

GOOD NEWS



**The parish magazine of
St John's Church, Preston, Brighton**

December 2023

50p

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, PRESTON, BRIGHTON

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BAPTISMS and MARRIAGES by appointment

The deadline for the January magazine is Sunday 17 December



For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

This Christmas, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of this baby, the Prince of Peace, we do so against a background of war and violence in Gaza and Ukraine, and peace is very much on our hearts and minds.

This Christmas, as we remember a young woman who 'gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn,' we may also recall the recent image of other newborn babies, those in al-Shifa hospital, swaddled and laid down seven or eight to a bed in a desperate effort to keep them warm and alive.

This Christmas, the song of the angels may well be the song of our hearts: ' . . . on earth peace, goodwill among people.'

As David Adam, the author of this year's Advent course, *Candles in the Dark*, writes: ' . . . when we struggle against darkness, then it is good to seek a light to disperse the gloom . . . Advent is about the coming of light, the coming of the Lord to his people.' He encourages us to 'make room for him in your home and in your heart' and my invitation to you is to do this by joining in with this year's Advent course.

This year there will be two Advent courses on Tuesdays 28 November, 5, 12 and 19 December at 2:30pm (except 12 December which will be at 10am), and Wednesdays 29 November, 6, 13 and 20 December at 7pm. Both courses will be held in the Vestry and will be the same. Each session will also be standalone, so please come when you can.

Rev'd Emma



ST JOHN'S | PRESTON,
BRIGHTON



Follow The Star
Join the Song

Christmas 2023

at St John the Evangelist, Preston, Brighton

Sunday 3 December

10am Parish Eucharist with Gift Service

Sunday 10 December

4pm Christingle

Sunday 17 December

6pm Community Carol Singing

Saturday 23 December

4pm 'Blue Christmas'

Sunday 24 December Christmas Eve

4pm Crib Service

11:30pm Midnight Mass

Monday 25 December Christmas Day

10am Parish Eucharist with Christmas carols

 **THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**

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The Heart of Christmas

We're at that time of year again! But is Christmas just about the shopping, tree or presents? At its heart Christmas is all about a God who has showed up on earth. The Creator of the universe, whose hands flung stars into space, cared enough to come to earth as a tiny baby. 'The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.' (John 1:14)

Every year we sing carols and retell the same story of the donkey, innkeeper, stable, angels, shepherds, star, wise men, gifts and Mary and Joseph with baby! Why do we do all this? It's to remind us that God deals with the mess of our world by sending His Son to die in our place. This makes it possible for us to have a relationship with Himself:

When the time came, He "did not consider equality with God something to be used to His own advantage; rather, He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:6-8)

Reflecting on Jesus in the manger is a great place to start understanding the heart of the Christmas message. However, it's so much more than simply a cute baby lying in the bed of straw:

*If our greatest need had been information, God would have sent us an educator;
If our greatest need had been technology, God would have sent us a scientist;
If our greatest need had been money, God would have sent us an economist;
If our greatest need had been pleasure, God would have sent us an entertainer;
But our greatest need was forgiveness, so God sent us a Saviour.*



Father Christmas

Of course, I had expected that by the age of seven it was inevitable that my son would begin to have serious thoughts about Father Christmas. Sure enough, one day near Christmas he suddenly said: "Mum, I know something about Father Christmas, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy." Taking a deep breath, I asked him what that might be. "Easy," he said, "They are all nocturnal."

No Room? On the Contrary

This year one carol will be sung with particular poignancy. It retells the message of angels, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests” and continues:

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife,
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel strain have rolled,
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love song which they bring:
O hush the noise, you men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.*

The angels’ goodwill message will persist despite our clamour, for it proclaims God’s all-embracing and eternal welcome. Heaven’s doors are ever open: it is home for everyone. The final biblical vision is of an all-encompassing city: “On no day will its gates ever be shut... the glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it.”

Jesus, for whom there had been no room at the inn, taught that God’s kingdom is home for every race: “I say to you that many will come from the East and the West, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” He reassured those anxious about the future: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms...”

No room? Don’t you believe it!



Preparations

Christmas is a time for making plans. Presents to buy, cards to send, decorations to put up, food to order, travel arrangements to make... the list goes on and on. But whether our plans are ambitious or simple this Christmas, we still dread anything going wrong.

Yet plans seemed to fall apart that first Christmas. Mary and Joseph had planned to marry and set up home together in Galilee. Then Mary had become unexpectedly pregnant, and they were summoned to Bethlehem for the census. So instead of a comfortable Galilean home amongst family, they were suddenly parents, all alone in a place fit for animals!

