

Christ Church Magazine

January 2026



40p

PARISH DIRECTORY

SUNDAY SERVICES

Details of our services are given on page 5/6.

THE PARISH TEAM

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Children & Families Worker	Peter Cuthbert peter.j.cuthbert@btinternet.com	07733 042205
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CHRIST CHURCH CENTRE

Booking Secretary	Parish Office	811990
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CHURCH SCHOOLS

Christ Church C.E.(Controlled) First School, Northesk Street.

Headteacher Mrs A. Graham BA(Hons) NPQH 01785 336545

Christ Church Academy, Old Road

Principal: Mrs Tara Thorn 01785 334900

Christ Church Magazine

January 2026

In This Issue....	
From the editor	4
From the Vicarage	4-5
Church Diary— January	6-7
Prayer Diary— January	8-12
Advent Windows	13-17
C.C 1st School update	18-19
World Leprosy Day	20
Christmas Dingbats	21
Tales from the Towpath	22-23
The Spiders Web Traps	23
Gratitude	24-25
Thinking about Carbon	26-27
Brief history of Hymns	28-29
A Recipe	29
Safeguarding	30
Holy Land Musings	31
Rotas & Roads for Prayer	32



Please send your articles for the February magazine to us by the 15th January

Cover Picture:
Sunrise from my Window - photo from- Shirley Hallam

Magazine 40p each month or £4 each year. Money may be given to your magazine deliverer or handed in to the Church office

Christ Church on the Internet

Parish website	www.christchurchstone.org
Parish office email	office@christchurchstone.org
Magazine contributions	magazine@christchurchstone.org

From the Editor

Hello Everyone,
A Happy New Year to you all.
What started off as a magazine which I though had little in it turned out to be a bumper edition!!! I have included photos of all the Advent Windows and there are some interesting articles as well as the regular features. Thanks for all your contributions.
Do keep sending in interesting anecdotes and stories, musings and items to get us thinking!
Enjoy!
God bless, Helen.
December 20th 2025

From the Vicarage.....

What is January for?

After much partying there comes a time when all returns to normal. The final blast is to see in the New Year as we look towards the new year ahead either with trepidation or expectation.

For many there will be the inevitable packing away of decorations by the Twelfth night after Christmas (5th January). Down come the decorations. Out goes the Christmas tree!

What next? Perhaps we are fascinated by 'National Nothing Day' (on 16th January apparently)? After having had a few days off work to engage in rather a lot of meeting, greeting and eating, inevitably one might feel a bit exhausted. So, the day provides time to do nothing – not even celebrating the day or that would nullify its purpose!

What if things look bleak and the January blues are approaching? Help comes from the Christian calendar. We have another festival held on 6th January called Epiphany ('appearing'). It commemorates

the visit of the Magi (commonly known as kings) as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles or, in the Eastern Church, to commemorate the baptism of Christ. The child manifested to the Magi at his birth, is later brought to the Temple according to the requirements of the Law for circumcision on the 8th day. There the infant Jesus is recognised by Simeon and Anna as no ordinary child. Simeon spoke prophetically: *“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss^[d] your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”* (Luke 2v29-32). Simeon was hoping and praying for the nation to be revived and restored and end its spiritual exile. His great hope had now been fulfilled as he believed that Jesus would be the leader to bring this about! This made his parents marvel. Simeon added: *“This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too”* (Luke 2v34-35). Jesus life would be determinative for peoples’ future.

Simeon’s final words move our attention away from the celebration of Christmas and towards the mysteries of Easter. It’s like watching a re-run of an old film that we love to watch over and again, even though we know the outcome.

Having glimpsed the wonder of Jesus’ birth we are to take time each day to see his glory in action and which reaches its zenith in his resurrection. January now takes on a new look. We are embarking on singing ‘the wonderous story’ (to coin a phrase from an old hymn). It is time to look again and delight in him. I hope that is your resolve for 2026.



