

# SPOTLIGHT

The magazine of Offington Park Methodist Church



December 2020  
- January 2021

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### Cover Picture

Our cover picture is a Christmas Wreath. The wreath symbolises the strength of life overcoming the forces of winter.



The wreath was an early Roman and Greek symbol of victory. Soon it began to figure in Christianity, for when Jesus was crowned with thorny holly branches, the white berries changed to blood red. People began to use the symbolic wreath at Christmas time, and a lighted candle was placed in the centre of the wreath to remind people of Jesus, the light of the world, born on Christmas Day.

Evergreens were used in wreaths as a symbol of immortality, because the boughs would stay green when all else was brown and dead, and consequently were seen as a sign of enduring life heralding the return of spring and new vegetation.



### PLEASE NOTE:

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED  
FROM **FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER 2020**  
TO **SUNDAY 3 JANUARY 2021**

## *Dear Friends,*

The word 'unprecedented' is replacing the word 'journey' as the most used term this year. Maybe you have others. We seem to be living in a constant state of tension with so many unanswered questions: will we get a vaccine; will we be able to secure enough; will it have side effects; will it be offered to me; will I have it; will we be able to celebrate Christmas, and if so where, who with and with how many people?



Without doubt, Christmas will be celebrated by the Christian community this year, but it will be different to any that we have ever known. Rather than try to recreate what used to happen, we have been challenged to look at new ways of being together.

As I write this, I am unaware if we might be allowed to gather together in the church building. So there are preparations being made for us to gather online, in case we are not able. Some of our services will be recorded so that you can watch them at home at a time to suit yourselves. For others, we hope to have the facility to join 'live' with a small group who will gather in the church (if it is allowed) and celebrate together with the aid of Zoom.

You could 'attend' the 11.30pm Christmas Eve service from the comfort of your bed or chair! Because our technology has so recently been updated with Wi Fi throughout the building and our two cameras, we should have the facilities to do this. I am delighted to say that the audio update is almost complete thanks to Derek and New Day.

At this point I want to say a huge thank you to Tim and Caroline who have spent a lot of time facilitating the online work, and to Mary who has been posting out the services. Lastly I want to thank you, for your patience and support, both prayerfully and financially, of this important piece of work, which will be fully utilised over the coming months.

How do you mark the season of Advent? In church there will be an advent calendar in the front window. This is a selection of puzzles that have been made up by our young people and depict different traditions of celebration in various countries.

In your post or email box will be an Advent leaflet for you to follow and the words of an Advent hymn that we will be using each week. You will also get news of our fundraising efforts, so please advertise these as far as you can.

*(continued overleaf...)*

**(continued)** Please note that the online auction has been postponed until early next year.

Each evening there will be a Circuit service led by different Circuit ministers. The details of these will be in the posting and on email. David Gibbs is continuing to work on a Christmas Carol CD which should be available at least two weeks before Christmas for you to sing along to.

My prayers continue for those facing the struggles of ill health, anxiety and isolation which are often heightened at this time of year. Although the world changes around us, sometimes at alarming speed, we continue to trust and hope in an unchanging God, whose love for us never ends.

Wishing you a Blessed and Peace-filled Christmas.

Love and prayers, *Dawn*



Our God is the God of the unexpected.  
Few things could be more unexpected than  
the King of Heaven being born in a stable.



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[info@betterpc.co.uk](mailto:info@betterpc.co.uk)

# CHRISTMAS CAPTION COMPETITION



Can you come up with something better than the Editors?

Send your caption idea to the Editors at:

**[offingtonspotlight@gmail.com](mailto:offingtonspotlight@gmail.com)**

A small prize will be available!

We will print the winning caption and winner in February

The Editors would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Spotlight throughout a very challenging 2020.

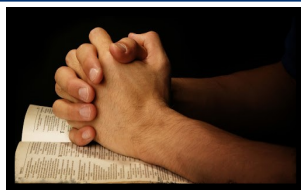
We would like to wish all our readers,  
advertisers and contributors a very

**Happy Christmas  
and a safe and healthy New Year**



## ***Covid-19 Prayers for Others***

*This festive season, we can expect some very different experiences at Christmas to what we are used to. This Christmas, as we all adjust, we pray for those for whom this Christmas will likely bring concerns that are not of their making and that they feel powerless to cope with.*



### **For the lonely & isolated**

We pray for those facing Christmas alone, who may not see anybody over Christmas. We pray that they may know Your presence. We pray that they will be, or will become, known to those who can help them, and we pray that neighbours may recognise their need, as we too seek to recognise the need in our own neighbours.