The shepherds had expected another routine night on the hills of Bethlehem. But the angel's message and a heavenly choir changed everything, and they went to search for the Christ-child instead. Their change of plans brought them great joy!

The Eastern men had expected to find the 'King of the Jews' in a royal palace. But the star by-passed Jerusalem and took them to Bethlehem. Then their plans changed again, when they were warned in a dream to avoid Herod, and slip home another way.

The Holy Couple then had another upset of plans: Joseph was warned in a dream NOT to go home to Galilee, but to flee for safety in Egypt instead.

At first sight, all these changes display a chaotic mix of circumstances. But behind it all, God was working out His divine purposes. When Jesus was born, all the Old Testament prophecies of His coming were fulfilled. Nothing happened by chance. Into a messy world God brought to us His Son, to be our Saviour.

We worship a great and loving God who not only planned that first Christmas but is also preparing for our stay in His eternal home.

The plans God makes are wise, and they always succeed! (Isaiah 28:29)



Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust and hostility to evaporate.

Albert Schweitzer

Winter Solstice

A Midwinter festival has been a part of life since pre-Christian times. When the hours of daylight are fewest, the warmth of the sun weakest, and life itself seemingly at a standstill, our ancestors, the pagan peoples of Europe and Western Asia, kept festival by lighting bonfires and decorating their buildings with evergreens.

Perhaps they believed that the dying sun could be enheartened by fire, and the life of the buried seed assured by the presence of evergreen branches.

With the advent of Christianity, the Spring gods became identified with Christ, and the birthday of the sun with the birthday of the Light of the World.

The early church father Tertullian did not approve of Christmas decorations. “Let those who have no light in themselves light candles!... You are the light of the world, you are the tree ever green...” But by the time of St Gregory and St Augustine, four centuries later, this had changed. Pope Gregory instructed Augustine not to worry about harmless outward customs, as long as the right God be worshipped through them. And so many Anglo-Saxon customs were never discarded, but simply endowed with a new significance.

By 1598 one John Stow of London wrote how: “Against the feast of Christmas, every man’s house, as also their parish churches, were decked with holme, ivie, bayes, and whatsoever the season of the yeare afforded to be greene.”



Sums up Christmas

Three phrases that sum up Christmas are:
'Peace on Earth'; 'Goodwill to Men'; and 'Batteries not included'.

Looking back on the year...

History repeats itself, that's one of the things that's wrong with history.

- Clarence Darrow

War loves to seek its victims in the young. - *Sophocles*

My political ideal is democracy. Everyone should be respected as an individual, but no one idolized. - *Albert Einstein*

It is ideas, not vested interests, which are dangerous for good or evil.

- *John Maynard Keynes*



Flower arrangements in church

Our grateful thanks to Marion, Judith and Cynthia for generously enabling us to purchase silk flowers and foliage for display when we have no sponsored fresh flowers. If you would like to sponsor flowers in memory of a loved one, or for a birthday or celebration, or just because ... please speak to Cynthia or Alex.

From Sue's Kitchen

As a change from the rich Christmas food, try this simple fish dish ...

Poached Salmon

1 8oz salmon steak or cutlet

1tbsp oil

½ glass of any dry white wine or water

A few sprigs of dill

Put the salmon into a baking dish, pour the oil on top and add the wine or water.

Put the dill on top.

Cover the dish with foil.

Put into a preheated oven at 180°C or gas mark 4 for 20 minutes.

Serve with salad and/or new potatoes.

Serves 1



The story of mince pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape - cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

The Most Beautiful Story

A well-known atheist was once interviewed on Radio 4. When asked how he spent Christmas, and he said that he went to Midnight Mass at church. 'But you're an atheist', his interviewer protested. 'Yes', he replied, 'but what they celebrate at Christmas is the most beautiful story ever told'.

That 'beautiful story' tells of a Creator who sent His Son to share the life of His creation, to be born as a helpless baby, to grow up as a man of extraordinary wisdom, gentleness and love, who was executed by the authorities for contradicting the traditions of the time. His followers – who today number about two billion people all over the world – believe that He rose from the dead, and that by His death and resurrection He has made possible forgiveness and eternal life for men and women everywhere.

That is certainly quite a story, perhaps the greatest story ever told, and yes, beautiful. And that is the story that will be rehearsed again this Christmas, in children's Nativities, in hymns and carols, in Bible readings and sermons all over the country. People who stay away from church all year turn up to hear it, and who can blame them? This is a story of hope, of love and of heaven touching earth.

