



Grasshopper



St. John the Baptist, Hey Dec 2018 Jan 2019
Receiving and Sharing the Love of God Everyday

Dear Friends

No doubt you will all by now be thinking about preparing for Christmas. The more organised amongst us may have been preparing for months. At this time of year a lot of thought goes into deciding on and finding the right gifts. We trudge around the shops for hours. Then there's the wrapping of the presents; I like to spend time making them look really good because I think it shows how much I care for those who receive them. Some of us spend hours in the kitchen, making sure that the puddings are all well and truly stirred up by "stir up" Sunday; icing a cake to look like a pretty snow scene, maybe adding a chimney and a Santa with a sack full of gifts. We send greetings, often to people who we haven't contacted since last Christmas, but also to those we see on a daily basis. Then there's the trimming of the house, and in particular, the Christmas tree. There are invitations to send out etc. etc.

Advent is a time of spiritual preparation for Christmas (and the second coming of course) so I would like you to think about how much God prepared for that first Christmas. Plans were made well in advance, several hundred years in fact. The Old Testament Prophets are evidence of this. God prepared the perfect gift, not only something beautiful but also something immensely practical; something that, after receiving it, we would wonder how we ever managed without it.

Special arrangements had to be made for Jesus to be born in the right place, so poor Mary and Joseph had to trudge, not round the shops, but all the way to Bethlehem. Did God take time and trouble wrapping up this most wonderful of gifts? Did He ever! There were angelic sightings, heavenly choirs singing, a special star in the sky. We could have had Christmas without these "trimmings" but God loved us so

much He wanted to make a special effort, He wanted us to have the beautiful “wrapping” as well as the gift. It is not my intention to trivialise the events surrounding the birth of Christ by calling them trimmings, and certainly, each one had its purpose, as did the visit of the magi; but they also beautify the whole season.

God sent angelic greetings, to those who had been spending time with him on a regular basis (Mary, Joseph, Zechariah) and to those who, maybe, hadn't been in touch for a while (the shepherds). The shepherds received an invitation to witness the event, as did Simeon and Anna, albeit slightly later.

God certainly prepared well for that first Christmas! There is much more that could be said but time and space (in the magazine) will not allow for this.

So what can we do in response to all God's preparations? Well maybe in Advent this year, as we shop we can thank God for his gift to us. As we stir our puddings we can ask God to stir up our hearts with the enthusiasm and excitement that the season deserves. We can ask Him to stir us to visit someone who needs to know that they have not been forgotten. As we make our snow scenes we can spare a thought and pray for those who will be out in the cold this winter, either emotionally or physically. Maybe we could make a donation to a reputable charity like Shelter, the Samaritans or a local counselling service. When we place the chimney and Santa on the cake we could remember those who will be without gifts this year. As we write our cards, let's pray for each person, that they might know the love of Jesus in their hearts. And maybe we could invite someone to celebrate with us, for who knows, we could be entertaining angels.

Prepare well for Christmas and after the big event, consider carrying some of the good things you practiced in Advent, into your New Year's resolutions.

May God bless you all this Christmas and in the year to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dign'.

Dear All

I would like to thank you all for your understanding and support as I go through this difficult time with my Mother, who is showing more and more signs of dementia. I try to make all meetings with Social Services, care agencies and various members of the medical profession for Fridays as that is my day off, there may, however, be times when this is not possible but I will work my hours around necessary meetings until suitable accommodation is arranged. I value your prayers and repeat my appreciation.

May the good Lord continue to bless us all.

Lyn

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If you wish to read **Crux** the Diocese of Manchester newsletter, you will find a link to it on the newsletter page of our web site: st-john-hey.org

Holy Baptism

4 Nov Alfie Steven Wilde
Infant son of Richard and Jenna Wilde

Day by Day Scheme

9 Dec A Special day
19 Dec Remembering the anniversary of Doris Lord's passing
2 Jan In memory of Jessie & Ernest Whittaker
18 Jan Remembering grandfather and grandchildren
22 Jan Remembering Doug's birthday

Thank you to all those who are helping to ensure the future fabric of our church by supporting the Day by Day Scheme.

