

FOCUS

DEC 2021/JAN 2022

FREE: Please take me home.

The monthly magazine of the Emmanuel
Benefice of Newsome and Armitage
Bridge and South Crosland, Huddersfield

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Leeds



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Church services.

Our church services for December will be:-

Sunday	5 December 10.00 am at South Crosland
	5 December 11.15am at Berry Brow Methodist Church
Sunday	12 December 10.00 am at Armitage Bridge
	12 December 11.15am at Berry Brow Methodist Church
Saturday	18 December 3.00 pm Family Carols at South Crosland
Sunday	19 December 11.15am at Berry Brow Methodist Church
Wednesday	22 December 7.00pm Family Carols at Armitage Bridge
Friday	24 December 7.00pm First Holy Communion of Christmas at Berry Brow
	24 December 11.00pm (Midnight) Holy Communion at South Crosland
Saturday	25 December 10.00am at Armitage Bridge
Sunday	26 December No services

Masks will be required for moving around the church but can be removed when sitting!

Then in January our service pattern changes. We have a service at 9.15am at either South Crosland or Armitage Bridge and an 11.15 service at Berry Brow. Whenever there is a special service this may change. So the services are:

2 January 9.15am	Holy Communion at South Crosland
2 January 11.15am	Morning Worship at Berry Brow
9 January 9.15am	Morning Worship at Armitage Bridge
9 January 11.15am	Holy Communion at Berry Brow
16 January 11.15am	Covenant Service at Berry Brow
23 January 9.15am	Holy Communion at South Crosland
23 January 11.15am	Morning Worship at Berry Brow
30 January 9.15am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge
30 January 11.15am	Morning Worship at Berry Brow.

Family Carol Service and the nativity story

South Crosland on Saturday 18th December at 3pm
Armitage Bridge on Wednesday 22nd December at 7pm

**These will be ticketed services so that we can all stay safe.
Tickets available at www.ticketsource.co.uk/church-of-england-parish
and are completely free of charge.**

**Bookings will open on Monday 6th December
so book early to ensure you get a seat!!!**

**As another safety measure we ask that all adults wear a mask
throughout the service so that everyone will feel safe!**

**Children can come dressed as a nativity character so that they can join
in as we tell the nativity story.**

**We will sing traditional carols and some contemporary children's carols
so that everyone will feel that Christmas is just around the corner!!**

**Come and join us at one of our services and give thanks for the birth of
Jesus Christ our saviour!**





Online Nativity!

We are working with the schools in our area again this year to produce an online nativity!

This will be available on our YouTube channel

www.youtube.com/channel/UCpvftnQzPub3KQ3gzJCUgEA

from Sunday 12th December.

Last year was a huge success and so we thought we would do it again.

This year there will be guest appearances by some very special people so don't forget to tune in!!

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

(I am writing this letter on the 1st birthday of my grandson Joe.)



The image on the left above is of a Giant Sequoia tree named after the author Mark Twain. It is 18 feet in diameter and the photo was taken in 1891. Imagine sawing through that using the saw shown in the picture??

The image on the right is of another Giant Sequoia tree named after the Civil War General Sherman and is the largest single stem tree in the world. It's estimated to be over 2500 years old.

I've had the privilege of visiting Sequoia National Park in California and standing next to this giant redwood.

If you want to get a physical impression of the grandeur of God, there can be no better way.

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I've also been fortunate enough to visit the Grand Canyon and the Rocky Mountains, Niagara Falls and other such examples of nature at its most spectacular.

Of course, if you really want to immerse yourself in the grandeur of God you simply need to look up into the sky.

Our solar system is part of the spiral galaxy we call the Milky Way which actually contains between 100 and 400 billion stars and a similar number of planets.

In what we call the 'observable universe' there are between 2 billion and 2 trillion galaxies.

The nearest galaxy to our earth is the Andromeda Galaxy which is 2.5 million light years away.

Now that's what I call the GRANDEUR OF GOD.

Does that put our 'earthly problems' into context?
Into perspective?

