

Web address: <http://stjameswoolton.org>

MINISTER: Revd. Peter Hughes peter.hughes@methodist.org.uk
0151 364 0134

Peter's day off is Friday - messages and emails left on Fridays will not be received by him until Saturday.

NEWSLETTER – 5th December 2021



This Week's Collect

God of all holiness, your promises stand unshaken through all generations and you lift up all who are burdened and brought low: renew our hope in you, as we wait for the coming in glory of Jesus Christ, our Judge and our Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**



Second Sunday of Advent

God of all time and space, who are we, that you should come to us? Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son. As we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works. We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near, even your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

UPCOMING PREACHERS

Sunday December 5th Graham Martin (St James') Clive Rigby (phone)

PROGRAMMES YOU MAY ENJOY – Sunday 5th December

6:00 – 9:30 a.m. Radio Merseyside: Daybreak

Helen Jones brings you the Sunday magazine reflecting Merseyside's worlds of faith.

8.10 a.m. Radio 4: Sunday Worship. Advent 2: 'The Dawn from on High'

For the second week of Advent, recorded in the Chapel of Girton College, Cambridge. Preacher: The Revd. Dr Tim Boniface, College Chaplain.

13.30 BBC 1 Songs of Praise: Young Chorister of the Year - Final

On the second Sunday of Advent, Aled Jones hosts the final of BBC Young Chorister of the Year with six talented singers and judges Lesley Garrett, Howard Goodall and David Grant.

Minister's Message

Hello everyone, I hope you have had a blessed first week of Advent. This Sunday our thoughts turn to the prophets who were given messages about God's coming leader. These prophets faithfully proclaimed God's word. The final prophet before Jesus was John the Baptist. This week, especially, may we listen to God's word in the Bible and faithfully obey what God calls us to do.

God Bless, Peter.

Sabbatical Photos

A few days after completing my pilgrimage in Wales I drove up to Scotland and caught a car ferry to the Island of Mull.

My friends Daniel & Suzy, who were soon to be married, welcomed me to their lovely home in Tobermory. The next day we enjoyed exploring the island in the hot sunny weather.

We visited Calgary Beach; settlers from here went to Canada and called their new home town by the same name - Calgary. I felt the sunshine of God's love in the hospitality I received and in the beauty of God's creation.



WORSHIP AT ST. JAMES'

There are now 3 ways in which you can enjoy our Sunday morning services.

- By booking a place and attending St James'
- Via telephone
- Via Zoom



All details and information are below.

Please use the Zoom link below

Joining from 10.15 for a 10.30 am start – Graham Martin

Either click on this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/5913455610?pwd=aVdZcFpaZVVaMDdsZ1BiR3lhRE1yQT09>

Meeting ID: 591 345 5610

Passcode: 12466

We hope to see you there.

If you want to listen in to the Service on Sunday, dial the above number, then PIN and listen in. You can chat up to 10.30, but when the service starts everyone will be “muted” to avoid feedback/noise.

**Also from St. James Church: - Invitation to Telephone Worship
(And every Sunday until the end of November)**

This Sunday our preacher will be Revd. Peter Hughes

To join us for a short (15-20 minutes) Act of Worship:

Between 2.20pm and 2.30pm on Sunday:

From your normal “landline” telephone: Dial: 0333-006-7775

On being asked, enter the following number, or “Pin”: 08 39 09 01

You will be able to chat with everyone else who joins until the service starts.

This Sunday’s Act of Worship, or short service, will comprise:

The Host for this service is Liz Hudson

- **Welcome and notices:**
- **Opening prayer (Host)**
- **Bible reading** (Peter Bounds: Luke 1: 68 - 79)
- **Lord’s Prayer** (Host)
- **Talk or “mini-sermon”** (Rev Peter Hughes)
- **Prayers** (Dave Dickson)
- **Grace and dismissal.** (Host)



COST: - The above number costs the same to dial as ordinary UK numbers – if you have “free minutes” from your telephone supplier then there will be no cost.

God Bless Graham Martin

Communications officer (and local preacher) St. James Church

[Call me on 0151-222-5832 or 07712-525239 if you have any questions.]

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT ALL THESE EVENTS

Fellowship Group

Please note that the Fellowship Group (formerly the Monday House Group) will meet on Monday 6th December at 2.30pm in Church.

The Wednesday House group will be meeting on 15 December at 7.30pm in church. New (as well as existing) members welcome.