### **For those facing a first Christmas without loved ones**

We pray for those who have lost loved ones during 2020, and not just those lost through Covid. We pray that they will be heartened by memories of past good times and encouraged by a life well-lived. May they know Your peace in their hearts.

### **For those wondering how to cope (financially, physically, mentally)**

We pray for those who see Christmas as a time of physical, mental or financial exhaustion. For those who are helping others in food banks and shelters, and those fearing the strain of potentially having family visits. We pray also for those who feel forced into having a 'credit Christmas', but fear the consequences in January. May they know Your calm and may they find time to rest in Your presence.

### **For the church**

We pray for the church, as it faces an 'online Christmas' with socially-distanced services in church buildings. We pray that in these strange times the church may find new ways of being the 'guiding light' in the darkness, just as Christ's star guided the wise men to his birthplace.

### **For those in power**

We pray for those in Government, who are charged with making decisions about our health and safety, and who know how delicate is the balance between seeing loved ones and staying safe over Christmas. May they be guided by the science, but know also Your compassion for the human race as they make difficult decisions that they know impact every life in the UK.

### **For those seeking more from life**

We pray for those who have a winter, but no real Christmas. For those who have never known You, but believe that there is more to life.



With churches offering limited facilities this Christmas, we pray that through the Web, online, and in our own hearts we ourselves may be the shining light that guides them to You, and helps them to realise Your goodness and accept You into their lives.



### **For those separated from their family**

We pray for those who will be unable to meet with their family this Christmas, for many reasons, and those who may have to choose which family members they can and can't see. We pray for those who live a long way from their family and may only have Zoom or Skype to make that human contact. We pray that they may be able to meet again just as soon as it is safe to do so.

### **For those with little hope**

We pray for those who have lost their jobs or livelihoods in this crisis, and who feel that there is no future for them. We pray that You will give them the strength to weather the current storm and that they may know Your calming presence during these uncertain times.

### **For those working on vaccines**

We pray for those who have already carried out incredible work in short timescales to create a safe vaccine; and for those who are charged with approving vaccines for use. We pray that the scientists will be strengthened to keep up the fight, and that the regulators will feel enabled to act swiftly but with due vigilance. We pray also for those that await a vaccine: that they won't be afraid, and that we who are not first in line will wait with patience and not be tempted to queue jump or take out our frustrations on those working on the front line.

### **For those on duty**

We pray for those in the emergency services who will be working over Christmas. We pray for their energy, for their safety and for their continued willingness to serve in difficult circumstances. We especially pray for those in hospitals that may struggle to cope with the influx of patients. May we be tolerant with them as they are tolerant with us.

### **For the world**

Finally, Lord, we pray for Your world. We pray for the swift control of this virus through the safe and rapid rollout of a vaccine to all parts of the world according to need and not according to status or ability to pay. We thank you for our NHS and for scientific and medical teams across the world who are doing hard, exhausting, but truly amazing work on a daily basis to help keep us safe. *Amen*

## A big THANK YOU from Traidcraft Exchange.



Thank you OPMC!!

You have donated £100.00 of your surplus to Traidcraft Exchange and we can't thank you enough. Your kind donation will be put to good use in supporting vulnerable people around the world to get a fairer deal from trade.

Trade is a basic means of survival. It puts food on our tables and clothes on our backs. But world trade today is broken. It's destroying our planet's natural resources and trapping millions of the world's most vulnerable people in poverty.

You are part of a community of people who strive to give a voice to all, equality to all, fairness for all. Together we campaign, we educate and we lobby for changes in law which will benefit the many, not just the few. We can't do it without people like you.



Fridah

It's thanks to you that people like Fridah, a farmer and mother-of-two from Kenya, are starting to feel the benefits of fairer trade and a fairer wage. She says:

*"I enjoy farming a lot. My motivation is being able to provide for my family. The most motivating part is when I see my potatoes are doing well just before harvesting – knowing that I can sell them and get money helps me continue this work."*

Thank you for supporting hardworking people like Fridah to build a better life for their families.

Denise Brough  
Administrator & Office Coordinator  
Traidcraft Exchange

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Thank you for supporting Traidcraft. I am quite happy to continue to take orders from you as you browse the catalogue and Traidcraft online.

