

St Thomas' and St Luke's Ashton - in - Makerfield Magazine



January 2021

50p

www.stthomasstluke.org.uk

Church Services in St Thomas' and St Luke's

Sundays

St Thomas'

1st Sunday

9am Communion
10.45 All Age
Worship

2nd Sunday

9am Morning

**SUSPENDED AT
PRESENT**

in the hub
ones in the hub

at 11am

Communion

Family Worship

Family Worship

Weekdays

Thursday 9.45am
Holy Communion (BCP)
in St Thomas'

Please see weekly notice sheet or visit
website for additional services details or
exceptions.

Deadlines: Handwritten material should be given to Malcolm
Taylor and email material to magazine@stthomasstluke.org.uk

Deadline	February	March
Hand Written	15th January	12th February
Emailed	22nd January	19th February
Magazine Release	31st January	28th February

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Booking Baptisms and Weddings

If you would like to book a wedding or a baptism, please email office@stthomasstluke.org.uk or ring 01942 727275.

Important Information

Baptisms

Baptisms normally held at St Thomas' Church at 12.45pm on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

Baptisms at St Luke's are at 11am on the 3rd Sunday.

To qualify for baptism parents should live within the parish boundaries or be a regular worshipper at St Thomas's or St Luke's. Parents and godparents should have been baptised and be prepared to attend a baptism preparation session.

Funerals

Every parishioner has the right to a service in church (if church is open), followed by a committal.

Marriage

You can marry in a CofE Church of your choice if certain criteria are shown to be met. For details please contact the church office on: 01942 727275 or office@stthomasstluke.org.uk

Letter from Sue



2020 will certainly be remembered as a year that was different from any we have previously experienced. Facing hardship, worry and loss we have realised our fragility and powerlessness in the face of an invisible virus.

However, it has also been a year of many positives. Communities have pulled together to look after each other, keeping in contact with people who may be vulnerable and looking out for each other. One way we've seen this in our parish is the incredible number of donations that have been made to ACT Foodbank.

We saw the air pollution levels drop dramatically in March and April. With this tangible evidence of the impact the emissions from our cars have on the environment, many are trying to reduce the number of journeys they make to protect our planet so that all life can thrive.

We have taken time to reassess what matters most to us and are making choices about each area of our lives more deliberately in line with what and who we value most.

Is Jesus someone we value?

The Magi travelled for about two and a half years to seek out Jesus. How much effort do we put into finding him today? As you start this new year you might like to make a commitment to explore or deepen your relationship with him? If you haven't been on an Alpha Course

before and you have access to Zoom, why not join us at 7.30pm on January 20th?

If you don't already set aside time to spend with God each day, maybe you could decide to do so? It doesn't have to be complicated. Simply reading a verse or two from the bible, mulling it over and then talking to God about anything that jumps out at you. The bit that I used to find hard was leaving some silence so that the God could put thoughts in my head and speak to me, but I have learnt how important this is. There are many applications you can download, such as Lectio365 that can also help.

This pandemic is far from over and even when it is, there will always be things that worry us. I don't know about you, but when I am anxious, I find I wake early in the morning and find it hard to get back to sleep. As the issue that is worrying me is whizzing round my head, I try to be purposeful and use this wakefulness to thank God for his goodness and to pray. Generally, but not always, this helps and I get back to sleep.

Paul's words in Philippians 4:6-7 are

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

My prayer for 2021 is that each one of us deepens our relationship with Jesus and that we receive that peace that truly is beyond our understanding.

Sue Thomas



Mothers' Union

It is usual that there are no Branch Meetings in January not that we have much opportunity in present circumstances. We can't even look forward to our belated Christmas meal for members and friends at Bryn Masonic Hall. Perhaps this is an event that we could hold later in the year to cheer us all up.

Advance Notice

Wednesday 17th February in St Thomas' Church Hall Subject to Covid permitting our Annual General Meeting will be held on this date starting at 7.30pm. The meeting is open to everyone and there is no better opportunity for anyone interested in the possibility of joining the Mothers' Union of finding out more about the organisation and in particular the work of our branch.

Despite where we are in this pandemic filled world of ours I must say that once again there has been a great response to the request for presents for the young people at Coops Foyer. I must say a big thank you to everyone who helped with this initiative. They were very welcome and as always very much appreciated.

I understand from our Treasurer Pauline that quite a number of subscriptions remain outstanding. Whilst thanking those who have already paid can I ask those who haven't yet paid to let either Pauline or myself have them at your earlier convenience.

Mothers' Union

As you may be aware the MU took part in this years 'Big Give' . This scheme provides that all donations received in the set period are doubled. I am delighted to report that the donations by our members helped the MU raise £64.000 well done.

We also received the usual Christmas card with best wishes for Christmas and happy New Year from the members of St Mary's MU Branch Wigton.