Most of us are familiar with probably the best-known statue in the world, Christ the Redeemer, towering over Rio de Janeiro, His arms outstretched in blessing. Christmas celebrates the birth of that great Redeemer – a tiny baby laid in a feeding trough. His birth changed history, His life transformed our understanding of what it means to be human, His death was at one and the same time a tragedy and a triumph. Yes, 'the most beautiful story ever told'. Enjoy it again this Christmas.



How Father Christmas got where he is today

One person you are bound to run into this Christmas season is Father Christmas. If he looks tired, just remember that he has been around a long time and gone through a lot of transformations.

Father Christmas wasn't always the red-suited, white-bearded star of the retail trade that he is today. He began life as Nicholas, born way back about AD260 in Patara, an important port on the southern coast of what is now Turkey. When his parents died and left him a fortune, Nicholas gave it away to the poor. He became a bishop of the nearby city of Myra, where he almost certainly suffered persecution and imprisonment at the hand of the Roman Emperor Diocletian.

Nicholas was a serious theologian: he was a participant at the First Council of Nicaea, which formulated the Creed which we still say today. He even, reportedly, slapped another bishop in a squabble over the exact nature of the Trinity.

Nicholas died in Myra about AD343, but the stories of his generosity and kindness were just beginning. One enduring tale tells of the three girls whom he rescued from certain prostitution by giving them gold for their dowries. When the father confronted him to thank him, Nicholas said he should thank God alone.

In the UK, Nicholas became the basis for Father Christmas, who emerged in Victorian times as a jolly-faced bearded character. Meanwhile, Dutch and German settlers had taken him to America with them as Sinter Klaas and Sankt Nicklas.

It was in America that Nicholas received his final two great breaks into real stardom. The first was when the Rev Clement C Moore, a New York Episcopal minister, turned from his lifework of writing a Hebrew/English lexicon, to write a fun poem for his children one Christmas. His 'The Visit of St Nicholas' is now universally known by its first line: 'T'was the Night Before Christmas'.

From Clement Moore we discovered that St Nicholas is round and pink-cheeked and white-bearded, and that he travels at night with sleigh, reindeer and a sack of toys on his back. It was Clement Moore who also revealed that St Nicholas enters houses down chimneys and fills children's stockings with toys and sweets.

So how did we find out that Father Christmas wears red? That was the US Coca-Cola advertising campaign of 1931, who finally released the latest, up-to-date pictures of Father Christmas: wearing a bright red, fur-trimmed coat and a large belt.

Spiritual Disciplines: Celebration

'But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.' (Luke 2:10).

As we conclude our series on the spiritual disciplines, this month we look at *Celebration*, which is very appropriate for this Christmas season. We are called to rejoice in God's good gifts and celebrate His faithfulness.

Jesus modelled celebration in his first miracle at Cana, when He turned water into wine, enabling the party to continue (John 2:1-12). Celebration helps us with the other disciplines, as it enables us to keep going through times of joy and struggle: *'Without a joyful spirit of festivity the Disciplines become dull, death-breathing tools in the hands of modern Pharisees.'* (Richard Foster). We celebrate crucial moments in our lives with unreserved joy and thanksgiving and this shape our lives to be more like Jesus.

Richard Foster offers a few helpful pointers to celebration in his book *Celebration of Discipline*. They may come in handy as you celebrate Christmas this year!

Singing and dancing: how can we rediscover what children do brilliantly, in our families or church? Is there room for singing Christmas carols together at home this year?

Laughter: just as Jesus brought humour into His teaching, how can we laugh more? What does it mean to take ourselves less seriously and encourage more fun with our friends?

Imagination and creativity: how can we invest in our own creativity, as well as other people's? - e.g. in painting, poetry, reading and other leisure activities? God gave us these things to enjoy! As we celebrate our own creativity, we are sharing in God's goodness and joy.

Family events: we can use family celebrations and with Christmas approaching, there is the opportunity of putting God at the centre of our celebration.

'So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God' (1 Cor 10:31).

