

PARISH OF KIRKLEES VALLEY  
'PARISH NEWS'  
DECEMBER 2020

The Brandlesholme Festival  
of Light, Hopes and Dreams is up and running!!



## Editorial .....

**W**ell, Advent is upon us, and so is the Brandlesholme Community Festival of Light, Hope and Dreams. The Committee have been hard at work publicising the festival, and you can get involved too! Full details of how to do this are on the update in this edition. The photo on the front cover is the display in St Francis house, arranged by Fr. Luke. How about sending in your photos for the next edition?

I have had so many messages of thanks and reports about the smiles on so many faces following the distribution of Advent 'Gifts of Hope' made by St Francis Ladies Club Committee. Hopefully, everyone will enjoy these small gifts and they will give you all a little bit of hope for the coming year. I'll expect to be sent some photographs of emerging daffodils in February!

We have plenty of Christmas greetings inside for you all to read, including one from Messy Church, thanks to everyone who has sent these in. There is also an update on the 'Christmas Films' from Fr. Luke and we see the start of a mini-series of narrated stories from Fr. Derek Akker - the first one being around the nativity and the journey to Bethlehem. It is a really different and modern account of the journey and will be followed next month by another story. I have enjoyed reading it, do let me know if you have enjoyed reading it too, it's always good to get feedback. You will also find inside, by popular request, the recipe for Simon's wonderful sounding Christmas Vodka, if you feel up to making some!

Enjoy the wonderful season and I'll be back in the New Year with an 'Epiphany' Edition.

*Lynne*

= - - - - - =

### **From the Parish Registers**

**RIP**

Lynn Skilling, of Warwick Avenue, Woolfold, 65 years old.

# FROM THE VICAR



## Getting in the Christmas Spirit...

It's beginning to look **a lot like Christmas**... Arguments about relaxing rules, family bubbles, tiers, singing, shopping, restaurants and pubs, financial worries, loneliness and all of the rest... And like most Christmases, **none of that is what the Church is supposed to be marking** at this time of the year!

Advent and Christmas are times of **expectation and preparation followed by comfort and joy**. But those words don't mean what most people take them to mean – the wait for presents as we open the doors of our chocolate or gin calendars; the annual splurge on food and booze and boxes of stuff that people don't really want...

In this season, **we are called to be signs of hope** for our world – and that means **trying to live differently**, which is **hard** when we so easily get caught up the hype, especially at the end of this strange year. But our Christian faith, and the story of that first Christmas, are all about **being in it for the long haul**. The first Christmas in a rough building in Bethlehem, for a displaced family, who then flee to Egypt to escape a vicious ruler, **isn't just** about the run-up to the big day and then back to normal. It's about **how a new birth changes life forever** – as any new parent will tell you. Only this birth, the birth of Jesus, **changes all our lives forever**...

However we keep this season, there are **challenges this year**. Seeing family or not has become an **existential, moral question** – and it isn't easy to know **what is right or what isn't**. And that's if you are fortunate enough to **have the choice at all** – as some people don't. But what **all of us need to hold onto**, *whatever* we may choose to do, is **why** we are doing it at all at this time of year – because **God came to give good news to the earth, to be with us**. And that means with **all** of us.

What we need to do then, is **recognise God in one another** this Christmas time – in our **friends and family**, in **ourselves**, and also in the **other people** out there, the ones we can so easily blame for spikes in rates or so-called bad behaviour...

Let's make this Christmas, and the New Year that follows, a time when we **stand back from judging and blaming others** – when we **recognise the struggles** of living with the real confusion in the guidance we are receiving, **do our best to keep ourselves and those we love safe**, and **focus on the real hope of Christmas** – that **God is with us**, because he is born **as one of us**, and that is good news for **all** humankind, **not just** for us...

In the meantime, to get you in **the Christmas Spirit early**, here's a practical way for us to do some **expectation and preparation followed by comfort and joy!**

Following **my reflection on Advent Sunday**, a number of people have asked about the **recipe for the Christmas Vodka** I mentioned – which I am delighted to share, along with a couple of festive cocktail suggestions too.

You will need some **Kilner Jars** or similar sealable containers, some **vodka** – supermarket own-brand is ideal – **rhubarb, apples, granulated sugar, cinnamon sticks, and ginger**. You may wish to add your own additional ingredients such as **cloves** (but not too many or it will swamp the flavour), or even **orange wedges** (again, not too many).

For drinking at Christmas in any year, this is best made in **late April/May time**, and never beyond June. First, harvest as much rhubarb as you can. Buy some reasonably sweet eating apples – Coxes or similar.

Chop the rhubarb and apples and fill your jar or jars with thumb-size or smaller pieces of each – about 2/3 rhubarb to 1/3 apple. Sprinkle one to two teaspoons of ground ginger over the fruit mix. Squeeze two cinnamon sticks into the jar at different ends – less if you don't like cinnamon – and if adding cloves,

add one, or if adding orange add no more than a couple of wedges. Heap 2-3 tablespoons of sugar onto the top of the fruit mix, and then pour in vodka until there is no air gap at the top. Seal carefully and shake the jar gently, inverting it completely if possible.

Normally you will be able to make at least two jars' worth of mixture with one bottle of vodka – perhaps more, and you can make as much as you wish if you have the capacity! Once the jar is sealed, store in a dark, cool place for a couple of months.

At the **start of September**, take out the jar(s), unseal and use a teaspoon to taste the vodka. The mix of spices and fruit should be flavouring the vodka and it should have an unmistakably Christmas flavour, albeit not very 'finished' yet. The fruit mix should be browning slowly in the vodka but not looking manky.

If the flavour is too sour, add more sugar. If it lacks spice, you can add ground cinnamon, more ginger, more cloves, but as always, be mindful not to overpower the fruit. Check you are happy with the flavour before putting it away again, but remember it will continue to develop. If necessary, top up with more vodka to avoid air in the jar and reseal. Store it again.

