

**The Parish Magazine
St Andrew's Church
Old Headington**



December 2021 / January 2022

50p

PARISH DIRECTORY

www.standrewsheadington.co.uk

Enquiries about marriage and baptism should be made directly to the Vicar, by telephone or email.

The Clergy will gladly visit and (if requested) bring Holy Communion to people who are ill at home or in hospital, by arrangement.

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THE NORMAN ARCH is published on the last Saturday of each month.

The parish magazine is named after the splendid Norman chancel arch in the church.

Editor Fr Darren McFarland
Sub-Editor Vacant

Deadline for next issue: 25th of each month

THE VILLAGE HALL
DUNSTAN ROAD, OLD HEADINGTON
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December Calendar

1	W	Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
2	Th	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
3	F			none
4	S			none
5	Sun	2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
6	M	Nicholas, Bishop of Myra		
		Eucharist		9.30am
		CMF Carol Service		7.30pm
7	T	Ambrose, Bishop of Milan		none
8	W	The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary		
		Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
9	Th	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
10	F	Health Walk Lunch (church room)		10.15am
11	S			none
12	Sun	3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
		Salvation Army receive gifts from St Andrew's boat		
		FOSAC Christmas Carol Evening with mulled wine & mince pies		6.00pm
13	M	Lucy, Martyr at Syracuse		
		Eucharist		9.30am
		Tea on Monday		3.00pm
		Years 1 & 2 Nativity Play		6.00pm
14	T	John of the Cross, Poet		
		St Andrew's School Carol Service		10.30am
15	W	Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
16	Th	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
17	F			none
18	S			none
19	S	4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
		Lessons and Carols		4.00pm
20	M	Eucharist		9.30am
21	T			none
22	W	Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
23	Th	Eucharist		7.30pm
24	F	CHRISTMAS EVE		
		Children's Service		4.00pm
		Midnight Mass		11.00pm
25	S	CHRISTMAS DAY		
		Eucharist	BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
26	Sun	ST STEPHEN'S DAY		
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
27	M	John, Apostle and Evangelist		10.00am
28	T	The Holy Innocents		10.00am
29	W	Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury		
		Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
30	Th	Eucharist		7.30pm
31	F			none

From the Registers

Weddings

6th November Megan McRoberts & George Rodger

Funerals

10th November Lee Butler
 29th November Trevor Lawrence
 30th November Justin Earl

Interment of Ashes

27th November Tess Boswood

December Readings

5th December

Old Testament
 Psalm
 New Testament
 Gospel

Advent 2

Malachi 3.1-4
 Benedictus
 Philippians 1.3-11
 Luke 3.1-6

12th December

Old Testament
 Psalm
 New Testament
 Gospel

Advent 3

Zephaniah 3.14-end
 146
 Philippians 4.4-7
 Luke 3.7-18

19th December

Old Testament
 Psalm
 New Testament
 Gospel

Advent 4

Micah 5.2-5
 80.1-8
 Hebrews 10.5-10
 Luke 1.39-45

26th December

Old Testament
 Psalm
 New Testament
 Gospel

St Stephen

Acts 7.51-end
 119.161-168
 Galatians 2.16b-20
 Matthew 10.17-22



***Please recycle your copy of the Norman Arch.
 Maybe pass it on to someone else!***

DECEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH



Providing a Stepping Stone to those who are Homeless or Vulnerably Housed

The Porch was formed in the 1970's in the front doorway of the All Saints Sisters of the Poor in Cowley and is now based at 139 Magdalen Road, Oxford. It provides day-long support for homeless and vulnerably housed people wanting to move forward in their lives, away from street life and addiction.

The Porch's aim is to help its Members to put their feet on the bottom rung of the ladder out of the mire of poverty and despair. It provides hot meals, shower and laundry facilities and clothing. In addition it has the use of 12 allotments, provides basic cooking skills, help with housing and a job club to help the Members to obtain employment.

We have been desperately in need of a larger space where we can provide an extended range of wheelchair accessible services. In January 2020, the Porch was able to purchase a former church just 100 yards away – a much larger building which will allow us to support more homeless and vulnerably housed people and to expand our range of support. The extra space will also mean we can support Oxford city to provide more safe sleeping spaces at the harshest times of the year.