Flowers

11 Nov Flowers in memory of Dad, Nan and Michael
Kathleen and Hilary

Street Prayers

<i>Week</i>	<i>Street</i>
02-Dec	Beechfields Close
09-Dec	Ashfield Cres North & Ashdene
16-Dec	Ashfield Cres South & Bateson Drive
06-Jan 19	Birks Avenue
13-Jan	Carr House Road
20-Jan	Heywood Fold Road
27-Jan	Knowsley, Knowsley Terrace, Drive, Green, Ave
3-Feb	Lower Turf Lane & The Spinney

Prayers for these streets will be offered in Church on the Sundays shown

Any requests for specific prayers
please ring the parish office 626 3630

Let us witness to the presence of the church to all in Hey Parish





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

Christ could be born
A thousand times in Galilee-
But all in vain
Until He is born in me
Angelus Silesius

Seed of God
Be born in me
Thrust new life forward
Like a sap filled tree
Rising from Your pool of grace
Sheltered by Your warm embrace
Seed of God
Grow in me
Make me what I ought to be
Adapted from a poem by Edwina Gately

Bible Readings

2 Dec First Sunday of Advent

Jeremiah 33:13-16

Luke 21:25-36

9 Dec Second Sunday of Advent

Malacai 3:1-4

Luke 3:1-6

16 Dec Third Sunday of Advent

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

23 Dec Fourth Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a

Luke 1:39-45

24 Dec Midnight Mass

Isaiah 9:2-7

Luke 2:1-20

25 Dec Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

John 1:1-14

30 Dec First Sunday after Christmas

Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-51

6 Jan Epiphany Sunday

Isaiah 60:1-6

Matthew 2:1-12

13 Jan Baptism of Jesus

Acts 8:14-17

Luke3:15-22

20 Jan Second Sunday of Epiphany

Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

27 Jan Third Sunday of Epiphany

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Luke 4:14-21

3 Feb Presentation at the Temple (Candlemas)

Hebrews 2:14-end

Luke 2:22-40

Diary Dates

Major events during World War 1 will be shown on their centenary date
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Sun 2 Dec		First Sunday of Advent
	8am	Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer
	9.30am	Parish Communion
	10.30	Christmas Fair
Tue 4 Dec	All Day	Experience Christmas
Wed 5 Dec	10 am	Holy Communion - BCP
	10.45am	Coffee & Chat
		WW1 - Death recorded on this day a century ago and named on our memorial: Sapper John Mellor
Thu 6 Dec	All Day	Experience Christmas
	7pm	Come & Praise!
	7.30pm	PCC
Sun 9 Dec		The Second Sunday of Advent
	8am	Holy Communion
	9.30am	Parish Communion
Wed 12 Dec	10 am	Holy Communion
	10.45am	Coffee & Chat

WW1 - The British Cavalry cross the Rhine and begin the Occupation of Cologne.

Thu 13 Dec 7pm Come & Praise! With Holy Communion

WW1 - Americans cross the Rhine and occupy the bridgehead at Coblenz. Armistice is prolonged for one month until 17th January 1919.

Sun 16 Dec **The Third Sunday of Advent**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Come & Praise!

3pm Carol Service

Wed 19 Dec 10 am Holy Communion

10.45am Coffee & Chat

11am Holy Communion at Millfield

Thu 20 Dec 11am Holy Communion at Oakdene

Sun 23 Dec **The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

Mon 24 Dec **Christmas Eve**

6pm Christingle / Nativity

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Tue 25 Dec **Christmas Day**

9.30am Parish Communion

Wed 26 Dec **No Service**

Thu 27 Dec **No Service**

Sun 30 Dec **The First Sunday of Christmas**

8am Holy Communion

9.30am Parish Communion

Wed 2 Jan 10 am Holy Communion - BCP

10.45am Coffee & Chat

11am Holy Communion at Oakdene

Thu 3 Jan 7pm Come & Praise!