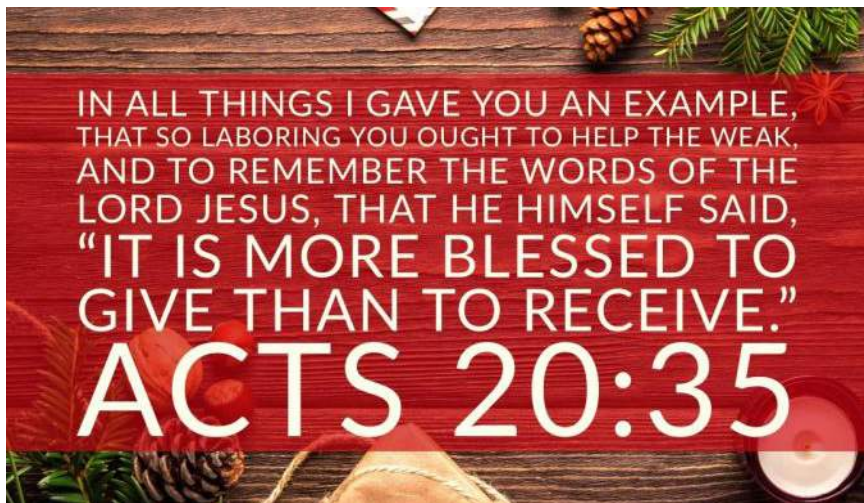
Eternal God, when life seems a puzzle and faith itself can make no sense of it, lead us forward out of darkness into light, out of confusion into certainty, out of the storm into tranquillity. Put our minds at rest and our spirits at peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wishing you a healthy and happy New Year

**Love and God bless
Barbara**



News from our churches



Toys and gifts

A big thank you to you Pat Hamilton for yet again organising the distribution of the gifts following our annual Toy Service. Thanks to the generosity of St Thomas' congregation we have been able to supply 3 toys/presents each to 13 asylum seeker's or refugee children and to 7 children in the homeless unit / women's aid. We were also able to supply toys to 50 children via Andrew Bullen's food bank. These families are referred by Social Workers, Health Visitors or Right Start centres. We were also able to supply Family Welfare at St Catherine's Church in Wigan with a substantial amount of gifts. Family Welfare work with some of the most needy children in Wigan Borough. On behalf of the recipients Pat asks that we thank everyone for their generosity. In her words, 'Talk about loaves and fishes' every year we manage to provide for the children no matter what the need is. It never fails to amaze me.'

Freewill Offering Envelopes

A new set of envelopes has been delivered to those who make their donations to Church in this manner. We have a reduced number in use with people kindly changing to Parish Giving which of course we do encourage due to the benefits derived from this

source of regular income. The new sets are dated to the end of June but may have a different number to that which you may be used to.

If you would like more information regarding 'Parish Giving Scheme' please do not hesitate in giving me a call and I shall be glad to explain the details. I must say that despite the closure of church during the lockdowns and the current limited access, many of you have been continue to support St Thomas by making sure we receive your envelopes. We are extremely grateful for this as it is helping is difficult financial times. If you have a collection of envelopes ready to be processed please do let us have them either through the vicarage door or dropped off at my house 32 Townfields. If you have difficulty with either give me a ring and I will collect then from you. Tel 205136

Christmas Decorations in Church

As I looked back fondly at last January's magazine this heading of an article caught my eye. I did hope that it would catch your attention. There are of course no decorations in church, indeed there is currently not much in church at all. Fortunately we did manage to sell all the pews, most of them, particularly the side pews, going to members of the congregation. The organisation of the sale and delivery of the pews has been quite a logistical exercise and I am obliged to Graham Bailey for the use of his van. The donations received will help with the funding of the work and a little bit of the church history has been preserved around Ashton and in one case delivered as far as Leeds. The work is currently at the stage of preparation with the pews, the plumbing and the wooden floors coming out. The infra structure for audio and visual system will begin to be installed when the constructive stage of the work starts.

Nativity

I must take a little space in the news slot to thank Juliette and her team of performers who delivered that delightful Zoom Nativity to brighten us all up as we approached what was a Christmas like none that we have experienced or indeed would want to

Senior Citizens Christmas Bags

Once it became apparent that the usual Senior Citizens Christmas Party, which is enjoyed by so many older members of our parish, would not be able to go ahead in January, it was decided that an extra special effort would be made to bring some festivities to them. And so Jan, Carole, Jess and the team of fantastic distributors set out on preparing, packing and delivering some 120 'treat bags' of Christmas sweets, baked goods, decorations and cards. A big thank you to those at Byrchall who made the Christmas cakes and to Church Wigan for the knitted angels. I do believe that the bags were so joyously received and that those delivering the bags too were overcome with a sense of community and fellowship whilst we physically are still apart.

The Leprosy Mission

Like all of us, and many other charities, the Leprosy Mission has suffered from the effects of the Covid pandemic this year. Although unable to foresee when it will be possible to meet up again as a congregation at St Thomas' or St Luke's, we have been looking ahead to the usual Leprosy Sunday, normally held each January, to see if anything can be arranged.