EUCCHARIST OF CHRISTMAS MORNING

CHRISTMAS DAY
MONDAY 25
DECEMBER 2023
8am



St Peter's Church,
Preston Drove,
BN1 6SD

A short, said service of Holy Communion
<https://www.stpetersprestonpark.co.uk>

Readings & Collects

Sunday 3 December – Advent Sunday

Readings Isaiah 64: 1-9 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9 Mark 13: 24-end

Collect

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility;
that on the last day,
when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal;
through him who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

Sunday 10 December – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Readings Isaiah 40: 1-11 2 Peter 3: 8-15a Mark 1: 1-8

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power
and come among us,
and with great might succour us;
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness
we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us,
your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen

Sunday 17 December – 3rd Sunday of Advent

Readings Isaiah 6: 1-4, 8-end 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 John 1: 6-8, 19-28

Collect

O Lord Jesus Christ,
who at your first coming sent your messenger
to prepare your way before you:
grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries
may likewise so prepare and make ready your way
by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,
that at your second coming to judge the world
we may be found an acceptable people in your sight;
for you are alive and reigns with the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Sunday 24 December – Christmas Eve

Readings 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16 Romans 16: 25-end Luke 1: 26-38

Collect

Almighty God,
you make us glad with the yearly remembrance
of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer,
so we may with sure confidence behold him
when he shall come to be our judge;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Monday 25 December – Christmas Day

Readings Isaiah 62: 6-end Titus 3: 4-7 Luke 2: [1-7] 8-20

Collect

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,
may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Sunday 31 December – 1st Sunday of Christmas

Readings Isaiah 61: 10 – 62: 3 Galatians 4: 4-7 Luke 2: 15-21

Collect

Almighty God,
who wonderfully created us in your own image
and yet more wonderfully restored us
through your Son Jesus Christ:
grant that, as he came to share in our humanity,
so we may share the life of his divinity;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Sunday 7 January – Epiphany

Readings Isaiah 60: 1-6 Ephesians 3: 1-12 Matthew 2: 1-2

Collect

O God,
who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Sunday 14 January – 2nd Sunday of Epiphany

Readings 1 Samuel 2: 1-10 [11-20] Revelation 5: 1-10 John 1: 43-end

Collect

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Christmas throughout the Christian world

For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at His 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for 12 days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany (6th January). Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God's blessing on rivers, wells, and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St

Church of England invests GBP 30m in kickstarting net zero plans

Thousands of churches, cathedrals, schools and clergy houses in England will benefit from a first phase of grants and projects worth £30 million, as part of the Church of England's ambitious plan to achieve net zero by 2030.

The aim is to support the Church in reducing carbon emissions from the energy used in churches, schools, cathedrals, houses and other buildings, saving money by improving the energy efficiency of buildings, and switching to cheaper, more reliable, renewable energy sources.

"The ambition to be net zero by 2030 is at the core of the Church of England's response to the climate crisis – to help safeguard God's creation and achieve a just world," said the Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, the Church of England's lead Bishop for the Environment.

"Climate change is hitting the poorest people of the world hardest. We are already seeing the devastating effects of climate change and we must act now. The Church is called to be a people of hope; to live in harmony with our world; to treasure God's creation and to love our global neighbours."

Dioceses, and their parishes and schools, can now take advantage of the first round of grants from the Church of England's Net Zero Carbon Programme, made possible by funding from the Church Commissioners for England.

Why begin at midnight with Holy Communion?

The hour was first chosen at Rome in the fifth century to symbolise the idea that Christ was born at midnight – a mystical idea in no way hindered by historical evidence! No one knows the real hour of His birth.


Certainly, in recent times, Holy Communion at midnight on Christmas morning has proved popular with modern families. One British writer pointed out its "domestic convenience" in 1947: "for where there are children and no servants, husband and wife may be unable to communicate at any other time." (So things don't change, then!)



BRIGHTON AND HOVE ARTS ORCHESTRA

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Saturday 9th December, 7:30pm
ST JOHN'S CHURCH, KNOYLE ROAD, BRIGHTON,
BN1 6RB



*With the
Amity Singers*

Seasonal music and audience carols

Free Admission with retiring collection for local charities

Off the Fence and Chomp

bhao.org

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Friday 1	2.00 pm	Preston Friday Club <i>Christmas Beetle Drive</i>
Sunday 3	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist with hymns – ‘Toy Service’ Ministry of prayer for healing
Tuesday 5	2.30 pm 4.30 pm	Advent Course Balfour Primary School Christingle
Wednesday 6	10.00 am 10.45 am 7.00 pm	Said Eucharist Preston Coffee Pot Advent Course
Thursday 7	2.00 pm 7.00 pm 7.30 pm	Balfour Primary School Said Eucharist PCC Meeting
Friday 8	2.00 pm	Balfour Primary School
Saturday 9	7.30 pm	Brighton & Hove Arts Orchestra Christmas Concert
Sunday 10	10.00 am 4.00 pm	Parish Eucharist with hymns Christingle
Tuesday 12	10.00 am 3.30 pm	Advent Course Hopscotch Nursery Christmas Concert
Wednesday 13	10.00 am 10.45 am 7.00 pm	Said Eucharist Preston Coffee Pot Advent Course
Thursday 14	7.30 pm	Dorothy Stringer School Carol Service