Although we've increased our delivery of meals, Covid means we can't provide any showers or our laundry service from our old building.

The new building is urgently needed and Covid and its longer term impact has made it even more relevant right now!

Our café is the hub of The Porch. Healthy food eaten on a regular basis is a critical start to the improvement of the body and the mind. We provide nutritious low-priced meals twice a day, six days a week, all year round. We cook with our own organic produce, harvest donations and contributions from the local food bank.

Our two kitchens, café and food store have been awarded five stars by the Food Standards Agency. We offer members the chance to gain new skills by working in our kitchens in preparation for further training and employment opportunities.

Our café is also a vital social and activity space. We provide daily newspapers and board games. We have bingo nights and other social events. Sometimes we offer special meals cooked and provided by friends of The Porch and of course we celebrate Christmas.

We are immensely grateful for all the support we have been given from St Andrew's over the years. Thank you!

Jacky Cole

ST ANDREW'S BOAT



The boat will be out in church on
5th & 12th December.

We ask that unwrapped gifts, for all ages, and also toiletries be placed in the boat on those Sundays.

These will be distributed by the Salvation Army for Christmas.

Christmas Flowers



Donations are needed and are now very welcome.

There is a plate in the baptistery and at the back of church on Sundays or you can pop some money through the Vicarage door in a marked envelope.

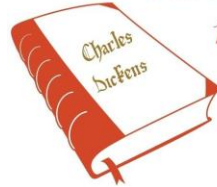


Young Church's Remembrance wreaths with doves of peace

St. Andrew's CE Primary School's
**A Christmas Carol
Victorian Christmas Fair**



*Sunday 5 December
11am-2:30pm*



Entry price: £1 on the door,
children free

Artisan stalls

Raffle

Craft activities

Tombola

Santa's grotto

BBQ

Mulled wine

Games

Wrap up warmly for a mainly-outdoor
Christmas Fair

Please help us to cut down on waste and
bring your own hot drink cup



Friends of Saint Andrew's Church

The Village Christmas Concert of Carols & Readings

**Sunday 12th December
6pm**



Followed by mulled wine and mince pies

**Tickets £5 for adults (on the door)
Children free**

CHURCH GARDEN



'When the red, red robin goes bob, bob, bobbing along..'

We are now in December, and Advent. Christmas adverts are on the TV, every magazine and cookery program is telling us how to cook the best ever turkey, and so we must conclude that the Christmas season has started. The shops are full of Christmas cards, some of which feature a little red-breasted robin. Of all the garden birds, the robin has become a symbol of Christmas. Of course, there are other birds but I can't resist mentioning; partridges in pear trees, swans (a-swimming or not), geese (a-laying) turtle doves and French hens. Robins, more than any bird, are the gardeners' friend. As soon as a bit of soil is turned over, a robin is bound to arrive, sitting on a branch or watching from a perch on a nearby fence. The robin is not interested in the gardener, (although it feels like he is looking for company) but he is just waiting for a worm or two to be exposed for his dinner. Robins are territorial birds, so it's likely that the robin who comes to watch me do some weeding is the same one each time. Male and female robins have the same red colouring and it is not possible to reliably distinguish between them on colouring or size.

The garden still has plenty of interest and food for wild life. There is a lot of ivy growing but it is mainly the non-flowering and non-berrying type. However we do have one large bush near the east gate by St Andrews Lane. This bush is in flower, providing nectar for insects and later will be covered in many dark purple berries. It will be very useful in Christmas flower arrangements or in a handmade wreath. The Rowan tree still has plenty of berries, and surprisingly, I have seen a few early primroses. It won't be long before the snowdrops will start to push up through the soil. Please do look out for the Christmas roses near the South door.