Then a card arrived this week, with a picture of Darcey Bussell on the front, captioned "Journey with me to Mozambique to help communities fight Leprosy". The reverse describes how Darcey and her family visited The Leprosy Mission in the town of Pemba and met people affected by leprosy. They saw how patients suffered from the stigma of leprosy, rejection, injustice and prejudice and vowed to help. Darcey continues, "I'd like you to join me in 2021 and hold a special service to support the Leprosy Mission and help rid Mozambique of leprosy. I have a wonderful film to share, taking you deep into Mozambique. Will you please join in our extraordinary mission?"

Therefore Margaret and I consulted with Malcolm and Sue, and decided that we will hold a Leprosy Mission Sunday in 2021 to raise funds. Any donations collected between 24th January and 24th April would be doubled by the U.K. government, similar to this year when our donations were doubled.

So, Leprosy Sunday will be on **14th February 2021**. There will be further details nearer to the time, which will depend on the regulations then in place.

Thank you all for your support.
Barbara and Margaret

Malcolm

THE ASHTON CROSS ENTRANCE TO GARSWOOD NEW HALL, ASHTON IN MAKERFIELD

We are indebted to our local historian David Fearnley for another intriguing insight into the past history of our town.

Have you ever walked through Ashton Cross and stopped to admire the architecture of the gate entrance to Ashton golf club? The gates were originally the entrance to Garswood New Hall owned by the Gerard family from 1771 – 1921. “Historic England” lists the gates as a Grade 2 listed building of the 19th century but provides no additional information since the history of the gates is unknown. In fact the gate entrance was designed and built by Edward Kemp (1817 – 1891) landscape gardener of Birkenhead Park, on the Wirral. Edward Kemp is mostly known for his design and building of municipal parks and cemeteries – Victoria Park and St. Helens cemetery in St. Helens; Birkdale Park, Hesketh Park, the Botanic Gardens and Southport cemetery in Southport and Princes Park, Stanley Park and Anfield cemetery in Liverpool. In 1857 some of Edward’s landscape designs were included in the creation of Central Park, New York.

After 1847 Edward also worked mainly for Lancashire industrialists and landed gentry, such as the Gerard’s, to design and landscape their estates. In his little known book “How To Lay Out A Garden”, of 1858, he recalls how from 1854 – 1858 he was employed by Sir

Robert Gerard, Baronet, of New Hall, Ashton in Makerfield, to (i) add terracing, balustrade walls (a wall consisting of a series of vertical stone pillars, with gaps between, supporting a stone rail or coping), summerhouses, statues and flower urns around the pre-existing ornamental lake designed by the landscape gardener Humphry Repton c1796 (the lake still exists on today's golf-course); (ii) to create an artificial lake with an island; (iii) to design and build the gate entrance at Ashton Cross.

At Ashton Cross each of the four corners between the main roads, for a distance of c20 yards, was fenced off from the fields behind and seeded with grass to provide four lawn areas each separated from the main roads by a post and chain link fence. The gate entrance was intentionally set back from Millfield Lane rather than being at the kerbside. The wing walls, the low curving stone walls either side of the gate posts, were topped with a balustrade wall, c4 feet high, consisting of stone plinths/pillars with gaps between. The wing walls and balustrade wall extended on either side of the stone gate posts to join the park walls on Millfield Lane and Liverpool Road. The balustrade wall no longer exists and has been replaced by iron railings. The gates, of which there was one for carriages and two for foot passengers, were of ornamental iron. A single storey lodge house was built just inside the gate entrance.

David A. Fearnley.



Our church and community litter picking group did well again on the 19th December. They had a successful morning and collected significant amounts of rubbish from Ashton Market, Garswood Street, Armoury Bank and St Oswald's School. **Well done!**

ACT Foodbank

Thank you to everyone who has been donating food to the foodbank in these difficult times and to Andrew and his team for all their work putting hampers together and delivering them as well as distributing food on a Friday morning.

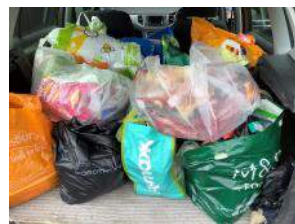
If you would like to donate any non perishable items, the please bring them to the:

- red wheelie bin outside the foodbank cabin ; or
- The food cabin on a Friday morning between 9.30am & 11.00am (food will be distributed from the church hall doorway)

Larger items can be left at the vicarage by arrangement.

If you want to leave food items for our asylum seeker friends, these can also be left at the vicarage but please make sure your bags or boxes are clearly labelled so we know who they are meant for.

Thank you very much for your support





Food for Thought

Each Sunday, between 12.30pm and 1.00pm St Thomas' Church Hall is open for anyone to come and help themselves to food that has been donated by various stores that is on or past its sell by date.

Here we offer some tried and tested recipes to help make use of these foods and any Christmas leftovers.