Lesley Skinner



# Services for December

## Sunday 6th December

9:30am Holy Communion

Preacher: Rev Dawn Carn

10:45am Holy Communion

Preacher: Rev Dawn Carn



## Sunday 13th December

9:30am Puppets & Carols

Preachers: Adam Cook and Family

10:45am Puppets & Carols

Preachers: Adam Cook and Family

3:30pm Messy Church with puppets & on Zoom

6:00pm Circuit Carol Service on Zoom

## Sunday 20th December

8:00am Breakfast Church & on Zoom

9:30am Carol Service (pre-recorded and featuring Nativity video)

10:45am Carol Service (pre-recorded and featuring Nativity video)

6:00pm Candlelit Carol Service on Zoom

## Thursday 24th December

4:30pm Christingle (by invitation and on Zoom)

11:30pm Midnight Service (booking only and on Zoom)

## Friday 25th December

10:00am Christmas Day Worship (booking only and on Zoom)

## Sunday 27th December

NO SERVICES TODAY

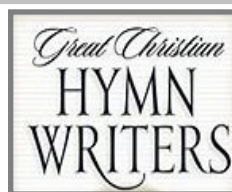
## **JANUARY 2021**

SEE EMAILS & NOTICES FOR ORDERS OF SERVICE & OTHER DETAILS.

**Please ensure that, where a service is marked as BOOKING ONLY, you book a place during the week prior to the Sunday you wish to attend. Bookings can be made by calling the office on 01903 205722 or emailing [office@offingtonpark.org.uk](mailto:office@offingtonpark.org.uk).**

## CHARLES WESLEY

*Hark the herald-angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King!*



With over 150 of Charles Wesley's 6500 hymns in the Methodist hymnbook, everyone has their favourite. This month we recall a much loved and much sung Christmas hymn as we take a closer look at his life and works.

Wesley was born very near to Christmas (18 December) in 1707 at Epworth, Lincolnshire, to the Anglican cleric and poet Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna. He was Susanna's 18th child!

Wesley was educated at Oxford, where he formed the "Holy Club", a prayer group which was later joined by his brother John. After graduating with a Masters degree in classical languages and literature, Charles followed his father and brother into Anglican orders in 1735.

Despite their closeness, Charles and John did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the Church of England.

Wesley experienced a conversion on 21 May 1738. The reputed site of his conversion is marked by a blue plaque at 13, Little Britain. It says, "Adjoining this site stood the house of John Bray - scene of Charles Wesley's conversion by faith in Christ".



Wesley felt renewed strength to spread the Gospel to ordinary people and began to write the poetic hymns for which he would become known.

In 1739 he took to field preaching, with John, under the influence of George Whitefield, whose open-air preaching was already reaching great numbers of Bristol colliers.

In 1749, Charles married Sarah Gwynne, who accompanied him and John on their evangelistic journeys throughout Britain. Although Sarah and Charles made their home in Bristol, he travelled frequently between Bristol and London. Charles gave up field preaching and frequent travel due to illness in 1765.

He settled and worked in the area around St Marylebone Parish Church. Then, in 1771, Charles obtained another house, in London, and moved into it that year with his elder son. By 1778 the whole family lived in London, where they remained until Charles' death. The Bristol house still stands and has been restored, but the London house was demolished.

Only three of the couple's nine children survived infancy. The six that died between 1753 and 1768 are all buried in Bristol, and there is a monument there, in a garden on the north side of the junction of Lewins Mead and The Haymarket.

Charles junior spent most of his career as the personal organist of the Royal Family, and Samuel became one of the world's most accomplished musicians and is often called "the English Mozart".

Wesley's conversion had a clear impact on his doctrine and is most notable in his hymns written after 1738. His hymns have had a significant influence not only on Methodism, but on modern theology as a whole. As a result of his enduring hymnody, the Gospel Music Association recognised his musical contributions to the art of gospel music in 1995 by listing his name in the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

Charles Wesley died on 29 March 1788, aged 80, in London. Since he considered himself a member of the Church of England, he had requested to be buried as such, and is buried in the St Marylebone Parish Church graveyard (see picture).



On 24 May 2007, the tercentenary of Wesley's birth, was celebrated throughout England, even though Wesley was born in December. Aldersgate Day, as 24 May is known to Methodists, commemorates the spiritual awakening of first Charles and then John. The village of Epworth, where Wesley was born, held a flower festival at the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, with flower arrangements representing some of Wesley's hymns, including "And Can It Be" and "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing".

In November 2007, the Irish Post Office issued a stamp to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Wesley's birth.



# Getaway

*a founder remembers*



I was so sorry to hear that Getaway was closing.

It was in 1974 that the Young Wives (later known as Monday and Tuesday Group) asked myself and Janet Bluck to form a group for Mothers and Toddlers. It was to be known as Getaway.

Other people came to help and its with fond memories I remember Eileen Flitt who was always there with a ready smile and a cup of tea.

