

January
2021



Parish of Stockport and Brinnington
St Mary
STOCKPORT PARISH CHURCH

St Thomas

St Luke

Welcome to our parish news sheet for January 2021

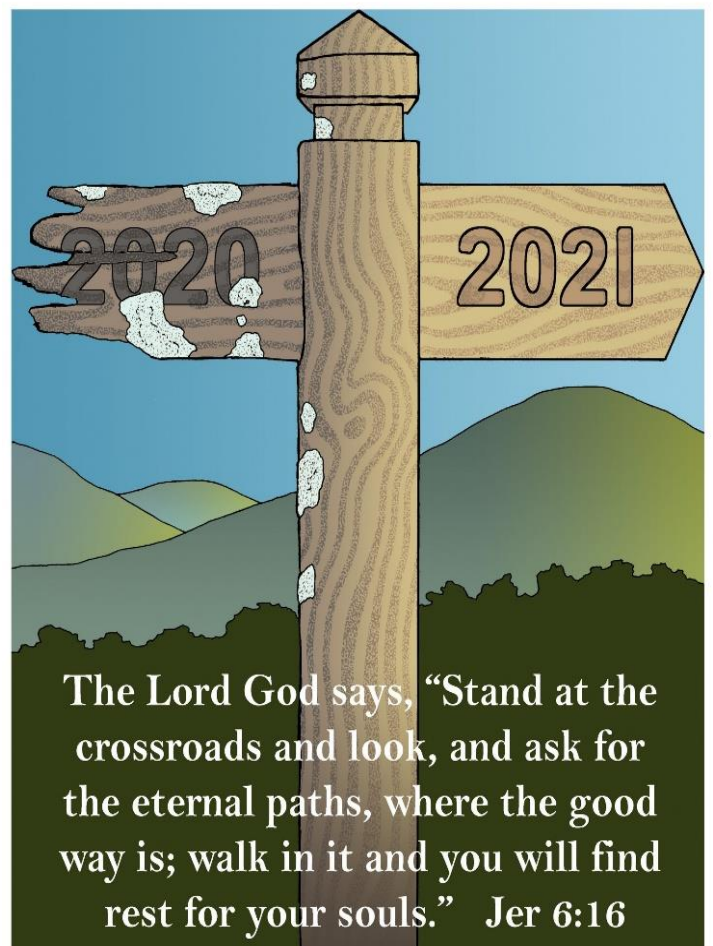
As another year fades into history, we can't help but wonder, "What will the New Year bring?"

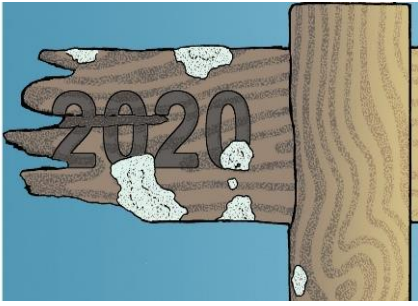
"Que Sera, Sera" (whatever will be, will be) according to that well known song published in 1956 when Doris Day introduced it in the Alfred Hitchcock film 'The Man Who Knew Too Much'. Well, we don't know quite enough about Covid-19 yet, but hopeful that the present situation will greatly improve with the introduction of mass vaccination and a better understanding of the disease in the coming weeks and months.

The future is always somewhat uncertain and 2021 will be no different - we are still in the midst of a Pandemic, Covid restrictions, and an uncertain relationship with the rest of the trading world, even with the good news of an agreement with Europe. Then there are local issues and personal ones too. We may not know what tomorrow will bring but we have hope and a certainty that, somehow or other, all will be well. The pandemic will end, there will be trade with other nations and local and individual problems will be resolved. A new year always brings a sense of hope - with all its tragedies, problems, disappointments, failures, and sadness behind us, a clean slate lies ahead.

So what are your hopes and dreams for 2021? – maybe just to enjoy everything we have missed since the Pandemic took over our lives. Getting back on track – weddings that had to be cancelled, family reunions put on hold, a return to unrestricted travel (except you may need to check that your passport complies with the new rules starting on the 1st January). The successful completion of the Covid-19 vaccination programme, to be able to feel "safe", less isolated or anxious. For our churches to be fully open again - the return of our volunteers our congregations and our visitors (especially those who are still to some degree "shielding"), to less financial hardship for individuals and businesses alike, and for happier times.

Whatever our collective wishes and individual ones, may this be a blessed new year for all of us.





We have finally reached the end of 2020.

What an extraordinary year! Who would have guessed this time last year just what was ahead. We no doubt all had our hopes and dreams for 2020, some of those will have been come true of course – that new job, new home, new beginnings - others shattered or at least put on hold.

Few of us have left 2020 unscathed by the pandemic.

Nearly half of us, 48 per cent, put on weight during lockdown. (According to a recent survey by King's College London and Ipsos MORI).

Millions of us turned to alcohol or drugs. Public Health England reports that one in five of us aged 45-74 are now drinking more than 21 units a week. The Royal College of Psychiatrists expresses alarm at the rapid rise in patients whose alcohol or drug use led to a decline in their mental health in 2020.

Children have suffered. Childline had nearly 43,000 calls from young people March and October. Cyber bullying has soared, with one in three children being bullied during the pandemic, according to the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

For millions of pensioners, Covid-19 'hit the fast-forward button on ageing', according to Age UK. Lockdown left old people frightened and losing their confidence, mobility and even functions such as memory.