January 2026

	Date	Time	Events (Zoom codes in weekly email)
Thu	1st		
Fri	2nd		
Sat	3rd	8.30 am	Prayer meeting followed by breakfast
Sun	4th	9.15 am	Communion; Matthew 28: 18-20 "The Great Commission"
Mon	5th		
Tue	6th	10.30 am	Communion; Luke 2: 15-21 "The circumcision of Christ"
Wed	7th		
Thu	8th		
Fri	9th		
Sat	10th		
Sun	11th	9.15 am	Morning Prayer; Luke 2: 41-52 "Precocious or perfect?"
		5.00 pm	Bible Study: Jesus through Old Testament eyes (4/8)
Mon	12th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	13th	10.30 am	Communion; John 1: 1-18 "Light!"
		2.00 pm	Autumn House - Church at Home service
Wed	14th	10.30 am	Christ Church First School assembly
		2.30 pm	Oulton Abbey - Church at Home service
		3.30 pm	Trekkers
Thu	15th	11.00 am	St. Mary's - Church at Home service
		1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly

January 2026

	Date	Time	Events
Fri	16th		
Sat	17th		
Sun	18th	9.15 am 5.00 pm	Communion; John 2: 1-11 "The Cana wedding" Bible Study: Jesus through Old Testament eyes (5/8)
Mon	19th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	20th	10.30 am	Communion; John 1: 19-28 "Prepare to meet The One"
Wed	21st	9.00 am 3.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks
Thu	22nd	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	23rd		
Sat	24th		
Sun	25th	9.15 am	All Age service; Mark 10: 35-42 "Who is the greatest?"
Mon	26th	9.30 am	Toddler group
Tue	27th	10.30 am	Communion; John 1: 29-34 "He is the Son of God"
Wed	28th	9.00 am 3.30 pm	Christ Church First School assembly Trekks
Thu	29th	1.10 pm	Christ Church Academy assembly
Fri	30th		
Sat	31st		

MISSION PRAYER DIARY

WEEK ONE - Leprosy Mission

The Leprosy Mission Great Britain is a global Christian organisation leading the fight against leprosy.

PRAYER POINTS

Pray for the people of Myanmar who are disabled by leprosy, often finding themselves on the edge of society.



Pray for the safety of Leprosy Mission staff and their families in Myanmar at a time when there is fear on the streets. Pray that they will be able to reach and help those who need it the very most.



Pray for the success of The Unconditional Appeal which seeks to help rid Mozambique of leprosy by raising awareness, improving access to healthcare and challenging deep prejudice surrounding the disease.



Pray that people affected by leprosy will be welcomed home to their villages. Please pray that those showing the early signs of leprosy will have the awareness and confidence to step forward and seek treatment.

**WEEK TWO - Tim and Kate Lee, Jigsaw
Excerpts from their recent newsletter, their full
newsletter is available on the missions notice board**

Dear Friends, greetings from everyone at Jigsaw. Thank you so much for your love, care, and support for our work and mission. Your partnership empowers us to share God's love in practical and strategic ways with children and families living in extreme poverty.

- Please pray for the Philippines, now under a state of emergency after two super typhoons displaced more than 1.5 million people. Pray for God's comfort for those who lost loved ones, and for families who lost their homes and all they owned. Please pray for floodwaters to recede quickly, for homes to be rebuilt, and for the resources needed to support thousands with food and hygiene essentials.

- Please pray for Jigsaw's ongoing work—that security will increase for the children and that their vulnerability and risk of harm will be reduced. Pray that through Jigsaw's ministries, especially the children's, youth, and discipleship life groups, many will come to know Jesus and grow in their faith.



WEEK TWO - Jigsaw (continued)

Please pray for new Jigsaw staff, the Manager for children with disabilities leading Jigsaw Philippines' disability program, and for four new social workers to guide Jigsaw's community-based child protection and family strengthening programs.

Please pray for Jigsaw's building project. This project is vital to create a safe and secure place of God's love and mission for children at risk for many years to come. Although everything is ready, the start has been delayed again—this time due to flooding from the recent typhoon. Please pray for calm, stable weather in the months ahead, and that God will protect the project and open the way for the building work to begin and be completed within the next four months.

Please pray for a new location for the Batasan children and youth centre. For the past three years we have been meeting in a street-side space, but we must leave by January. This is a very poor and challenging area, so please pray that God will guide Jigsaw to the right place—a safe, secure location protected from wind and rain, and close to the children and families we serve.



WEEK THREE Feba Radio-Focus on India

Feba's ministry is about the creative use of radio and other audio media to inspire people to follow Jesus Christ

PRAYER POINTS

There are currently 770 active community listening hubs across India, where people regularly gather to hear Feba's radio programmes together. Pray that every listener will grow in faith and learn how to apply God's word in their daily lives.