Over the past three years we've been preoccupied with Brexit, Covid and Global Warming.

Brexit has almost been put to bed.

Covid is still around and still serious but the inventiveness and ingenuity and collaboration of God's greatest creation, humankind, are putting up quite a fight.

Clever people predict we shall eventually live with it in the same way that we co-exist with flu.

The recent COP26 conference in Glasgow has been at once disappointing and hopeful.

Disappointing in that we haven't got the firm commitments we need for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to the level needed to contain global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

But hopeful in the massive pressure and lobby we've seen from around the world from those most likely to be affected by a temperature rise.

From young people, indigenous people, and the increasing number of pressure groups raising their voices and so influencing the decision makers.

I believe and trust in God and His desire to preserve and protect His creation.

I also believe that we have a vital role to play in partnership with God.

I've heard it said that "if God can't come, he'll send someone"

I think **we** are the **someone**.

I believe that 2022 needs to be a year where we join hands with God in becoming more sustainable in the way we live individually and collectively.

I intend to make my 2022 New Year's Resolution a practical commitment to add my voice to the growing band of those groups of activists who say '**up with this we will not put**'

Because in all beginnings there is an elementary truth:

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The moment one definitely commits oneself to anything, then God moves too. A whole stream of events which no one would have dreamt of will happen.

“Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all.”

(Emily Dickenson)

David





Please use the following prayers throughout the Christmas Season: Christmas is a time of immeasurable joy for the Church. Yet it's also a time of great danger for many of her members. As we prepare to receive Jesus Christ into our hearts and homes once more, let's remember all those around the world who are prevented from doing so in freedom and safety. Please pray the following prayer, asking the Incarnate Word to protect and bless all those facing injustice for believing in him.

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of one who brings good news.

Lord Jesus Christ, may those who suffer discrimination, harassment and all forms of injustice because they belong to you be reminded of the good news you bring to earth. This Christmas, and always.

He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command.

Jesus, light of the world, shine your transforming light into the darkest corners of this world; may the places where there is no freedom, justice, or peace radiate your glory and power. Now and for evermore.

You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase.

Son of God, the joy which your incarnation brought to the world cannot be contained in words. May the church throughout the world to be filled with an inexpressible joy, today and every day.

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For there is a child born for us, a son given to us.

Emmanuel - God with us. Be near to all those around the world suffering for their faith. May they find immense consolation knowing that they need to never suffer alone, for you are by their side, until the end of time.

Today in the town of Dave is a saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

The miracle of Christmas brought salvation to the world. May All Christians in every corner of the world be reminded of the hope and assurance they have in you, knowing that you are their Saviour, today and for all eternity.

Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace to men who enjoy his favour.

Jeremy

School Governors

At South Crosland CofE (A) Junior School we are still in need of more foundation governors. These are governors who are regular worshippers and would serve on the governing body supporting the school and upholding the school's Christian ethos and values. This is a voluntary position but it is very rewarding. If anyone from any of our churches is interested or would like to find out more about what is involved please contact me through school and I will happily have a chat with you. (01484 667075)

Janice Dorrington

Pop up Shop

The LEP (churches together) charity shop at Newsome crossroads is a small but busy place. Since lockdown, we have had more donations than we can sell and the sorting office was full to bursting! So, we decided to try a pop up shop in the scout hut on Saturday 6th November to sell off surplus stock and make some more money for shop funds. Most items sold for bargain prices, 50p or £1, and so we weren't sure if it would be worth the effort involved.



But what a success it was! Lots of folk worked very hard to prepare for the day, sorting and ironing stock and sourcing rails. The scouts set up tables, moved rails and provided tea, coffee, biscuits and

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cakes. More folk came and staffed the stalls on the day and helped tidy up at the end. And, best of all, lots of folk came and grabbed themselves some bargains, as well as sharing a cuppa and fellowship with others. The pop up shop was a monetary success, £404.50 for the shop and over £100 for the scouts, but it was also a great community event and enjoyed by many people from Newsome and the surrounding areas.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way and supported this event. We hope to hold more pop up shops in the future, perhaps one or two per year, and it would be wonderful if they were also so well supported. Once we have a date it will be advertised in Focus and elsewhere; get it in the diary and grab some bargains!

