

Lillington Parish Magazine  
St Mary Magdalene's Church

DECEMBER 2017

One hundred years ago, in December 1917, the last Christmas of World War I, servicemen and women sent home embroidered postcards



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*References available*

## Advent Blessings

"Christmas is for children". How often we hear that said at this time of year, usually with a resigned sigh and an implication that the speaker does not expect Christmas to have any meaning for them. Yes it is, but only because it is for Everybody!

When St Francis came up with the idea of making the first nativity scene, it wasn't to amuse the children. It was to help ordinary folk (most of whom who at that time would have been unable to read) to connect personally with the Christmas story told in the gospels of



Matthew and Luke. They saw shepherds dressed like themselves kneeling before a young couple with a baby looking just like people they knew.

It is only in recent times that Christmas has become the major consumer festival it is today. In allowing that to escalate, we adults are in danger of losing the real Christmas in an overwhelming whirl of gift shopping and wrapping, mince pie baking and motorway dashes to take in every relative who expects our presence over the festive week.

Even those of us who love the Christmas festival can find ourselves caught up in all that. One way to help keep things in perspective is to use the weeks of Advent for what the church intended this period to be. Advent has been traditionally a time of preparation, not yet of festivity. Before the feast, we need to take time to focus on what matters.

Unstable autocratic world leaders, economic uncertainty, religious fanatics misrepresenting religion for their own ends, slavery and exploitation of the vulnerable. Sounds familiar?

Jesus came to a world in turmoil, just as it is today.

Jesus came to show us we are not as helpless as we feel. God is with us. That's what the title Emmanuel means, God with us (such as in the hymn *O Come O Come Emmanuel* which we sing at the start of Advent). Jesus came to give us hope. Hope that we can make a difference just where we are, by bringing love to every situation of hatred, evil, exploitation, and greed. This love is not a fluffy, tinsel covered facade to cover up the reality or messiness of the world. God loves us so much that he took the huge risk of coming into this turbulent world, and he asks us to take the risk of engaging with that messiness in whatever way he shows us. During Advent we ask him to show us clearly what difference his coming makes to how we should live.

Jesus was not just born 2000 years ago in the Middle East. He is born every Christmas into every heart open to him. Can we see in our mind's eye the nativity scene, not populated by children in tea towel head-dresses, but with ourselves kneeling in wonder and awe? In the muzak carols in the supermarket or the warbling of infants in the school entertainments, can we hear the angels calling us to find Jesus? In the writing of each card and present label can we find ourselves grateful for all God has done for us and offering ourselves at the feet of Jesus?

Let us relish every moment of preparation, so that when we reach the feast day we can truly rejoice at all that God has done for us and meet him once again, in child-like amazement, joy and awe.

We are all God's children, so yes, Christmas is for children, for each one of us who can recapture not childishness, but child-like wonder as we meet Jesus afresh.

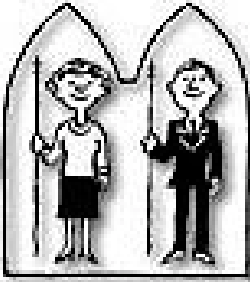
**Revd Rosemary Pantling**

\*\*\*\*\*

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| Quarter page     | 6cm x 9cm             | £56                                  | £7                         |
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## **Hello friends and neighbours,**

December has eased its way forward almost imperceptibly with the weather being autumnal rather than wintry (as I write). Flowers are still blooming and insects buzz among them - it's amazing what is attracted to a shallow dish which has apple cores and sugar lumps for them to feed upon.

Quite dramatic encounters have been witnessed by me watching this miniature world. We love a good drama don't we? The Christmas season is packed full of it. The Christian nativity story has all the elements of a full-bodied drama. Voices from above, angels, a young unmarried mother and her long-suffering fiancé, edicts from the Roman Emperor compelling everyone to move to their birth place for a census and taxation, and evil King Herod, a smelly cave-like stable, an amazing birth. Determined wise men convinced of the importance of the star in the east. Humble shepherds, just ordinary fellows looking after their livestock during the hours of darkness, who were persuaded by the 'heavenly host' to hurry to Bethlehem to see a new-born baby - a KING!

Some drama ... and as we know, it doesn't finish there either.

Enter into the spirit of Christmas this year with renewed wonder, at whatever level you feel connected with it. I would urge you to read again for yourself the story of the first

Christmas. You'll find it in St Matthew chapters one and two, and also St Luke chapter two. Curl up on your sofa with a glass of your favourite tippie and revel in the age-old message of Christmas, 'Peace on earth and goodwill to all on whom his favour rests'.