At the **end of November/beginning of Advent**, bring out the jar(s). Taste the liquid to check it for flavour – it should be very Christmassy and more balanced – perhaps over-sweet the first year you make it, but if you keep making it, you can judge the quantities of ingredients better for yourself. If you are more scientifically minded, you can vary the ingredients in different jars even in the one year – this is how I discovered the difference apples and cloves can make!

Sieve the liquid into a measuring jug to remove the fruit mix. The fruit itself is very tasty having been steeped in the vodka, and can make an excellent pudding at this point with some ice-cream – as long as you don't need to drive afterwards! Once the full jar is sieved, leave the liquid to settle for 10 minutes. If you have other jars, ideally sieve them into separate containers. Check each container by taste – then sieve them again together into one big container. Stir and then sieve again into a suitable bottle(s) – an old spirit bottle, for example, but spring-stoppered glass bottles from furniture stores are also perfect.

Once bottled, **your Christmas Spirit is ready to go**. And it literally tastes like Christmas, in that wonderful old Victorian imagining many of us grew up with. It can be **drunk neat** as a winter warmer after some lusty outdoor carolling, and makes an excellent dram to leave out for Father Christmas on Christmas Eve.

For something **a little more exotic**, in the style of a Kir Royale, add a splash of the Spirit to the bottom of a champagne glass and top up with the sparkling wine or even fizzy water or lemonade of your choice to make a Christmassy '**Cheer Royale**'.

Alternatively, add a finger of the Spirit to a highball glass filled with ice and two squeezed lime wedges, then top up with ginger beer or ginger ale, to make a festive version of a Moscow Mule that I like to call a '**Little Donkey**'.

Once you start making this Spirit, if you have access to a rhubarb plant, it soon becomes **a regular habit and an annual tradition**. Now when I make it, I like to make sure that I still have a little of the previous year's batch to **compare** the two. If you sieve it properly on bottling it keeps very well and develops a surprising smoothness. But personally, I like to **add the new batch to the last of the old**, so that the bottle **never runs dry** from generation to generation. Enjoy!

Please **look after yourselves, be kind and drink responsibly** this Advent and Christmas. We will be running a **mix of online and onsite services** for the Christmas period – details will follow subject to the latest government guidance. Please **join us if you can!** And whatever you do, have a **peaceful, hopeful, protected and blessed Christmas** when it comes!

In the name of Jesus,

*Simon*

## Christmas ... and a few Christmas Films ... from Fr. Luke

**Dear Friends** - I hope that you can feel *some* of the excitement of Christmas in the air – Advent is here, and we know in just a few short weeks, we will be celebrating the world-changing birth of Jesus; it is indeed, the most wonderful time of the year. The joy available to all is infinite.

“Now I have a machine gun – Ho Ho Ho” What warmer welcome can there be than that? 😊 Although meant as a seasonal joke, we should remember that in the First World War, at Christmas, the above *was* true, so our line from a very well-known Christmas film actually *does* have some relevance for those facing Christmas away from loved ones this year. In truth, we may all be facing Christmas away from loved ones in some way at the time of writing – we do not know really who we will be allowed to see or not.

We **will** still be keeping Christmas though. Let us be positive, and say for certain what we **can** do. We can **always** pray, and give thanks for the blessings that we know in our own lives. We can build on this by acting on the principle of the season of goodwill to all people, and try and help others less fortunate by being charitable towards them in some way. This could be a donation of some kind, even if it is just a donation of time to ring someone up, maybe even one of your own relatives or friends you have not spoken to for a while. So here are two things we can definitely do, pray and be charitable. That is a good start to any time of year, not just Christmas. I know I am teaching you to suck eggs, but a reminder doesn’t hurt at Christmas when we are all too busy for the seemingly more important things – well, these **are** the most important things.

Another thing we can do is think of the Nativity. A simple, Divine story, but as Holy and enchanting as ever. Fr Derek has written an excellent modern language version of the story, it serves very well in bringing the world-changing events of 2000 years ago to life for us now, so please read it if you can. A final thing we can do, no matter what restrictions we may face, is to have some Christmas cheer. In order to do that, we do all the above, in that order, and I promise you **will** be more cheerful - think of it as religious personal wellbeing training. If we add in a little good food and drink, and a Christmas film or two, even if we *are* alone on Christmas day, I hope that you can find *something* to have some Christmas cheer over. We do have a lot to be most grateful for, not least the Virgin Birth from which everything else has been given life too. If you are struggling, or know someone who is, please let me know ([FRLS@protonmail.com](mailto:FRLS@protonmail.com) / 07999 802133 / 24 hours). There are several people already I will be visiting on Christmas Day, and I will be delighted to add you to the list – there **will** be Christmas cheer, no matter what, and I will be bringing home-made mince pies as well as wearing my favourite Christmas jumper 😊

Right then, what about those films? Here are three classic films that always appear in some form or other over Christmas. Whether you know them off by heart, or have never even heard of them, they are most certainly worth watching. In reverse order then: -

3. **National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation** – 1989, US, directed by Jeremiah S. Chechlik, starring Chevy Chase, Beverly D’Angelo, Randy Quaid, Brian Doyle-Murray, Juliette Lewis.



© 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox

Above we have an idyllic, contemporary Christmas scene – Clark Griswold (*Chevy Chase* in perhaps his best role) and Ellen Griswold (the superb *Beverly D’Angelo*) stand outside their Christmas light-bedecked family home. All is not what it may seem though. This film is very funny, as it fairly accurately, a few moments of broad physical comedy aside, recreates some of more trying elements of Christmas. In fact, there may be some people this year

who find Christmas a lot easier and enjoyable, meaningful even, for exactly the reasons we see in **Christmas Vacation** – by *not* having the family coming to visit. Be aware that there are one or two more adult scenes, and a swear word towards the end, but it is all in context, and is a genuinely warm film, where ultimately, the family as a unit is affirmed as the worthier existence – it provides room at the inn for Cousin Eddie and his family, and waters down (literally) the cold, empty late 80s capitalism of the next door neighbours. Play ball!