The New Year is the time for making a 'New Year resolution'. If, like me, you were interested in the Climate Change conference in Glasgow, you may feel that now is the time to think about steps you

could take to 'make a difference'. It is easy to feel that, as individuals, we can't do anything. However, no-one can do 'everything' but we can all do 'something'. This year, I am not going to buy any peat-containing composts. Our peat bogs are a huge carbon sink which are being dug up to provide us gardeners with a cheap growing material. They take thousands of years to form and are irreplaceable. There are now good alternatives, it's up to us to make that change. Secondly, I am going to continue to reuse and take good care of) my plastic pots. Black plastic almost all ends up in landfill as it can't be recycled. We must reuse and repurpose. I have a little wooden mould and with a bit of careful folding, can make little newspaper pots for seedlings. You can also use the inside of toilet rolls or kitchen towels. When the seedlings are ready for planting, the whole thing goes into the ground and will rot down quickly. It does take a bit of time to make newspaper pots, but it's still quicker than making a special trip a garden centre.

I feel I have to mention Christmas presents and make a few suggestions. It seems sad that the words 'I don't know what to buy, he/she has everything' are said so frequently. My view is that a gift shows the love of the giver and that time and thoughts mean so much more than a purchased present. What then could be better to give a gardener than some home raised plants, rooted cuttings, or promise of ready to plant seedlings in the spring? A good book, preferably second-hand, or perhaps a homemade jam or chutney. Don't get me wrong, I will always appreciate warm extra thick socks, protective gloves and new secateurs!

The Church garden will soon be ready for Christmas. The now traditional Christmas tree lighting evening and the lights on the tower will be a welcome site for all Old Headington residents. There may even be some extra new interesting things in the Church garden to delight you! It may be cold, but I hope you all enjoy the beauty of our lovely, peaceful garden in this joyous season.

A very Happy Christmas to you all,

Jane Shepherd
jane.shepherd1955@gmail.com

Baptisms & Confirmations 2021

Sunday 14th November was a busy day. At the Parish Eucharist we had Baptism, Confirmation, & Remembrance! It was wonderful to welcome Bishop Steven back to such a busy church full of wonderful; music and liturgy.

There were seven candidates from St Andrew's and four from Headington School were confirmed, with two candidates from St Andrew's baptised.

Last month I wrote about the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence. Here is a picture of some of the Bishops (and the Mothers Union CEO) who are supporting our campaign pictured outside Church House during General Synod.



The Bishop & Fr Darren with Osman

Bishop Steven offered his warm congratulations to Fr Darren and Fr Simon on their Civil Partnership which had happened on 13th November, before preaching a thoughtful sermon on the themes of Confirmation, Remembrance and the Eucharist.

The Act of Remembrance was enhanced by wreaths created by Young Church and brass from Headington School.

In Oxford diocese members have been busy supporting those in need at Christmas. Here is a star that has been knitted for a child who is supported by Children Heard and Seen (a charity that helps the children of prisoners).



250 of these have been made. Children who have been helped by Baby Basics will be given a toy, and their mums some toiletries. Prisoners at Bullingdon and Woodhill will receive a Christmas card from Mother's Union. Around the world members prepare Christmas Food Hampers and give presents for the

marginalised. Whilst many of us are able to celebrate the birth of Christ, others find this time very stressful. We do our best to bring some joy.

The next Bible Studies are as follows (all from 10.30am – 11.30am):

Tuesday 7th December at 89 Derwent Avenue
 Tuesday 11th January in the Church Room at St Andrew's Church

Tea, coffee and biscuits (and possibly cake) will be provided too. Please bring your Bible. If you need a lift, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me on 01869 343760.



Bishop Steven with Peter

Alison Bennett

We offer our warm congratulations to Ben and Osman on their Baptism and Confirmation and to Sarah, Emma, Peter, Bethany and Caine on their Confirmation.



Emma, Ben & Sarah after the service

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on the day and especially to the musicians and choirs from St Andrew's and Headington School (which included a harpist!).

Malcolm Nichols

Crib Service



Any children who wish to take part in the Nativity service at 4.00pm on Christmas Eve are invited to turn up about 20 minutes before the start and we will find you a part. We particularly need angels, shepherds, wise men and animals for the stable. We have plenty of costumes, but you could bring your own if you like!

Come and help us tell the story of Jesus' birth. Much more fun than just sitting and watching!

No practice is necessary if you want come on the day, but you are also welcome to our rehearsal in church during the 10.00am service on Sunday 19th December

The Bible Reading Fellowship

EXPLORING OUR FAITH....