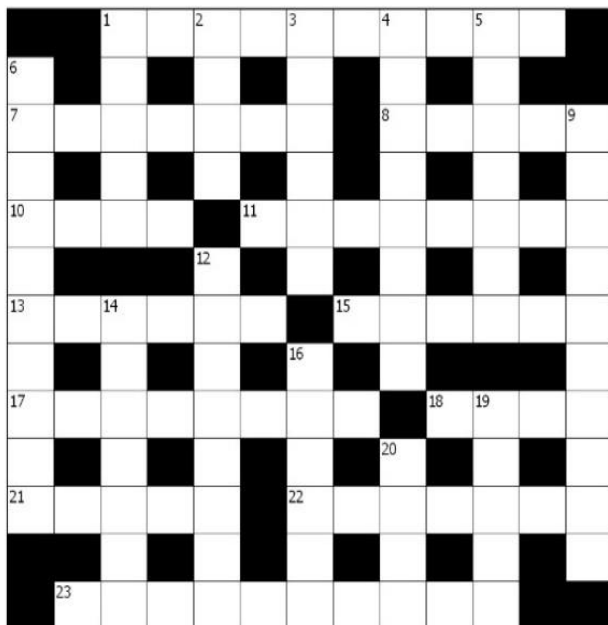
May love and joy be yours at this special time of year.

With my love and best wishes to you all,

***Glyn Wright***  
***Churchwarden***



# CROSSWORD



- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)  
 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)  
 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

## Down

- 1 .... and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8) (5)  
 2 The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ... as a lion (Proverbs 28:1) (4)  
 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)  
 4 He escaped from Nob

## Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)  
 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14,15) (7)  
 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th & early 16th centuries (5)  
 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)  
 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)  
 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)  
 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith .... (6)  
 17 Stormy (8)  
 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone unclean (Numbers 9:11) (4)

- when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19,20) (8)  
 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)  
 6 Offer your bodies as living..., holy and pleasing to God (Romans 12:1) (10)  
 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)  
 12 One who accepts government by God (8)  
 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)  
 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)  
 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)  
 20 You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ... his people from their sins (Matthew 1:21) (4)

## Answers on page 10

# WALKERS' GROUP

## November Walk & AGM



After waking up to a very wet Saturday morning eight of us met in the Octagon for the AGM. Business was soon sorted, but we are looking for a person to lead one walk during next year. 9.30am came and we surveyed the weather and decided to chance it. The walk was 5 miles from Norton Lindsey and was very rural but

enjoyable. Even cattle in fields which we walked through didn't put any of us off (even Godfrey!!), although two Longhorn cows with huge horns did alarm us a bit. We arrived back at The New Inn in good time and enjoyed an excellent lunch. The pub is a Community Pub and the Staff were very helpful and friendly. The weather turned out to be sunny and bright so we were very lucky.

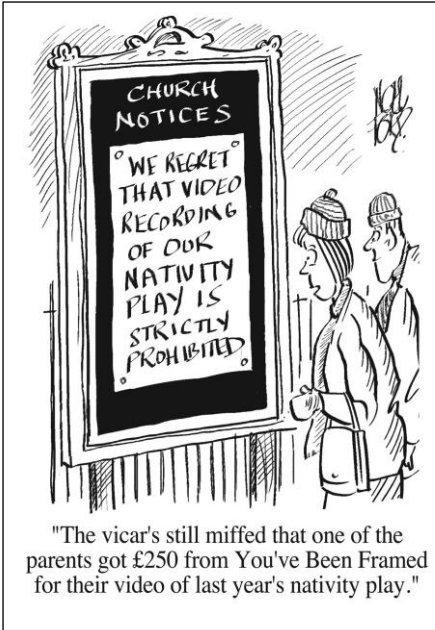


*Sandra and Ted Dear*

**Please note that there is no walk in December**

**A**ppeal for Toys for Local Children in struggling homes across Leamington, including Sydenham, Whitnash and Lillington.

This year, collecting primarily in the Catholic churches and schools from 18th November to 3rd December, with unpacking, sorting and wrapping from 4th to 6th December at Our Lady's Church Hall in Lillington. If anyone would like to help please let Christine Butler know (07963 229756). Volunteers needed as follows: Monday 4th December - Unpacking 10am - 4pm : Tuesday 5th December - Sorting 10am - 4pm : Wednesday 6th December - Wrapping 10am - 4pm.



"The vicar's still miffed that one of the parents got £250 from You've Been Framed for their video of last year's nativity play."

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## Sing Carols at The Christmas Tree Festival

Singers of all ages are invited to join an informal group to sing carols on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December from 3 – 3.30 pm.

In addition we are seeking instrumentalists to fill short slots with seasonal music.

If you are interested speak to Anne Furze or Cordelia Gadsby.