Sun 6 Jan Epiphany Sunday

8am Holy Communion - BCP

9.30am Parish Communion

Tue 8 Jan 7.30pm PCC

Wed 9 Jan 10am Holy Communion

10.45am Coffee & Chat

Thu 10 Jan 7pm Come & Praise!

Sun 13 Jan

Baptism of Jesus

8am Holy Communion
9.30am Parish Communion

Wed 16 Jan

10 am Holy Communion
10.45am Coffee & Chat
11am Holy Communion at Millfield

Thu 17 Jan

7pm Come & Praise!

Sun 20 Jan

Second Sunday of Epiphany

8am Holy Communion - BCP
9.30am Parish Communion

Wed 23 Jan

10 am Holy Communion
10.45am Coffee & Chat

Thu 24 Jan

7pm Come & Praise!

Sun 27 Jan

Third Sunday of Epiphany

8am Holy Communion - BCP
9.30am Parish Communion

Wed 30 Jan

10 am Holy Communion
10.45am Coffee & Chat

Thu 31 Jan

7pm Come & Praise!

Sun 4 Feb

Presentation at the Temple (Candlemas)

8am Holy Communion - BCP
9.30am Parish Communion



6 December St Nicholas

One account of how Father Christmas began tells of a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died in an epidemic, Nicholas decided to use his inheritance to help people. He gave to the needy, the sick, the suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service, and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. As a bishop in later life, he joined other bishops and priests in prison under the emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire. Finally released, Nicholas was all the more determined to shed abroad the news of God's love. He did so by giving. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. There was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry, and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight, and tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window – thus saving the girls from a life of misery.

The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. Hence the custom of children hanging out stockings – in the hope of attracting presents of their own from St Nicholas - on Christmas Eve. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols of St Nicholas.

The example of St Nicholas has never been forgotten - in bygone years boys in Germany and Poland would dress up as bishops on 6th December, and beg alms for the poor. In the Netherlands and Belgium 'St Nicholas' would arrive on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. To this day, 6th December is still the main day for gift-giving and merry-making in much of Europe. Many feel that simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

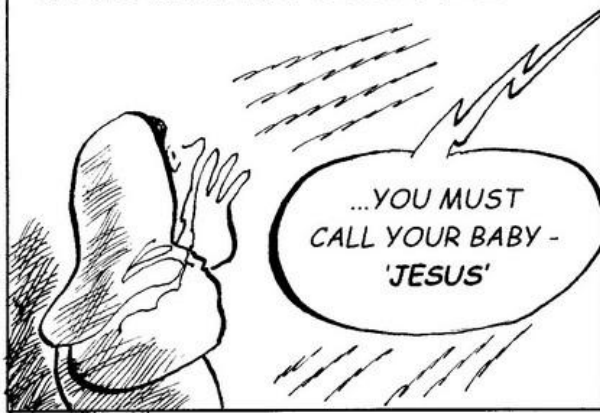
The First Christmas



JESUS WAS BORN ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO IN THE SMALL TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEAR JERUSALEM.



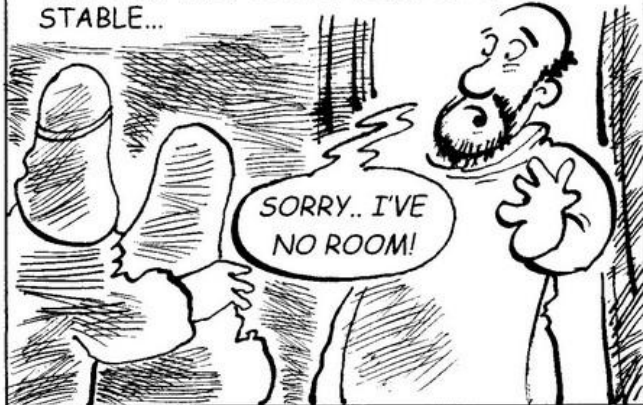
AN ANGEL HAD TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE VERY SPECIAL BABY



MARY AND JOSEPH MADE THE LONG JOURNEY FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM. THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED THERE BY THE CENSUS.