Suicidal thoughts soared during lockdown, with the number of people seeking help tripling, to stand at more than a quarter of a million. The Royal College of Psychiatrists warn that mental health services are now 'overflowing' with patients struggling to cope with anxiety, psychosis and depression. Many charities fear that a 'second pandemic' of mental health problems.

So – what do we do as January 2021 dawns? Each one of us CAN do something to make things better, if only in a small way. How about these for your New Year Resolutions?

Firstly, just get regular exercise. As one professor said, "Exercise creates a virtuous circle of physical and mental well-being. You move more, you eat better, you feel positive." On the other hand, only a couple of weeks of lying around the house will leave your cardiovascular systems less effective, your musculoskeletal system weaker, your metabolic rate affected, and your immune system lowered.

Secondly, adopt the right mental attitude. Studies of Holocaust survivors found that those who recovered best had certain character traits of resilience: optimism, self-esteem, acceptance and above all, spirituality. A faith in God gave them purpose and meaning, even in the midst of fear and death.

Thirdly, make an effort this year to keep in touch with your friends and keep an eye out for vulnerable neighbours. Be willing to act as a safety net for others, if only to show compassion and a willingness to listen to them.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Heaven's gift of another year
As the old departs and the new is born,
Plans for a future and a hope
Preparing us for each new dawn.

Yesterday has gone forever,
New days and ventures lie ahead,
Even darkness turns to light
When we make the Lord our head.

Yielding to the Holy Spirit
Ever mindful that He's there,
As we live our lives before Him
Rejoicing in His loving care.

By Megan Carte (An acrostic poem where the first letter of each line spells out the title of the poem)



New ministry team member

We're delighted to welcome a new ministry team member, Jane Crook, who will be with us on Tuesdays and Sundays until Easter and then for three days a week for the following year.

Jane will become involved in all areas of parish activity over time; please do welcome her warmly, we're delighted to have her with us.

Below is a short introduction which she's written for us.

LSC



"My name is Jane Crook and I'm an ordinand, training for ministry in the Church of England at St Mellitus College in Liverpool. I live in Woodley with my husband Andy, 2 of our 3 children, (who are both now older teenagers) and our westie, Hamish. Our other daughter lives nearby with our little 4-month-old granddaughter.

I'm really pleased to have been offered an 18-month training placement with you. From the little that I have seen so far, it's obvious that St Mary's, St Thomas' and St Luke's are churches that are incredibly active in sharing the love of God in word and deed in their communities. I'm really looking forward to being part of that and to learning from you & serving alongside you.

I look forward to meeting you all, in one way or another, over the coming weeks".

Thanks to everyone who donated gifts to the 2020 Stockport Homes Gift Drive.

Under normal circumstances it is nice to see all our toys and gifts displayed in church but whatever was hidden in all those lovely bags (as well as the individual items on top of the table of course) everything was gratefully received by Stockport Homes representatives Kirstie and Yvonne.



When we first contacted Stockport Homes to make arrangements for the 2020 Gift Drive we had no idea if there would actually be a service in church mid-December or not - but we were determined that the "Gift Drive" would take place – this year perhaps more important than ever. As it happened we were lucky in that Lockdown II had just ended and Tier 3 allowed us to re-open for Sunday worship once again and our annual presentation of the gifts was able to take place on Sunday, 13th December – giving plenty of time for Stockport Homes to sort them out and make available before Christmas. We are all aware what a difficult year it has been, especially so for many of the clients Stockport Homes work with. Your gift(s) made a great difference to someone somewhere in the Borough who may otherwise have received no Christmas present at all. THANK YOU.



If you didn't see them for yourself or haven't watched the video on Facebook you may not have noticed all the beautifully made angels hanging up (or seated on a bench) around our three churches before Christmas. They really looked lovely.

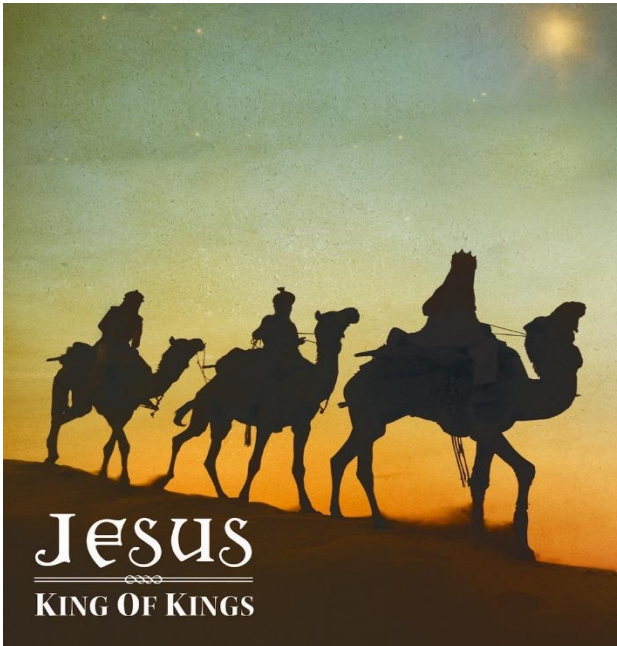
Nice too (on the video) to also see our "bombing team" in action – preparing our angels and hanging them up. A job well done to Marie, Catriona and everyone who assisted in one way or another to make, prepare and distribute this little angels around the Parish.

It's gone!

If you have entered St Mary's recently using the West Doors you can't help but notice that something is missing. We have finally had to remove the notice board so kindly given to us by Stockport Heritage Trust when they celebrated 10 years of being located at St Mary's many years ago. In a poor condition and beyond repair it has been removed in the interests of health and safety however it will be replaced in due course.