We started in the red room (now the kitchen) with nine mothers and toddlers. Mothers wanted to get out of the house and so there was a need for a group like ours. In those days not many mothers worked and so they needed somewhere to socialise and where the children could interact with others at an early age.



*In the beginning...*

It was a happy group which kept growing until we had to start meeting in the hall. We then had to expand to two days a week: Mondays as well as the original Wednesdays.

We now see the first little ones coming with their children, and if they have to work, the grandparents are bringing them. In fact that was just what I did.

Its the end of an era but we have to accept that life is different now.

**Mollie Bourne**

*Hope*  
at  
*Christmas*

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?"

**Bob Hope**

## MARY by Sue Head



The Holy Spirit came to Mary;  
told her she would be with child.  
She had found favour with the Lord;  
a faithful servant, meek and mild.  
“How can this be? I’ve known no man,  
I know I should not be with child”.

So Mary kept this secret with her; the Son of God she held inside.  
Joseph was a troubled man: How could his Mary have God’s son?  
An Angel came to speak with him; to tell him Mary was the one  
Chosen above all other women; for God’s only begotten son.  
Joseph knew he’d marry Mary; her child would be from Joseph’s line.  
The Lord had said his name was Jesus: He would save the sons of man.

A Census, ordered by Augustus, meant Joseph went to Bethlehem  
And while they travelled far and long, Mary knew her time had come.  
There was no room at the local inn; a stable was the only space  
And Mary, here, gave birth to Jesus, in that humble, lowly place.

Some shepherds in the fields nearby were frightened by a wondrous sight  
An Angel of the Lord appearing. “Don’t be afraid”. “This very night  
The Son of God, in David’s town, is born to bring eternal light”.  
The shepherds went to Bethlehem, to see the Son of God, that night.

Dressed as he was in swaddling clothes,  
they bowed before him deeply moved.

Despite His lowly place of birth, the shepherds knew that He was loved.  
In awe and wonder did they gaze upon the child that quietly lay  
and felt His presence in that place, that smelled of cattle and of hay.

Three wise men came from afar; following a large, bright star.  
With gifts to bring the Son of God; Gold and Frankincense and Myrrh.  
And Mary knew what God had said  
and thought about these wondrous things.

She did not really understand her child would be the King of Kings.

## EVERYDAY ADVENT

*There are many different ways to engage with the season of Advent, the time of Watching and Waiting. There are copious amounts of books to follow. There are also, of course advent calendars with chocolate too! Here is a very simple way to mark the days of Advent. All the items should be easily found in and around our homes. If it is helpful to you to focus your mind on the coming of Jesus then please use it and enjoy. Please note it is not meant to be burdensome or an 'I should do this' task.*

- 1** **Light bulb** - we are looking towards the birth of the One who brings light into the darkness. Pray for those who are experiencing times of darkness today. **John1:14**
- 2** **Shoe** — think of the journeys made by Mary and Joseph. Pray for those who have no shoes. **Luke2:4**
- 3** **Menu card** – think of the Inn keeper who had no room. Pray for those who have no home. **Luke2:7**
- 4** **Something woollen** – think of the sheep on the hillside. Pray for those who work making clothes. **Luke2:8**
- 5** **Postcard** – think of the journey made by the Magi. Pray for those who have lost jobs in the travel industry. **Matt 2:1**
- 6** **Item of food** – think of trying to access food on the journey. Pray for those who have worked in Supermarkets and food distribution throughout the pandemic. **Luke2:3**
- 7** **Something blue** - a colour we associate with Mary. Pray for all who are going to be mothers and those who would have dearly loved to be blessed in this way. **Luke1:30**
- 8** **An item of jewellery** - think of the treasure Mary pondered in her heart. Pray for those who have pain and distress in their hearts. **Luke 2:19**
- 9** **Something brown** - a colour we associate with Joseph. Pray for those needing to make difficult decisions. **Matt 1:19**
- 10** **Spices or herbs** - think of the gift of Myrrh from the Kings. Pray for the people caring for those near the end of their life. **Luke 23:56**
- 11** **Perfume** – think of the Frankincense used in Holy places. Pray for all those leading Christian communities. **Matt.2:11**