Caroline

Post Script

As Chair of the Together Shop Group meeting I would like to thank everyone who helped to make the pop up shop such a success by raising £404.50 for the Churches and our Community Worker. There are too many people to thank individually but I know there were those who worked behind the scenes collecting and sorting clothes. Those who worked on the day putting up stalls and arranging clothes etc. plus those who stayed behind to clear things away. I would also like to thank the Scouts for putting on refreshments of tea and cake throughout the day raising over £100 for their group.

Thank you everyone.

Wishing every blessing

David Kent

Mid Week Worship

Mid Week Communion, at 10.00am on the following dates

Wednesday 1 December	11 Sherwood Drive, Netherton
Wednesday 8 December	14 Sherwood Drive, Netherton
Wednesday 15 December	43 Delph Lane, Netherton
Wednesday 22 December	11 Sherwood Drive, Netherton

THE WELCOME CENTRE (HUDDERSFIELD)

Festive 500

We want to provide 500 clients with festive food packs for Christmas. The festive packs will include a 7-day food pack as well as all the ingredients to cook a Christmas meal or a frozen home-cooked Christmas meal for all the family.

Donations open 12:00 PM, 30 November 2021 to 12:00 PM, 7 December 2021

The campaign target is £11500 which will be matched £ for £ from a fund championed by The Reed Foundation

– <https://donate.thebiggive.org.uk/christmas-challenge-2021/a096900001qgTE3AAM>



Coffee Morning

Holy Trinity church hold a coffee morning the second Saturday of each month (except August). On Saturday 13th November, we held our latest coffee morning at the junior school on Moor Lane, Netherton, 10am to



11.30am. How wonderful it is to be back together at these social events! The school hall was full of folk enjoying tea, coffee, juice and biscuits, buying cakes and books to take home and having a go at winning one of the super raffle prizes. Best of all, it was a chance to catch up with friends and neighbours! We raised £192 for much needed Holy Trinity church funds and enjoyed it so much we're going to do it all again on Saturday 11th December. Why don't you join us then? It would be great to see you.

Caroline

Here are the dates for the coffee mornings until 2022.

- 8 January 2022
- 12 February 2022
- 12 March 2022
- 9 April 2022
- 14 May 2022
- 11 June 2022
- 9 July 2022
- August No coffee morning

Dates for Your Diary

Zoom Quiz.

The fun-raising Zoom quiz by Steve Gledhill returns for the festive season on Sunday 12 December at 7.00pm. So please put the date in your diary, invite your friends and get ready to party and quiz.

The donation is £3 for an individual or £5 for a team.



Contact Rena Souten on rsouten@gmail.com or 07799895350 for the QR code or pay by BACS.

Account name South Crosland PCC

Sort Code 050348

Account Number 30282888

Café Church

Cafe Church. 18th December at 4pm-5.30. at Berry Brow Methodist Church.

The Community Gospel Choir will entertain us with Christmassy songs followed by refreshments.

Churches Together Retreat

A retreat for Churches Together has been booked at the Briery Ilkley from 25th to 27th February 2022.

If you are interested in going please contact Pam Kent or Carol Waters for more information. More details to follow.

THANK YOU!

Most of the boxes have now been collected, filled and packed in cartons. They've been palletted and are sitting shrink wrapped waiting for their onward journey.



Caroline and I thank you all for your magnificent support this year in filling boxes, donating items to fill boxes and donating money. The good news is that we have collected at least 30% more than last year.



Rena

Armitage Bridge Ringers

Recently Oliver and Sally Austin espied this in the Halifax Courier of 1938.