Epiphany for today



Canon Paul Hardingham finds the wise men's gifts to be of help to us now.

This month we celebrate Epiphany, when we remember the Magi from the East who followed a star to find the baby Jesus: *'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?'* (Matthew 2:1).

At the start of a New Year, amid the uncertainty of the pandemic, are we asking the same question? The gifts they offered show us how we can find Him in the uncertainty of the coming year: *'they bowed down and worshipped Him...and presented Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.'* (2:11).

The *gift of gold* reflects that the Magi saw in the baby a king, destined to rule over us all. In this coming year we need to remember that Jesus is on the throne, the seat of power and authority in the whole universe. Will we crown Him king of our lives and dedicate all that we are and do to Him?

The *gift of frankincense* reflects that the visitors saw not just an earthly king, but God in human flesh. Incense symbolises the prayers of God's people and so this gift reminds us that God is worthy of our worship and prayer. Will we offer our praise and prayer, as we seek God to guide us through the uncertainties of this time?

The *gift of myrrh* reflects that these astrologers saw beyond the baby's birth and life, to His death which would secure life for all. Jesus was offered myrrh on the cross and was a spice used in His tomb. As we face the sufferings of this New Year, we can be confident that Jesus knows and understands our experience. Are we ready to trust Him?

'Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice! Heav'n sings Hallelujah: Hallelujah the earth replies.' ('We Three Kings').

On entering the house,
★ they saw the child
with Mary his mother
and they knelt down
and paid him homage.
Then, opening
their treasure chests,
they offered him gifts
of gold, frankincense,
and myrrh.

Matthew 2, verse 12

Where do we go from here?

Lester Amann considers the visit of the Wise Men.

Perhaps this was a question the Wise Men asked after seeing the infant Jesus. They had come from a distant land to Jerusalem. They had followed a star and expected to see a royal child. Now in Bethlehem, they saw things differently. No doubt, Mary and Joseph shared with these men their recent experiences and knew God was with them. Now the Magi had to have eyes of faith to recognise that this child was God in the flesh.

On 6th January many churches will celebrate Epiphany. On this day we remember the Eastern Men bringing their gifts to Jesus. The word 'epiphany' describes their 'revelation' or 'insight' that this was no ordinary baby. Who could they tell? Not King Herod. They had a dream warning them to return home a different way.

Their return to familiar surroundings was going to be different. They couldn't be silent about what they had experienced. Their lives were now changed. On returning home they faced new circumstances and challenges.

Doesn't this sound a bit familiar to us today? The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all of us in one way or another. Where do we go from here? We have celebrated our Lord's birth, but now we are returning to our previous activities. The festive break is over, and we are returning to changed, very difficult circumstances.

We go into a New Year that is so different from this time last year. While we might be downcast with all the upsets around us, there is one thing that has not changed.

It is almighty God! He is our rock. We can look to Him in this world of confusion and uncertainty. Perhaps, from now on, we shall be worshipping and serving Him in different ways. So, with the challenges that lie ahead, let's continually seek His guidance.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding....and He will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Open that window

Here is an easy resolution for the New Year: open your windows at home for 'short sharp bursts' of 10 to 15 minutes at a time, several times a day.

The government's public information campaign says that regular fresh air can cut the risk of Covid transmission by more than 70 per cent. So, either leave a window open a small amount continuously, or open it fully on a regular basis throughout the day, especially if anyone has come to visit you in your home. Coronavirus is spread through the air by droplets and smaller particles known as aerosols. They can hang in the air for hours and they build up over time.

Overcoming disappointment

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.'
(Martin Luther King, Jr).

Canon Paul Hardingham considers the disappointment of life going wrong.

During this current pandemic, one of the dominant emotions is disappointment. It comes out of our expectations of life, even as people of faith. The life story that we adopt for ourselves is that life should be long and healthy; we can become anything we want, and we have perfect families, homes, holidays and retirement! No wonder we're disappointed when things don't work out like this, especially during the pandemic.

Jesus tells the story of a wealthy farmer, living the good life (Luke: 12:13-21), when God says: 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' It's a very modern story, as this farmer's expectations of the future took no account of death or God. Like death, there are unexpected moments that interrupt our life story, including illness, redundancy, divorce, or the pandemic.

If we pay more attention to how Covid upsets us, we can discern where we have set our hearts. What life story are we really living for? What are our expectations for work, family and friends, health, God or church?

At the end of His parable, Jesus offers this challenge: 'This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.' (21). At the beginning of a New Year, are we ready to align our story more to God's story for us? Reflect on Jesus' parable, asking how God can be at the heart of our life story.

What words would we like to see written on our gravestone when we die, describing the way that we've lived our life? With God's help, those words can reflect our life today!

Plants in your front garden

What's in your front garden? If it is sparse, why not consider adding some plants this year?

Apparently, the presence of greenery can lower your stress levels as much as two months of mindfulness sessions. Plants can also help you to feel happier.

A recent trial study by the Royal Horticultural Society found that people who introduced ornamental plants such as juniper, azalea, clematis, lavender, daffodil bulbs and petunias had a significant lowering of the stress hormone, cortisol, and many reported that they felt 'happier'.

The Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the CofE, considers the New Year ahead.

I keep hearing people say that 2020 was a 'year like no other.' Friends have been writing a special journal recording the year, so they can pass it on to their grandchildren. Others just want to leave 2020 behind and look to a happier new year.