## FROM THE CHURCH RECORDS

| BAPTISM    |                           |
|------------|---------------------------|
| 22 October | Richard & Isobel Sargeant |
| FUNERAL    |                           |
| 10 October | Bill Wootton              |

### **Abby Rhodes says "Still time to join Scratch Choir":**

Following the fun we had with the Harvest music evening, I am hoping to put together a Christmas scratch choir, to learn some carols and Christmas music. There are a number of opportunities to sing in November and December and it would be great to do this together.



As with the Harvest choir, no prior experience or huge talent is necessary – if you'd like to just have some fun singing then this is for you!

If you are interested, please contact me – either by email ([music@lillingtonparishchurch.org](mailto:music@lillingtonparishchurch.org)) or on 07779 499640

**REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR**  
**- remember it just keeps on giving!**

Once more we are supporting the Leamington Night Shelter and our local Lillington branch of the Leamington and Warwick Food Bank.

**\*\*Here are the details\*\***

We will launch Reverse Advent at our 9.30am service of Morning Praise on **Sunday 3rd December** when we will be distributing boxes and baskets for you to take home and fill up, ready for Christmas. There will also be baskets/boxes available at the 8.00am service). Filled boxes and baskets will be received back into church at our 9.30am Communion & Nativity Service on **Sunday 17th December**.



**\*\*How it works\*\*** Lots of us now have an Advent calendar with a chocolate or little toy for each day. With the Reverse Advent Calendar, you GIVE a little something for each day.

You could fill a box or basket for the Night Shelter, or our local Food Bank and at the same time your help will support what "Love Lillington" is doing in our Community.

For the Night Shelter, the little gifts can be hand-warmers, new socks, hats, gloves, scarves, underwear, toiletries, toothbrushes & toothpaste, chocolates or biscuits and other luxury foods.

For the Foodbank, tins of vegetables, stuffing, gravy, bread sauce, little Christmassy goodies and stocking fillers, or even a supermarket gift card.

At the end of Advent these will be fantastic boxes and baskets of little gifts for us to distribute to Leamington and Lillington people in need. Perhaps think about writing a short prayer and enclose it with your gifts, or tie it on with a ribbon?

If filling a whole box or basket is not for you, there will be a 'whole church' Reverse Advent box, available in church, where your contribution may be made.

**Christine Butler**

## WHAT I LOVE ABOUT.....

### **Mike and Ann Hyslop on The North of England**

Ann and I decided to take a late autumn break up north. Our first port of call was Leeds where our youngest daughter Anna and her husband and two young children live. It was good to see them again during a two day visit.

Afterwards we went on to Newcastle on Tyne where we arranged to meet our eldest granddaughter Georgina who is in her third year at university there. We had an interesting day with her going to the Baltic Museum in Gateshead with its modern art rooms. We walked over the Millennium



Bridge for lunch at the quayside in Newcastle and spent the rest of a lovely day at the city centre dominated by a monument to Charles Earl Grey the great 19th century reformer. He also has a notable type of tea named after him.

The following morning we started a journey over the Pennines keeping close to Hadrian's Wall and called at a Roman settlement called Sill. It has a brand new youth hostel and restaurant and shop; certainly a great place to stay if one likes hiking. On this very sunny day the views over Northern England were extensive and beautiful with long vistas looking west towards the Solway Firth. The borders between Scotland and England could be clearly seen. Eventually we reached the M6 motorway and drove south to the Kendal turnoff and stopped at a little village called Crooklands with its delightful hotel where we stayed for three nights. This gave us an opportunity to visit some of the old haunts in the Lake District which we loved so much in our younger days. Our first visit was to Ambleside where we sat and wrote post cards in the main square. From a gap in the buildings we could see the summit of Wansfell Pike and wished we were energetic enough to tackle a walk there as we have done years ago. Instead we watched the thousands of visitors wander the streets of Ambleside, many of whom sported so many different breeds of dogs.



Later in the day we drove to Grasmere and enjoyed a brief walk around the village where my great uncle was vicar at the turn of 19th century. At the moment the church is covered in scaffolding going through a restoration project. Our drive next day took us Grange over Sands

on the north shore of Morecambe Bay. It is a lovely little town with formal gardens and an attractive promenade along the seafront. It is also a place to buy and enjoy Morecambe Bay shrimps in butter! Afterwards we drove to the other side of the bay to Arnside and saw the bore coming in at full speed. The view from this village of the wide expanse of the bay with Cumbrian Fells in bright sunshine beyond is superb.

On our journey home we visited Garstang in Lancashire in order to meet an old member of our church namely Judy Osborne who is enjoying living there near her daughter Kerry. We met her at the Art Centre serving coffee and cake in aid of the local flower club. Some of you will remember her at Mary Magdalene as flower secretary and organiser of one of our Flower Festivals.