- 12** **Something gold in colour** - think of the value of this gift. Pray for all those who need to feel valued. **Matt2:1-2**
- 13** **Piece of hay or grass** – a makeshift cradle for the baby. Pray for all those who strive to give their children a safe and comfortable home. **Luke 2:7**
- 14** **Something stripy** - associated with the shepherds: think of their practical skills. Pray for those who serve God through their practical gifts. **Luke 2:8**
- 15** **Something shiny** - associated with Angels: think of how the angels gave the message. Pray for those who feel led to evangelise and lead others to Christ. **Luke2:13**
- 16** **A piece of music**- think of the Angels song. Pray for those who lead worship in music of whatever genre. **Luke2:14**
- 17** **Holly or prickly leaf** - A reminder of the crown of thorns. Pray for those who suffer pain or persecution. **Matt27:29**
- 18** **Photograph of family or friends** - think how isolated Mary and Joseph were as they answered the census. Pray for all those who will feel isolated this year. **Luke 2:6**
- 19** **A piece of red ribbon or wool** - this reminds us of the love that Jesus had for each one of us. Pray for those who do not yet know the love of Jesus in their lives. **John 3:16**
- 20** **Small candle** – often used for celebrating birthdays. Pray that this year, more will celebrate Jesus' birth. **Matt1:21**
- 21** **4 cocktail sticks** – representing the 4 corners of the earth. Pray for those living in countries torn apart by war and for whom there will not be a peaceful Christmas. **Micah4:3**
- 22** **Some soft sweets** - used to represent the gifts of God. Pray for there to be more kindness shown to those who are unable to support themselves. **Gal 5:22-23**
- 23** **An orange** - used to represent the earth. Pray for those involved in bringing about legislation to help climate change and restore the planets resources. **Gen 1:1**
- 24** **Make a Christingle** using items 19-23 and celebrate with us the birth of Jesus our Lord and Saviour. **Luke 1:32-33**
- 25** **Emmanuel - God with us.**  
**Wishing you all a Blessed Christmas.** **Isaiah 9:6**

# **FUNDRAISING** at Offington in the weird and wonderful world of lockdown



I am so impressed! You have all done so well. There we were, in the middle of the long, dreary twilight of lockdown and not a church event in sight, when everyone responded to the call and learned how to go online. Zooming here and Facebooking there, you've all been marvellous.

When we realised the Christmas Fair was definitely not happening this year, a cry went up – 'to the screens!' and there was a tremendous flurry of books, jewellery, toys and games, office gear, furniture, hats and a fetching fluorescent jacket offered, claimed and sold. So far we have raised **£345** on our Facebook page alone, and we have barely begun!

For those who aren't on Facebook, this is how it works: we have a page called **'Offington Park Bring and Buy'** that is just for selling things you don't want, in aid of church funds. You simply upload a picture and description, and add a price you think is fair. Others can then make offers. The eventual purchaser arranges to collect the item, and pays the money directly to the church bank account.

**Please join us!** If you want to find out how to join in, Hazel Child is happy to give Facebook tutorials. There is absolutely no need to put any personal information on the Web at all. You can just have a blank Facebook account, and just use it to join in activities. It's pretty safe.

If you would like to offer items for sale, but don't have the Internet, please ask an Internet-savvy friend or relation to take a photo of your item and send it to the church office. We will be happy to upload it on your behalf, and phone you when it is sold. Regrettably, due to Covid restrictions, it isn't possible to have items brought to the church.

## **Christmas Market**

We wanted to do something a bit different for Christmas items. We thought of an evening auction, but then decided to have something more social.



So, on Saturday 12 December between 10:00am and 12:00pm, you are invited to get yourself a cup of tea/coffee and maybe something to nibble, and to dial into Zoom for a chat or two and the chance to buy some special Christmas crafts - our thanks to everyone who makes and so generously donates these items - plus cosy knitwear, gifts and decorations too.

We have also unearthed the jigsaw puzzles, so you can still buy your traditional annual puzzle for those quiet afternoons over the festive period!

In the two weeks prior to the event, we invite you to visit our **'Christmas Coffee Morning'** event page to see what will be on offer. Put this link into your Web browser: [www.facebook.com/events/1650528118458602](https://www.facebook.com/events/1650528118458602)

If you would like to contribute, we would love you to upload Christmassy things – new items suitable as gifts, handcrafts and decorations. Please include a GUIDE PRICE which is the amount you think it is worth. Others will (hopefully) make OFFERS under the item and at the end of the Coffee Morning on 12 December the highest offer will secure the item.



**Crochet Reindeer**

If you like an item and want to buy it earlier than that, for example decorations, or items that require posting, you can negotiate with the seller.

On 12 December afternoon, the Offington Elves are offering a limited delivery service, if needed, for a small donation.

Among the items for sale are some lovely glass things, which we encourage you to buy. These will be clearly marked 'in aid of MND'

On the day itself, items that are still available to make offers on will be on display in Zoom breakout rooms. Anyone is welcome, not just church members, and the Zoom link will be sent out to everyone who requests it.