Both reactions are completely understandable. But I've been looking ahead to 2021 and thinking about the five top things I'd like to see in the year ahead. I wonder if you'll agree with them or not? Maybe you could put together your own list.

Let's make sure the vaccines are distributed fairly and speedily. Those who need the vaccine most urgently should receive it first, with a fair system for ensuring everyone else can be vaccinated quickly and efficiently. We need to ensure that everyone receives the vaccine wherever they live in the world – from the poorest to the richest. Especially, in those parts of the world where there is war, and people are living as refugees.

Let's learn the lessons of the pandemic – not just going back to how life was, as quickly as possible. Many of us learnt to appreciate our family so very much more – especially when we could not be with them for months on end. We learnt lessons about how important our neighbours and local businesses are, how precious our NHS, medical researchers, care providers and other frontline workers are. Let's not forget them.

Let's value nature. Those of us with gardens, or with parks or fields nearby, have been massively blessed. I've learnt to pay attention to birdsong, to the changing colours of the trees, and how unexpected plants have taken root in our garden. Pets have played a major part in helping us endure the lockdowns, especially for people who live alone. May we all learn to value the natural world on our doorsteps in the year ahead and beyond.

Let's bless technology. Without the use of the internet, meeting people 'online' or keeping in touch via email, Facetime or other technologies, 2020 would have been a whole lot tougher. Churches across the country moved their Sunday services online, and soon adapted to a different way of worshipping – not the same, but still helping us to worship together and see familiar faces. Let's continue to give thanks for the science that made that contact possible in 2020.

Let's value our church family. Imperfect we may be, like any family. But the months without being physically able to worship with them, share communion with them, sing alongside them have been hard. I value so much how many churches have risen to the pandemic challenge and sought to serve their communities in all kinds of ways. May we take all this experience into 2021 and build upon it. Whatever 2021 holds for you and all those that you love, I pray that you may know the love of God in your life, and be able to pass it on to others.

The first man to to get stopped for speeding

Tim Lenton

It was 125 years ago, on 28th January 1896, that Walter Arnold of Kent became the first person in the world to be convicted of speeding. The speed limit was 2mph at the time, and a man carrying a red flag had to walk in front of the vehicle. But one day Mr Arnold took off at 8mph, without a flag bearer. He was chased by a policeman on a bicycle for five miles, arrested, and fined one shilling.

Mr Arnold was four times over the rather modest 2mph limit in the streets of Paddock Wood, near Tunbridge Wells in Kent. To achieve this feat today, a driver in most towns or cities would have to be travelling at over 100mph, which is probably a bit excessive.

The speed limit was changed later that same year to 14mph, but there is no record of Mr Arnold getting his money back. Nor is there any evidence that he was endangering life and limb, which used to be the criterion: the 1832 Stage Carriage Act introduced the offence of endangering someone's safety by "furious driving".

Just over 100 years later, the road safety charity Brake reports that male motorists are more than three times as likely as women to having driven at more than 100mph, because 'boy racers' believe they have more talent than the average driver. Police have caught one driver doing 120mph in a 20mph zone, another doing 152mph in a 30mph zone, and one doing an astonishing 180mph on a motorway. As Edmund King, AA president, points out: "Generally men have riskier attitudes towards driving than their female counterparts."

2021

At the passing of time I'm aghast
Another New Year coming fast!
Can it be that much worse
Or more of a curse
Than this horrible year that has passed?

By Nigel Beeton

We must become a 'simpler, humbler, bolder Church' – Archbishops

The momentous events of 2020 will have a “profound effect” on the future of the Church of England and our wider society, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have said.

In a recent joint address to the General Synod, Archbishops Justin Welby and Stephen Cottrell said the Church of England must adapt and put its trust in God to become a “simpler, humbler, bolder Church.”

The archbishops' comments came as they addressed the first online sitting of the General Synod following a legal change to enable it to meet remotely amid the coronavirus restrictions.

They outlined how the coronavirus pandemic and its economic fallout are providing the backdrop to huge social changes – here and around the world.

They also singled out how the Black Lives Matter movement and the publication of the IICSA report on abuse had exposed the Church's own failings and the need to change.

Archbishop Justin told Synod: “2020 will be a year that registers in memory and in history. It can be compared with 1929, with 1914, with 1989.

“We are aware that this is a year in which huge changes are happening in our society and consequently in the Church.

“For let us be clear, there is no possibility of changes in society failing to have a profound effect on the shape, calling and experience of mission in the Church.”

Outlining the dramatic events of 2020, he added: “These crises are not signs of the absence of God but calls to recognise the presence of the kingdom and to act in faith and courage, simplifying our life focusing on Jesus Christ, looking outwards to the needy and renewing in our cells our call to wash feet, to serve our society and to be the Church *for* England.”

Archbishop Stephen went on to outline the work of groups set up to discern how the Church of England might respond and change in light of the recent challenges.

He told Synod: “If we put our trust in God, and if we learn to love one another, then I believe we can become a simpler, humbler, bolder Church, better able to live and share the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Time to prepare for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: 18th – 25th January

This year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme, "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit", is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community's vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.

For 2021, the sisters are inviting churches across the world to enter into their tradition of prayer and silence that is rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church catholic.

Today the community has 50 sisters, spanning different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion.

Each year Christian Aid provides the 'Week of Prayer for Christian Unity' with 'Go and Do' action points for each of the daily reflections – linking into the important work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and advocacy of justice.