A Critic of Campanology

*How sweet the peace, the Sabbath calm,
How sweet it used to be:
How cherished was the silent spell
The seventh day brought to me*

*But now when Sunday comes around
And Strident noises cease,
the tintintabulation starts
And wrecks the holy peace.*

*The ringers with unbridled zest,
Old hackneyed airs set free
Upon a quiet countryside,
With diabolic glee.*

*Vile tunes- each single note is sought
With wild uncertainty:
The painful pause, the note in doubt,
The ringer wrings the wrong one out,
And murder boils in me.*

*Thrice cursed crescendo-craving age,
Where clangour governs grace
Oh! Silence, dear departed shade,
Where is thy resting place?*

Ned Nevo 1938

A reply by Pam Murgatroyd.

A Fan of Campanology

*How sweet the sound our bells ring out
After months of quiet
With no invite to a service
In the Covid Climate.*

*But now when Sunday comes around
Our services have started,
Bell ringing has begun again
With a sound that's wholehearted.*

*The ringers, who were quieted
Have found a new found sound,
Now recovering from lockdown
Can be heard for miles around*

*They're ringing out their quarter peals,
Their skill will need no mike,
It's impregnated on their brains,
Like riding on a bike.*

*How sweet the noise, how welcoming
No more they'll silent be.
How wonderful the sound of bells
Does the seventh day bring to me.*

Pam Murgatroyd 2021

The Intergenerational Gospel Choir

The choir has been meeting and singing for about 7 years, so I thought it was time to give you an update. Since we have been able to re-group after the lockdown we have really spread our wings.

As part of the Huddersfield Literature Festival workshops for creative writing were introduced, where participants wrote verse about being separated yet still interconnected during the COVID epidemic. Rachael, a local musician, set the words to music, and our choir was given the opportunity to perform them at the Lawrence Batley theatre. The creators of the original words were delighted to hear their lyrics sung with a Gospel vibe.

As a result of this we were asked to provide the backing sounds on four demonstration discs. (We were the ooh and aah boys and girls) using the recording studio at the university- headphones, cameras, amplifiers, the lot.

An interesting day, but quite tiring. After many retakes, and a break for pizzas, eventually they were happy, and the recordings were whisked away to the mixing decks to refine the sound.

Whilst there, we also recorded two of our favourite songs. We haven't heard the results yet- so watch this space. Who knows what it may lead to!!

We have been invited to various venues over the last few years, including luncheon clubs, residential homes, HMP New Hall, Arts and Crafts exhibitions, Christmas Tree Festival, Café Church etc.

We always enjoy ourselves, and hopefully the listeners do too. Barbara and Maxine are so enthusiastic and talented you can't help but be swept along. (We even clap and move to the gospel rhythms) wow!

But don't take your eyes or ears off Barbara as she has a range of hand signals which determines the length of each song, how many repeats, Amens etc.

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Great fun, no musical ability required, so come along and join us on the first and third Sunday of each month, 5.30 – 7.00pm at Berry Brow Methodist Church and Community Centre.

Meanwhile, ‘we will let our little light shine.’”

Catherine.

Vegetarian Recipes

One Pot Tomato Orzo

Vegan. Serves 4

This easy one pot Basil and tomato recipe is perfect for busy weeknight meals. Its full of flavour, satisfying and ready in 30 minutes.

Ingredients.

1.5 tbsp olive oil	1 x 14oz tin chopped tomatoes
4 cloves garlic	2 ½ Cups vegetable stock
¾ tsp oregano	3 tbsps capers
½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes	
½ cup fresh basil, chopped. (can be substituted with parsley)	
½ tsp salt	
1 ½ cups orzo pasta	
½ cup dry white wine	

Method

1. Heat the oil, add garlic, oregano, crushed red pepper flakes.

2. Saute a few minutes until garlic is lightly browned.
3. Add the orzo and stir to coat well. Cook for 1-2 minutes to lightly toast the orzo and incorporate the flavours. Move around to prevent sticking.
4. Add white wine and cook for 1-2 minutes.
5. Add tomatoes and juice and simmer 2-03 minutes.
6. Add the vegetable stock and seasoning. Bring to the boil, then simmer gently for 7-10 minutes,, until the liquid has mostly been absorbed and orzo is tender.
7. Stir often to prevent sticking
8. Remove from the heat and add the capers. Stir to combine. Check the seasoning. Let it stand for 1-2 minutes without a lid to thicken up.
9. Serve with vegan parmesan.