Friday 15	2.00 pm	Preston Friday Club <i>Christmas Party</i>
Sunday 17	10.00 am 6.00 pm	All-Age Worship Community Carol Singing
Tuesday 19	2.30 pm	Advent Course
Wednesday 20	10.00 am 10.45 am 7.00 pm	Said Eucharist Preston Coffee Pot Advent Course
Thursday 21	7.00 pm	Said Eucharist
Saturday 23	4.00 pm	'Blue' Christmas
Sunday 24	10.00 am 4.00 pm 11.30 pm	Said Eucharist Crib Service Midnight Mass
Monday 25	8.00 am 10.00 am	Said Eucharist at St Peter's Preston Park Parish Eucharist with Carols

JANUARY 2024

Wednesday 3	10.00 am 10.45 am	Ministry of the Word Preston Coffee Pot
Thursday 4	7.00 pm	Said Eucharist
Sunday 7	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist with hymns Ministry of prayer for healing



to
Rols Ham-Riche on the 11th
Christine Eden on the 14th
Lynn Miller on the 15th
and
Graham Warnes on the 19th



Wishing our friends and supporters a Happy Christmas!

Please nominate us to win £1,000 today!





Free Event!
Donations welcome

Sunday 10th December

10:00-16:00

Victorian Christmas Activities

at the Church of St Peter, Preston Park

The Churches Conservation Trust is excited to welcome children and families to the Church of St Peter to take part in Christmas activities and learn about the Victorians!



Can you restore the fire damaged painting of the Nativity scene?

How easy is it to abide by Victorian Etiquette?

Can you make your own Christmas Cracker?



Directions: The church is immediately adjacent to Preston Manor at the northern tip of Preston Park on the A23 in Brighton. Main entrance from Preston Drive but there is a footpath through Preston Park itself. Limited pay and display parking & toilet facilities are available in Preston Park, operated by Brighton & Hove City Council.

For more information on the church: www.visitchurches.org.uk/visit/church-listing/st-peter-preston-park



See you there!



WRAP UP WARM!

**Event organiser:
Gabrielle Dryden
07887567234**



The story behind the hymn: O Come, All ye Faithful

Nobody knows who wrote this well-loved Christmas carol. It was originally a Latin Christmas hymn, 'Adeste Fidelis'. It seems to have first 'surfaced' in English due to a John Francis Wade, who lived in the 18th century, and who made his living copying manuscripts and, sometimes, music by hand. Wade was a Roman Catholic, and all services in the church at that time were conducted in Latin, and so he knew the language well.

The story goes that in about 1750 he slipped this hymn into a manuscript he was copying for the English Roman Catholic College in Lisbon, Portugal. 35 years later, in 1785, it turned up in the Portuguese Chapel in London, where it became known as the 'Portuguese Hymn'.

From there, the hymn appears to have 'travelled' across to the Margaret Chapel in London's West End. Young William Ewart Gladstone, who later became British Prime Minister, greatly appreciated the services at this church. He said that the congregation were "the most devout and happy that I have ever seen."

The minister at that time was Frederick Oakley, one of the leaders of the 19th century Oxford Movement, who was later to convert to Roman Catholicism. Oakley believed strongly in the power of religious symbols and fine music, and before he bade farewell to the Margaret Chapel, he introduced this hymn to the congregation. Having started as 'Adeste Fidelis', and been for a while 'The Portuguese Hymn', this hymn soon became known – and loved worldwide – as 'O Come, All Ye Faithful'.

*O Come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;*


*O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord!*

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;*



MONKS IN THE CITY

© ST JOHN THE BAPTIST'S CHURCH, KEMPTOWN




PRAY WITH US - FROM 1ST OCTOBER

Join the monks for prayers in **St John the Baptist's Church**:


Lauds (Morning Prayer): Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat - 9am

Vespers (Evening Prayer): Mon, Tues, Wed - 6pm



MIDDAY STILLNESS - FROM 6TH OCTOBER

Every **Friday, 12noon to 1pm**, an hour of music, prayer and reflection in **St John the Baptist's Church**.