More at: <https://ctbi.org.uk/go-and-do-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/>

World Leprosy Day – 30th January

It is not just Covid-19 that makes other people want to avoid us. Up to three million people worldwide are living with leprosy, a disease that can separate sufferers from their loved ones for years.

Someone is newly diagnosed with leprosy every two minutes, and millions of people suffer crippling deformities.

Leprosy Mission was founded to help defeat this terrible disease, and to transform the lives of its victims. Nowadays this established Christian charity is a global network active in 34 countries across the world. 15 countries have a high burden of leprosy; Leprosy Mission works in 11 of them.

Leprosy Mission works closely with governments, local communities, partner health organisations, the World Health Organisation, local NGOs, local churches, and Christian partners.

And – you can help! This month you can pray, make a donation, or even consider working with Leprosy Mission. Visit <https://www.leprosymission.org/get-involved>. Thanks to all of you that have a Leprosy Mission collection box at home and to Sheila Andrews (and retiring co-ordinator Frank Hamnett) for making all necessary arrangements for boxes to be collected in and monies paid to the Charity.

UK's leading Christian philanthropy charity backs government report

Stewardship, the UK's leading Christian philanthropy charity, has recently backed a report by leading back-bench MP Danny Kruger, calling for a '*levelling up of our communities*' and a '*New Deal for Faith Communities*' in the UK. Commissioned by No 10 Downing Street to bring forward proposals in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic, Danny Kruger consulted Church leaders and leading Christian charities such as Stewardship, the Evangelical Alliance, yourneighbourhood.org and others. He has now urged Government and Public Servants to take new opportunities to work with faith communities at the very heart of their local communities.

In his report '*Levelling Up Our Communities: proposals for a new social covenant*', Mr Kruger reminds Ministers that before the NHS and Welfare State was invented, it was often faith communities, especially the churches, which were at the heart of local health, education and social care, and that they remain key players – but are often widely underused, and valued by the Government. Now, the MP says that church and faith leaders have made a 'grand offer' to work together to raise £500 million over the coming five years, on top of the Church of England's £900 million already pledged, taking the church investment in the recovery of our nation to £1.4 billion over five years. Given this 'grand' and generous offer, in his report, Mr Kruger calls on the Government to implement a number of radical proposals in the light of the need to re-build society again after the effects of Covid-19.

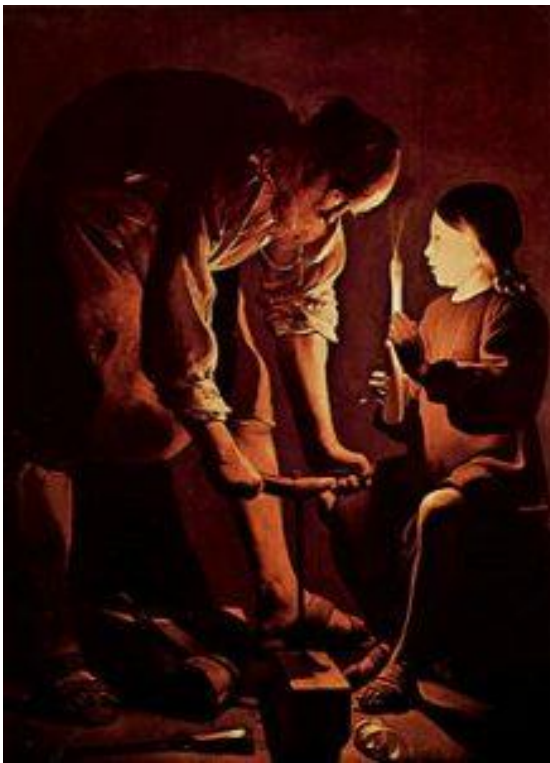
His key proposals include:

- Churches **mobilise the congregation's resources** to help resolve one or more besetting local social problems. This may include debt, childcare, personal rehabilitation, rough sleeping etc. and in return, are able to access Government grants and support.
- A call for greater **Private Philanthropy** (the MP claims that of those earning over £250,000 a year, 2/3rds do not give to charity).
- The Government should consider the option of a new, national **Civic Crowd-funding programme** to tackle local and regional social problems.
- The Government commit to a new **Community Recovery Fund**, building on the £750 million given to local authorities to handle Covid-19.
- Renewing the **National Lottery Community Fund**.
- A **Volunteer Passport Scheme**, matching demand and supply for volunteers in local communities a key
- A '**Community Power Act**' to give local people power over the design and delivery of public services, and 'Pop-up parishes' with time-limited powers and freedoms to innovate
- An annual **Neighbourhood Day**, in the form of a Bank Holiday, celebrating the contribution of charities and voluntary work in the community/nation

Overall, *Levelling up our communities: proposals for a new social covenant* sets out a vision for a more local, more human, less bureaucratic, less centralised society in which people are supported and empowered to play an active role in their neighbourhoods. Stewart McCulloch, CEO of Stewardship, who has been working with Mr Kruger on the report said: "*The role of communities, civil society and the Church is essential in creating a better society ahead as this storm passes. There is a Tsunami of need for practical help and Gospel hope that is only just coming into view.*"

"*The Church must step forward to aid the poor, the vulnerable and the anxious at this historic time. Danny's report sets out a national manifesto for community led recovery; our job is now to equip the church to rise to this historic set of challenges and opportunities and we are ready and committed to doing so.*" More at: <https://www.dannykruger.org.uk/communities-report>

The hidden years of Jesus



The Revd Michael Burgess looks at 'St Joseph the Carpenter' by Georges de la Tour. It now hangs in The Louvre in Paris. The graphic is a faithful photographic reproduction of a two-dimensional, public domain work of art.