Saturday December 11th – Roy Barker and Friends Christmas Sing-along.

Roy Barker & Friends Christmas Sing-along is on Saturday 11th December at 7.00 pm (doors open at 6.30pm).

Come and join us for some Christmas fun and lots of singing. Wear your Christmas hats and sweaters and bring your voices.

Due to Covid safety restrictions, seating has been reduced so get your ticket now. Tickets adults: £6, children: £1.

Contact Roy and Lynne Barker 0151 421 1218



Christmas baubles

We asked for your help a few weeks ago to knit, crochet or sew Christmas baubles for this year's planned Christmas experience. As we continue our planning it would be helpful to know how many have been made or are in the process of being made so far, so if you get a spare minute, perhaps you could let me know? There is no panic, and plenty of time left to carry on making them too!

Thank you to everyone who has been busy making Christmas baubles. Would you please bring them to church by 28th November or if you need them picking up, please give me a call and I will arrange that for you.

Thanks Pam Bellis

Christmas Services

Advent Sunday: November 28th, 2021 – dedication of donations in lieu of toys and gifts for our Christmas Charities at 10.30 a.m.

Sunday, December 12th, 2021, CHRISTINGLE SERVICE, (all age worship) at 10.30 a.m.

Sunday December 19th Morning Service with Holy Communion at 10.30am AND Carols by Candlelight at 4pm

Friday December 24th, 2021, Christmas Eve Communion at 11.30 pm

All the above services will be led by Revd Peter Hughes

Christmas Day - Morning Worship led by Andrew Gillespie at 10 a.m.

NO SERVICE on Sunday December 26th, 2021.



WINTER FAYRE

Thank you to everyone who helped at the Winter Fayre last Saturday and to all of you who supported us.

We raised £1590 . A marvellous amount and we are very grateful and appreciate your support each year. Money raised from this event has always been for the maintenance and upkeep of our two beautiful buildings. They are a little older than last year and to keep them in good working order comes at a cost which we try to manage efficiently on a very small budget.

We rely on a very small but amazing team of volunteer helpers. If anyone could offer some time, we would be delighted to hear from you. The time does not have to be on a regular basis or for long periods. Perhaps you would be prepared to go on a list of contacts to be called on when needed?

If so, please speak to Wendy (Doig) or contact her on 07867795179 or wdoig45@gmail.com. Thank you.

St James' Christmas Card

We are going to send a St James Christmas card to all our members and friends of the church again this year. If you would like to send a greeting, please either speak to me in person, email me at pambellis@hotmail.com or give me a call on 0151 356 7510 to give me your greeting and who it is from. If you wish to make a charitable donation in lieu of sending cards we will be donating to Christian Aid.

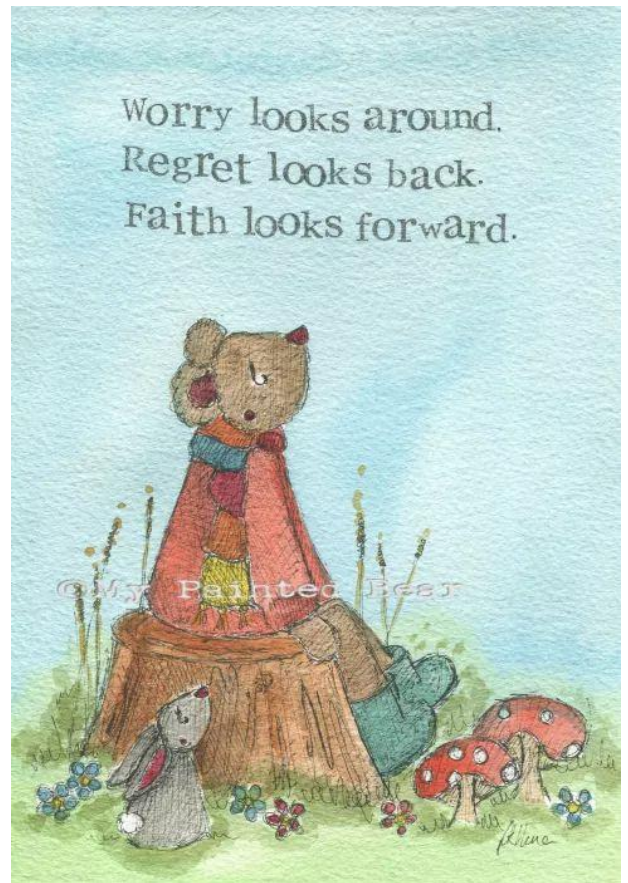
Thanks, Pam Bellis.