SATURDAY SANCTUARY

30th Sept, 28th Oct, 25th Nov : 10.15am to 12.15pm

Join us for a morning of fellowship, input, prayer and silence. Starts in the **Fitzherbert Community Hub**.



MONK TALKS

A series of talks from the monks of **Worth Abbey** introducing monastic prayer and contemplation for today.

7:30pm to 9pm in the Fitzherbert Community Hub.

17th Oct - *Meditation and Contemplation* (Fr David OSB)

14th Nov - *The joy of praying together* (Br Anthony OSB)

12th Dec - *Discipleship and humility - Becoming real*
(Abbot Stephen OSB)

☎ 07444 802368

📍 St John the Baptist's, 2 Bristol Rd, Kemptown, BN2 1AP.

Happily, the Church of England still retains some singular parish clergy. Take the parish of St James-the-Least in the county of C- for example. Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic vicar, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained...

On two wise men, one three-legged sheep and a tipsy tree

The Rectory

St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

It really is time to get some new figures for the crib. After a series of accidents over the years, we are now down to two wise men, two shepherds, and one three-legged sheep that only remains upright if it is leaning against a shepherd.

Joseph, having been obliged to stand outside the shelter of the stable for the last four decades, is now comprehensively veneered with bat droppings. In a rather desperate effort to enlarge this rather frugal cast, Miss Timmins hit on the idea of introducing characters from the children's Easter garden. This would have all been very well if both sets of figures had been to the same scale, but we now have the shepherds apparently being threatened by two ten feet rabbits.

One of our local farmers – I am sure very kindly meant – donated far more straw for the stable than was necessary. Our decorators, refusing to let his generosity go to waste, used the lot. The result is that Mary and Joseph stand up to their waists, looking as if they are being engulfed by a straw snow drift. The crib, along with baby Jesus, has disappeared entirely. The latter is not entirely to be regretted, since no one can now see that Jesus has no nose and only one arm, the result of one of our children dropping Him on the floor at last year's Crib Service.

I am sure your ecologically appropriate Christmas tree, made of re-cycled dustbin liners will be much appreciated by your congregation, knowing that they are saving the planet for future generations. We however remain traditional, with a tree always donated by the local squire from his estate, even if it is at the cost of adding another degree to global warming. Not only does it look more fitting, but it gives

our verges something to do on twelfth night, as he sweeps up several hundredweight of pine needles.

I sometimes wonder if it is entire coincidence that the tree is always delivered by the estate staff on a day when there has been torrential rain in the area. Carrying it into church up the aisle makes it look as if the parting of the Red Sea has unsuccessfully taken place inside St. James'. The major problem every year is getting the wretched thing to stand upright in the sanctuary. It takes so long that I sometimes feel it would be quicker to re-align all the church pillars to the same angle as the tree itself.

Last year's decision to have tree lights which flashed in succession was not a success. Those members who stared at them for too long while singing carols tended to fall over – although I suspect that Major Crump's inability to remain upright at the midnight Service was for rather different reasons. Not using flashing lights this year, the Major will have to find a different excuse.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace



**A Service of Prayer and
Lament for the Planet**

Sunday December 3rd at 4pm
St Luke's Prestonville, 64 Old Shoreham Road

info: buff@stlukesonline.co.uk

COP28 UAE
CLIMATE ACTION

The Everlasting Turkey

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me
I've bought a big fresh turkey and a proper Christmas tree.

On the second day of Christmas much laughter could be heard
As we tucked into our turkey – a most delicious bird.

On the third day of Christmas people came from just next door,
The turkey tasted just as good as it had done before.

On the fourth day of Christmas came relations young and old
We finished up the Christmas pud and had the turkey cold.

On the fifth day of Christmas, outside the snowflakes scurried,
But we were nice and warm inside, and had the turkey curried.

On the sixth day of Christmas, the Christmas spirit died.
The children fought and bickered – we had the turkey rissoles fried.

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love he did wince
When he sat down at table - and was offered turkey mince.

On the eighth day of Christmas, the dog had run for shelter,
For he'd seen our turkey pancakes and the glass of alka-seltzer.

On the ninth day of Christmas, by lunchtime dad was blotto,
He knew that bird was back again, this time as a risotto.

On the tenth day of Christmas we were drinking home-made brew,
Anything to help us face that steaming turkey stew.

On the eleventh day of Christmas our lovely tree was moulting,
And with chilli, soy and oyster sauce, the turkey was revolting.

On the twelfth day of Christmas we had smiles back on our lips,
The guests had gone, the turkey too – WE DINED ON FISH AND CHIPS.