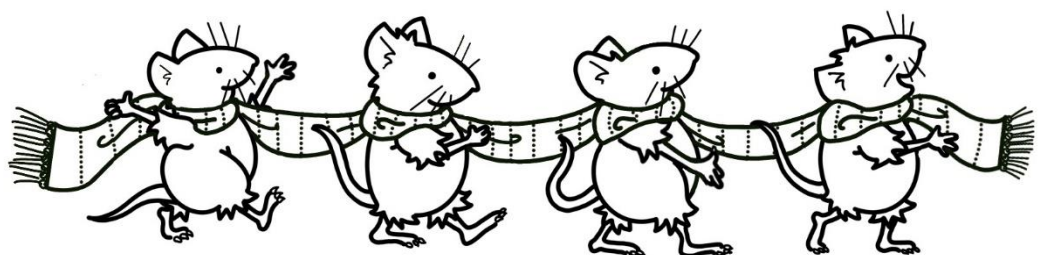
When St Paul wrote about the birth and humanity of Jesus to the Philippians, he described it as an emptying and a humbling. Jesus humbled Himself, he wrote, 'and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.' In obedience and love Jesus followed the will of His Father through His ministry from baptism to the cross and Easter beyond.

But what about that period called 'the hidden years', after the Holy Family's return from Egypt? The Gospels tell us of only one event in that period leading up to adulthood: the pilgrimage to Jerusalem when Jesus was 12. For the rest of those 30 years, He lived with Mary and Joseph 'growing in wisdom and in divine and human favour.' Just as He followed His heavenly Father's will in His ministry, so in these growing years He followed the guidance and teaching of Mary and Joseph.

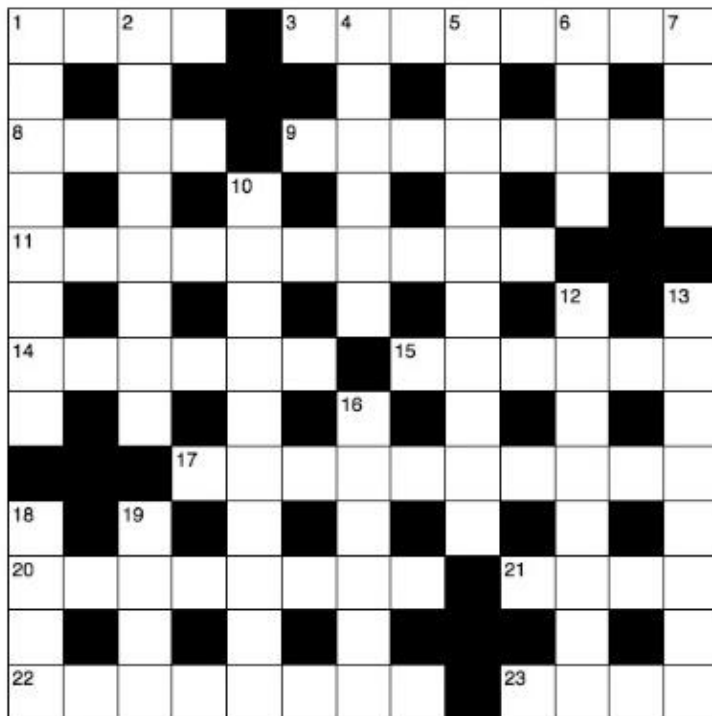
This month's painting highlights one moment in those years of growth: 'St Joseph the Carpenter' by Georges de la Tour. 'Highlights' is the right word, because this painting captures the strong contrast of light and darkness. Georges de la Tour lived from 1593 to 1652 in Lorraine. He was part of a Franciscan-led revival in that area, and this work from the 1640s captures St Joseph and the Christ-Child with Franciscan tenderness and insight.

We can see the tools of Joseph's trade on the ground. He leans over them, hard at work on a piece of wood. Jesus is sitting by his side, his face lit by the candle, which lights up the carpenter's shop. As well as contrasting light and dark, there is the contrast of young and old, and the thought that the child learning from the old man is also the one who can teach us. De la Tour was particularly fascinated by light and shadows cast by a candle or a lantern. Here the artist shows the candlelight illuminating the face of the child Jesus who will grow up to the Light of the world.

As this New Year begins, we can think back to the light from the Bethlehem manger we celebrated at Christmas. We can look ahead to the light shining from the adult Jesus through His teaching and healing. Here in these hidden years, we can celebrate the light of wisdom and divine favour, as Luke calls them, shining on the face of the child Jesus. We pray for that light to guide us through this New Year. When the way ahead may look dark and uncertain, let us pray that God's light will make clear the path ahead.