Jimmy feeling the cold during our recent cold snap!

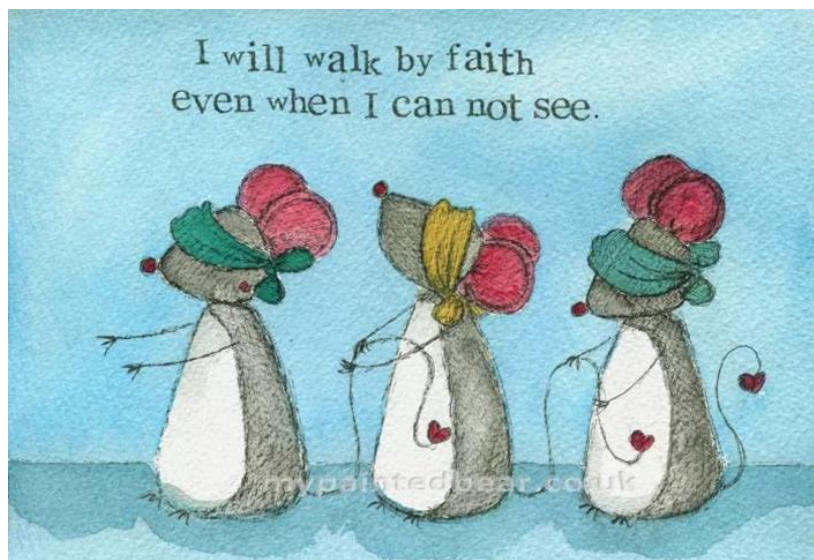


PRAYERS

Dear God,
We confess our need for you today.
We need your healing and your grace.
We need hope restored.
We need to be reminded that you work on behalf of those you love, constantly, powerfully, completely.
Forgive us for trying to fix our situations all on our own.
Forgive us for running all different directions and spinning our wheels to find help, when true help and healing must be found first in You.
Forgive us for forgetting how much we need you, above everyone and everything else.
We come to you and bring you the places we are hurting.
You see where no one else is able to fully see or understand.
You know the pain we've carried.
The burdens.
The cares.
You know where we need to be set free.
We ask for your healing and grace to cover every broken place.
Every wound.
Every heartache.
Thank you that you are Able to do far more than we could ever imagine.
Thank you for your Mighty Power that acts on behalf of your children.
We reach out to you and know that you are restoring and redeeming every place of difficulty, every battle, for your greater glory.
Thank you that you will never waste our pain and suffering.
We love you.
We need you today.
In Jesus' Name, **Amen.**



We continue to pray for Gordon and Christine Salmon, Ken Kitchen, John and Sylvia Pagan and Arthur Evans.
We continue to pray for those who need our prayers at this time due to ill health, struggling with mental health and all difficult situations.



Opening Prayer

Call to worship - Responsive

Leader: Now is the time to get ready:

All: Let us prepare the way of the Lord!

Leader: Now is the time to be changed:

All: Let us repent and seek forgiveness.

Leader: Now is the time to welcome God into our midst:

All: Let us worship God in humble expectation.



LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

Hymn: Come, thou long-expected Jesus (Singing the Faith 169) Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oykTZvZPz48&feature=youtu.be>

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free,
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

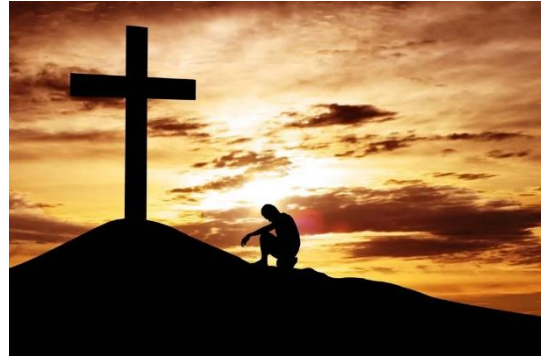


Let us pray together

Lord Jesus, Light of the World, the prophets said you would bring peace and save your people from trouble. Give peace in our hearts in this advent season. We ask that as we wait for you to come again, you would remain present with us. Help us today, and every day to worship you, to hear your word, and to do your will by sharing your peace with each other. We ask it in the name that is above all names, the name of Jesus Christ who is the reason for the season.