Chestnut Pate en Croute

Serves 6.

This is a great dish to make for Christmas. (It looks like Beef Wellington), will freeze, cuts well and is delicious hot or cold.

Ingredients.

250gm Frozen Puff Pastry, or home made short, or wholemeal

For the Nut pate

235gms Butter	1 tablespoon
of brandy (optional)	
1 medium onion finely chopped	¼ teaspoon paprika
1 clove garlic crushed	½ teaspoon
dried thyme	
1 stick celery finely chopped	Sea salt

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50gms walnuts, grated Black pepper
150gms cashew nuts, grated 100gms button mushrooms, sliced
100gms chestnut puree
50gms cheddar cheese, grated
1 egg to bind and glaze

Method.

1. Roll out the pastry into an oblong
2. Melt butter, sweat the onions and celery, till soft but not coloured
3. Remove from the heat, stir in the garlic, nuts, cheese, egg, brandy, salt and pepper
4. Mix together well. Check for seasoning.
5. Place the mushrooms down the centre of the pastry, leaving sufficient pastry to place over the nut mix to fully enclose it.
6. Place the nut mix on top of the mushrooms.
7. Seal well and glaze with egg.
8. Bake in hot oven for about 30 minutes for the puff pastry to rise.
9. Reduce heat and cook for a further 20-25 minutes.
10. Serve hot with your favourite sauce and seasonal vegetables. Serve cold with salads.

VEGAN OPTION: Use vegan cheese, omit the egg and glaze with non dairy milk.

Catherine Day

Caroline's Recommendations.

This is one of Caroline's favourites.

Vegetarian Wellington

<https://www.gordonramsayrestaurants.com/recipes/vegetarian-wellington/>

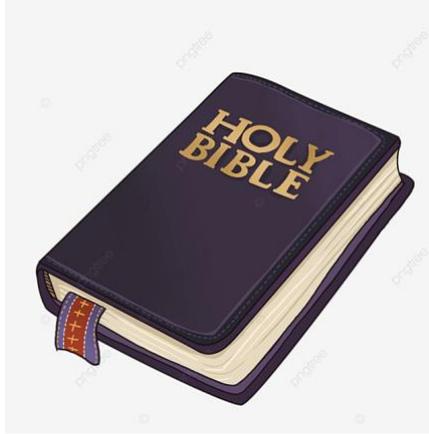


Rick Stein's onion tart from Alsace - YOU Magazine

Is there anything more gorgeous than lots of onions
www.you.co.uk

<https://www.you.co.uk/rick-stein-onion-tart-from-alsace/>

15:19



December Readings and prayers

Sunday 28th November – Advent Sunday – 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-end and Luke 21: 25-36

Prayer for the Day – Almighty God, as your kingdom dawns, turn us from the darkness of sin to the light of holiness, that we may be ready to meet you in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 29th Psalm 50, Isaiah 25.1-9, Matthew 12.1-21

Father, we praise you that whoever we are and wherever we go, you are there. We have discovered that there is simply nowhere we can go where you will not be present,

Tuesday 30th Psalm 47, Ezekiel 47.1-12, John 12.20-32

Father, we cannot hide, we cannot run, and we cannot even be there before you! We praise you that you are always ahead of us, preparing

the way, you are there waiting with arms of love and mercy to hold us and to welcome us, to heal us and to hold us.

Wednesday 1st Psalm 47, Ezekiel 47.1-12, John 12.20-32

Lord, you are ever near, ever approachable, in the midst of our anxiety and fear you are always understanding, coming into our turmoil, our doubts, our weakness and despair, and you come with peace.

Thursday 2nd Psalm 42, Isaiah 28.14-end, Matthew 13.1-23

Father, you stand guard over our hearts and minds so that we dare to speak your Holy name and serve in your kingdom.

Friday 3rd Psalm 25, Isaiah 29.1-14, Matthew 13.24-43

Great and wonderful God, always loving, we praise and honour you. Your majesty is beyond our reach, your fatherly love so gentle and accepting is always near.