Crossword – January 2021



Across

- 1 'Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a — began to crow' (John 18:27) (4)
- 3 Fetters (Job 33:11) (8)
- 8 Perform on a musical instrument (1 Samuel 16:23) (4)
- 9 Paul describes it as 'the third heaven' (2 Corinthians 12:2–4) (8)
- 11 Loyally (Deuteronomy 11:13) (10)
- 14 Hens? Me? (anag.) (6)
- 15 Not visible (Matthew 6:6) (6)
- 17 Predicted site of the final great battle (Revelation 16:16) (10)
- 20 Jacob's youngest son (Genesis 35:18) (8)

- 21 One of Zophar's eleven sons (1 Chronicles 7:36) (4)
- 22 For example, London, Paris, Rome (8)
- 23 United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1,1,1,1)

Down

- 1 Favourite church activity: Fellowship round a — — — (3,2,3)
- 2 Divinely bestowed powers or talents (8)
- 4 Pile together (1 Thessalonians 2:16) (4,2)
- 5 Commanded to justify (John 8:13) (10)
- 6 Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5) (4)
- 7 Killed (Psalm 78:34) (4)
- 10 One of Graham Kendrick's best-known songs, — — King (3,7)
- 12 Indecency (Mark 7:22) (8)
- 13 Unceasing (Jeremiah 15:18) (8)
- 16 He prophesied 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Matthew 24:15) (6)
- 18 British Board of Film Classification (1,1,1,1)
- 19 Pans (anag.) (4)

Wordsearch - Jan21

The Christmas story carries on into the New Year, with Epiphany and the arrival of the Wise Men, led by the Star in the East. Through the eyes of faith, they saw Messiah in that small baby, and worshipped him, giving gifts that foresaw his life and work. New Year is also a time of new beginnings for us – resolutions about diets and paying the bills and doing better at work... Happy New Year!

Epiphany

Wise

Men

Camels

Baby

Jesus

Star

Herod

Worship

Gold

Frankincense

Myrrh

New

Resolutions

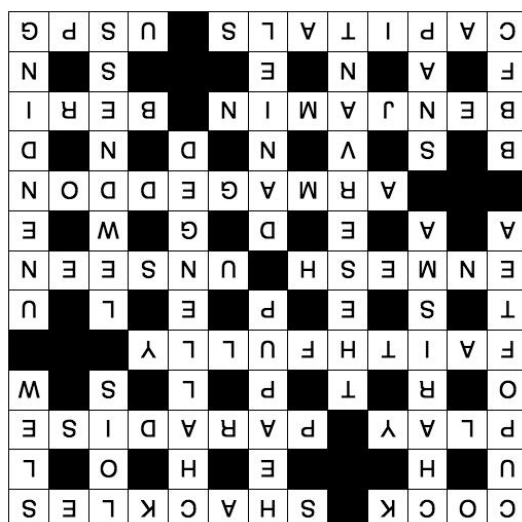
Bills

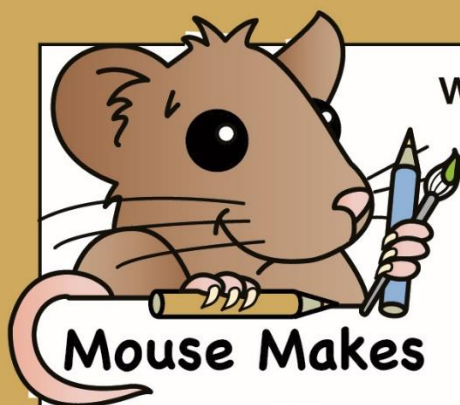
Work

Study

Running

Gym





What happened after Jesus had been born in Bethlehem?

READ Matthew 2:1-12

Who came from the East?

Why had they come?

What were they following?

Who was alarmed by their arrival?

Who had the prophet written about?

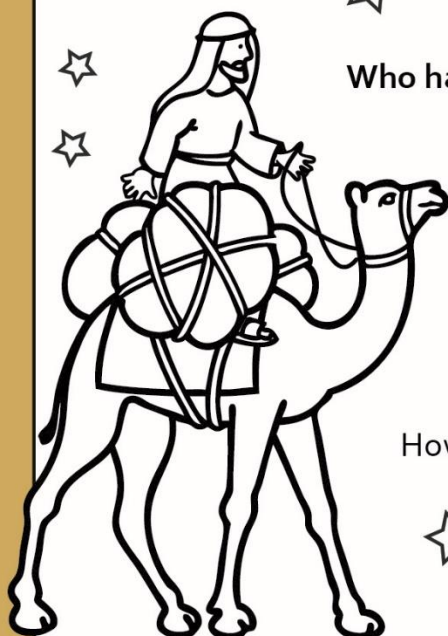
Where were they then sent?

What were they to look for?
..... and why?

Where did the star lead them?

Who did they see? What did they do?

How were they warned to go home another way?



READ Matthew 2:13-23

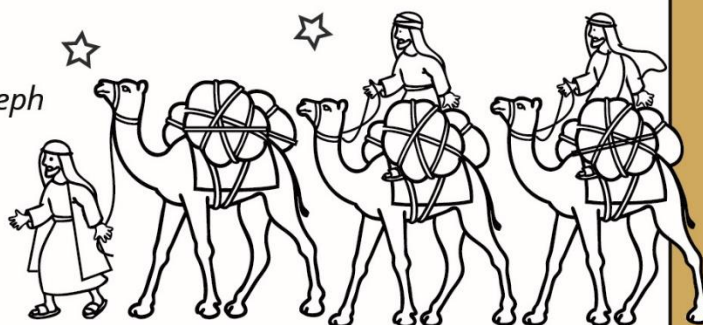
Who appeared to Joseph?

What was he told? Why? What did he do?

Who then became angry? and why? What horrible thing did he then do?

When Herod died where was Joseph told to take his family?

Where did Jesus finally grow up?



Bible Bite

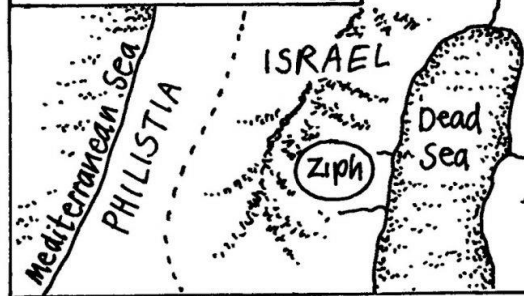
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
1 Samuel chapter 26 - 27:1

When King Saul wasn't fighting the Philistines to stop them invading Israel he was still trying to hunt down David.