Leek and Potato Soup

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 - 1 onion, sliced
 - 225g (8oz) potatoes, cubed
 - 2 medium leeks, sliced
 - 1.2 litres (2 pints) vegetable stock
 - 150ml (5 fl oz) double cream or crème fraiche
-
1. Heat the oil in a large pan and add the onions, potatoes and leeks. Cook for 3—4 minutes until starting to soften.
 2. Add the vegetable stock and bring to the boil.
 3. Season well and simmer until the vegetables are tender.
 4. Whizz with a hand blender or in a blender until smooth.
 5. At this stage the soup can be frozen and reheated once thawed.
 6. Reheat in a pan and stir in cream or crème fraiche to serve.

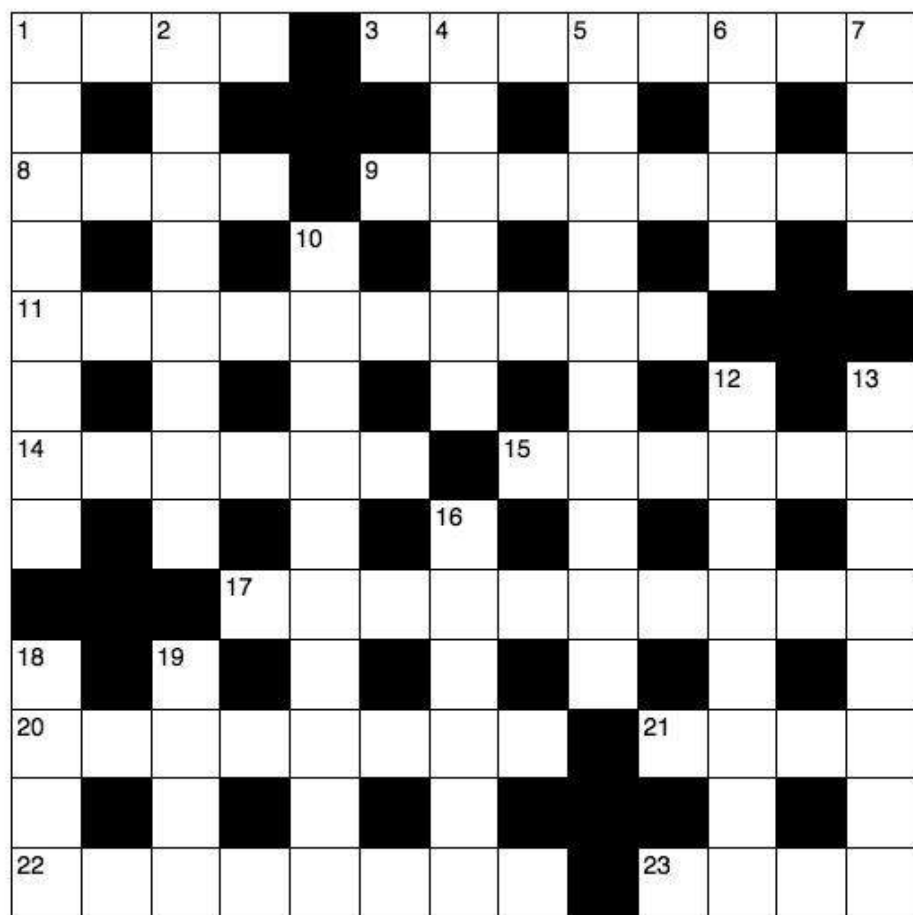
Orange, cranberry and walnut cake

- 250g plain flour
- 150g caster sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 100g (4oz) chopped cranberries (or any other dried fruits you have spare)
- 50g (2oz) chopped walnuts
- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 180ml fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon grated orange zest



1. Preheat oven to 180°C / gas mark 4 and grease a 23 x 12cm (9x5 inch) loaf tin.
2. Combine the flour, sugar, salt, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda. Add the cranberries and walnuts and ensure that they are well coated with flour.
3. Mix together the egg, orange juice, oil and orange zest in a separate bowl until fully combined.
4. Pour the wet ingredients into the flour mixture, and stir until just blended.
5. Spoon the cake mixture into the prepared loaf tin
6. Bake for 50 minutes, or until a skewer inserted near the centre comes out clean.
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the tin for 10 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack.

Crossword



Answers on page 30

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

p	e	o	p	l	e	e	p	a	p	m	b
a	b	n	e	r	t	q	c	w	a	d	e
j	r	s	o	u	n	d	l	y	b	a	p
c	a	m	l	u	e	o	r	c	i	v	s
x	p	l	y	t	g	e	k	t	s	i	a
m	i	r	u	y	t	h	s	h	h	d	u
k	i	o	o	a	d	i	s	r	a	e	l
a	h	d	w	t	l	h	i	d	i	n	g
s	o	l	d	i	e	r	s	l	e	e	p
z	i	p	h	l	f	c	s	p	e	a	r
c	v	p	c	r	e	p	t	h	u	n	t
c	a	m	p	k	i	n	g	f	t	s	n

crept	kill	Philistia	camp
protect	enough	people	middle
shouted	army	hunt	Abner
Saul	David	spear	soundly
Abishai	soldiers	hiding	king
sleep	water	Israel	Ziph

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...