We are also hoping to offer a **cake run** before the event. Please contact the church office if you would like to OFFER a cake, ORDER a cake or join the team DELIVERING cakes to people's doorsteps.

We are sorry that this event is only available via the Internet. We do hope that as many people as possible will be able to find a way to get online and take part, if only for a short while. This time next year, we hope and pray that we will all be together again in church, talking about the funny old year that was 2020.

*Hazel Child (contact Hazel via the Church Office)*



**"One of my earliest memories is the day my grandfather cut the hedge on Christmas morning, and then we all sat down to a nice big lunch with all the trimmings."**

*Milton Jones*

## **RECYCLING AT CHRISTMAS**

Hark! The Herald-Angels sing,  
Please recycle - do your thing!



Picture the scene: Christmas Day, 3:00pm. You can't see your carpet because everything below knee level is submerged in a sea of wrapping paper, discarded packaging and bits of pulled crackers. What to do with all that rubbish? Recycle and reuse, of course, using our helpful hints and crafty ideas!

### **CHRISTMAS WRAPPING PAPER**

- Shred coloured wrapping paper to use as colourful light but protective packaging around future gifts.
- Use it to clean windows and leave them streak-free (but avoid using the shiny/plastic stuff)
- Thin paper-like wrap is great for origami or decoupage – you can make crafty items and decorations for yourself or to give to friends for next Christmas.
- Use it to decorate dull notebooks.

### **CHRISTMAS CARDS**

- Cut out a square or rectangle from the design to use as a gift tag for next year. Use pinking shears or cut out a wavy edged template to make them more interesting.
- Tall strips could be used for bookmarks.
- Make whole cards into small boxes to keep items such as erasers, paper clips or badges tidy.
- If you're crafty, with careful cutting out you can make a stencil or template to decorate next year's cards or gift boxes.

### **CHRISTMAS TREES**

- Take your old tree to the tip or B&Q. They will shred them to make ground-cover. Or leave out for the recycling collection.
- Strip the needles to use as naturally pine scented pot pourri or to stuff pin cushions.
- Needles can also be used to restore balance in a compost heap. Needles are acidic so balance out alkaline things, like wood ash.
- Eat it! You can make some [Douglas Fir & Orange Blossom Butter Cookies](#). Search for the recipe, or click on the hyperlink!

**REMEMBER—REDUCE; REUSE; RECYCLE**

# CHURCH FAMILY NEWS



## SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAYS

### *December*

Susan H

Peter W



### *January*

Rosemary S

Heather G

Genny R



*Many congratulations and best wishes  
for all your special days!*



I am a registered domestic electrician, providing a quality and friendly service in the Worthing and surrounding area, including:

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**Chris Ludlow 07899 980090** [chrisludlow6@gmail.com](mailto:chrisludlow6@gmail.com)

## **FAMILY CHRISTMAS QUIZ (no Googling!)**



1. Right, you muppets (that's a clue, by the way). In the film 'It's a Wonderful Life', what are the first names of the policeman and the taxi driver?
2. In what year did Band Aid first ask 'Do they know it's Christmas?'
3. Which Christmas treat was first used to keep noisy children quiet during the church service?
4. Christmas Island belongs to what territory?
5. What Christmas song has been a hit for Michael Buble, Kylie Minogue and Taylor Swift?
6. From which country does the traditional Christmas flower Poinsettia come?
7. Where does Christmas visitor 'der Nikolaus' leave presents for the German children?
8. Which two words appear on virtually every Christmas gift tag?
9. On 6 January the French eat Galette des Rois. What does galette des Rois translate as?
10. Which popular festive song begins 'I don't want a lot for Christmas'?
11. What were the first and last US states to declare Christmas a national holiday?
12. What is a female turkey called?
13. In Mexico at Christmas, they celebrate 'noche de rabanos'. But what are rabanos?
14. Who invented electric Christmas lights (a bonus point if you can get the year within five each way)?
15. How many Christmas number 1's did the Spice Girls have?
16. Which song has the lines 'see the blazing Yule before us'?
17. What name is given to the Italian cake belonging to Tony and often eaten at Christmas?
18. Which 'Who' catches the Grinch red-handed stealing the presents?
19. Which pantomime character marries Alice Fitzwarren?