People came to tell King Saul where David and his men were hiding. Saul took 3000 of his best soldiers and went to look for David...

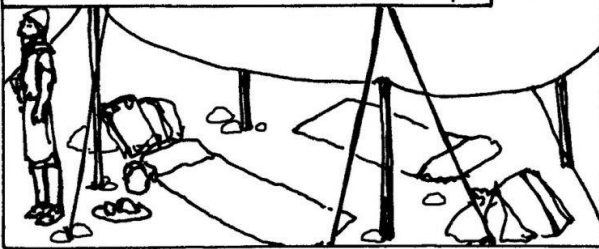
They camped near where David was hiding



When David heard that Saul was near, he crept up to the camp.



He saw that Saul and his army commander Abner were sleeping in the middle of the camp.

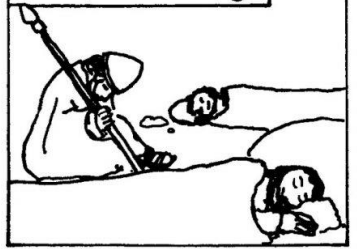


Who will come with me into the camp?

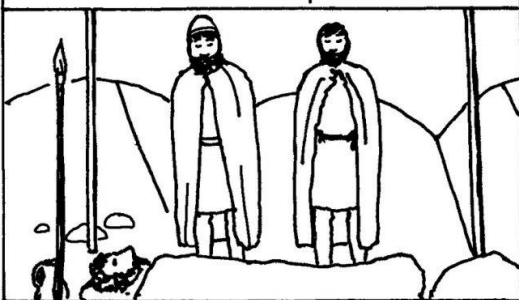


Abishai said he would.

That night God made all the camp sleep soundly.



David and Abishai reached the centre and found Saul

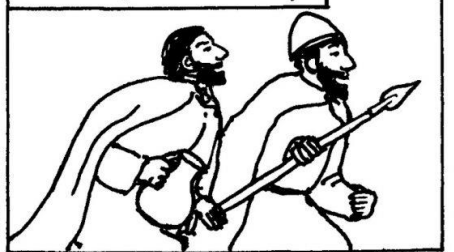


This chance is from God! I'll kill him!



No! God chose him as king!

They took Saul's spear and water jar and crept out of the camp.



When they had got far enough away, David shouted



Abner, why didn't you protect your king? I've taken his spear and water jar!

King Saul heard David and shouted back



David, I'm so sorry! I won't try to harm you again!

But David knew that Saul would try again to kill him, so he left Israel and went to Philistia.

RoggieDog

Happy New Year everyone

I'm here, nearer to the back of the magazine than I would have liked – but better than not being given a page at all.

I decided that it was time to take a break from work and to relax, but how to make Mummy do the same was a little problem I needed to resolve – then a LIGHT-BULB moment, all I had to do was insist that was what we were going to do – and decide how best to undertake the task in paw!



I had to wait until Mummy had left her chair near enough to the computer table for me to jump up - when she wasn't around to see me.

Then all I had to do was to wait to be discovered. AND if I am sat on the keyboard Mummy can't use it – well not without moving me first that is. Surely she wouldn't do that.

Mummy found me of course. I kept very still and quiet and pretended to be asleep.

My plan worked a treat, Mummy sat with me and held my head in her hand – it was nice and I didn't want to move for ages! I quite like it on the desk (it's like being at church but this one is slippery being made of glass – I have to take care not to fall).

I jump up on the desk quite a bit now I know I can, but Mummy was less impressed when I jumped up one day and landed on the laptop when it was switched on and everything went "off". Ah well – never mind!



Now I know how to stop work completely - but best not to delete any files.

This is Mummy - I suppose one should from time to time allow Mummy to have a photograph taken too.



There is nothing like a selfie or two – and I love to post some on my facebook page.



Did you know that I have my very own social media outlet? Well Mummy is hopeless at keeping up with hers so I needed one of my own.



I was wondering if I should make some new year resolutions – like not to throw my food on the floor, pinch the bath towel out of the bathroom, or to behave when my hair is being combed – but that would be no fun at all.

I am looking forward to 2021 – I don't really understand Covid issues or what transition arrangements are (do we need a new passport to get into Wales?) - I would just like to go out more and look forward to lots of cuddles, biscuits and treats with my human and doggie friends.

I want to take Mummy out on adventures – go out in the car, play in the park and on the beach. I want to chase the birds – and that grey cat next door.



Still I'm happy snuggled up on my blanket - looking after Mummy and watching the world go past the front window – there are lots of things happening outside and I love to wait for the post to arrive. As for THAT CAT he has been sat on my patio table – I just know he wants to sneak in. I JUST KNOW that he lurks round the corner and talks to Mummy – well he'd better keep well away from MY food bowl, MY bed and MY blanket. He had better not get too friendly with MY Mummy either.

Licks and kisses Roggie

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Churchgate, Stockport, SK1 1YG

Telephone: 0161 480 1815
Website: stmarysinthemarketplace.com
Email: st.marysstockport@gmail.com
Facebook: Stockport Parish Church - St Marys

St Thomas' Church, Stockport, Holt Street, Stockport, SK1 3PY.

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Website: st.thomasstockport.org.uk
Email: info@stthomasstockport.org.uk
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