Please pray for some of the listening groups who have stopped meeting because of fear of persecution. Pray for their protection and courage, asking God to strengthen their faith and fill them with His peace and boldness

Ask God, in Jesus' Name, to break the chains that hold many listeners captive including addiction, superstition and infidelity.

We thank God for our partner's dedicated staff and faithful supporters whose prayers, generosity, and encouragement sustain this vital ministry. Please pray for God's continued blessing over them – for strength, protection, and good health, especially for those serving faithfully while facing their own health concerns and challenges

WEEK FOUR - Barnabus Aid

PRAYER POINTS

Almost all Somali Christians are converts from Islam. Muslim-background believers are at risk of being killed by neighbours, former friends or families as retribution for leaving Islam. Pray for people in Somalia, may God strengthen and uphold them.

Believers forced to flee their homes in north-eastern India following a surge in anti-Christian violence are being helped to rebuild their lives through sewing and tailoring classes funded by Barnabas. Give thanks for the success of the project. Pray for an end to hostility against Christians in Manipur.

Praise God that the Church in Nepal continues to grow. The country's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, but a 2018 law forbids any attempt to convert a follower of another religion. This can protect Hindus and Buddhists but not Nepali Christians. Pray that unfounded charges of forced conversions will be dismissed by the courts.

Sri Lanka's minority Christian community experiences harassment and hostility from extremists in other faith groups, despite constitutional promises of religious freedom. Many struggle to find work because of discrimination and are very poor. Pray for courage and strength for Sri Lankan Christians.

Advent Windows 2025

Advent Windows 2025 was great this year (we are up to number 20 at time of writing). There are more photos overleaf of the windows. We had a great turnout at most of the windows despite some very wet weather! Most days we ran out of the 30 carol sheets printed so that is a good sign. Each day we put the photo up on Facebook - do 'like' and share so we can spread the word! Thanks to everyone who helped with this brilliant project.

Helen



Advent Windows 2025



Advent Windows 2025





geak.org.uk/staffordshire





This term has been really busy and the children have enjoyed a wide range of learning opportunities since our return in September, which seems like a distant memory. Our new Reception children settled in really well and have made brilliant start to their school careers. Our events started off in September when we attended church for our harvest service on 30th. We had collected donations for the Stone Food Bank and, as always, our parents were extremely generous. In October, we were busy with transition activities for Year 4 as they had a visit from staff at Christ Church Academy and Walton Priory Middle school on consecutive days. CCA led art and French sessions which the children thoroughly enjoyed and WPMS did a session on the magic of science and even brought a Van der Graaf generator which was good fun.

We held our Open morning on 11th October which was really well-attended. The children in years 3 and 4 acted as tour guides and did a wonderful job. They received a lot of compliments for their maturity and enthusiasm.

On 15th October, the whole school took part in a sponsored walk around Stone. The children really enjoyed the walk and we raised money for some much-needed resources in school. This was followed by a trip to the Crown Wharf Theatre for Reception and Year 1. They went to see Tales from Acorn Wood, which they thoroughly enjoyed. In November, the children represented the school for the Remembrance Day Parade on 9th and then visited church on the 11th for the unveiling of the new bench alongside Reverend Kingman and Mr Best. Our choir joined the other schools in Stone for the Christmas Lights Switch-on on the 20th November.

As usual, the weather was miserable but the signing was brilliant. The choir then attended the Eccleshall Christmas Tree Festival at Holy Trinity church on 27th, where they joined other schools for some collective singing and also performed 3 songs on their own.

As we entered December, the festive activities began with Christmas crafts for Year 1. They invited their parents into school to help them and we did the same with Reception class on 15th December. Our Christmas performances were held in church on 9th December for Years 2,3 and 4 and they performed the nine lessons and carols. This was a lovely evening and enjoyed by all. Reception did their performance of Whoops a Daisy Angel and Year 1 held a special coffee morning with a Family Worship to share the learning they had been doing over the term and of course, sing a few Christmas carols.

The choir have also been busy – they sang at the Advent Window at the Cats’ Protection League shop on 5th December, visited Bromfield Court Residents on 8th and went to sign at the Royal Stoke Hospital on 15th. They were also invited to sing on the Children’s Ward, which was very special for us all.