Saturday 4th Psalm 9, Isaiah 29.15-end, Matthew 13.44-end

Father. We praise you for your love and truth made known in the word of the Prophets, in your word made flesh in Jesus; in his dying and his rising.

Sunday 5th December – 2nd Sunday of Advent – Philippians 1: 3-11 and Luke 3: 1-6

Prayer for the Day – Almighty God, purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord and our God.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 6th Psalm 44, Isaiah 30.1-18, Matthew 14.1-12

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Father, we thank you that we can come into your presence just as we are, we do not have to pretend to be good, kind and helpful because you know what we are really like.

Tuesday 7th Psalm 56, Isaiah 30.19-end, Matthew 14.13-end

Father, you know just how easy to find it to be selfish, unkind, and to want our own way. You know how hard we find to like other people, and that to love them is even harder.

Wednesday 8th Psalm 62, Isaiah 31, Matthew 15.1-20

Father, we thank you for helping us to see something of your tremendous love towards us and for understanding of the difficulties we face every day.

Thursday 9th Psalm 53, Isaiah 32, Matthew 15.21-28

Father, we thank you that in Jesus you shared all our experiences of life. In him you added the experience of what it means to be us to your knowledge of what it means to be God.

Friday 10th Psalm 85, Isaiah 33.1-22, Matthew 15.29-end

Father, we praise you that there is nothing that hurts us or makes us sad or afraid that you do not understand.

Saturday 11th Psalm 145, Isaiah 35, Matthew 16.1-12

Father, there is no fear, doubt or worry that you do not know. You know what it means to feel rejected, unwanted and unloved. You know how it feels when your friends do not want you and you feel as if you are on your own.

Sunday 12th December – 3rd Sunday of Advent – Philippians 4: 4-7 and Luke 3: 7-18

Prayer for the Day – God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak

the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 13th Psalm 40, Isaiah 38. 1-8, 21-22, Matthew 16.13-end
Lord, how can we not thank you for your extravagant love to us in Jesus Christ.

Tuesday 14th Psalm 70, Isaiah 38. 9-20, Matthew 17.1-13
Lord, we thank you for the way you have made yourself and your purposes known, and not just the high and mighty.

Wednesday 15th Psalm 75, Isaiah 39, Matthew 17.14-21
Lord, for those who knew they were unworthy and had done nothing to deserve your love.

Thursday 16th Psalm 76, Zephaniah 1.1-2.3, Matthew 17.22-end
Lord, we thank you for the way you constantly surprise us by coming to us when we least expect it; you open our hearts and minds and lives to the truth of your presence and power.

Friday 17th Psalm 77, Zephaniah 3.1-13, Matthew 18.1-20
Lord, thank you that knowing you and being part of your purposes never depends on our age or achievements but entirely upon your grace.

Saturday 18th Psalm 71, Zephaniah 3.14-end, Matthew 18.21-end
Lord, thank you for the story of Mary and for the assurance and challenge it brings of the width of your love and the irresistible power of your glory.

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Sunday 19th December – 4th Sunday of Advent – Hebrews 10: 5-10 and Luke 1: 39-45

Prayer for the Day – Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 20th Psalm 46, Malachi 1.1, 6-end, Matthew 19.1-12

God, we adore you, voicing our amazement and wonder at your patience through generation after generation, again and again you could have given up on your people, but you have renewed your covenant constantly. At Christmas we are reminded of this miracle, for the miracle has come to stay.

Tuesday 21st Psalm 121, Malachi 2.1-16 Matthew 19.13-15

Jesus, we adore you, fragile child in a frightening world, with shepherds we kneel in wonder; with travellers we look on in amazement; for you are the sign that we are adored by God, and precious to him.

Wednesday 22nd Psalm 124, Malachi 2.17-3.12, Matthew 19.16-end

Holy Spirit, we adore you. By your power, the life of God is moving among us. You create newborn opportunities before our eyes; you enter a mother's heart and a father's soul.