2. **A Christmas Carol** – 1984, UK/US, directed by Clive Donner, starring George C. Scott, David Warner, Edward Woodward, Susannah York.



© 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox

Above we find the Ghost of Christmas Present (*Edward Woodward* in good form) haunting the definitive film portrayal of Ebenezer Scrooge (the incomparable *George C. Scott*.) Friends, this is the **best** version of Charles Dickens' deeply profound ghost story ever committed to celluloid. I know you know the plot, but we should not dismiss its life-changing essence. The Christian message is here in one of its strongest narrative incarnations. Scrooge truly does come to faith, and changes his life as a result. You can't do better than that. George C. Scott gives a monumental performance as Scrooge, by turn ogre and office overlord, equally pitiful as he later begs for mercy. The spirit of Christmas is brought alive by this superb and fairly accurate version of the novel, filmed beautifully on location in Shrewsbury filling in for Old London Town. Its director, the old hand Clive Donner, had been editor on the seminal film *Scrooge* in 1951, and brings that experience to bear on this film. Mega support is given by a fantastic ensemble cast of British thespians, not least the wonderful *David Warner* as Bob Cratchit – his performance towards the film's denouement as he returns late to the office on Boxing Day is a genuine Christmas Joy to behold as he waits for Scrooge to berate him, not realising or believing at first how he has changed. Seek out and watch this film friends, it is an absolute classic of its kind. We have thinned out our film and tv collection over this last year or so, from around a thousand DVDs etc down to about 80 – this was one of the films I kept. I can't praise it enough.

1. **Die Hard** – 1988, US, directed by John McTiernan, starring Bruce Willis, Alan Rickman, Bonnie Bedelia, Alexander Godunov, Reginald VelJohnson.

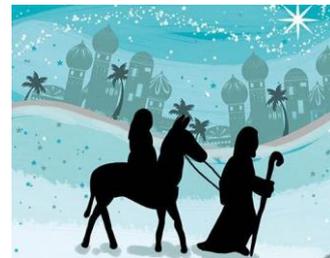
Right, I *had* written a near essay on why you should watch Die Hard, but realised that my space was running out, so have had to delete it! Okay, Die Hard takes place on Christmas Eve, and features John McClane (*Bruce Willis*) as a modern-day avenging angel character *a la* 2 Kings 19.35. There is a *lot* of swearing and violence so be aware. Its sheer rollicking nature means it is pulled off with aplomb, not unlike the Kings scripture – we are left wondering about the reality, but find something satisfying and maybe even disturbing in the telling of the story anyway.

A last-minute nomination has been **The Muppet Christmas Carol**, 1992, US, directed by Brian Henson, starring a tremendous dead-pan *Michael Caine* as Scrooge, and various puppet performers. An excellent, and much more fun and accessible version of *Dicken's A Christmas Carol*, one that eschews modern gimmicks like lifeless CGI in preference over the artistry and craft of human puppeteers and model makers, and the natural organic warmth that they bring with them. The script is great 4<sup>th</sup> wall breaking fun, and children and adults alike may well prefer it over the more serious version above, which in truth does not water the subject matter down for a moment, where this version takes some funny liberties (like a rat as a narrator and jokey songs) with the story. Everyone, break out your *Swedish Chef* impressions over a glass of sherry 😊

It only remains for me to wish you all a wonderfully Happy Christmas and New Year, and to use that wonderful Dickensian benediction - *God bless us every one!* 😊

*Luke.*

## 'The Visitors to that Little Town of Bethlehem'.



### Birth in a Stable!

This event took place over two thousand years ago in modern day town in the West Bank, Palestine. We are used to living in comfortable homes with running water, hot and cold, hospitals and midwives to provide care as a new life enters the world. That is our norm, but this story is set in a time where the norm was very different.

Joseph and his wife Mary had arrived in Bethlehem after a week-long journey from Nazareth. (Bethlehem, the 'House of Meat' in Arabic or 'House of Bread' in Hebrew). The approximate journey of 130km, 80 miles was on foot and donkey and not the easiest or safest of journeys. There was a high risk of being attacked by robbers and other unsavoury characters. They probably travelled with a group and followed a trade route, a camel train - anything to make it safer.

**I'm David, your storyteller. I'm named after King David, in fact all my family names come from our ancestors my granddad was Jehoshaphat, my Dad was Solomon. We have a thing about our ancestry. It is important to know where our roots are, but enough of that.**

Our journey was long and tiring and I walked along with Mary and Joseph. It was my pace, fairly slow. I don't do rush. We chatted, Joseph explained that Mary was expecting a baby and they were hoping that they could get to Bethlehem before the baby arrived. Mary did not say much, she looked tired but there was a calm and trusting look about her. But most of the time Joseph and I spoke about our respective work, he was a carpenter and I was a storyteller, **yes**, a storyteller, so you can imagine I did a lot of talking but I do observe and listen.

During the journey we shared our food, bread, wine, dried fish and fruit. Others joined us and there always seemed enough to go round. Eating together around a fire in a group made us feel safe and yes, I told a few stories.

We arrived in Bethlehem foot sore and Mary was just about at the end of her tether have had a week of being bounced around on the back of a donkey. The donkey was a lovely beast but so uncomfortable, especially when you are expecting a baby. Joseph set about trying to find somewhere to stay. There was nowhere, it didn't matter for me but for Mary and Joseph it was different. I could see the look on their faces there were getting desperate. When it looked just as bad as it could get the innkeeper, well I bet it was his wife really, came to the rescue. He offered the stable, it literally was better than nothing.

There was a bit of a kerfuffle with the animals and getting some space for Mary and Joseph. Most of the kerfuffle was down to the donkeys facing up to each other, it soon settled down however. I left them there and went to the Inn, where I got some food and drink and went outside. It was so crowded and noisy in the Inn and smelly, I wondered if Mary and Joseph had got a better deal and I was pleased to be outside and sat against a wall and rested. I was exhausted. Despite all the noise I must have dozed.