We held our final church service on 16th December and the children sang a wide variety of their Christmas favourites from traditional carols to more modern songs. They did a great job even though they were all exhausted by his point in the term!

The term ended with a Christmas fun day for Reception and Year 1 while Years 2,3 and 4 went on a Santa Safari at West Midlands Safari Park.

Mrs A Graham—Head Teacher

**Christ Church First
School Advent
Window**



World Leprosy Day

Sunday 25th January is World Leprosy Day. On Sunday November 23rd last year Gary spoke on two passages in the bible that mention the healing of someone with leprosy, the first from 2 Kings 5 vs 1/14 . Naaman, an army commander, who expected a face to face consultation with Elisha, but didn't get it! Just a simple instruction to wash 7 times in the river Jordan. Naaman stormed off not trusting Elisha. Fortunately his servants had some sense and urged him to do as Elisha said and Naaman was healed. The second account from Matthew 8 vs 1/4 was of the man who came and knelt before Jesus and said "Lord, if you are willing you can make me clean" and Jesus did. What a wonderful act of compassion on someone who would have been shunned by family and friends and left to fend for himself. Sadly, over 2,000 years later 2 to 3 million people around the world are still living with leprosy, with 200,000 new cases reported each year, 10,000 of these are children..... and sadly, the stigma attached to it are still the same. Getting access to sufferers is often difficult, early diagnosis is vital to prevent long term disability. Leprosy can be cured, but it has to be treated as soon as possible.

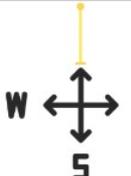
At that service we had the lovely song about the healing of a leper, of which this is the chorus:- Please please please, Make me clean, No one else can do it Lord, Please make me clean. (I wish I could attach the lovely music to go with it!!) The Leprosy Mission has been working hard for 150 years to bring relief to those suffering from this terrible disease. If you would like to know more just look them up.

Phil Tunstall



Christmas Dingbats

Just a little after Christmas fun!!! (answers on page 30)

ABCDEFGH IJKLMNOPQ RSTUVWX YZ	Y Y MEN Y	MISTLETOE XXX	CHRISTMAS CHRISTMAS → CHRISTMAS
1	2	3	4
DONKEY → DONKEY	CE CE CE ¹ CE π π	MANAWAYGER	LEFT <hr/> TURKEY
5	6	7	8
NIGHT	PRES ENTS		
9	10	11	12
XMAS	GOOD DAY SPRING HI THERE SUMMER HEY AUTUMN HELLO WINTER	PPP 	BLANPIGPIGKETS
13	14	15	16
D NER	DECOR = 8/10	VORDERMAN DANVERS SMILLIE KING	PRESENCE <hr/> PRESENTS
17	18	19	20

December 2025



Hi There,

We were pleased that Waterways Chaplaincy was involved in both Advent Windows and the Christmas Tree Festival this December.

For Advent we had the letter M for Messenger—very appropriate for our role on the Waterways. I was pleased that one of the boaters, Jenny, helped me with this—she did some beautiful embroidery to really give lots of detail to our picture. The girl guides, led by Kimberley at Canal Cruising also helped and provided angels for our display—it was a great team effort.

The Christmas Tree festival at St Michaels was themed with 1940s/ Second world war

Planning the design



The finished product with WWCs
Andrew & Helen



Part made!

Tales from the Towpath (cont)

Christmas, so we did a display around the 'Idle Women' - the women who worked the boats in the war (a bit like the land girls only on water!).



John & I did a bike ride along the Caldon Canal which was lovely.

I enjoyed meeting and helping another lovely boater who had been stopped in Stone for a while during the time Star Lock was being repaired. They are all such lovely people!!

Please pray for all the

boaters and everyone along the towpath in our lovely town of Stone and the village of Barlaston. 'Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God' – Micah 6:8



God bless, Helen 15/11/25

The Spiders Web Traps

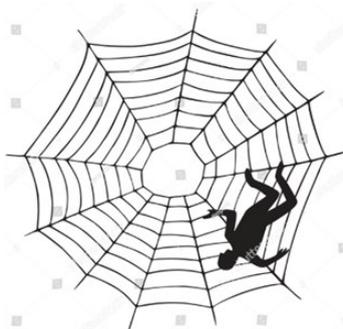
Ps 91 Surely He will rescue us from the fowler's snare and the deadly pestilence

Ps 107 Those sitting in darkest gloom when they call out in repentance. God will quickly restore them.