Big Ben

Do you stay up until midnight on New Year's Eve? If so, this year will be special – it is 100 years ago, on 31st December 1923, that the BBC first broadcast the chimes of Big Ben to welcome in the New Year.

For it was not until 31st December 1923 that the chimes of Big Ben were ever heard outside of Parliament and Westminster. But then the BBC got permission to broadcast them to the nation, and history was made.

That first year, the BBC engineers were not allowed into Parliament, and so had to access Big Ben from the roof of the Palace of Westminster. This meant that their microphone picked up not just the chimes, but a lot of traffic noise as well. But a tradition had started, and by 1924 the Big Ben bongs were being broadcast every day.

By then the BBC had installed low sensitivity microphones very close to the bells, so that they missed the sound of the clock mechanism.

The nation quickly came to love the sound of Big Ben, and during the Second World War the chimes were broadcast across occupied Europe – encouraging millions in their struggle against the Nazis.

The Big Ben daily time signal on the BBC is still cherished today, and Big Ben rings live for important events such as Remembrance Day and New Year, when the BBC sends the sound right around the world.



A Christmas Quiz this month – what else?

- 1 In which year was the first Christmas card sent?
a) 1743 b) 1843 c) 1943
- 2 There are four ghosts in Dicken’s A Christmas Carol.
A point for each one you can name.
- 3 In which ocean is Christmas Island?
a) Indian b) Pacific c) Caribbean
- 4 About how many turkeys are consumed every year in Britain?
a) 5 million b) 10 million c) 20 million
- 5 How many different flavours are there in a standard tub of Quality Street?
a) 8 b) 10 c) 12
- 6 In which year was the Queen’s speech first televised?
a) 1952 b) 1955 c) 1957
- 7 Which church celebrates Christmas on 7 January?
a) Greek Orthodox b) Russian Orthodox c) Coptic Church
- 8 Which is the best-selling Christmas song in the UK?
a) Do they know it’s Christmas b) White Christmas c) I wish it could be Christmas every day
- 9 In which country is it tradition to eat KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken) on Christmas Day?
a) Japan b) Korea c) Vietnam
- 10 Where is the UK’s tallest Christmas tree?
a) Kew Gardens b) Wakehurst Place c) Windsor Great Park
- 11 In which country is it the tradition to fill children’s clogs with treats and sweets on 5 December?
a) Belgium b) The Netherlands c) Denmark
- 12 Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
a) Edmund Halley b) Roger Cotes c) Isaac Newton

- 13 Who 'invented' the Christmas cracker?
a) Tom Jones b) Tom Smith c) Dick Smith
- 14 How many points does a snowflake have?
a) 6 b) 8 c) 12
- 15 Which Christmas themed ballet first premiered in St Petersburg in 1892?
a) Cinderella b) The Nutcracker c) The Little Matchgirl
- 16 Which of his plays did Shakespeare write as a Christmas present for Queen Elizabeth 1?
a) The Merry Wives of Windsor b) A Winter's Tale c) Twelfth Night
- 17 Ilex is the scientific name for which Christmas greenery?
a) Mistletoe b) Ivy c) Holly
- 18 Which king was crowned on Christmas Day?
a) Stephen b) Henry II c) William I (the Conqueror)
- 19 What colour coat did Santa have until Coco-Cola gave him his red one?
a) Blue b) Green c) White
- 20 How many gifts were given in total in the twelve days of Christmas?
No multiple choice here but see if you can work out the answer.

Can you remember the first line of the carols these lines come from?

- 21 mark my footsteps, good my page
- 22 most highly favoured lady
- 23 two thousand years of wrong
- 24 no ear may hear his coming
- 25 let nothing you dismay
- 26 they lookèd up and saw a star
- 27 thus spake the seraph and forthwith
- 28 glory streams from heaven afar
- 29 risen with healing in his wings
- 30 breathes a life of gathering gloom