I woke with a start, there was noise from the stable and I was sure I heard the cry of a baby. I ran and sure enough there was Mary holding her baby, a boy. Joseph was there looking the proud father. I asked if they were all OK, and left them to enjoy the moment without an audience. I left feeling good, there is something about a new life entering the world. It gives you hope and that feel good feeling. We had not had much to feel good at for a while.

I returned to my space against the wall, I ate some rather stale bread and drink the remainder of my wine and fell asleep. I was woken up again, this time it was by a gang of excited shepherds. I should explain many years ago shepherds were well respected, they were often related to each other. It was a family

business caring for the sheep. Things have changed and many not for the better. Shepherds had a bad reputation and some deserved this bad reputation, but not all of them. I pushed my way through, thinking there could be a good story here.

I was right, there could be a good story if I could only make sense of what these excitable shepherds were saying or should I say shouting. I just stood and tried to listen. I thought I was a good listener but these shepherds had me beat. They were loud and spoke too quickly. I was able to gather they were talking about angels, singing and a baby being born. That was about as much as I could understand. When they had left and things calmed down, I went and had a word with Joseph, he was as confused as I was, but Mary explained. By that I mean she held the baby in her arms, looked at him and then looked at me and smiled and gave me a knowing nod. It was as if to say I know and you will know in time.

*Our sacred texts give us differing accounts of Christmas and Epiphany but the heart of the story remains the same. It is a story of a God who comes to us in human form, not only that but as a helpless babe. It is a powerful and moving story. To some the story is absurd but to others life changing. The above story can be found Luke Gospel Chapter 2 verses 8-20.*

©2020 Derek Akker – No distribution beyond personal use without permission

= - - = - - = - - = - - =

Here is a Christmas message to us all from our friends in Haarlem, who have been sharing our weekly services, sent to Derek by Anni Kearney a Member and Secretary of the Anglican Churn in Haarlem:-

*...it has been lovely to share some of your weekly services with our own congregation here in Haarlem, The Netherlands. Such contact is always a blessing, but even more so when facing strange circumstance like the recent lockdown, when online worship made such a difference to those having to stay at home. Thanks to you for your generosity in sharing the Word - **We wish you all the best this Christmas time.** From the Anglican Church Haarlem.*

*Anni*



*(How lovely it was to watch their Advent Carol Service via the internet last Sunday)*

# Parish Christmas Greetings

## A Christmas Message from Anne & Barry Sugden

At this time of the year we are both usually very busy, particularly with all our musical activities both with Church and Ramsbottom Choral Society. With the society we would normally have just completed the performance of a large choral piece the last Saturday in November and would now be starting rehearsals for our annual carol concert. In addition, Anne would have been working hard with the enthusiastic members of All Saints and St James in order to sing in an informal concert at All Saints as well as at all the Christmas services. Anne would probably have been looking forward to providing a game or two and some singalong music for the St. Francis Ladies Club Christmas party. This year will be quite different for everybody, but nevertheless, Christmas will be enjoyed and celebrated in quite a different way, but still as meaningful as before.

Way back at the beginning of April, we felt very honoured to be asked by Simon to provide music for a special online Easter service. This was intended as a one-off event for those members of the congregation who were able to access it online by computers, tablets or smartphones. However, it proved extremely popular with many people viewing it from all over the place and we were delighted to continue doing it into the unforeseeable future.

So, here we are now recording music for every week wearing our Sunday best every Wednesday, as we continue to record hymns and other music for Simon and Liz to use as part of the online Sunday services that they put together which everyone finds so inspiring and encouraging.

We are so grateful that we have been able to support Simon and Luke and our church community in this way and we really value the many messages of appreciation from so many members of the congregation and elsewhere that we have received over the last eight months.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a peaceful Christmas and a healthy New Year. We both look forward to the time in the not too distant future when we will all be together again to praise God in our normal way.



*Happy Christmas to all our friends  
in the Parish of Kirklees Valley*

**P  
E  
A  
C  
E**  **NOEL**  
*Christmas Greetings to everyone who reads Parish News! We wish you a happy, healthy and blessed Christmas as we all look forward to better times in 2021.*  
*Keep safe and well.*  
*from*  
*Mike and Sue Williams."* **J  
O  
Y**  
**Christmas**

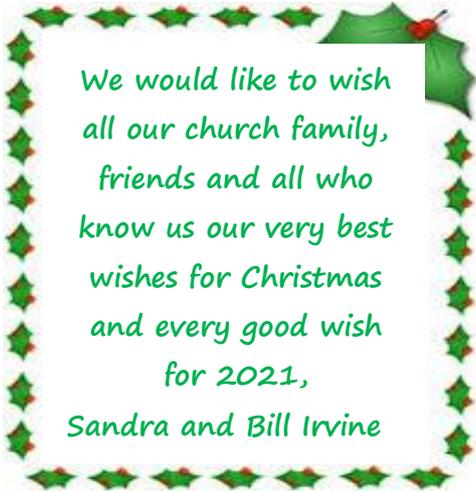
*"Good friends are hard to find, harder to leave and impossible to forget." With this thought, I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy & peaceful New Year.*  
*Ann Redding x*

*Wishing you all peace and joy at Christmas and all through the coming year.*  
*Every day that passes is a day nearer to when things will improve and we will be able to meet again without risk.*  
*We have been enjoying the Sunday Services every week from the very beginning. Many thanks to Simon, Luke, Barry and Ann and Liz for their hard work in brightening up our Sundays.*  
*Regards Margaret and Ken Laidlaw*