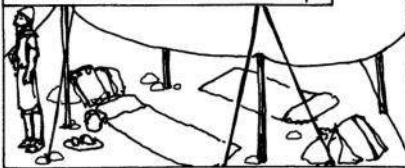
They camped near where David was hiding



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



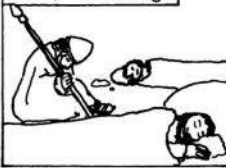
He saw that Saul and his army commander Abner were sleeping in the middle of the camp.



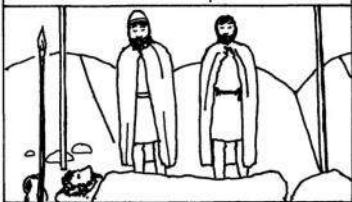
Who will come with me into the camp?



That night God made all the camp sleep soundly.



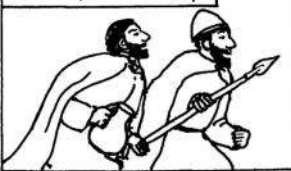
David and Abishai reached the centre and found Saul



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



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



When they had got far enough away, David shouted



King Saul heard David and shouted back



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

Noah – leading in a time of crisis

In Church Wigan's series entitled 'What kind of King?' Philip Anderson explores the story of Noah

The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that he had made humankind on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.

So the Lord said, 'I will blot out from the earth the human beings I have created—people together with animals and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.' But Noah found favour in the sight of the Lord.

Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth.

And God said to Noah, 'I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth. Make yourself an ark of cypress wood...

'For my part, I am going to bring a flood of waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with you.'

Reflection

If you read Genesis chapters six to nine without having ever heard the story of Noah before you might not think it would make one of the most popular stories for children in the whole bible. But as Halloween reminds us, children enjoy horror. And the story of Noah is terrifying.

Like the other stories from the very beginning of the Bible we can see similarities between this story of the one righteous man saved from a terrible flood, and others that come from the ancient Middle East, particularly modern day Iraq. Another name for that region is Mesopotamia, which comes from the Greek, and means the 'land between the rivers'.

A couple of years ago when ISIS was on the rampage through cities like Mosul, we were all reminded of those great rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. We know from Genesis that it was here that the people who would become Israel, and who wrote the Bible began, because the family of Abraham lived in the great city, now excavated by archaeologists, or Ur.

Built out of mud bricks these ancestors of ours were the earliest farmers and city dwellers, the great rivers providing them with water to drink, to their crops, fish, and a means of transport. But the rivers could also bring death when heavy rains led them to flood their banks. And this is probably the background to the story of Noah, when the whole world, as they knew it was deluged.

What do we learn about God, and our faith from this very early story? God cares about humanity, but also about the whole creation, hence the animals in the ark. Our sin has consequences. The reason for the flood is that every human heart is filled with violence, turning away from God. This year we have all been reminded that one person's behaviour can unleash consequences for millions of others. But above all God is good, and God is merciful.

Noah listens to God, builds the enormous boat as instructed, despite the ridicule of others. He gathers the creatures, and his family, and they float, rudderless, utterly dependent on God, until the floods subside. It's a very powerful symbol of how all life depends on God.

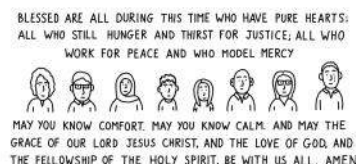
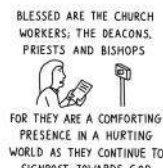
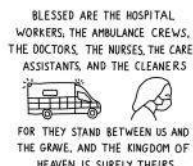
Then, as Noah offers a sacrifice, coming before God in worship, God makes a covenant with Noah, the rainbow is its sign, that never again will a flood destroy the world, it applies to him and his family, but also to the animals. As we read this story with Christian eyes we can see that Noah prefigures Christ, the one righteous man, whose obedience and love brings the possibility of new life to the world.

As we batten down the hatches, as the dark storms loom, the story of Noah reminds us that God is with us, sustaining us with every breath we take, and through the covenant he made with Christ through baptism, his death and resurrection, God has pulled us out of the deep waters, and adopted us as his children, by grace. The story may be an old one, but it has stood the test of time.