The trapped person cannot save themselves, only God can release them. This

only happens through much prayer. How do we pray?

Father Thy will be done, may it please Thee to release this person from their dark prison. **(Submitted by Kath Thompson)**



Gratitude



New Year is a good time to be looking back and forward. As Dag Hammarskjöld, the UN's second Secretary General prayed: "For all that has been, thank you. For all that is to come, yes!"

God is faithful in his provision for us and for his church (often coming through us). Recently published insights into 2024 Church of England finances show many signs of continuing financial health in Lichfield Diocese's churches, which is vital to a confident, thriving body of Christ, growing in love and service. So we can give thanks while remaining prayerful about our future needs and our part in providing them.

Thinking and praying is all the more relevant after the recent round of consultations with parishes this autumn which resoundingly backed using the diocese's increased income over coming years from the Church's national historic investments to invest in parishes rather than merely balancing the books.

The challenge is for parishes to achieve and maintain financial sustainability rather than spending all-too-exhaustible reserves. We will need to make the right spending choices to take us there. 2024's on-the-ground analysis of parishes shows us some encouraging signs as well as pointers to things that need attention.

One stand-out is that parishes are taking the responsibility of caring for their buildings as seriously as ever. They have found more money for their buildings in recent years with capital expenditure on buildings rising back to the pre-pandemic peak of £5 million a year, although this is not exactly comparable because of inflation. Even better news is that the amount of grant income has risen to closely track and almost equal the level of capital expenditure 2022-2024. This is a sea-change on a decade ago, so join me in giving thanks for the sources of grants for buildings, mostly trusts, and for all the skilled people, especially those in St Mary's House, who know where to apply and how to write the applications. In future, grant funding should be even easier to access through technological marvels like

the Cornerstone¹ platform which the national church is rolling out across dioceses.

Looking at our churches income and expenditure can also inform our future choices and the recently published data is uniquely about money flowing into and out of parishes. Total income rose slightly from 2022-2024² in monetary terms, again after a pandemic drop. A rise in income is always a cause of gratitude, but it is still lower than pre-pandemic. Expenditure on parish share (common fund, which pays for parishes to have serving, trained, housed and pensioned clergy and more besides) is broadly flat. It is the minor sources of income that have increased: interest, property income (church halls, parish houses), dividends and anything else. This is great, but the major part of parishes' income comes from giving and gift-aid. Notably, that is coming from fewer people giving more. Our aim and our call is for more people giving more!

So amongst the gratitude to God for giving, for givers and for Gift aid, here is a prayer: "All things come from you and of your own do we give you. Help us to put our whole selves into Seeking your Kingdom. Help us to offer our time, our talents and our treasure to this task so that we may overflow with thanks and be found talking, not about finding resources, but about using what we have to grow your church. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Over coming months, we will be providing resources and encouragement with giving and sharing further insights from this data and the Church of England's Generous Giving programme.



The Ven Liz Jackson, Archdeacon of Walsall

You can read more about the Cornerstone platform that helps parishes identify and track grant providers at [lichfield.anglican.org/cornerstone](https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/cornerstone)

Finance summary dashboard for the parishes of the Diocese of Lichfield is at <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/finance-reports/>

Thinking about Carbon

It seems fitting, as we start a new year to focus on larger issues, trying to make positive changes to tackle the global crises of climate change and biodiversity loss. For those of you who care for our churchyards, chapel yards and cemeteries there is much you can do for wildlife and hopefully these monthly articles have already inspired you to take some steps already. But how climate change and carbon? Is there anything we can do about that on a local level? Well, yes there is, for those of us who manage a piece of land, whether it's our own garden or the local burial ground there is a great deal that we can do.

Firstly, care for your trees. Trees and shrubs store carbon in wood, be it the trunk, branches or roots. Trees store more carbon than other plants owing to their size and long lifespan. Hedges too can store carbon for a long time. Many churchyards and cemeteries contain ancient trees as well as trees planted in Victorian times, often conifers with a shorter lifespan as well as the longer-lived native broad-leaves. These conifers may be coming toward the end of their life so keep an eye on them, carry out an annual inspection using [The Caring for God's Acre sheet on inspecting trees](#) as well as having professional surveys by a skilled arborist. The life of a tree can be prolonged by care and prompt action as problems arise, (which can save money too). Perhaps you can think about planting young trees to replace those nearing the end of their lives. Is there room for a sapling now? Young trees grow quickly, laying down carbon-based wood as they do so.