And the answers to last month's Colourful Quiz

1. Which of the seven colours in the rainbow comes in the *Middle*? **b. Green**
2. In a game of *Snooker*, which colour ball is worth 5 points? **a. Blue**
3. Which colour can go before *Feather*, *Noise* and *Sauce*? **d. White**
4. What colour is the *Neutral* wire on a modern British domestic plug? **a. Blue**
5. What colour is known in French as *Jaune*? **d. Yellow**
6. An American writer of *Westerns* has which colour as his surname? **c. Grey**
7. What is added to *Gin* to make it *Pink*? **b. Angostura Bitters**
8. What colour is an *Amethyst*? **d. Violet**
9. What colour is a *female* Blackbird? **c. Brown**
10. What colour is a *Moonstone*? **d. White**
11. What colour is *chlorophyll*? **b. Green**
12. What colour is A *Clanger* – a children's TV puppet? **b. Pink**
13. What colour is *Thunderbird 4*? **d. Yellow**
14. What colour do you get when you mix *Cyan* and *Magenta* together? **a. Blue**
15. What colour is the planet *Neptune* when viewed from Earth? **b. Blue**
16. What colour is the *longest* wavelength of Visible Light? **c. Red**
17. What colour is the mineral *Lazurite*? **b. Blue**
18. The American state of *Kentucky* has the nickname the ? *Grass State*. **a. Blue**
19. Where in Great Britain are the *Black Mountains*? **d. Wales**
20. According to legend who rode a horse called *Black Bess*? **a. Dick Turpin**

Can you fill in the missing colours from these songs

21. Elvis Presley **Blue** Suede shoes
22. Nat King Cole **Red** Sails in the Sunset
23. Brian Hyland Itsy Bitsy Teenie Weenie **Yellow** Polkadot Bikini

- 24. Rolling Stones Paint it **Black**
- 25. Tom Jones **Green, Green** Grass of Home
- 26. The Beatles **Yellow** Submarine
- 27. Bing Crosby **White** Christmas
- 28. Chris de Burgh Lady in **Red**
- 29. Moody Blues Nights in **White** Satin
- 30. Boney M **Brown** Girl in the Ring



Parish of Brighton, The Chapel Royal

Part time administrator needed for busy City centre church (starting on 12th February 2024)

Chapel Royal is a Church of England church situated in North Street in Brighton city centre.

This is a P/T post for a self employed administrator.

Payment is £12 per hour for approximately 16 hours per week.

The job involves giving administrative assistance to the Church wardens and the Priest in charge of the Parish. (A full job description and person specification are available on request).

The job could be hybrid and a laptop is available to allow work to be done offsite but at least one day a week should be spent in the Chapel.

The successful applicant will have good administrative skills and experience, excellent Computer skills, and be willing to work as part of a small team.

Please send your CV FAO Churchwardens: office@chapelroyal.church by closing date of 7th January 2024. Interviews will take place in w/c 15th January 2024.

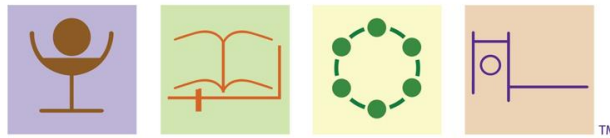
Please also use the above email address if you require any further information about the post.



CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

MESSY CHURCH	Every second Sunday (except August & December) in the church 4.00 - 6.00 pm	
FLOWERS	Contact the Church Office	01273 553311 office@brightonstjohn.org.uk
HALLS/CHURCH for HIRE	Halls Administrator	07847 352889 halls@brightonstjohn.org.uk
PRESTON COFFEE POT	Every Wednesday after the 10.00 am service	
PRESTON FRIDAY CLUB	Crowhurst Community Centre alternate Fridays in term time 2.00 - 4.00 pm	Sue O'Malley 01273 700150
THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY	Judith Lawson	
6th / 7th PRESTON PARK GUIDES - Crowhurst Community Centre		
Rainbow Guides	Tuesday in term time 5.30 – 6.30 pm Wednesday in term time 5.30 - 6.30 pm	Ms Jo Mander girlguiding.org.uk Mrs Jackie Vidler girlguiding.org.uk
Brownie Guides	Tuesday in term time 6.15 - 7.45 pm	Ms Jo Mander girlguiding.org.uk
Guides	Wednesday in term time 6.45 - 8.45 pm	Miss Helen Emerson girlguiding.org.uk

For more information about activities at St John's please see our website
www.brightonstjohn.org.uk



PARISH GIVING SCHEME

If you're able to contribute to St John's on a regular basis, please consider signing up to the Parish Giving Scheme.

For more information: <https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/preston-st-john-the-evangelist-brighton/>



St John's is now registered with easyfundraising. Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself!
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/brightonstjohn/>

Using your smartphone this QR code enables you to support St John's via a debit or credit card:



Parish Church of St John the Evangelist
Knole Road Brighton BN1 6RB
01273 553311
www.brightonstjohn.org.uk
www.facebook.com/prestonstjohn

Parish Office opening times: Wednesdays & Fridays 9:30am-12pm

*Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sue Seymour
safeguarding@brightonstjohn.org.uk*



St John the Evangelist
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