Philip Anderson
Hub Leader
(North West Hub)

BEATITUDES

FOR A GLOBAL PANDEMIC





The Story of the Christingle

The word 'Christingle' actually means 'Christ Light', and celebrates the light of Jesus coming into the world. Stories of how the Christingle began look back to the Moravian Church, which is found in the Czech Republic. The Moravians have held Christingle services for more than 200 years, and according to them, this is how the first Christingle might have been made:

Many years ago the children in a village were asked to bring a Christmas gift to put beside the crib in the church. One family was very poor, and had no money for gifts, but the three children were still determined to take something. The only nice thing they had was an orange, so they decided to give the Christ-child that. But then they discovered the top was going green, so the eldest cut it out, and put a candle in the hole. To add some colour, one of the girls took a red ribbon from her hair and tied it around the middle of the orange. It was hard to make the ribbon stay still, so they fastened it in place with toothpicks. The toothpicks looked a bit bare, so the youngest child added some raisins to them. The children took their decorated orange lantern to the church for the Christmas Mass. The other children sneered at their meagre gift, but the priest seized upon it with joy. He held it up as an example of the true understanding of the meaning of Christmas, for the following reasons: the orange is round, like the world; the candle gives us light in the dark, like the love of God; the red ribbon goes round the 'world', as a symbol of Christ's blood, given for everyone; the four sticks point in all directions, and symbolise that God is over all: North, South, East and West; and the fruit and nuts remind us of God's blessings.

The Children's Society first introduced the Christingle Service to The Church of England in 1968, and it has since become a popular event in the church calendar. This candlelit celebration is an ideal way to share the key messages of the Christian faith, while helping to raise vital funds to help vulnerable children across the country. To learn more visit: www.childrenssociety.org.uk

Robert Carson's Film Report

Wonder Woman 1984 (12A)

Directed by Patty Jenkins

Stars: Gal Gadot, Chris Pine, Kristen Wiig, Pedro Pascal, Connie Nielsen, Robin Wright, Lily Aspell, Lucian Perez, Oliver Cotton, Amr Waked, Natasha Rothwell, Ravi Patel, Kristoffer Polaha, and Gabriella Wilde



In a Nutshell: Well, it's finally here, after much delay and that's even before the pandemic delayed most movies (this movie was due out in 2019 originally) the return of Wonder Woman finally arrives in cinemas for Christmas and is honestly a complete blast. Yeah sure, there are things here and there that may not be perfect or add up but you'll always find that in things anyway. First and foremost, this is a movie that is just having a technicolour and neon gold blast revelling in the 80s and throwing a completely bonkers plot that is like a mash up of Aladdin and Iron Man at us at a million miles a minute. Gal Gadot is once more on fine form as Diana Prince, the caring and stoic figure who is at once charming and at once fabulously sincere, she's backed up wonderfully by the always fabulous Chris Pine who in a twist of events returns once more as the endlessly charming Steve. Kristen Wiig really impresses as Dianas' friend and possible foe Barbara, blending her perfect comedy skills which something way feistier and more sinister whilst Pedro Pascal is just the perfect blend of slimy and sympathetic as the odious media mogul Maxwell Lord. Plenty of cool action sequences and cool visuals whizz you through a standard two- and half-hour running time as plenty of action and intrigue happens. Some may complain of a long run time but these are kind of standard at this point and the time flies by fine. It's honestly just a total blast and the sort of neon fun we all need right now, a reassurance that heroes are around and that good can still triumph. Honestly, sometimes all you need is a superhero swinging off lightning.

Rating: 8/10

Coming in February

Review of 2020 and a review of Soul

Also Seen

Happy Christmas (15) (2014) 6/10 Happiest Season (12) 9/10
The Christmas Chronicles: Part Two (PG) 9/10
The Man who Invented Christmas (PG) (2017) 8/10
Noelle (U) 8/10 A Christmas Gift from Bob (12) 9/10
Deck the Halls (PG) (2006) 7/10 Holidate (15) 8/10
Christmas with the Kranks (PG) (2004) 7/10 Klaus (PG) (2019) 10/10

21 Movies for 2021! (All being well)

21. Raya and the Last Dragon (PG) Release Due: March 5th 2021

The next animated epic from the Walt Disney Animation Studio, this sees a young warrior tasked with discovering the last of the dragons. Expect sumptuous animation and thrilling adventure.

20. Top Gun: Maverick (12A TBA) Release Due: July 9th 2021

Tom Cruise will finally return as the eponymous Maverick after much delayed release dates in this adrenaline fuelled follow up that sees Maverick and Iceman reunite, with new blood added with Miles Teller as the son of Goose plus Ed Harris, Jon Hamm and Jennifer Connolly.

19. Jungle Cruise (PG TBA) Release Due: July 30th 2021 Another movie that had to sadly be delayed, this sees The Rock and Emily Blunt go all African Queen as they command a boat deep into the heart of the jungle on a rollicking adventure based on the popular Disney ride.

18. Ghostbusters: Afterlife (12A TBA) Release Due: June 11th 2021

Yet another of the ones that were delayed, this reboot of the Ghostbusters franchise sees a bunch of youngsters discover much spooky goings on which link back to the original gang of 'busters.

17. Venom II: Let There Be Carnage (15 TBA) Release Due: June 25th 2021 Andy Serkis takes up the directing mantle for this sequel to the 2018 antihero superhero action flick, which sees Tom Hardy set to face off against Woody Harrelson's monstrous Carnage.