In a recent sermon Fr Darren explained some of the thinking behind the evangelist St Mark's construction of his gospel. It wasn't just a straightforward biography of Jesus; all the way through it, St Mark is pointing his readers to the question "Who is this Jesus?"

The other gospel writers – Matthew, Luke, and even John to some extent – picked up on stories which Mark had recorded and then re-arranged and re-used them, or just added a slightly different touch, to emphasise the particular purpose for which each was writing their own gospel accounts. Each was writing for a different audience, in a different setting, facing different challenges, and sometimes with a different cultural or religious background. So each gospel needed to be differently angled....while still trying to put into words the almost indescribable reality of this Jesus whose nature each of them had personally found overwhelming.

One of the recent writers of the daily Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) Notes asked how we in our day can best talk about Jesus in a world where every day people of other faiths are "on our doorstep". That may literally be so because they live next door, or are next to us in our workplace. Or it is certainly so, as we've seen through COP26, that across the world our 'other faith neighbours' in different countries wrestle with the same problems which worry us all.

One thing that BRF writer points out is that just as Christians are divided between Anglican, Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed, Charismatic and with each of those broad categories dividing into smaller groupings along conservative and liberal lines, so too are each of the other faiths divided. Jews are Orthodox, Liberal or Reformed: even in Jesus' day, Pharisees and Sadducees held strongly different beliefs. Muslims are Sunni, Shi'ite or Sufi – with other categories such as Ahmadiyya Muslims who are keen on interfaith co-operation but sometimes isolated from other Muslims, and the more conservative Salafis. Hinduism too divides into four different denominations, Buddhism into three. Sikhism is a younger religion, hardly 500 years old, distinct from either Hinduism or Islam; most argue that it has not yet evolved into denominations and yet it has different emphases, following different gurus....and that of others.

So should we throw up our hands and retreat into our shells, feeling that the territory is too complex to enter without risking our giving offence? And yet, our neighbours of other faiths have just as much difficulty in understanding exactly what Christians believe. Maybe they have met someone who tried aggressively to convert them; maybe it was a Jehovah's Witness or a Mormon, not actually regarded as within mainstream Christian Churches. And so confusion builds....confusions which are sometimes harmful to the building up of true community.

A better course is, first, to hold back from stereotyping anyone of another faith or, indeed, of our own. For us to assert, "Muslims say..." or "Hindus believe..." may well not be true of the person in front of us....nor of Catholics or Evangelicals. Secondly, step out of our comfort zone: be brave enough to accept invitations to a neighbour's house, even if you fear the food may be too spicy or you may not be sure how to behave. Seldom was Jesus the host, controlling matters; far more often he risked being a guest in someone else's house. But thirdly, build up our knowledge of our own faith so that if we are asked about Jesus, we have some idea what to say.

The daily BRF notes can help us greatly in this. In 2022 BRF celebrates its 100th anniversary with the theme 'Sharing the Story'. Their *New Daylight* series January-April offers brief passages for each day, drawn by a team of contributors from different parts of the Bible (the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Acts 16-20) or illustrating themes such as in 'Learning from Simeon & Anna' in Epiphanytide, then through Lent 'Heaven', 'Rest & Recreation', the Ten Commandments and, in Passiontide, readings for Holy Week and Easter. Their aim is to provide "*an accessible yet stimulating aid to spending time with God each day, deepening faith and their readers' knowledge of scripture*".

The BRF *Guidelines* series for that period offers more in-depth study, "*drawing on the insights of current scholarship*", and intended to enable readers "*to interpret and apply the biblical text with confidence in today's world*". Some sections look at the ongoing effects of the pandemic ('Coronavirus and Christ' and 'Self-care'), or life's milestones ('Childbirth' and 'Old Age'). Lent notes are centred on 'God's travelling People', leading on to 'Resurrection: the gift of hope', 'Holy Week and human suffering', and 'The Pathways of Easter'. Other writers help us understand biblical writings: for Jews in the book of Esther, exiled among hostile Persians – how hard is it to be faithful in a strange land?; in St Paul's short epistle to the Galatians, focussed on themes of identity and belonging, with

tender generosity towards our neighbours; and in the part of the Second Book of Kings where the kingdom of Israel split off from the kingdom of Judah, both spiralling downwards into corruption until God signals surprising hope.