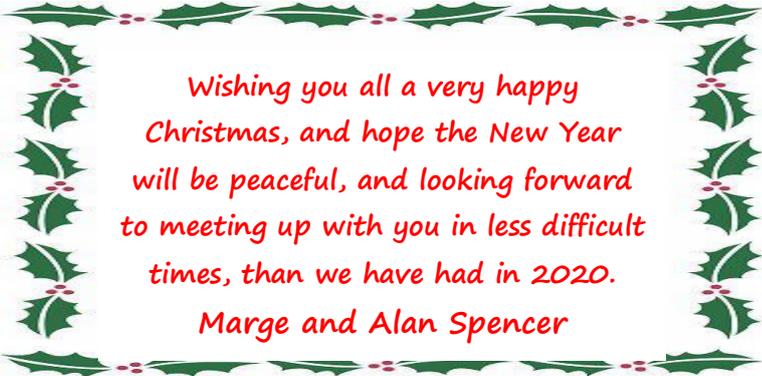
*Kath and John Schofield send good wishes for the festive season to Simon, Luke and their families, walking group, ladies club and all the congregation at All Saints.*  
*Hoping we can join together again for worship, fellowship and the mudding of boots early in the New Year.*

*Love and Christmas Greetings to everyone at All Saints and St. James. Let's all pray for a better year than the one we are leaving. Looking forward to the time when we can all get back together again. Let's hope it will be soon.*  
*from Hazel and Allan*

  
*Christmas Greetings to all.*  
*Every blessing,*  
*from Geoff and Joan.*



We would like to wish  
all our church family,  
friends and all who  
know us our very best  
wishes for Christmas  
and every good wish  
for 2021,  
Sandra and Bill Irvine



Wishing you all a very happy  
Christmas, and hope the New Year  
will be peaceful, and looking forward  
to meeting up with you in less difficult  
times, than we have had in 2020.  
Marge and Alan Spencer



John and Elaine Small send  
good wishes to you all for a  
wonderful Christmas and a  
Happy New Year.



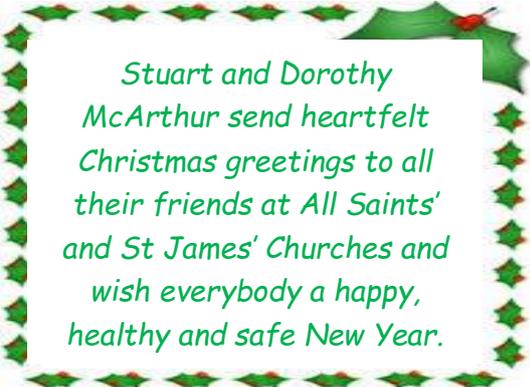
HAPPY CHRISTMAS  
EVERYONE  
Wishing you  
Love, Joy and Peace  
in the  
NEW YEAR  
Beryl and Peter



Wishing everyone a joyful  
Christmas and a happy  
and healthy New Year  
from Sue and Robin



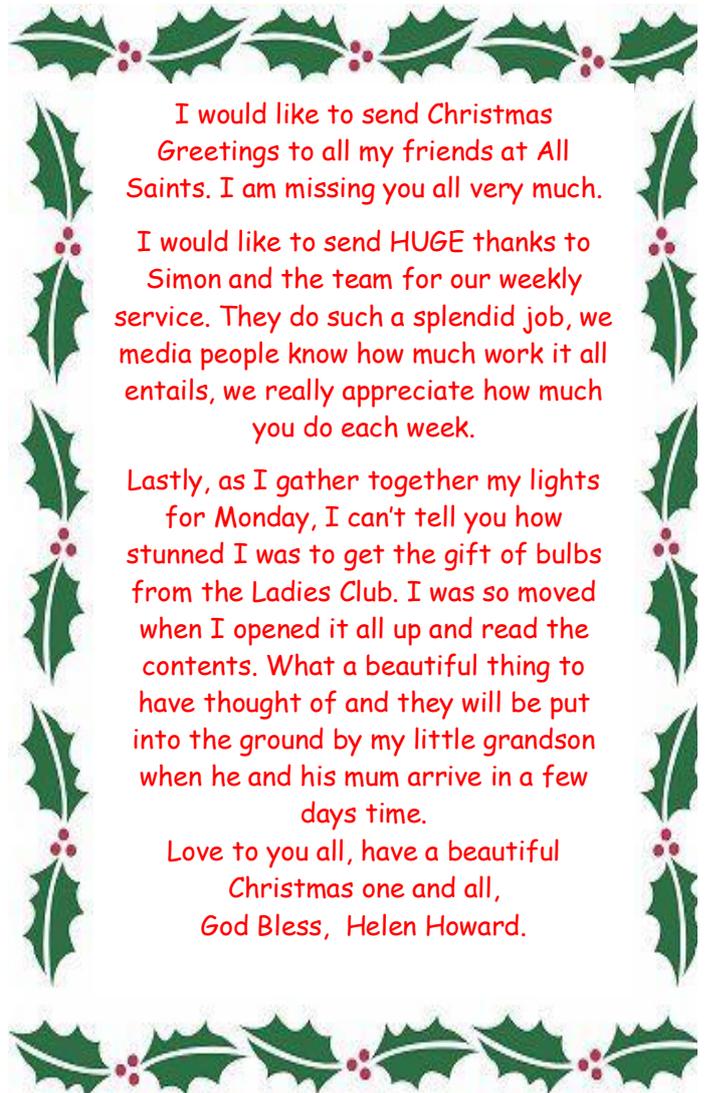
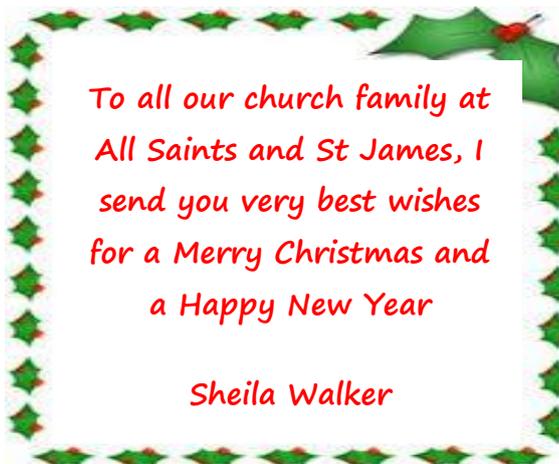
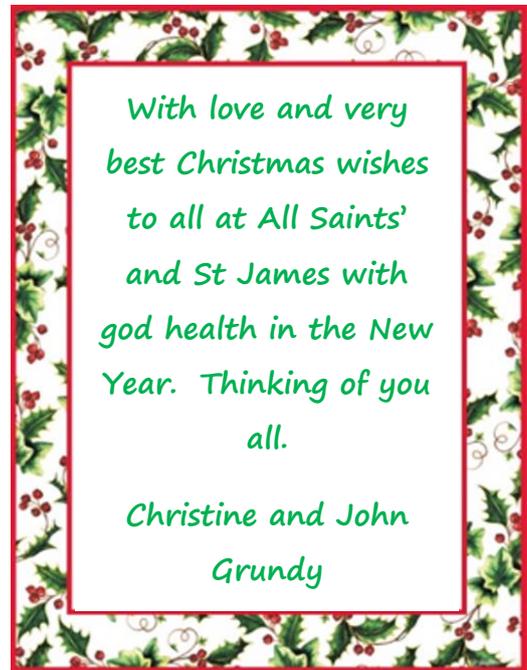
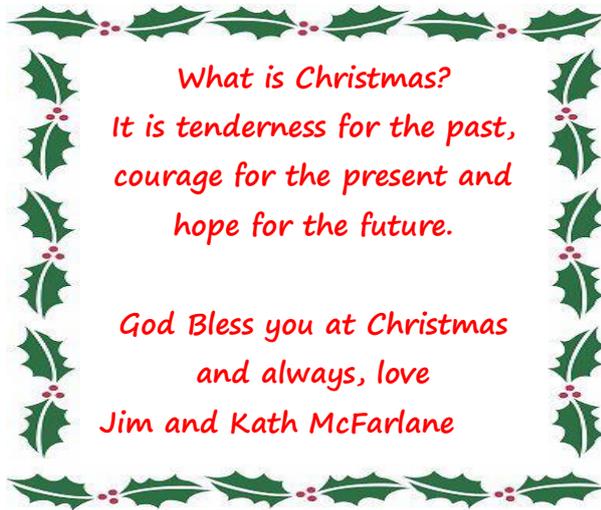
Rachel and Phil would like to  
wish everyone a holy and  
blessed Christmas.  
Let's hope and pray that we  
can all be together again next  
year! Stay safe and keep well.