16. West Side Story (PG TBA) Release Due: December 10th 2021

Steven Spielberg goes all musical as he directs this adaptation of the classic 60s musical and will see a whole cast of newcomers playing the Jets and Sharks.

15. Halloween Kills (18) Release Due: October 15th 2021 Jamie Lee Curtis returns once more as Laurie Strode to face off against Michael Myers in this follow up to the smash hit 2018 reboot of the franchise.

14. Cruella (PG TBA) Release Due: May 28th 2021 In this latest of the Disney reboots and remakes, this prequel movie sees Emma Stone go all sinister and stylish as a young Cruella De Vil, and documents her rise in the fashion industry.

13. The Beatles: Get Back (PG) Release Due: August 27th 2021 Peter Jackson returns with this awesome documentary which covers the making of the album Let it Be, using the same high-tech techniques used on They Shall Not Grow Old.

12. Last Night in Soho (15 TBA) Release Due: April 23rd 2021 Edgar Wright is back with a horror thriller set in a London where the director grew up. With a superb cast and plenty of the great genre stylings that Wright is known for, expect a superbly suspenseful treat.

11. Untitled Matrix Sequel (15) Release Due: December 22nd 2021 Keanu Reeves returns to the cyber world in this fourth instalment of the mind-blowing sci-fi franchise. Not a lot is known, but expect to be blown away and slightly confused in equal measure.

10. The Eternals (12A TBA) Release Due: November 5th 2021 Marvel truly goes interstellar and heads to the stars in this latest gamble from the comic book studio. A cast including Richard Madden and Angelina Jolie head up this super sci-fi adventure about a cosmic royal family.

9. The Suicide Squad (15 TBA) Release Due: August 6th 2021 James Gunn moves over to DC to reboot the story of a rag tag bunch of crime fighters and anti-heroes who suddenly are called on to save the day. A massive cast of awesome names leads this wild and crazy action fest.

8. The Kings Man (15 TBA) Release Due: March 12th 2021 This prequel to the Kingsman franchise finally hits cinemas as Ralph Fiennes leads the charge in the story of the origin of the Kingsman agency. Matthew Vaughn returns to direct, with a plentiful cast of cool British talent.

7. Black Widow (12A TBA) Release Due: May 7th 2021 Marvels' next massive movie will finally be hitting screens soon in this origin story for Scarlett Johansson's' super-secret agent, with assistance from Rachel Weisz and Florence Pugh.

6. A Quiet Place: Part II (15) Release Due: April 23rd 2021 Another movie finally hoping to hit screens after delays, this super tense sequel to the 2018 smash hit horror hit sees Emily Blunt and kids trying to survive in a world where making a noise is the end.

5. Dune (12A TBA) Release Due: October 1st 2021 Maverick director Denis Villeneuve adapts the Frank Herbert novel with a terrific cast and stunning vistas in this epic sci-fi adventure that sees Timothee Chalamet find his destiny.

4. Godzilla vs. Kong (12A TBA) Release Due: May 21st 2021 Two absolute titans finally face off on the big screen in this follow up to Skull Island and King of Monsters, expect plenty of monsters and one big epic rumble whilst Millie Bobby Brown and co look on.

3. No Time to Die (12A TBA) Release Due: April 2nd 2021 James Bond will finally return this year after a long delay, Daniel Craig in his final role as the suave secret agent as he faces off against Rami Malek's' mysterious villain.

2. Mission: Impossible 7 (12A TBA) Release Due: November 19th 2021 Tom Cruise returns as agent Ethan Hunt, as he no doubt does a whole load of mad death-defying stunts as the whole team returns including new recruit Hayley Atwell.

1. Untitled Spider-Man Sequel (12A TBA) Release Due: December 17th 2021 This highly anticipated third movie in the Tom Holland Spider-Man franchise sees not only Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield returning as previous Spider-Man but many other characters from the extended universe.... Expect a lot of cool and crazy twists and turns.

Holocaust Memorial Day calls for ‘light in the darkness’ of today

It was 25 years ago this month, on 27th January 1996, that the first Holocaust Remembrance Day was observed in Germany. It became International Holocaust Day in 2005 when it was adopted by the United Nations. It marks the day (27th January 1945) when the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration/death camp was liberated.

The theme for Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) in 2021 is ‘**Be the light in the darkness**’. The aim is to encourage people to “reflect on the depths humanity can sink to, but also the ways individuals and communities resisted that darkness to ‘be the light’ before, during and after genocide.”

HMD is encouraging people to heed the ‘Be the light in the darkness’ theme as a call to action. “The utterly unprecedented times through which we are living currently are showing the very best of which humanity is capable but also - in some of the abuse and conspiracy theories being spread on social media - the much darker side of our world as well.

“We can all stand in solidarity. We can choose to ‘**be the light in the darkness**’ in a variety of ways and places – at home, in public, and online.”

More at:

www.hmd.org.uk



Where do we go from here?