You can find examples of BRF notes on our church bookstand. Some you can buy there. Or if you would like to order a set of notes, please do let me know so that I can arrange it.

Nicholas Coulton
ngc@proscenia.co.uk

Notes from the Organ Bench



Sunday by Sunday in the Pew Sheet, at the end of each hymn, is a brief note acknowledging the writer of the words and the name of the tune. Recently we sang the hymn, 'There is a land of pure delight' to the tune by George Garrett called 'Beulah'. This name caught my attention because, as a student, I lived close to the place in London after which, I believe, the tune was named, Beulah Hill: Norwood, South East London.

Why, I wondered, was the hymn tune called Beulah and what was George Garrett's connection with Beulah Hill?

George Garrett was born in Winchester and lived from 1834 to 1897. He served as a chorister at Winchester Cathedral where he was also assistant organist to Samuel Sebastian Wesley. For 40 years, he was the Director of Music at St John's College, Cambridge. No connection to South East London would be apparent from this!

Looking a little further, I discovered that George Garrett's predecessor at St John's College, Cambridge was Thomas Attwood Walmisley who, before moving to Cambridge was organist at Croydon Parish Church. Now that's moving us a little closer to the Beulah Hill connection!

Walmisley was simultaneously organist of Trinity College, Cambridge and St John's College, and became Professor of Music at Cambridge and, coincidentally, composed the chant that we used for the psalm on St Andrew's Day.

Thomas Attwood Walmisley was named in honour of his godfather, Thomas Attwood who, when a student, had been a pupil of Mozart. A manuscript of Attwood's can be seen in the Mozarthaus in Vienna. The manuscript has Attwood's original in black ink and copious corrections in red ink by Mozart's hand!

Mozart only lived in the house in Vienna from 1784 to 1787 and Attwood arrived in Vienna in 1785, aged 20, having already studied for two years in Naples. Attwood's sponsor was the Prince of Wales, later George IV. Thomas Attwood spent much of his working life as organist to St Paul's Cathedral and was an eminent court musician. His London home was in Cheyne Walk.

In 1829 Attwood had heard the young Mendelssohn perform while he was in London. Mendelssohn then went up to Scotland before returning to London. Sadly, during this time in the capital, he fell out of a carriage and injured his leg. Attwood wrote to Mendelssohn, sending him a large hamper and inviting him, when he was fit to travel, to stay in his family home at Beulah Hill, Norwood. While he was there, Mendelssohn composed a piece for harp and piano called 'The Evening Bell', suggested by the gate bell at Attwood's house.

So there we have it! George Garrett's connection with Beulah Hill was through the godfather of his predecessor at St John's College, Cambridge, Thomas Attwood: a pupil of Mozart and a friend to Mendelssohn.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for all your support during the past year and to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy and safe New Year.

My best wishes to you all.

Richard Bennett
Director of Music

Walsingham Pilgrimage 2022



The 2022 has been arranged for 12th - 15th September, and details may be obtained by contacting Malcolm Nichols
malcolmjnichols@outlook.com 01865 761184

January Calendar

1	S	The Naming of Jesus		none
2	Sun	FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY	BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
3	M	Eucharist		9.30am
4	T			none
5	W	Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
6	Th	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
7	F			none
8	S			none
9	Sun	BAPTISM OF CHRIST		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
10	M	Eucharist		9.30am
		Tea on Monday		3.00pm
11	T	Mother's Union Bible Study		10.00am
12	W	Aelred of Hexham		
		Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
13	Th	Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers		
		Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
14	F			none
15	S			
16	Sun	2nd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
17	M	Anthony of Egypt, Abbot		
		Eucharist		9.30am
18	T			none
19	W	Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester		
		Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
20	Th	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
21	F	Agnes, Child Martyr at Rome		none
22	S			none
23	Sun	3rd SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
24	M	Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva		
		Eucharist		9.30am
		Tea on Monday		3.00pm
25	T	The Conversion of Paul		none
26	W	Timothy and Titus		
		Eucharist	BCP	10.00am
27	T	Little Fishes play group		9.30am
		Eucharist		7.30pm
28	F	Thomas Aquinas		none
29	S			
30	Sun	CANDLEMAS		
			BCP	8.00am
		Parish Eucharist		10.00am
31	M	Eucharist		9.30am

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Editor.
No responsibility can be taken for advertising statements published.