## **FAMILY CHRISTMAS QUIZ (no Googling!)**



20. In the song 'Jingle Bells', what is the name of the horse?
21. What bird did Queen Elizabeth I decree should be eaten at Christmas?
22. Why does a Welsh hamlet in Carmarthenshire get extra post at this time of year?
23. Which is the most popular ornament placed at the top of the Christmas tree?
24. Which Christmas movie was based on a popular children's book written by Chris Van Allsburg in 1985?
25. The singing of Christmas carols was banned in England in 1649. When was the ban lifted?
26. Which country is the largest producer of Brussels Sprouts, churning out 82,000 metric tons every year?
27. Which storm caused intensive flooding with homes being evacuated in Lancashire & Yorkshire at Christmas in 2015?
28. Which hugely successful Leonardo DiCaprio film was released on Christmas Day 2013?
29. Kevin the Carrot is the face of which retailer's Christmas advertising?
30. What kind of animal delivers gifts at Christmas in Syria ?
31. In which decade did 'Etch-A-Sketch' first appear at Christmas?
32. Gaja Kristnako is Happy Christmas in which language?
33. What does the name Bethlehem mean in Hebrew?
34. Who is the sweetheart of Harlequin in English pantomime?
35. In which Italian city is fried eel a Christmas Eve traditional meal?
36. Christmas Day 1950: what was stolen from Westminster Abbey?
37. Where do they celebrate Up helly aa after Christmas?
38. Portuguese navigators discovered 'The river of January' on 1st January 1502. What is 'The river of January'?
39. On Christmas day 1967, Paul McCartney got engaged to whom?
40. And finally one straight out of the cracker - which English playwright is afraid of Christmas?

## AND GOD MADE MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE

I have often wondered what was meant by God making man “in His own image”. No one has ever seen God and we have no idea what He looks like or indeed what kind of being He is. If we are made in the image of God then what exactly does this mean? We know that God is the Supreme Creator and that He created the heavens and the earth. We know that He created our earth to be a beautiful place for us to live on and for us to live in harmony with Him.



I never cease to be amazed at our Creator’s imagination and at the beauty and complexity of His creation. All things on this earth were designed to work together and were all created for a reason. When God made animals, birds, fish and insects He designed them to behave in the way He wanted them to. He designed them, each with their own genetic code, to fulfil the purpose He had for them. We know that God created us to have our own will and He did not make us like robots, programmed to behave in a certain manner. He made us to be creative beings, like himself, and to have the knowledge and ability to look after His Creation.

Why did God create us in this way? He wanted us to be able to make choices about our lives and to choose to live on this earth as caretakers and custodians of His world. By creating us “in His own image” He gave us the ability to create too. He gave us the ability to understand and learn and to be able to commune with Him.

As man had the ability to choose how to live his life, he was also able to make wrong decisions, as well as right ones. God gave His Commandments to man, so that we would know what He wanted for us. He hoped that we would see the sense in living by these Commandments, loving Him, loving others, and looking after his Creation. God showed us how we should live.

God made Adam first and then made Eve to be a soul mate for Adam. He took a rib from Adam to make Eve. Why did He do this? Why not just make Eve, as He had made Adam. This was because Eve was to be “a part of Adam”. God wanted her to support and help Adam. Together they would support and help each other.

When God sent Jesus to live among us He sent Him to right the wrongs of the world and to absolve us of our sins. Jesus was not created by God in the way He created everything else.

Jesus was His “only begotten son” and He loved him dearly. We are not told, in the Bible, what Jesus looked like. We can only guess at His outward appearance by where He was born and what people at that time would have looked like. However, what Jesus looked like was not important. It was what He was like as a person that mattered.

As the Son of God, He was precious to his Father. But God was prepared to sacrifice Him to save each and every one of us. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”. God was showing us how much He loved and cared for us by allowing Jesus to be sacrificed in this way. We know how precious our own children are and not one of us could sacrifice our own child. Even though some are tested, as it says in the Bible, God did not allow this to happen as He knew the pain and suffering it would cause.

When God Created us we were without sin. However, man was tempted and made the choice to disobey God. Satan used the serpent to approach Eve as he wished to destroy God’s creation. Satan, being extremely clever, was aware that, once Eve had been tempted with no adverse reaction, it was more likely that she would be able to tempt Adam. Whether we blame the serpent, who tempted Eve, Eve herself for tempting Adam or Adam for giving in to temptation, man had sinned by betraying God.

Although God loved us, we were not fit to live with Him and were sent out to make our own way in the world. Despite this God did not abandon us and always made us aware of His presence. Those who chose to obey His commands were near to God and guided by Him.