Prayers of confession

We have sinned against you.
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
cf Psalm 51



Readings: Malachi 3: 1- 4; Luke 3: 1- 6

Time to Reflect

Today, as we step into this second Sunday of Advent, we are invited even more to prepare our hearts and minds for yet another Christmas, another coming of the Christ-child. And I have rarely met anyone who does not in some way want to be in on the expectant, hopeful feeling of this season. All around us, in the coming weeks, and certainly when Christians gather to worship and pray, people will be given the opportunity to celebrate the Holy birth of "God with us." This is the business of preparation, or as our Gospel lesson puts it, it is a time of "Making Straight the Way." A time of great preparation. With Xmas with us, decorations will be everywhere, this is all preparation.

Today's Gospel lesson reveals the work of the ultimate preparer. John the Baptist, whose ministry, some scholars tell us, lasted only about a few months. John comes to us and tells us to prepare the way. But for thirty years, John's life had been leading up to this short period of ninety days during which he would build a path for the Saviour of the world.

The Scripture tells us that the forerunner John the Baptist did this to call on his hearers for "repentance." He modelled that in his own life by saying he was not even worthy to carry the sandals of the One Who was to come. John knew, despite some rather incredible popularity in his own right, that for God to work in his life and to continue His work on earth, the Baptizer had to step aside and allow Christ to begin for another preparation, the preparation for His kingdom.

If we are really to be part of the Advent season, I think we have to turn to John as a model. How do we "make the path straight" for the return of our Lord and in our day to day lives? Certainly, there are many things, but let me briefly point to two:

The first is that we must utterly and wholeheartedly offer our lives to God in Christ. John the Baptist said that he must decrease so that Christ might increase. We are to do the same. We are consciously to offer ourselves to a deepening commitment and have a personal relationship to Jesus if we are to truly be children of the Light named Christ.

The second is that as John set his life on a path of making straight the way for others, we are called to do the same. Jesus tells us time and time again, that the greatest of all commandments...of all laws, is the law of love the law of concern for those around us. We, you and I, have an obligation to all those around us to take the skills, talents, gifts and resources we have and make straight the path for others to reach the Kingdom, by pointing the way as did John to Jesus.

This is crucial that each of us give of ourselves beyond joining in worship week after week. Not just by our prayers and words. We are called to - in all things - word and deed, prayer and action, by what we say and do, share the Christ story and thereby draw others into our journey to the end of the path.

As Advent continues, let us turn from those things, those paths that are not of God, open our hearts and our souls and say with all that we are, "Emmanuel, God with us." Amen.

A time of prayer

We pray...

For those lost in the desert.
May they find the straight path.

For those downtrodden.
May they be lifted up.
For those in dry places.
May they find you as the living water.

For those heart broken.
May they find peace in Jesus.
For those seeking healing.
May they be healed.

For those seeking consolation.
May they be comforted.
For those waiting to be heard.
May they find justice in you.

For those waiting for transformation. May there be sprouts of change.
Amen.



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

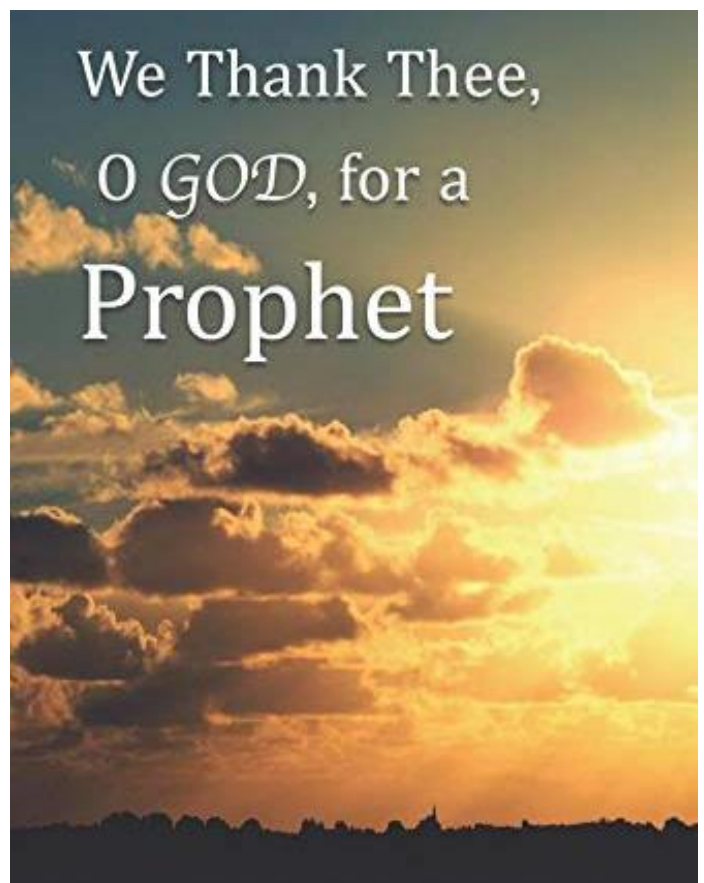
Hymn: Listen to *'The prophets' voice comes down the years'* (Singing the Faith 162) [The prophets' voice comes down the years \(StF 162\) \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