From the Vicar

The last couple of days before Christmas often cause us a slight sense of panic. There's that present I've not yet bought. And what on earth am I going to buy. There's the fruitless and frustrating wandering up and down the High and into Queen Street and then Cornmarket searching for inspiration. We're desperately trying to remember the broad hints that a loved one has been dropping for weeks about what they would like when we weren't quite paying attention. Then suddenly it's too late. Christmas Eve dawns and brings the last round of Christmas cards from people to whom you haven't sent one. The shops close and no more food or presents can be bought and there is a sense in which it is only then that Christmas really begins, when it's too late to do anything more.

And then we come to church and hear what the angel says to the shepherds. "Fear not..." Don't worry. "Fear not." This is, in fact, the standard opening line for angels in the Bible. When the angel tells Mary that she's going to give birth to Jesus, the message is "don't be afraid". "Fear not" is what the angel also says to Joseph in his dream. That's the dream which convinces him to stay faithful to this girl to whom he's betrothed and who finds herself strangely pregnant.

There are lots of reasons to be afraid in the Christmas story. Who wouldn't be afraid away from home with nowhere to stay and about to give birth? Who wouldn't be afraid when there was an insane tyrant like King Herod around?

If you ever visit the Holy Land and things are peaceful enough you will get the opportunity to visit Beit Sahour about three kilometres outside Bethlehem. It's where the Shepherds' Fields are found. Despite the constant stream of pilgrims, it's a surprisingly peaceful place. But there is fear in air. The Shepherds' Fields look across the valley to an Israeli settlement. In between there's the security fence and wall separating Israel from the Palestinian Territories. It's a vivid symbol that where the Prince of Peace was born there is no peace. And yet to troubled Bethlehem countless people come as pilgrims on a journey of faith, curious to see the place where Jesus was born, wanting to catch something of the joy, mystery and love of the Christ-child, God with us.

The little town of Bethlehem will be packed at Christmas and despite the images on the Christmas Cards that we have received and set up around our homes it does it good to face the reality that Jesus was not born in a place of stability, security, prosperity and freedom. He was born in occupied territory, in poverty, in danger, and where there was

no room for him at the inn. Pilgrims to Bethlehem still go to a problem place of high unemployment, where many of its citizens cannot visit Jerusalem just a few miles away and where many citizens of Jerusalem cannot visit Bethlehem. But that's the point. God reveals himself to us within the troubles of the world, not after our problems are solved.

Jesus Christ is born in us when we are ill or after we've had a row, when our relationships break down, or when we are lonely. Christ comes to us to be alongside us in our poverty or our dissatisfaction with life. He's with us in unemployment and grief. The birth of this child in Bethlehem two thousand years ago wasn't some simple solution to the world's problems. He grew to be a man who had to face suffering, an unfair trial and an undeserved death himself. He knew life wasn't fair. No, Jesus Christ doesn't solve everything with the wave of a magic wand. But this is God coming to live alongside us, within us, to bring us hope because even when we don't love one another he never gives up loving us. That's the joy of the Christmas message.

Christmas speaks to not of happiness but of joy. Christmas does not say to us 'don't worry, be happy.' The constant refrain is 'fear not, rejoice.' Joy finds its fulfilment in God, and its opposite is not sorrow, but fear. Fear not, rejoice. We hear this spoken by the angel to a terrified Mary, overwhelmed by the enormity of what will be asked of her. We hear it spoken to bewildered shepherds minding their own business and their flocks by night. We may hear it whispered to us as we enter into wherever our darkness is. Do not fear, rejoice.

This story that we do not have to be governed by fear, this story of love born among us is astonishingly good news. But it tells us more than this – it tells us that we are capable of giving love and of relieving others from fear. Because this story of God born among us puts an end to notions of a distant kind of God, something outside of us, but places God firmly in our midst and teaches us that in our humanity we all have the capacity to be Christ-like.