Secondly, think about your grassland. Rather surprisingly grassland is actually great at storing carbon with most of it out of sight. Whilst carbon is stored in the visible, above ground plants it is within the soil that most is held in fact it is estimated that up to 30% of the earth's carbon is stored in grassland soil.

From the Diocese (2) cont...

Soil carbon comes from decomposing plants, animals and fungi. When things die, they are broken down and used as food by insects, worms and other invertebrates, fungi, bacteria and other microbes. Whilst some carbon dioxide is released most carbon is incorporated into the soil. The more mature the soil, the better for carbon storage. A mature, complex, undisturbed soil has a wide range of life within its soil, all of which contain carbon. Churchyard, chapel yard and cemetery grassland are usually mature and full of different grasses, flowering plants, fungi and lichens. This richness above ground leads to a corresponding richness below the surface.

What about the length of the grass, does that have an effect? Yes it does, taller grassland rather than short lawn has a deeper zone of active soil due to deeper plant roots. This active soil is full of carbon-based life.

So look at your local churchyard with new eyes, seeing it as a carbon store and seeing if you can improve this. Care for your trees, plant replacements and when trees need to be felled try to leave some deadwood on site or maybe keep the carbon locked away by using the wood for timber or wood-turning. Is there scope to increase the grass length in some areas to increase the depth of active, carbon-rich soil? Finally, can you reduce the use of petrol machines such as lawn mowers and strimmers replacing with electric ones or maybe using them less often.

All of these actions will benefit wildlife too so it really is doubly worthwhile.

All the best, Harriet

Harriet Carty, *Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor*, harriet@cfga.org.uk,

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk - individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code diomem22

A Brief History of Hymns

By Simon Lole - Songs of Praise conductor, composer, arranger and organist (Taken from BBC Songs of Praise website)

For almost two thousand years, Christians have used music as a way to worship. In the Bible the Apostle Paul writes: "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs."

The word "hymn" comes from the Greek word "hymnos" which means "a song of praise". Originally these would have been written in honour of the Gods. Hymnody (the singing or composition of hymns) has evolved and changed over the centuries and been affected by new thinking and developing religious beliefs: throughout the history of the church, whenever there has been renewal, revival or restoration, new songs of worship have appeared.

During the Middle Ages hymnody developed in the form of Gregorian chant or 'plainsong'. It was sung in Latin and most often by monastic choirs. But in the 16th century, church goers were given much greater access to hymns as a result of the invention of the printing press and the influential German theologian, Martin Luther, who began encouraging people to sing together in congregations.

In England the non-conformist minister Isaac Watts (1674-1748) began a transformation of congregational singing. Watts believed strongly that hymns should express the religious feelings of the people and he became a prolific writer, creating hundreds of new hymns. Watts has been described as "the liberator of English hymnody" as his hymns moved people away from simply singing Old Testament psalms, inspiring people to sing from the heart, with great faith and understanding.



In the same period, another significant movement affected the hymns of the church: the Methodist movement, led by John Wesley. Wesley and especially his brother Charles used simple rhythms and sing-able melodies to help congregational singing. They wrote many of our most well-known hymns that are still very popular today.

In the late 19th Century a new style of hymnody known as “gospel” emerged. These songs were usually characterised by a strong lead vocal and exciting harmonies, and were a great influence on later contemporary worship worldwide.

The twentieth and twenty first centuries have seen an explosion of new hymn writers and approaches. Old texts have been refreshed by new tunes and lots more contemporary hymns have sprung up. In the non-traditional church movement there has been a move away from the previous style of congregational singing to worship led by one singer or a worship band. Instrumentation has become more popular and musical styles have become much freer. The church today is richer than ever in musical resources and continues to bring congregations together through song.

I wonder what your favourite Christian hymn/song is?? You could write about your favourite letting us know why—send in your article!

Helen

A Recipe

Take one whole pound of Kindliness
and stir it round with thoughts that bless
Plenty of Patience makes it nice
Some fun will add a little spice
Don't weigh out love, but pour it in
Oil of good cheer will grease your tin
Mix well in just the old-time way
And you'll have made a Happy Day.