In all, a super week UP NORTH.



### **Crossword answers.**

**ACROSS:** 1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar. 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.

**DOWN:** 1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save.

## **Our star reporter Roderick Clark introduces Abby Rhodes**

A newcomer to St. Mary Magdalene's is already making a big impact, particularly in our music and work with children and young people. **Abby Rhodes** slipped into the parish almost unnoticed as we said farewell to our Vicar, the Revd Charlotte, in the summer. She is an "ordinand in placement", pursuing a comparatively new method of training to be a priest. Living in Coventry and looking after her husband and two sons, she follows a punishing routine: lectures in London (at St Mellitus theological college) on Monday and occasional weekends away, with home study on Wednesday and Friday; in Lillington for most of Tuesday, all Thursday and much of Sunday; Saturday is a "day off" (in theory, anyway!). This will go on for two years until her planned ordination.



Abby grew up happily in Walsall in a Christian household with her parents and two younger brothers. Her father, a police officer, ended his career as an inspector operating in the challenging district of Birmingham City Centre – but is also a pianist (you might have spotted him playing at a Harvest singing event which Abby organised here two months ago). Her mother was a French teacher who also took on senior pastoral responsibilities.

As a girl, Abby says she was always outwardly confident, enjoying her schoolwork and successful in it; conscientious and reliable; not "cool" (trendy) but with a good set of friends. Music loomed large: learning the clarinet to the top standard, and also the piano; always singing – from her first solo in a large town-centre church at the age of ten to professional engagements as a lyric soprano. [Most of us haven't heard her yet – but pupils at Lillington School did recently... and gave her a spontaneous round of applause.]

At Queen Mary's High School for Girls, she made full use of its strong musical background – but also enjoyed languages, History and English. The school left her believing she "could do anything".

Her experiences at two Walsall churches made her enthusiastic **not only** for traditional church music and liturgy - she distinctly recalls the Evensong prayer "Lighten our darkness" running through her head during a difficult childbirth - **but also** more modern worship songs. On a youngsters' camp at the age of eleven, she decided: "I want to be a Christian in my own right".

It is no surprise that Abby met her future husband Mike at an amateur theatre company, performing mainly Gilbert and Sullivan operettas - they were both just thirteen. [They married (much later!) in 1999; Mike is also a police officer and the couple have two sons, Chris and Owain, aged 14 and 11.]

Abby's academic ability and singing talent took her to St Peter's College, Oxford, with a choral scholarship, to study French and linguistics. That time included a year as an English language assistant in a school near Paris.

Her career led her from management training to work with BECTA, an organisation which helped teachers use technology in their work; she rose to national head of corporate communications - but then BECTA's government funding was ended. She admits to being "extremely grumpy" - but sensed that God had a plan for her which He wouldn't yet disclose! A few months later, she was a Fellow of the London College of Music and a professional singer. We think she actually sang in Lillington Church about five years ago with a group called *Espressivo*. She was now also a qualified music teacher - and on the church front, continued to lead worship, particularly more informal services, at Holy Trinity in central Coventry.

In the end, after much soul-searching and consultation, God explained His plan. All she wanted (and wants) to do is to be a Christian **leader, teacher** and **encourager** - and friends said: "That sounds like a priest to me!" A sermon shouted in her head, she says, to look at ordination. A year ago, the diocese said "Yes!".

Here at Lillington she says she's been made to feel welcome, allowed to get 'stuck in' straightaway and to contribute to our parish life and ministry. She is our Director of Music and part of the Octotots, Sunday Club and Youth Group leadership teams. And what hopes does she have as a priest? She feels called most to be a "travelling companion on people's path of faith; to be with people at key moments, hopefully that they might see Jesus' love for them in and through her".

## **Retired Churchwarden, John Butler, writes:**

Belated but heartfelt thanks for the generous gift presented to me by Rev. Charlotte back in July. With this I have, at last, bought a painting to serve as a permanent reminder of my time as churchwarden.

Christine and I have a love for North Norfolk; land of salt marshes and reed beds, of windmills and wide



skies. An area awash with art and artists, so you would think that buying a painting would be a simple task - not so! We first started looking when we camped at Kelling Heath in July, but it wasn't until we returned in October that a suitable picture was found - and that via an on-line gallery. There are both pros and cons associated with buying on-line. It is certainly convenient to browse the gallery remotely, but the paintings have to be viewed in the flesh, so to speak, before a final selection is made. Fortunately the gallery was located at Holme in Norfolk, about 30 miles from where we were staying, so, having advised the proprietor of those pictures in which I was interested, he was able to extract these from the racks and present them at his home the following day - for my closer inspection.