The shepherds leave the stable and return to work, to the usual routine of shepherding, but they go back to it transformed. They face the same problems and live the same lives but with new hope because of the joy coming from this child, Jesus Christ, God with us. Fear not.

A very happy and joyful Christmas to you all.

Fr Darren

JANUARY MISSION OF THE MONTH



The Mission of Seafarers contribute to the physical & mental welfare of approximately 1.5 million seamen & women who work on the sea in difficult & often dangerous conditions. This support has been especially important during the pandemic when personnel on ships have found themselves isolated aboard their vessels unable to go ashore or return to their home ports.

The Mission's focus is to compensate for the lack of facilities available, & for the physical & mental well-being of the sea-personnel caught in these unresolved situations.



Mission to Seafarers is a global presence in over 200 ports with chaplains offering support & counselling from 150 centres with help ranging from financial & religious guidance to legal & social resources.

Although the nearest mission centres are at Avonmouth & Southampton there are 21 mission ports in total throughout the UK, with the HQ in London. Their local reach is also augmented by online chaplaincy & other services.

The charity run a number of campaigns to raise awareness & support including Sea-Sunday which is observed by a number of churches in the Oxford Diocese. These commemorate seafarers & the difficult & dangerous work they undertake to convey up to 90% of the things we need. Sea-Sunday can be commemorated any Sunday of the year & for more information please contact

www.missiontoseafarers.org

A prayer for seafarers

We give you thanks, O Lord,
for the whole company of your saints,
with whom in fellowship we share our prayers and
praises.

Inspired by them, and by your grace,
may we daily grow in faith, in compassion,
in love and in service.

Guide us to your kingdom and grant us your peace
at all times.

Amen.

Malcolm Nichols

January Readings

2nd January

Old Testament
Psalm
New Testament
Gospel

Feast of the Epiphany

Isaiah 60.1-6
72
Ephesians 3.1-12
Matthew 2.1-12

9th January

Old Testament
Psalm
New Testament
Gospel

Baptism of Christ

Isaiah 43.1-7
29
Acts 8.14-17
Luke 3.15-17, 21-22

16th January

Old Testament
Psalm
New Testament
Gospel

2nd Sunday of Epiphany

Isaiah 62.1-5
36
1 Corinthians 12.1-11
John 2.1-11

23rd January

Old Testament
Psalm
New Testament
Gospel

3rd Sunday of Epiphany

Nehemiah 8.1-10
19
1 Corinthians 12.12-31
Luke 4.14-21

30th January

Old Testament
Psalm
New Testament
Gospel

Feast of Candlemas

Malachi 3.1-5
24.7-10
Hebrews 2.14-end
Luke 2.22-40





Our 10th Art at St
Andrew's

Saturday May 7th –
Sunday 15th May 2022

Seven wonderful artists!

Look out for more details in
future magazines.



A group for pre-school children and their
parent/carers

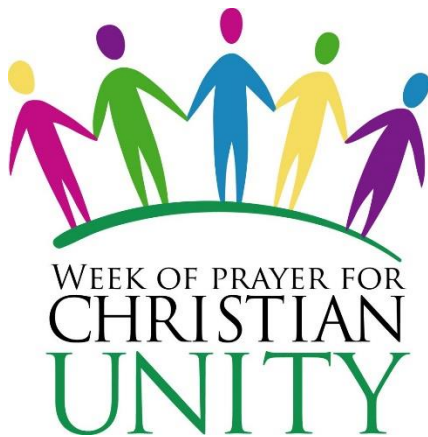
Thursdays in school term
9.30 – 11.30
in the Church Room

Closed on 23rd & 30th December.
Opens on 6th January 2022

Please bring your own drinks and snacks.

No charge.

If you would like to attend please contact
Natacha Huggett in advance on
07436 837779



Churches Together in Headington

Annual Ecumenical Service

23rd January 2022
All Saints' Parish Church
3pm



TEA ON MONDAY & KNIT AND NATTER

13th December, 10th and 24th January

3.00 - 4.30 pm

Join us in the church room for refreshments and a chat.

Bring along a friend or neighbour who would enjoy some company.



All welcome to the new TOM knitting/crochet/sewing group.

Take part in our charity projects or bring your own work along.



Everyone welcome!