayer Evening	Z
Thu 10	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Sat 12	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 13		ADVENT 3	
	9.00am	Parish Communion	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion followed by 100 Club Draw and Christmas Draw (tbc)	
	5.00pm	Mini Carol Service (tbc)	*
Tue 15	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
	7.30pm	Advent Bible Study	Z
Wed 16	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions	
	7.00pm	Mini Carol Service (tbc)	*
	7.30pm	Refresh (tbc)	
Thu 17	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Fri 18		Schools break up for Christmas	
Sat 19	11.00	Karate	MH
Sun 20		ADVENT 4	

	10.30am	Parish Communion	
	5.00pm	Mini Carol Service (tbc)	*
Tue 22	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
	7.30pm	Advent Bible Study	Z
Wed 23	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	9.00am	Mission Group	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions	MH
	4.00pm	Vacancy Steering Group	Z
	7.00pm	Mini Carol Service (tbc)	*
Thu 24		CHRISTMAS EVE	
	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
	11.30pm	MIDNIGHT COMMUNION (tbc)	
Fri 25		CHRISTMAS DAY	
	10.00am	Christmas Celebration for ALL	*
Sat 26		BOXING DAY	
Sun 27		CHRISTMAS 1 – White Box day	
Sun 27	9.00am	Parish Communion	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion with prayers for healing	
Tue 29	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
Wed 30	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions (tbc)	MH
Thu 31	10.30am	Parish Communion	*

JANUARY 2021

Fri 1		NEW YEAR'S DAY	
Sun 3		EPIPHANY	
	10.30am	Family Praise	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion	
	5.00pm	Evensong	*
Mon 4		Schools start new term	
Tue 5	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
Wed 6	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions (tbc)	MH
Thu 7	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Fri 8	9.30am	Friday Group (tbc)	
Sat 9	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 10		BAPTISM OF CHRIST / EPIPHANY 1	
	9.00am	Parish Communion	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion	

Tue 12	2.30pm	Mothers' Union (tbc)	
	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
Wed 13		February Crossroads deadline	
	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions (tbc)	MH
	7.30pm	Refresh	
Thu 14	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Fri 15	9.30am	Friday Group (tbc)	
Sat 16	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 17		EPIPHANY 2	
	10.30am	Parish Communion	
	5.00pm	Evensong	*
Tue 19	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
Wed 20	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World sessions (tbc)	MH
Thu 21	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Fri 22	9.30am	Friday Group (tbc)	
Sat 23	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 24		EPIPHANY 3	
	9.00am	Parish Communion	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion with prayers for healing	
Mon 25		Crossroads printing	
Tue 26	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH
Wed 27	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Sessions (tbc)	MH
Thu 28	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Fri 29	9.30am	Friday Group (tbc)	
	2.30pm	Quiet Prayer Group (vtbc)	
Sat 30	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 31		PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE or EPIPHANY 4 February Crossroads available	
	9.00am	Parish Communion	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion	

FEBRUARY

Tue 2		CANDLEMAS	
	7.00pm	Karate (tbc)	MH

Wed 3	8.15am	Morning Prayer	Z
	3.30pm	Slimming World Session (tbc)	MH
Thu 4	10.30am	Parish Communion	*
Sat 6	11.00am	Karate (tbc)	MH
Sun 7		2nd Sunday before Lent	
	10.30am	Family Praise	*
	10.30am	Parish Communion	
	5.00pm	Evensong	*

M = Main Hall: S = Small Hall: SL = Softley Lounge: Z = by Zoom: * = St Margaret's

THE ABOVE ARE PROVISIONAL DATES ONLY

Editors' note: Please note that events may be moved, added to, or cancelled, any changes will be noted in our newsletter.

Should you know of anything missing from the above listing of dates please let us know so we can update our information for the future. Many thanks

"Yesterday, everybody smoked his last cigar, took his last drink and swore his last oath. Today, we are a pious and exemplary community. Thirty days from now, we shall have cast our reformation to the winds and gone to cutting our ancient shortcomings considerably shorter than ever."

**TO ALL OUR READERS, DISTRIBUTORS, ARTICLE PROVIDERS
WE WISH YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR**



LITTLE BIT OF HUMOUR TO FINISH WITH...

How many donkeys does it take to change a light bulb? Donkeys don't know what a light bulb is, and they've got hooves anyway. If you're going to do one thing this Christmas, for goodness sake keep donkeys away from light bulbs.

Where does Father Christmas like to enjoy a mixture of badminton, horse-riding, and subtropical swimming? Santa Parcs.

Which London Underground line is best with leftover turkey? The Piccalilli line.

Three men die in a car accident on Christmas Eve. They all find themselves at the Pearly Gates waiting to enter heaven. To enter St Peter tells them that they must present something relating to or associated with Christmas. The first man searches his pocket, and finds some mistletoe, so he is allowed in. The second man presents a cracker, so he is also allowed in. The third man pulls out a pair of tights. Confused at this last gesture, St Peter asks, 'How do these represent Christmas?' The third man answers 'Well, they're Carol's.'

On New Year's Eve, Marilyn stood up in the local pub and said that it was time to get ready to bring in the New Year. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living. At 12.00midnight it was very embarrassing in the pub, as bartender was almost crushed to death.

My 2020 New Year's Resolution was to lose 30lbs by the end of summer, I've just weighed myself and I've only got 40lbs to go!

On New Year's Eve, Daniel was in no shape to drive home, so he sensibly left his car in the car park and walked home. As he was wobbling along, he was stopped by a policeman. 'What are you doing out here at four o'clock in the morning?' asked the police officer. 'I'm on my way to a lecture,' answered Roger. 'And who on earth, in their right mind, is going to give a lecture at this time on New Year's Eve?' enquired the constable sarcastically. 'My wife,' slurred Daniel grimly.