BUT THE TOWN WAS FULL... THE ONLY SHELTER THEY COULD FIND WAS A STABLE...



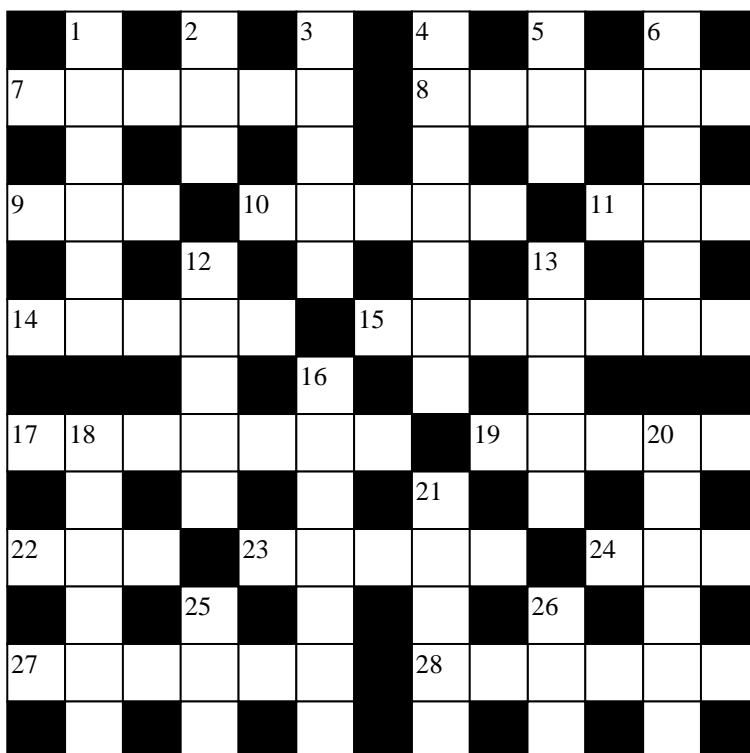
...WHICH IS WHERE THE BABY JESUS WAS BORN.



SHEPHERDS IN FIELDS NEARBY RACED TO SEE THE BABY. AN ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM WHERE JESUS HAS BEEN BORN.



DECEMBER CROSSWORD



CLUES

ACROSS

- 7. Give counsel (6)
- 8. Trinket (6)
- 9. Small animal doctor (3)
- 10. Stable animals (5)
- 11. Self-opinion (3)
- 14. Long tube to drink with (5)
- 15. The twilight hours (7)
- 17. Mail carrier (7)
- 19. Follow (5)
- 22. Hostelry (3)
- 23. Mount an attack (5)
- 24. Low-lying marsh (3)
- 27. Creek (6)
- 28. Small suitcase (6)

DOWN

- 1. The time before Christmas (6)
- 2. Fastener (3)
- 3. Banquet (5)
- 4. Watch (7)
- 5. Small cake (3)
- 6. Narrow-necked jug (6)
- 12. The last dance (5)
- 13. Catch (5)
- 16. Hobby (7)
- 18. Highly decorated (6)
- 20. Dairy product (6)
- 21. Red Indian warrior (5)
- 25. Limb (3)
- 26. Malt drink (3)

Solution to November crossword Across: 1.Pandemonium,9.Imports,10.Scion,11.Hindi,12.Inshore
13.Violet,15.Kidnap,18.Letdown,20.Issue,22.Ennui,23.Edifice,24.Originality. Down:2.Aspen,
3.Dormice,4.Mosaic,5.Nests,6.Unicorn,7.Dishevelled,8.Interpreter,14.Oftener,16.Initial,17.Intern,
19.Owing,21.Swift.