Thursday 23rd Psalm 128, Malachi 3.13-4.end, Matthew 23.1-12

Holy Spirit, you sow seeds of eternal hope; you move in nations and kingdoms to transform history into a new era.

Friday 24th CHRISTMAS EVE - Psalm 45, Nahum 1, Matthew 23.13-28

Lord, we are preparing to celebrate your Birthday but we find it so easy to forget why you came. We sing our carols and say our prayers,

but when we open presents and spend time with our family and friends we find it so hard to make space for you.

Saturday 25th CHRISTMAS DAY - Psalm 110, Isaiah 62.1- 5, Matthew 1.18-25

O come, O come, Immanuel! Be born again in the Bethlehem of our time. Live again in the Galilee of our generation, and be raised high amongst us, by the power of God. Jesus Immanuel! Come.

Sunday 26th December – 1st Sunday of Christmas – Galatians 2: 16b-20 and Matthew 10: 17-22

Prayer for the Day – Gracious Father, who gave the first martyr Stephen grace to pray for those who took up stones against him: grant that in all our sufferings for the truth we may learn to love even our enemies and to seek forgiveness for those who desire our hurt, looking up to heaven to him who was crucified for us, Jesus Christ our mediator and advocate.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 27th Psalm 21, Exodus 33: 12-end, 1 John 2: 1-11

Lord, thank you for Christmas, and that you have declared the love that never ends, which can fill our lives and make all things new.

Tuesday 28th *Holy Innocents* Psalm 36, Genesis 37.13-20, Matthew 18.1-10

Lord, we think of the year just ending, the things we have done, and the things that we have failed to do.

Wednesday 29th Psalm 19, Jonah 1, Colossians 1.1-14

Lord, we think of the year just ending, the things that have been important to us and for which we want to give you thanks and praise for.

Thursday 30th Psalm 113, Jonah 2, Colossians 1.15-23

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Lord, we think of the year just ending, the things we want to leave behind, the things that we have done to hurt you so much.

Friday 31st Psalm 102, Jonah 3-4, Colossians 1.24-2.7

Lord, we think of the year that is coming, the hopes we have and the good things we are longing for you to do in our lives.



Saturday 1st *Naming and Circumcision of Jesus* Psalm 103, Genesis 17.1-13, Romans 2.17-29

Lord, we think of the New Year that is here, the opportunities for witness and service and the promise of the Holy Spirit to equip us for giving, caring and loving.

Sunday 2nd January – Epiphany – Acts 8: 14-17 and Luke 3: 15-17 & 21-22

Prayer for the Day

Creator of the heavens, who led the Magi by a star to worship the Christ-child: guide and sustain us, that we may find our journey's end in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 3rd Psalm 127, Ruth 1, Colossians 2.8-end

Lord, we think of the year that is here, this is the time to thank you for it, and to firmly place it into your loving open arms.

Tuesday 4th Psalm 89.1-37, Ruth 2, Colossians 3.1-11

The Magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour; we too must search for you all our lives.

Wednesday 5th Psalm 48, Ruth 3, Colossians 3.12-4.1

The Magi brought precious gifts to you; our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom now.

Thursday 6th Psalm 18: 1-30, Ruth 4.1-17, Colossians 4.2-end

The coming of strangers from the east marked the coming of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show Christ's love in our everyday lives.

Friday 7th Psalm 99, Jeremiah 23.1-8, Matthew 20.1-16

You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the in. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

Saturday 8th Psalm 46, Jeremiah 30.1-17, Matthew 20.17-28

The Magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new King whose sign was a star in the East. We too must be prepared to search, find and worship you.