The painting I selected is by Jack Cox, who spent his working life as a fisherman. He died in 2007 and was painting until the day before his death at the age of 93. When the painting is framed I will bring it to church, meanwhile, see the photograph above.

## **Margaret Moore and Chris Johnson write:**

Thank you for the gifts of food etc. and the wonderful donation of £420.00 to the **Leamington Night Shelter**. It will all be put to good use and please pass on our thanks to all concerned.

As winter draws upon us, we are finding that the needs of our clients are still the same as ever, but we are so thankful that we have the support of organizations and churches like yourselves that make providing for their everyday needs much easier to cope with.

We find that at the Night Shelter, the atmosphere is always merrier when we have a bounty of food, as well as a bounty of food parcels to take away, and plenty of socks and toiletries for those that need

them. That we can go out and buy each week without worrying about the cost makes life so much easier for both ourselves and our clients. In fact it is a joy to be involved in and see at first hand the difference that it makes to some of our clients.

It is not all sweetness and light, but we find that if we deal appropriately with each situation as it arises, and try and do the best action at the time, hopefully, with prayer, somehow things will work out all right. Many thanks for all the help that you and your church give to the Leamington Night Shelter.

## SERVICE DETAILS

### SUNDAY WORSHIP - December 2017

|  |                  |  |
|--|------------------|--|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> December                   | 08:00            | Holy Communion   |
|  | 09:30            | All Age Worship (no Sunday Club)   |
|  | 18:30            | Advent Service (Darkness into Light)   |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> December                  | 08:00            | Holy Communion   |
|  | 09.30            | Holy Communion with Prayers for Healing & Sunday Club. Service led by Youth Group. |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> December                  | 08:00            | Holy Communion   |
|  | 09:30            | Holy Communion with Sunday Club Nativity   |
|  | 18:30            | Carol Service  |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> December<br>Christmas Eve | 08:00            | Holy Communion   |
|  | 15:00 &<br>16.30 | Christingle Services   |
|  | 23:30            | Midnight Communion   |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> December<br>Christmas Day | 10:00            | Family Communion   |
| 31 <sup>st</sup> December                  | 08:00            | Holy Communion   |
|  | 09:30            | Holy Communion   |

### SUNDAY CLUB

For children of all ages up to 10 years during School Term time. Children join the main 09:30 service at the beginning and the end, and leave for a 30 minutes Sunday Club session, which has a range of age appropriate activities



## WEEKDAY WORSHIP:

There will be no Tuesday afternoon communion or Tea & Chat in December

## THE CHURCH OFFICE

The office is open Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30am till 1:00pm. Please note that the office is no longer open on a Wednesday. For Baptism, Weddings and general enquiries please contact the church office (01926 470449).

## WHAT'S ON

### December 2017

|        |          |   |
|--------|----------|---|
| Fri 1  | 4.30 pm  | Lillington History Group Christmas Entertainment at The Free Church Hall  |
| Sat 2  | Noon     | Follow the Star in Christchurch Gardens   |
| Sat 2  | 6.00 pm  | Christmas Charity Concert at St Mary's, Warwick by The Gentlemen of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal in aid of Rufus' Friends' Fund |
| Wed 6  | 3.00 pm  | Poetry Group at 17 Lime Avenue  |
| Thu 7  | 7.30 pm  | PCC meeting   |
| Sat 9  | 9.45 am  | Churches Together in Leamington walk from Newbold Comyn car park  |
| Sat 9  | 2.00 pm  | Christmas Tree Festival launch tea party  |
| Sat 9  | 7:30 am  | The Amici Choir in church   |
| Tue 12 | 11.00 am | Crown Community Café Christmas lunch  |
| Tue 12 | 6.30 pm  | Knitters' Group in the Octagon  |

### January 2018

|        |         |  |
|--------|---------|--|
| Fri 5  | 4.30 pm | Lillington History Group meet in The Free Church Hall – Henry Maudslay DFC |
| Thu 11 | 7.30 pm | PCC meeting  |
| Sun 28 | 3.00 pm | Beauchamp Sinfonietta at The Town Hall                                     |

A reminder: Please make Cheques payable to Lillington PCC

**For any events you wish to publicise please contact the Editor or email [events@lillingtonparishchurch.org](mailto:events@lillingtonparishchurch.org)**



## **Mike King wrote to John Butler:**

My sincere thanks for the beautiful framed picture of St. Mary Magdalene Parish Church which I received on Sunday 25th June. Also a pair of socks with musical motifs on reminding me that I can put my foot in it!

In November 1991 Rev. Don Philpott appointed me as organist and choirmaster. Twenty five years on is still seen as the next generation, but the time has raced along allowing me the privilege of witnessing the young choristers of 1991 getting married and raising their next generation.