Stuart and Dorothy  
McArthur send heartfelt  
Christmas greetings to all  
their friends at All Saints'  
and St James' Churches and  
wish everybody a happy,  
healthy and safe New Year.



Happy Christmas to all in these  
difficult times.  
Margaret & Brian Carter





Wishing you ALL peace  
and happiness, may you be  
blessed with Love this  
Christmas

Love from Joyce and Tony



We would like to wish all our  
friends at All Saints and St  
James a very happy and  
peaceful Advent and  
Christmas.

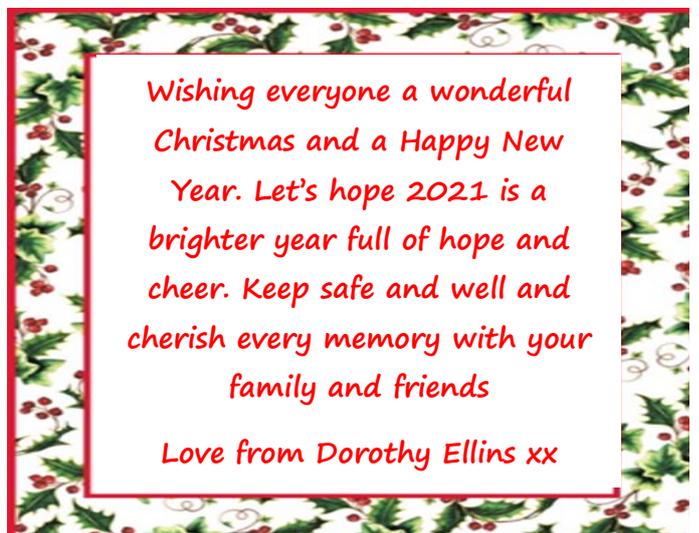
We pray for good health  
throughout the coming New  
Year.

Mark and Andrea



With Very Best Wishes  
for a Peaceful  
Christmas and a Happy  
and Healthy New Year

Margaret and Ken  
Anderton

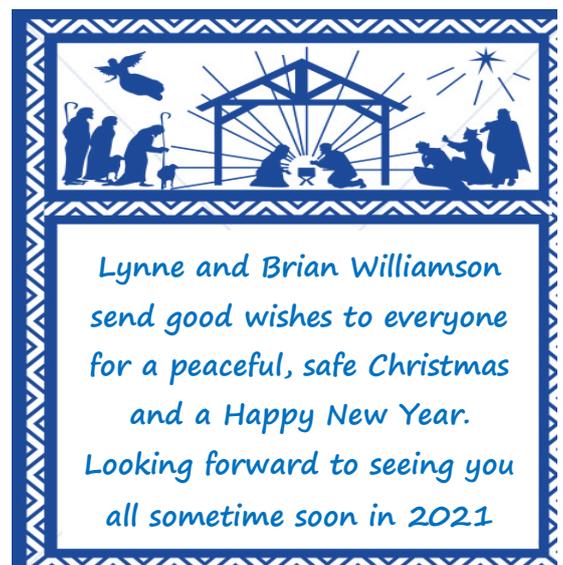


Wishing everyone a wonderful  
Christmas and a Happy New  
Year. Let's hope 2021 is a  
brighter year full of hope and  
cheer. Keep safe and well and  
cherish every memory with your  
family and friends

Love from Dorothy Ellins xx



Wishing you and yours every blessing  
for Christmas and throughout 2021  
Love David, Deirdre and family



Lynne and Brian Williamson  
send good wishes to everyone  
for a peaceful, safe Christmas  
and a Happy New Year.  
Looking forward to seeing you  
all sometime soon in 2021



Hello, your Messy Church has been continuing through-out the lockdowns via WhatsApp Meetings. Your Messy Church leaders have been incredible! Adapting their skills and trying out technology they hadn't experienced before to enable us to provide activities, games, short films and share stories, despite whatever has been going on in their own lives.