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Sunday 9th January – Baptism of Christ – Acts 8: 14-17 and Luke 3: 15-17 & 21-22. Prayer for the Day

Heavenly Father, at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognize him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 10th Psalm 2, Genesis 1.1-19, Matthew 21.1-17

Come Holy Spirit of God, come upon us that you may send us out in your power in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Tuesday 11th Psalm 9, Genesis 1.20-2.3, Matthew 21.18-32

Lord, fill us with your grace and goodness, that we may be able to bring the Good News to the oppressed, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Wednesday 12th Psalm 20, Genesis 2.4-end, Matthew 21.33-end

Lord, you come to us, you inspire us, and you enable us to proclaim your loving presence and show us your saving power; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thursday 13th Psalm 21, Genesis 3, Matthew 22.1-14

Let your church be seen to be working for justice and righteousness; for liberty and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

Friday 14th Psalm 67, Genesis 4.1-16, 25-26, Matthew 22.15-33

Lord, make us instruments of peace within our communities and our homes, that all may live in freedom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Saturday 15th Psalm 33, Genesis 6.1-10, Matthew 22.34-end

We pray for any who are hostages at this time; for their loved one and friends that their anguish and anxiety may cease, through the love of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Sunday 16th – Epiphany 2 – 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11 and John 2: 1-11

Prayer for the Day

Eternal Lord, our beginning and our end: bring us with the whole creation to your glory, hidden through past ages and made known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 17th Psalm 146, Genesis 6.11-7.10, Matthew 24.1-14

Where kindness is treated as weakness or rejected through lack of grace, forgive us for not understanding the gifts of your Spirit.

Tuesday 18th Psalm 132, Genesis 7.11-end, Matthew 24.15-28

Where goodness is crucified by the power-hungry and passes unrecognised by a noisy, busy world, forgive us for losing sight of the gifts of your Spirit.

Wednesday 19th Psalm 81, Genesis 8.1-14, Matthew 24.29-end

Where faithfulness is abandoned and no one trusts another anymore, forgive us for wiping out the gifts of your Spirit.

Thursday 20th Psalm 76, Genesis 8.15-9.7, Matthew 25.1-13

Where gentleness is ridiculed and people build their lives round aggression, forgive us for misrepresenting the gifts of your Spirit.

Friday 21st Psalm 27, Genesis 9.8-19, Matthew 25.14-30

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Where we lose self-control, giving in to the violence of our emotions, forgive us for not trusting the gifts of your Spirit.

Saturday 22nd Psalm 122, Genesis 11.1-9, Matthew 25.31-end

Holy Spirit, forgive us our rejection of your riches; open the hearts of nations and peoples to receive love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, but start with us!

Sunday 23rd – Epiphany 3 – 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a and Luke 4: 14-21

Prayer for the Day

God of all mercy, your Son proclaimed good news to the poor, release to the captives, and freedom to the oppressed: anoint us with your Holy Spirit and set all your people free to praise you in Christ our Lord.

Prayers for the Week

Monday 24th Psalm 108, Genesis 11: 27-12:9, Matthew 26: 1-16

Father, we praise you that you see everything to the ends of the earth and deep into our lives. We thank you that there is nothing you do not see or fully understand.

Tuesday 25th *Conversion of Paul* Psalm 66, Ezekiel 3.22-27, Philippians 3.1-14

Father, we come to praise you, just because you are so very great and wonderful. Your power is complete and there is no weakness in you. There is nothing you do not know.

Wednesday 26th Psalm 45, Genesis 14, Matthew 26.36-46

Father, we praise you for your greatness and your supreme authority. It gives us hope and strength as we come to you because in Jesus Christ your Son you first came to us.

Thursday 27th Psalm 47, Genesis 15, Matthew 26.47-56

Father, we thank you that you always make the first move. You did not wait to be asked to create, to love, to forgive, or to send Jesus to be our Saviour. You loved us before we loved you.

Friday 28th Psalm 65, Genesis 16, Matthew 26.57-end

Father, it is when we become aware of your majesty that we realise how small our lives are. It is when we begin to grasp your glory that we can be held by your grace.

Saturday 29th Psalm 68, Genesis 17.1-22, Matthew 27.1-10

Father, it is when we are crushed by life that we are glad we can be strengthened the knowledge of the empty cross. It is when we are defeated by our attempts to follow Jesus that we are glad to be encouraged by the empty tomb.

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This magazine may be read in full colour on our webpage!

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“Offering love and service to our communities in Christ’s name.”