This beautifully framed picture now takes pride of place on our lounge wall.

It is also at this time that I decided to step aside as director of the choir and let new ideas and refreshing inspiration take over. My best wishes to Abigail and the choir with music befitting of St. Mary Magdalene.

John, please extend my thanks to all other parties who were involved in arranging this special gift to me.

*Mike King.*



Editor's note: Mike wrote this letter at the time of the presentation but, due to the ineptitude of editors past and present, publication is late. Apologies to all concerned.

Crown Community Café



## Christmas Celebration Lunch

Two course lunch at Lillington Community Centre, Valley Road

12<sup>th</sup> December 11.00 am – 2.00 pm

Santa

Music

Lillington  
School Choir

St Mary  
Magdalene  
Singers

Please book by 5<sup>th</sup> December as we have limited places.

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## Amici's Advent Return



On **Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 in the church** the Amici Choir will present an evening of advent themed choral music and readings. Tickets will cost £10 and will be available from the church office or from Godfrey and Caroline Carr (01926 422916/ [thecarrs01@virginmedia.com](mailto:thecarrs01@virginmedia.com)). Seasonally themed refreshments are planned for the interval!

Amici have visited the church twice before and have been very warmly received, but these were both presentations of summer programmes and this is a chance to hear one with a quite different theme. Amici are conducted by Kerry Beaumont, Musical Director of Coventry Cathedral, and the choir is tasked with strengthening links between the Cathedral and churches in the diocese. The proceeds of the evening will be split equally between St Mary Magdalene and the Cathedral, with the cathedral portion being used to develop the Cathedral's musical life.

We would like to have good audience to welcome them back to St Mary Magdalene, so please spread the word.

*Godfrey Carr*

## Friends of The Holy Land – Our chosen charity for December



*Ruth Burgess of The CARE Committee writes:*

This month any charitable giving by the congregation will go to **"Friends of the Holy Land"**. This charity is based in Kenilworth and was set up in 2009. Their work is with poor Christians in the Holy Land, often discriminated against by their neighbours. The work is ecumenical and has the backing and blessing of Anglican and Catholic Bishops in this country.

Christians are encouraged to remain in the land of their birth and support is given to build resilient and self-sufficient communities in what can often be a challenging environment. The charity has a team of locally based lay and clerical professionals who identify needs and provide support. They work with the Christian population of the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan, focusing on education, employment, family support, health and housing.

If you want more information please contact the charity at Farmer Ward Road, Kenilworth, CV8 2DH. Tel: 01926 512980 or email: [office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk](mailto:office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk).



## CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

The church will be open every afternoon 2-5 pm from  
Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> December

Enjoy trees decorated by groups, teams, individuals and  
families in many styles.



Christmas music. Refreshments served.

Launch Day Special, on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>  
December, with afternoon tea and live  
music.



# COOKING WITH CROSSTALK

In Sweden, the main Christmas meal is eaten on Christmas Eve, not Christmas Day. It is essentially a cold buffet accompanied by some hot dishes. The centre piece of the buffet is *julskinka* ("yool-shinka" Christmas ham). The content of the meal varies slightly from one family to another but always starts with pickled herring and normally ends with *risgrynsgröten* (rice porridge). Swedes eat the leftovers on Christmas Day!

*Juldag* (Christmas Day) is a day for recovering from the night before and generally relaxing. It is often a day when they visit friends and relatives that they weren't able to celebrate with on Christmas Eve. *Julotta* (*otta* is the time slightly before dawn) is a church service which is usually held at 7am on Christmas morning and is one of the most popular church services of the year.

## JULSKINKA - Glazed Boiled Ham

Swedes normally boil ham as it tends to keep it nice and moist. This can be done a day or two in advance if desired. Indeed these days most Swedes probably buy a ham that has already been boiled and then they simply glaze it at home on Christmas Eve.



The ingredients below should be sufficient for ham of up to 2 kg (4 lb). If you are cooking a larger joint you will need to double the ingredients in order to have enough glaze.

2 tbsp Dijon mustard  
1 tbsp English mustard, or  
other strong mustard  
1 egg yolk  
1 tbsp golden syrup

1 tsp cornflour  
2-3 tbsp fine dried  
breadcrumbs, preferably  
including some rye  
1 tbsp cloves, optional

1. Pre-heat the oven to 240°C (480°F, gas 9, fan 220°C).
2. When the ham is cold enough to handle, remove the rind and most of the fat underneath, but leave a thin layer. Score a diamond pattern in the layer of fat left.
3. Mix the mustards, egg yolk, syrup and cornflour and spread over the ham.
4. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the glaze and roast for 10-15 minutes until a nice golden colour.
5. Remove the ham to somewhere cold, such as outside or a cold garage, so that the ham cools as quickly as possible trapping in all the moisture so that you end up with a lovely juicy ham.
6. When cold, garnish the ham by studding it with whole cloves if desired.