In recent months you will be pleased to hear that various younger members have participated, alongside the leaders, by making videos, leading the introduction and welcome, saying prayers, Bible Readings and demonstrating activities at the on-line meetings (some of the outtakes have been worthy of TV Bloopers). Our Messy Parents and Grandparents have been there to encourage and help. Additionally, they have provided photos and short videos, voice recordings and messages of what they have been up to. Simon has contributed videos with his own brilliant and sometimes, deliberately humorous delivery for our end of sessions '**Celebration**', singing appropriate hymns and leading the final prayers.

I would like to say to all of the Messy Church family a personal, huge **THANK YOU** to every single one of you for continuing to share our Lord's Love and Light during these difficult months. You have truly been amazing!!

*Deirdre*

**WISHING YOU A  
VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS  
AND JOY FILLED NEW YEAR!  
FROM ALL AT MESSY  
CHURCH**



## Festival of Light, Hopes and Dreams Festival Update From 30<sup>th</sup> November until 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

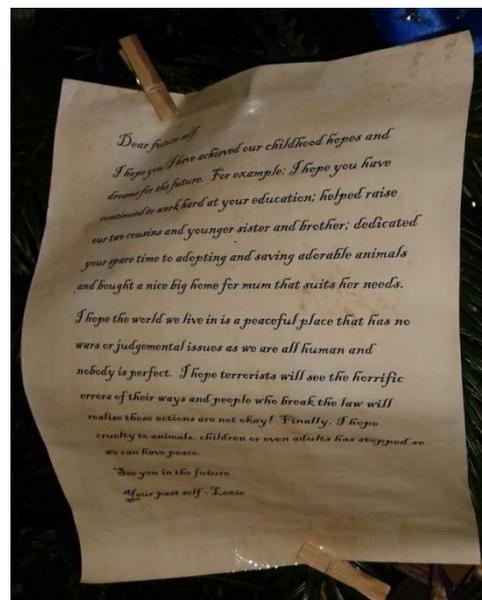
To our family members in the Parish of Kirklees Valley, we really do need your help with the launch of the festival PLEASE. We have flyers and A4 posters from the printer. Mike Williams has kindly laminated a number of A4 posters using laminated pouches for outdoor use. Please let us know if you are willing to push through your neighbours' doors flyers and / or display a poster in your front garden, if you already haven't done so. We now need to really push the festival as it's due to start as we enter Advent, just a couple of weeks away as I write

Aidan, Sylvia and Phil's son-in-law has been exceptionally enterprising with the festival Facebook page and has been trying out his additional, newly acquired social media skills, still adding to these as he goes. I spoke to Aidan on the 19<sup>th</sup> November and at that point we had over 1500 hits and 58+ shares. However, we really do need more and will get these with your help. If you use Facebook please see the links shown later in this update and share these on your own page with as many people as possible. Asking them to join in and share the festival page with their own contacts.

Below are a few ideas from the photos we took at Chester Cathedral.

We need you and your family to submit some of their and **your own Hopes and Dreams for the future please ASAP.**

People can remain anonymous if they wish but it would be helpful if they could just put their initials and the area they live (they can live anywhere on God's earth). So that it doesn't look like we have just sat down made all these up.



Some ideas for you to think through for Hopes and Dreams messages: *Dear future self I hope by now ... ; My hopes for our future world are ... ; My hope for future generations is that ... ; Be Someone (what would you like to be when you grow up?)* Maybe you could picture, in your mind, someone you hold dear. Then think about what you would want to ask God for, on their behalf? You could also write a prayer or a poem. The festival will run until Epiphany. Mike suggested we ran on as people make New Year Resolutions. What will yours be?

Phil Gornall who decided that as an adult he would take up piano lessons has put together two short piano pieces and added lights to his playing. He is a clever man in my book as he has uploaded these to YouTube and sent them in so as they can be used on the Festival Facebook Page. If you are musical please consider sending in something yourself. **We also want to hear and share the songs or music that makes you feel happy?** Send these to us.

Father Luke is busy creating a light display at St. Francis House ready for Advent. As soon as this is active we will get photos to share and submit them for the festival Facebook page also ask if Simon could share them through one of the weekly emails. Here are the links for the Facebook page and the invite please and send both links. <http://www.facebook.com/CommunityBrandlesholme/>. [Community event link](#) Also, the other Contact details: **Tel 07810 783 385 email: [buryfestival@gmail.com](mailto:buryfestival@gmail.com)**

**Please keep in mind that many people do not or cannot access social media** and are not on Facebook. So we need personal invites from you and these to be cascaded on so that we can be as inclusive as possible. PLEASE GET / ASK FOR THE POSTERS AND THE FLYERS as this will help with the latter.

We though you might like to read these messages we received. A message from the Head Teacher at **Woodbank CP School**. *'In school we are decorating our Woodland area and fence and all the children are writing their messages on a laminated candle which we will hang along our school fence and in our hedge for people to read The festival of light is the start of our Christmas celebrations so we are doing it in 'style' '*

Also we received the following message and photo (see below) of how they plan to get involved from **Old Hall CP School**. *'We hope you are well, just to update you our school are making lanterns which we will photograph in school and then the children will take them home so they can display them in their gardens. I have attached a picture so you can see what we're making. I have been given your email today and will speak to the teachers about the children making the dreams for the future cards.'*



We hope that you will find something above that brings you inspiration and joy in taking part. Please don't forget together we can light up lives of those around us and in giving joy find joy. Please display a light even if it's just a candle in the window or light up a tree outside from the 30<sup>th</sup> November onwards and put up your own hopes and dreams for the future and let **our Lord's Light and Love fill our hearts and those of our neighbours**, the best Christmas presence we believe we can receive and give. To coin a very well know childhood favourite Carol *'Yet in thy dark street shineth, the everlasting light, the Hopes and Fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.'*

Our Very Best Wishes for Christmas and 2021, The Brandlesholme Festival Committee Members,  
Sheila Walker, Joanne Guy, Sylvia Jones, Mike Williams, Lorna Kerry, Lizz Morely, Hilary Marshall, Aidan Quirke,  
Revd. Simon Cook and David and Deirdre

## Bits and Pieces

### A new member for our Family .... from Margaret and Ken Laidlaw

In March just as soon as lockdown began my youngest son Stuart said, "Mum we have some news to brighten up the months for you. Sarah and I are expecting a baby in November". [their first] They had 12th of November as the due date and we waited by the phone for news. Sarah went to the hospital on the Friday and Saturday to be sent home both times. Stuart took her back on the Sunday morning to be sent home himself only to be recalled at 3.30 that afternoon.