As we are created in His image I hope that man will come to understand this and use his God given gifts of creativity and intelligence to understand how simple God’s commandments really are and how important it is to live by them, guided by God and not by our own selfish wants. If we understand that we are made in His image and are able to look after His world as He intended, then we will surely be able to do what God wants us to do and turn away from Satan, who only has his own selfish desires to satisfy.

The Ten Commandments are rules to live by, showing us how to worship God and how to care for each other. Instead of taking away our own free will, abiding by these Commandments gives us the freedom to live our lives as God intended, choosing to abide by His rules, choosing to love God and have a relationship with Him, choosing to love each other and looking after the world we live in, given to us by our Creator.

**Sue Head**

## JC's LITTLE NUGGETS

### God is higher than hi-tech



I know it is hard to believe, but in my younger days, when computers were the size of a house, I was considered at work to be a Hi-Tech Guru.

However, here I am now: a Grumpy Old Duffer who finds it hard even to text without the help of my nephew! I am surrounded by "go to" aids like Google and Alexa, both of which seem to be the fountains of all knowledge.

However there are things that these tech wonders can't do! They can't promise to listen to our prayers and our petitions, or promise to be with us at all times. They cannot unconditionally forgive, completely change our lives, or give a new sense of direction and purpose. They can't give us light and hope in our darkness, or unconditional love, support and guidance.

Our God is greater than any tech the world can produce. He can do all these things and so much more. He is the one in which we should place our trust, for it says in Isaiah 45 v18: "I am the Lord; there is no other".

So in this ever changing and confusing world of gadgets let us never forget that our Lord is unchanging but still the greatest.

John Carr

## THAT'S A CRACKER!

What do snowmen wear on their heads? **Ice caps!**

What do snowmen eat for lunch? **Icebergers!**

What do snowmen have on their burgers? **Chilly sauce!**

What happened when the snowman's dog melted?

**He had a slush puppy!**

How do you drain your vegetables at Christmas?

**With an advent colander!**

Why was the Brussels sprout sent to prison?

**It was a repeat offender!**



## ***THE SHEPHERD IS ACTIVE***



The New Year is upon us, 2020 forgotten,  
For most of this year, let's face it, was rotten!  
Tragedies, pandemic, spread all about us  
As we battled and fought the Coronavirus.

Earthquakes and flooding, and Beirut's disaster,  
100-year events are coming much faster.  
Mother Earth is complaining of our selfishness,  
For too long we've ravaged, ignoring her mess.

Have we learned the lesson, it's time to fix wrongs,  
Take corrective action where it belongs?  
Or do we think now the cost is too great,  
And it won't be effective, we're just too darned late?

With all that has happened, our lives are still blessed,  
Our trust in the Lord sharply put to the test.  
But the Shepherd is active, his flock in good hands,  
He'll guide and protect us, through these frail lands.



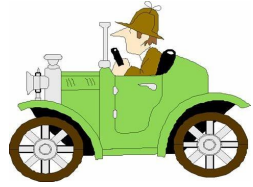
Last month we Spotlighted the Bible Lands, one of which is Lebanon. This month we take a closer look at that country.

Lebanon hit the news following a huge explosion at the port of Beirut, which killed almost 200 people and left many thousands injured. Of course, it is also often in the news due to ongoing conflicts. Christians migrate from Lebanon to other parts of the Middle East because they feel hopeless and helpless in the face of conflict.

Pray for those injured in the explosion, or grieving over the loss of loved ones. Pray for a revival amongst young people, that they may find hope in their own country and come to trust God. Pray too for the Christians staying in Lebanon, that they may have courage and perseverance to continue being witnesses to the saving power of Jesus Christ.

## IF MY BODY WAS A CAR...

I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish, and my paint job is getting a little dull.



But that's not the worst of it.

My headlights are out of focus, and it's especially hard for me to see things close up.

My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather. It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns inefficiently.

But here's the worst of it. Every time I sneeze or cough, either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires!

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"The son of God became a man  
to enable men to become  
sons of God".

C.S. LEWIS

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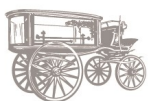
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## NEXT EDITION

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The fabulously rich tribal king of an Island nation wanted to spend some of his enormous wealth, so he bought several magnificent thrones.

However, he only lived in a relatively small grass hut and soon found that the thrones were taking up too much space. He therefore decided to put all the thrones on the upper floor of his hut where they were out of the way but where he could still admire them.

Unfortunately, after a few months, the weight of the thrones became too much for the fragile upper floor, and one night the floor collapsed. The thrones came crashing down on the king, injuring him.



The wise men of the island recognized a lesson in this experience and when advising the people of the king's accident stated gravely: "People who live in grass houses should not stow thrones."

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