### **RISGRYNSGRÖTEN - Swedish Christmas Rice Pudding**

Serves 4 people

300ml water

150g pudding rice

1 tsp salt

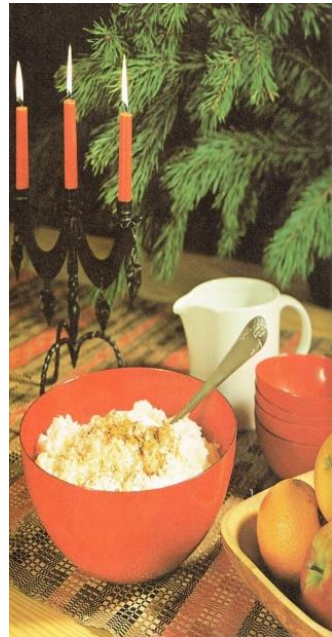
700ml whole milk

150ml whipping cream

1-2 tbsp caster sugar

1-2 tbsp raisins if wished

1. Bring water to boil and add rice to it. Simmer for around 10 minutes till all water is absorbed.
2. Add the milk and salt and simmer on a low heat stirring occasionally until the rice has absorbed all the milk and the grains are soft and the rice pudding has thickened.
3. Stir in the cream and sugar.
4. If wished raisins can be added at the end.
5. Add one blanched almond. The person who gets it will marry during the course of the following year according to tradition.
6. Serve with cinnamon and milk.



## **KNÄCK - Swedish Christmas toffee**

Knäck is the Swedish word for "break", so I assume the name of this seasonal toffee refers to its texture. If you prefer your knäck a bit chewy, cook it for a slightly shorter time than is usual. Knäck is traditionally poured hot into small paper moulds and left to set. For those who make their knäck very sticky in texture, the paper won't let go of the toffee once it's cool, so you have to eat the whole thing, paper and all.

Most Swedes regard knäck as essential over the Christmas period. These quantities will make 45-60 pieces of toffee, depending on how long you boil it and how big your moulds are.



200ml cream

170g sugar

280g golden syrup

2 tbsp salted butter

2 tbsp finely chopped almonds and/or breadcrumbs (optional)

1. Mix all the ingredients except the nuts and/or breadcrumbs in a heavy pan .
2. Bring to a simmer on medium heat, stirring with a wooden spoon from time to time, and cook until the mix reaches 251°F (122°C) or until a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a firm but pliable ball, 30 to 40 minutes. The finished toffee will be same firmness of the ball in water.
3. As soon as the toffee is ready, mix in the almonds and/or breadcrumbs, spoon into moulds and leave to set.
4. Cool to room temperature and store in an airtight container at room temperature

With many thanks to Marc Gadsby and Katarina Minton for their Christmas recipes.

***Carol Innes***



# JUNIOR CROSSTALK

## CARD or DECORATION



## CHRISTMAS CARDS

Time to write your Christmas cards again – what designs have you picked to send this year? Are they religious ones?

Look in the shops at all the different designs, traditional and modern. Traditional religious cards have usually included the nativity – Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus. But what else would you count as religious? The Three Kings? The Bible doesn't say they were kings, or that there were three; just that they were Wise Men, who travelled far to bring special gifts for the baby Jesus.

Do you know why there are so many robins on Christmas cards? The first postmen in Victorian times wore red and were called robins, so robins were shown as delivering cards.

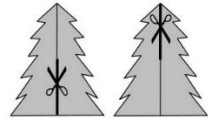


Whatever kind of card you send this year, be sure to include a kind message with love for your friends. Our love is a tiny echo of God's love for all the world.

Here is a simple 3-D Christmas tree that you can use as a decoration or a card. You will need green card, crayons, glitter or paint, scissors and sticky tape.

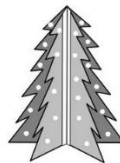
Fold a piece of card in half, then cut it in half. Put the two pieces together and fold them in half again.

Draw half a Christmas tree opposite the fold. Cut along the line and you will have 2 identical trees. Fold the trees in half, very lightly, hardly creasing the centre line to mark the centre of the tree. Cut a slit along the bottom half of the centre of



of one tree and along the top half of the centre of the other tree. Slip the two trees together along the slits. To help the tree to stand firmly, use sticky tape to fasten the parts together where they meet.

Decorate the tree. If you are using it as a card then leave an area free of decorations so that you can write on it.



*What goes red white red white red  
white?  
Santa rolling down a hill.*

A Saviour is born!