Baby Alistair Richard was eventually born at 1.45am on Monday morning 16th November weighing exactly 8lbs. He looks very like his dad when he was born, the only difference being that he has red hair! He is a beautiful baby [aren't they all] with very long legs. Sarah is as tall as Stuart so he might become quite tall eventually.

We have photographs of him and have had various Zoom meetings too, although we are not sure when we shall actually see him as they live in Newcastle, where Stuart teaches and Sarah works at the University. Hopefully we may be able to get together at Christmas when we will be able to have lots of cuddles [rules permitting]



-----

Don't forget to save your used stamps for Sylvia Jones, there should be plenty about in December.



(Please try and leave a one-inch border round each stamp).

## It's Quiz Time .....

### Merry Christmas to everyone from Malcolm

Associations	Christmas
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bud and Chesney were a double comedy and song act in the 30s and 40s. Who were they better known as?</li> <li>2. If you put a sea creature with a potato, what meal would you have?</li> <li>3. This iconic dance partnership made 10 films together between 1933 and 1949. Who are they?</li> <li>4. In political circles they were known as Dennis and Margaret. Who were they?</li> <li>5. They produced such musical films as "South Pacific" and "Oklahoma". Who are they?</li> <li>6. If you connected a 'type of firework' with a '70s/80s comedy tv series that was set in a mobile army surgical hospital', what meal would you have?</li> <li>7. The dictionary description is as follows "small, not much" and "great in size" Can you relate this to a comedy duo?</li> <li>8. Dish of cabbage and potatoes fried together are better known as what meal?</li> <li>9. What couldn't "all the kings horses and all the king's men" put together?</li> <li>10. What sport do you associate with Andre Agassi and Steffi Graff?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Which Christmas Carol has as its final line... "and take us to heaven to live with thee there"...?</li> <li>2. What did the other reindeers not let Rudolph do because of his shiny red nose?</li> <li>3. What is the name of the last ghost that visits Scrooge in A Christmas Carol?</li> <li>4. Which choir had a 1980 hit with There's No One Quite Like Grandma?</li> <li>5. Three of Santa's reindeer's names begin with the letter "D." What are those names?</li> <li>6. In which Christmas Pantomime does the character Widow Tankey appear?</li> <li>7. According to the song, what did my true love give to me on the eighth day of Christmas?</li> <li>8. Can you name any of the three wise men who visited the baby Jesus?</li> <li>9. Which real life person is Santa Claus based on?</li> <li>10. Which Christmas song contains the lyric "Everyone dancing merrily in the new old fashioned way?"</li> </ol>
<p><b>ANSWERS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Flanagan &amp; Allen</li> <li>2. Fish &amp; Chips</li> <li>3. Fred Astaire &amp; Ginger Rogers</li> <li>4. Mr &amp; Mrs Thatcher</li> <li>5. Rodgers &amp; Hammerstein</li> <li>6. Bangers &amp; Mash</li> <li>7. Little &amp; Large</li> <li>8. Bubble &amp; Squeak</li> <li>9. Humpty Dumpty</li> <li>10. Tennis</li> </ol>	<p><b>ANSWERS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Away in a Manger</li> <li>2. Join in any reindeer games</li> <li>3. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come</li> <li>4. St Winifred's School Choir</li> <li>5. Dancer, Dasher, and Donner</li> <li>6. Aladdin</li> <li>7. Eight maids a milking</li> <li>8. Balthasar, Melchior, and Gaspar (or Casper).</li> <li>9. The Christian bishop St. Nicholas</li> </ol>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Vicar:	Reverend Simon J Cook Tel: 0161 797 1595 Mob: 07745 232662 Email: <a href="mailto:simondjcook@aol.com">simondjcook@aol.com</a>	
Curate:	Father Luke Tel: 07999 802133 Email: <a href="mailto:fpls@protonmail.com">fpls@protonmail.com</a>	
Church Warden All Saints:	Christine Grundy	0161 764 8718
Church Warden St James's:	Ann Redding	0161 761 4273
<b><u>All Saints' Contacts:</u></b>		
Art and Craft Group	Joyce Abraham	0161 764 2247
	Helen Howard	0161 307 5147
Bible Study	Geoff Hanson	0161 761 6338
Choir	Stuart McArthur	07821 287018
First Steps	Helen Jackson	0161 797 5263
Messy Church	Deirdre Watson	07733 008078
Homegroups	Elaine Small	0161 761 7692
	Rachel Gornall	0161 797 2978
Men's Group	Trevor Eastland	0161 705 2037
Mother's Union	Anne Gratton	0161 761 3465
Parish Prayers	Mike Williams	0161 761 4712
Rooms at St Francis	Deirdre/David Watson	07368460378
St Francis' Ladies Club	Lynne Williamson	0120488 6790
Monday Walkers	Lynne Williamson	0120488 6790
<b><u>St James Contacts</u></b>		
Mothers' Union	Ann Redding	0161 761 4273
Sunday School	Gill Fern	07931 702612.
Rooms at St James' Centre	Ann Redding	0161 761 4273
Noticeboard Production	Lynne Williamson <a href="mailto:lynandbri@outlookcom">lynandbri@outlookcom</a>	0120488 6790 07722 624847

Parish Website:

[www.allsaintsbury.co.uk](http://www.allsaintsbury.co.uk)