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)

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

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Crossword answers

ACROSS: 1, Cock. 3, Shackles. 8, Play. 9, Paradise. 11, Faithfully. 14, Enmesh. 15, Unseen. 17, Armageddon. 20, Benjamin. 21, Beri. 22, Capitals. 23, USPG.

DOWN: 1, Cup of tea. 2, Charisma. 4, Heap up. 5, Challenged. 6, Lois. 7, Slew. 10, The Servant. 12, Lewdness. 13, Unending. 16, Daniel. 18, BBFC. 19, Snap.



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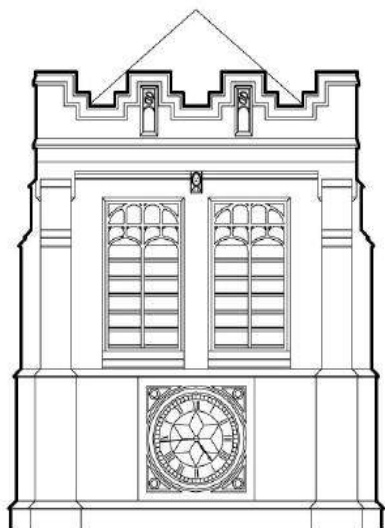
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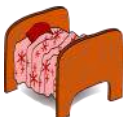
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Many people are asking us how they can give their usual weekly offerings. We do appreciate your concern for the finances of the church as the plate offerings help towards the payment that has to go to the diocese each month. We need to continue these payments as the outgoings of the diocese will remain the same while church is closed. Please consider switching to the Parish Giving Scheme by phoning 0333 002 1271 as we can get the tax back much quicker this way.

If you want to continue giving by envelope, please take them to the vicarage, or to Malcolm and Barbara's (32 Townfields), clearly marking the envelopes if it is for more than one week.

Funds currently in use are: Africa Fund, Asylum Seeker, Audio Visual, Church Hall, Building & Maintenance, Garden of Rest, General, Grave Maintenance, Heath Road Graveyard, Heating and Fit for the Future.

Unless otherwise stated donations will go into the General Fund.

If you wish to discuss any issues around Wills and Legacies please ring the Parish Treasurer Sarah Riley on 01942 722747.

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From Margaret Cook


In Memory of **Mary Swift**
From Carole & Michael Pye

In Memory of much loved family members
From Kath & Barry Cox

In Memory of **Bill Carins**
From Dorothy & Dianne

THANK YOU

Thank you for the many donations following our appeal for help funding the churchyard maintenance.



St Thomas' Donations & Remembrance



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From Christine Kelly


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From Barbara & Malcolm

In memory of a lovely lady, **Freda Melling**
From Barbara Myler

In memory of my husband **Keith** & daughter **Andrea**
Merry Christmas
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In memory of our parents
Ron & Jean Boon



The Registers



Funerals - "May they rest in peace"

1st December	Walter Corless	Heath Road	80
2nd December	Alfred Rampling	Bolton Road	74
8th December	Harold Rigby	Fairholme Avenue	88
11th December	Stanley Cross	School Street	76
14th December	Margaret Ashurst	Derby Road	96
15th December	Allan Woodward	Edward Drive	87
18th December	Leonard Morris	Wellbeck Road	84
29th December	Winifred Hamilton	Flora Street	80

Bless those who mourn, eternal God,
with the comfort of your love
that they may face each new day with hope
and the certainty that nothing can destroy
the good that has been given.
May their memories become joyful,
their days enriched with friendship,
and their lives encircled by your love.

Amen.

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<u>Coffee Mornings at St Thomas'</u> Tues 10am-12pm Barbara Taylor 205136	<u>Flower Guild</u> Meta Laites 723679
<u>Children, Young People and Families</u> Sue Thomas 07877 704645	<u>Asylum Seeker Support</u> Anne & Chris Wooff 724207
<u>Church Architect</u> Bill Schafer 717300	<u>F.W.O. Secretary</u> Vacant
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<u>Duke of Edinburgh's Award (14-18+)</u> Sun evenings Church Hall Ceri Mansell 727417	<u>St Thomas' Mothers' Union</u> 3 rd Wed: 7:30pm Barbara Taylor 205136
<u>Fairtrade Stall</u> 3 rd Sun 11.45am Anne Wooff 724207	<u>Fur Clemt Stubshaw</u> Mon 12-1pm at St Luke's Jennifer Harrison 718618
<u>Litter Pick 3rd Sat 10am - noon</u> Chris Wooff 724207	<u>Bowling Club</u> Henry Hunter 712709
<u>Girl Guides</u> Rainbows (Tues 5:30pm) Danielle Wood 07841 649475 3 rd & 4th Ashton Brownies (Thu) 3 rd Ashton Guides/Rangers (Tues 7:15pm) Rachel Starkie 718350	<u>Children's Sunday Clubs St Thomas'</u> Bubbles (Pre-School) Splash (R-Y2) Xstream (Y3-Y6) Bell Tower (Y7-Y11) Karen Cunliffe

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