The prophets' voice comes down the years
to teach and to inspire,
to show the nature of our God
in words and deeds of fire;
not to disclose some rigid plan
that God has set in stone,
but to renew the promises
the saints have always known.

The prophets' voice speaks of the past --
the actions that reveal
the way God used the people then
this broken world to heal;
and then translates the things gone by
in ways that we find new
so we can judge the world we know
by standards ever true.

The prophets' voice holds up a glass
in which to see our day;
events which span the globe around
and things we do and say.
It calls us to repent and turn
from things that tear life down,
to choose the path that Jesus chose
and share his work and crown.

Alan Hinton



A prayer of blessing

And now may the blessing of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be with us and all we love now, tomorrow and the days to come. **Amen.**

Readings

Old Testament Reading

3 “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty.

2 But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness.

Gospel reading

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

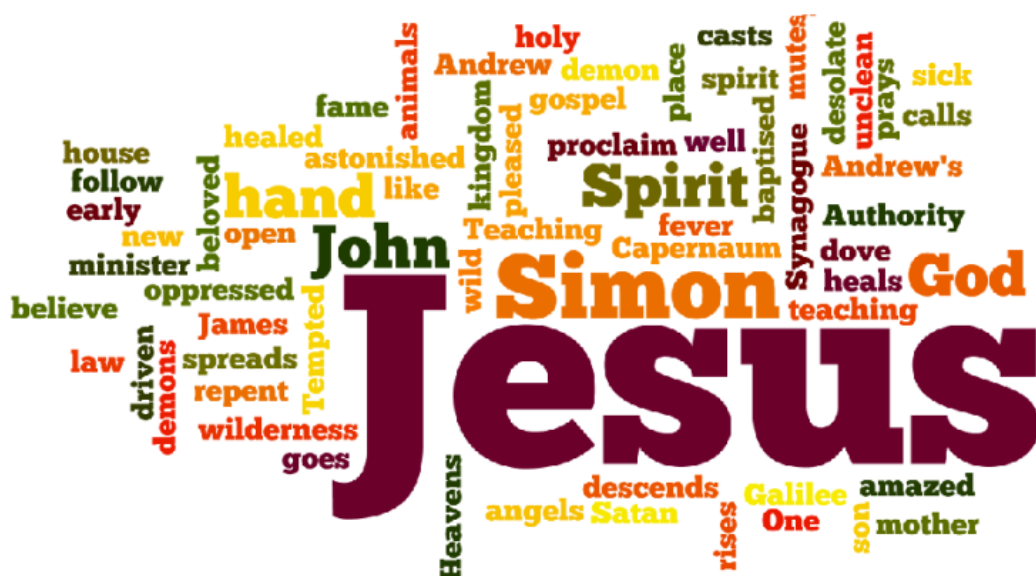
3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—