Colour in one star  
a day as you  
countdown to  
Christmas

Read the  
Christmas  
story in  
Luke 1 and 2



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 R O F I E L D E G A S H E P H E R D S  
 I Y O N B O R N O Z E G M A R Y A A A  
 N M R N A T O Z O A P A A L I R I V V  
 G O D S C H I L D R H L N A S O S I I  
 L J E S U S H O N E L I G H T O E D O  
 O G U A R D I B E T H L E H E M Z S U  
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## **Steve Hucklesby writes about his job as policy advisor on international affairs for the Methodist Church in Britain.**

I have been in my current job for 14 years. Methodists have formed a team of 10 people with Baptists, the Church of Scotland and the United Reformed Church. The 'Joint Public Issues Team' carries out research in public policy to help our churches speak on issues of social justice on the national stage. My background and specialism is international affairs.

A typical week might get divided up along the following lines. I hope to be able to spend the bulk of my time, say 20 hours/week, carrying out research (speaking to specialists/experts) and writing articles or policy papers for adoption by our churches on a few topics where our churches hope to make a difference. I might spend five hours/week responding to requests from church members, or others who want to know our Churches' views on various issues. Recently queries include questions on the Churches' investments in oil and gas companies, the conflict in Israel and Palestine, Brexit, tax avoidance and UK tax policy, persecution of Christians and other religious minorities in various countries and the UK government's priorities for international aid. Then maybe five hours meeting with MPs or the media. And finally five hours on the less interesting but necessary administration and coordination across the team to keep everything running.

One of my greatest joys has been to learn from church ministers and theologians how we might apply the lessons of scripture to the quite different ethical dilemmas that we face in our world today. You might think that the influence of the church in our society is declining and I think this is probably true. In addition the UK's influence in the world is somewhat diluted by new emerging powers. However when it comes to some of the big ethical issues of our time, many in British society still look to the Church for comment. We are more effective when we respond with an informed understanding. The Joint Public



Issues Team is currently organising a national 'public issues' conference (the fourth of its kind) that will bring together over 250 people from churches across the UK. I am always encouraged by the keenness of members of our churches to reflect prayerfully on issues of justice and ethics that demand our attention today. For information and resources see [www.jointpublicissues.org.uk](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk)

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## **OCTOTOTS**

Meets term time from 10.30am – noon.

Octotots is an informal weekly get together for babies, toddlers and their grown-ups in the Octagon at St. Mary Magdalene's.

We meet on Thursday mornings during term time for a mixture of chat, bible stories and songs with plenty of toys to keep the little ones busy.

We start with tea or coffee at 10.30 am and finish by 12.00 pm. Just pop along, or contact the church office to find out more.



## JEFF'S JOTTINGS

Mike and Ann Hyslop were stalwart members of the Church Walkers' Group and led many of our rambles. More especially, they have taken the group on holidays to the Lake District. I remember feeling very proud having scrambled up Catbells on a particularly wet day, only to hear Mike quote from Wainwright, "This is a Sunday afternoon stroll for grannies". So I wasn't surprised when Mike and Ann's piece in the series "What I Love About.." included the Lakes. I hope you enjoy it.

I am indebted to Roderick Clark for introducing us to Abby Rhodes, our ordinand in placement. Abby has been enhancing the musical and general life of our church for some months now, and many of us know little about her. So Roderick's article is very timely.

Steve and Ellie Hucklesby are fairly new members of our church and, as Steve works for a church organization, I know that there are many readers who will be interested in his piece.

I type this having just returned from Beryl Redwood's funeral. Beryl played a big part in the life of St Mary Magdalene over many years and a tribute to her will appear in the next edition.

The whole team at Crosstalk, Wendy who does the printing, the assembly folk, Jeff Arnold in charge of distribution, and your editor wish you a very happy Christmas.

### Christmas Cards

Each year at St. Mary Magdalene's, we have a Christmas card board at Church. Instead of everyone sending lots of Christmas cards, each of us can choose to send just one Christmas card, to all our friends at church. These cards are displayed on a notice board in church, so that everyone can read the greetings which have been sent. Not only



does this save on paper but we also invite a donation of the money you have saved on buying cards, which we then give to charity.

This year our chosen charity is **'Friends of The Holy Land'**

*The Christmas Card board will be in place from Sunday 3rd December.*



# **CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!**

## **CAROL SERVICE**

Sunday 17 December at 6.30pm  
Come along and hear the Christmas story  
and sing some favourite carols.

## **CHRISTINGLE**

Christmas Eve at 3.00pm & 4.30pm  
This joyous service, especially for  
children, is run twice so there's room for  
everyone.

## **MIDNIGHT COMMUNION**

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm

## **FAMILY COMMUNION**

Christmas Day at 10.00am  
A short service for all ages - bring a  
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