July 1948
With good wishes
KE Foster

***Provided by Kath
Thompson***

Safeguarding

The United Benefice is committed to Safeguarding and has adopted the National and Diocesan Safeguarding Policies for the welfare of everyone in our congregations. Anyone requiring any further information or raising concerns should contact the Safeguarding Coordinators: **Christ Church, Stone:** Andrew Stone on

Safeguarding2@christchurchstone.org

Oulton with Moddershall; Mary Gale on

Office@christchurchstone.org

Or contact the church office [01785 811990] to leave your details, and Andrew or Mary will ring you back.

The vicar, Rev Paul Kingman can also be contacted on 01785 812669.

If the matter is more urgent, or you feel uncomfortable contacting someone in our Benefice, you may contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team at Lichfield <https://www.lichfield.anglican.org/safeguarding/>

Answers to Christmas Dingbats:-

1. Noel
2. Three Wise men
3. Kisses under the mistletoe
4. Last Christmas
5. Little Donkey
6. Mince Pies
7. Away in a manger
8. Leftover turkey
9. Holy Night
10. Opening presents
11. North Pole
12. Jack Frost
13. White Christmas
14. Seasons Greetings
15. Peace on earth
16. Pigs in Blankets
17. Donner
18. Decorate
19. Carols
20. Presence over presents

.....

(cont from page 27)

All in all, an interesting, if rather tacky visit which is probably rather more difficult to achieve under the current circumstances. More thoughts in subsequent magazines.

John Bowes

Holy Land Musings

Some years ago, (back in the 70's) Helen and I were fortunate enough to visit Israel and quite a few of the associated biblical sites. I expect quite a few of you have also visited these sites, but below and in subsequent parish magazines, are a few of my personal recollections of this interesting trip. Firstly, concerning the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem :-

- the main church door. When we visited Bethlehem, security was fairly non-existent. I expect it is now considerably enhanced. Various civilisations have left their mark on the Church of the Nativity. Between the 16th and the 18th centuries, the Ottoman Empire ruled in Palestine. They utilised the church nave for various 'profane purposes'. With the aim of preventing the entry of cattle and horses into the church, the next rulers blocked up the main entrance and inserted a tiny door, not more than five foot high. It still exists today being known as the Door of Humility since visitors have to bend down to actually get into the church – very strange.
- ownership disputes. The current custodians of the church are the Greek Orthodox, the Armenian Orthodox and the Franciscan Order. Disputes are frequent, usually associated with a lack of respect for the prayers of the various parties. Palestinian police have to be regularly called to restore order !
- the Grotto of the Nativity. A silver star marks the spot where Jesus is supposed to have been born. To get to this spot, one has to descend two sets of steps, essentially into a cave. I was not aware that Jesus was born in a cave – a manger within a stable, but a cave !
- Manger Square. Outside the church there is a large square where coaches park and all sorts of rubbish is sold eg Bethlehem Air in sealed cans ! Whilst examining a selection of daggers and swords, a rather dubious character came up behind me and whispered in my ear 'do you want to kill somebody sir'. I beat a hasty retreat back to the coach. (cont on page 30)

Groups and Rotas

Deanery Synod Reps Helen Bowes, Sue Kingman
P.C.C. Members Lynne Collier, Maxine Garrington-Miller, Marylyn Hillman, George Holden, Pete Kelly, Liz Mason, Shelagh Sanders, Andy Stone, Gary Williams, Shirley Hallam,
Secretary Shelagh Sanders
Treasurer Pete Kelly
Envelopes, Gift Aid Lynda Marenghi

FLOWER ROTA		WELCOMER	
4th Jan	Flower Guild	4th Jan	Jacqueline Abrahams
11th Jan	Flower Guild	11th Jan	Pete Kelly
18th Jan	Flower Guild	18th Jan	Jeanette Rowlands
25th Jan	Flower Guild	25th Jan	Pam Roberts

CHURCH REGISTERS	BAPTISMS
	WEDDINGS
	FUNERALS

Roads for Prayer

5th Jan	12th Jan
Ancestry Close	Bentley Close
Anderton View	Berkeley Street
Arthur Street	Brindley Close
Barnton Edge	Bromfield Court
19th Jan	26th Jan
Caldon Way	Chandler's Way
Cameron Wharf	Chestnut Grove
Candler Drive	Cressy Close
Cauldon Way	Cross Street