2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

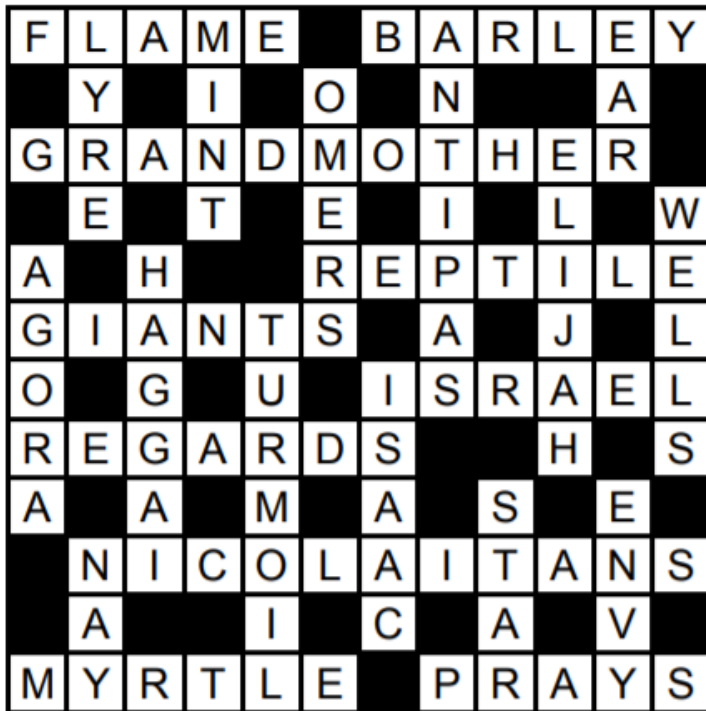
3 He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.
5 Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill made low.
The crooked roads shall become straight,
the rough ways smooth.
6 And all people will see God’s salvation.’



LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Across: 1 Flame, 4 Barley, 8 Grandmother, 13 Reptile, 14 Giants, 16 Israel, 17 Regards, 20 Nicolaitans, 21 Myrtle, 22 Prays.

Down: 2 Lyre, 3 Mint, 5 Antipas, 6 Ear, 7 Omers, 9 Elijah, 10 Wells, 11 Agora, 12 Haggai, 15 Turmoil, 16 Isaac, 18 Star, 19 Envy, 20 Nay.

Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.com

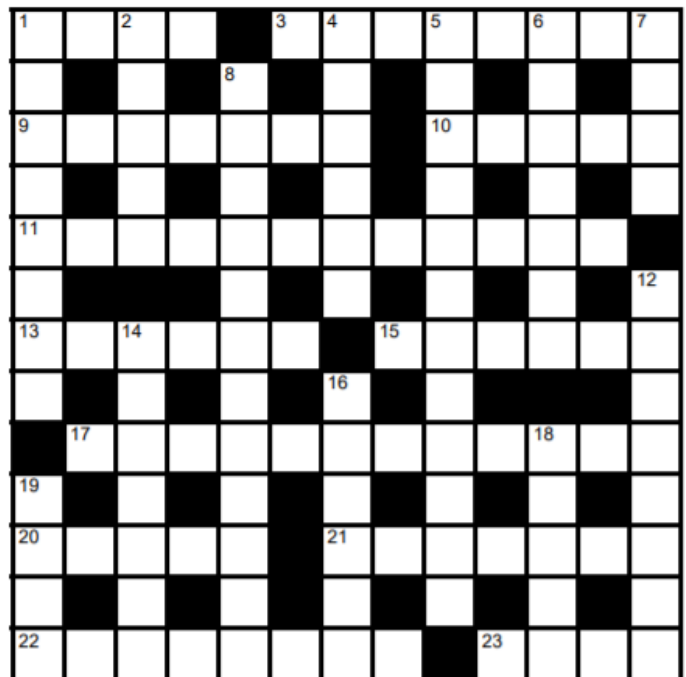
THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Fruits (4)
- 3 Turned over a new leaf (8)
- 9 Teacher, master (7)
- 10 Cancels (5)
- 11 Daughter of Job (12)
- 13 Cattle guide (2,4)
- 15 Daughter of Job (6)
- 17 Sinner (12)
- 20 Daughter of Job (5)
- 21 Fruit-tree grove (7)
- 22 Counted (8)
- 23 As Peter did three times (4)

Down

- 1 Be aware of in advance (8)
- 2 One of Solomon's commissariat officers (5)
- 4 Son of Chislon, and Benjamin's representative (6)
- 5 Ubiquity (12)
- 6 Book after Zechariah (7)
- 7 The makings of Adam (4)
- 8 Entrance near the Pool of Siloam (8,4)
- 12 With reverence (8)
- 14 Mountain of Samaria (7)
- 16 Turn away from (6)
- 18 Joseph in Egypt (5)
- 19 Hide (4)



by Philologus

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NEWSLETTER NOTICES NEXT WEEK



If you would like to share anything with your Church family in this newsletter including any birthdays, celebrations, or anyone to include in our prayers, please let me know.

Please send any messages to Jayne McLaren at

jayniemac@hotmail.co.uk