

# GOOD NEWS



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

**December 2025**

**50p**

# ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, PRESTON, BRIGHTON

Knoyle Road, Brighton BN1 6RB

[www.brightonstjohn.org.uk](http://www.brightonstjohn.org.uk)

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**BAPTISMS and MARRIAGES** by appointment

# CHRISTMAS 2025

at St John the Evangelist, Preston, Brighton

Sunday 10 December

6.00pm A Solstice Celebration

*in the Community Garden*

Sunday 14 December

4.00pm Christingle

Sunday 21 December

6.00pm Carol Singing

Wednesday 24 December ~ Christmas Eve

4.00pm Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Thursday 25 December ~ Christmas Day

10.00am All-Age Worship

for Christmas Day

[www.brightonstjohn.org.uk](http://www.brightonstjohn.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/prestonstjohn](http://www.facebook.com/prestonstjohn)

# Reflections on the Christmas Story

*A mix of Bible readings and comments by Tony Horsfall, a former OMF missionary to the Far East and now retreat leader and author based in Yorkshire.*

## Matthew 1:18 – Joseph's dilemma

*This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit....”*

It is not clear at what point Mary told Joseph the news of her pregnancy, but when she did it came as a bombshell. What should he do, knowing the child was not his? Could her story be true? He was however a righteous man, and he sought God for direction rather than acting impulsively. God spoke to him through a dream, confirming that the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and this gave him the courage to stand by her, and take her as his wife. It was a brave decision, but he now knew that the child would be the One to save people from their sins.

It is easy when we have difficult decisions to make to be impetuous or hasty, but the best decisions are made slowly and with prayer. When you are making important choices ask God to guide you clearly, and to give you the courage to do what is right.

## Matthew 1:22 – Long-awaited Immanuel

*All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’ (which means ‘God with us’)… And Joseph gave Him the name Jesus.*

The plan of salvation is intimately connected to the Old Testament, and was the fulfilment of prophecies made long ago. God was sending His Son into the world that we might be saved. God is with us – this astonishing, mind-blowing truth underpinned Joseph’s straight-forward trust in Him. Today as you get on with your life, pray that the wonder of knowing that God is with you will never be far from your awareness.

## Luke 2:1-7 – Bethlehem

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world... so Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee*

*to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

This is perhaps the most familiar picture we have of the Christmas event—but remember what was happening. This was no ordinary child. In Jesus God became a human being and dwelt among us, perhaps the greatest miracle (and mystery) of all. As you visualise the scene again, let worship arise in your heart: *‘From heaven you came, helpless Babe, entered our world your glory veiled.’* Emmanuel, God with us! The Servant King, worthy of all our adoration and love.

## **Luke 2:8-12 – The Shepherds arrive**

*And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.*

The first visitors are not VIPs but humble shepherds who have been summoned by an angelic visitor. For those who have eyes to see, there hidden in the manger beneath the blankets is the Son of God, the one sent by the Father to be the Saviour of the world. Very few of those crowded into Bethlehem that night were aware of what was happening. Only those with faith could recognise the arrival of the long-awaited Messiah. It is the same today.

Lord, I pray for eyes to see where the glory of Heaven touches earth. May I be alive today with the truth that the Saviour, rescuer, King Jesus has been born ‘to us’ and that there is joy in this for all people. May my life reflect that glory even in a small way in my interactions with people, so that in this Christmas season the good news of great joy will be known.

## **Luke 2:13-15 – Angel hosts**

*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.’*

The darkness of the Judean hillside was lit up by the appearance of a great angelic choir, messengers sent to herald the birth of the Saviour. Their song breaks the stillness of the night, first in praise of God for his act of mercy in sending the Son, and then in proclamation of the peace the child will bring to earth. The shepherds now decide to do the unthinkable -leave their flocks, and head off into town to see the new born King. Such is the drawing power of the Saviour.

Sometimes there are things we too must leave behind if we are to follow his call, but whatever sacrifice is needed, it will be worth it just to find him for ourselves.



## **Archbishop Designate, Sarah Mullally, sets out her hopes for the Church**

Shortly after the announcement of her nomination as the next Archbishop of Canterbury, Bishop Sarah Mullally delivered an address at Canterbury Cathedral, reflecting on her calling, the challenges facing the Church, and her hopes for its future.

Rooted in her early vocation as a nurse and shaped by her ministry in London, she spoke of “washing feet” as a guiding image of Christian service, and of finding hope in the quiet faithfulness of churches, chaplaincies, and communities across the Anglican Communion. She addressed the Church’s responsibility in safeguarding, the need to confront power dynamics, and the importance of standing against hatred and antisemitism.

She said she would seek to be “a shepherd who enables everyone’s ministry and vocation to flourish,” and expressed her desire to nurture confidence in the Gospel. “Held fast by the Lord’s hand,” she concluded, “please pray for me as I will pray for you.”

# Carol Singing Together

*Oh Come All Ye Faithful*, dust off your Christmas jumpers and join us for two opportunities to sing carols on Saturday 20th December.

At 3.00pm there'll be mulled wine and carols at little St Peter's in Preston Park. And at 5.00pm, we'll *Ding Dong Merrily* across to The Crown and Anchor in Preston Village.

So join us for either or both.



## Why was Jesus born in a barn?

Our pretty Christmas cards do not do it justice – the stable that Jesus was born in would have been smelly, dirty, and full of mess. So why did God not provide something better for His beloved Son? Why let Joseph and Mary scrounge around until they ended up in a smelly stable?

Perhaps because the King of Kings being born in a foul stable is a perfect picture of redemption. Jesus came from glory into a world filled with the dirt, filth and darkness of sin. And Jesus was not put off by darkness in the least – instead, He came to be the Light of the World. Thank God for His unspeakable gift. No wonder the angels sang “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 2:14)

His humble birth in a barn also speaks to us of God's closeness to the ordinary and overlooked. In choosing such a lowly place for Jesus' arrival, God demonstrates that no one is excluded from His love, and His presence can be found even in the most unassuming circumstances. The stable becomes a symbol of hope for all, reminding us that God's glory often shines brightest in places we least expect.

# From Sue's Kitchen

## Chocolate and Cherry Mousse.

60g plain chocolate (at least 70% cocoa)

3 large eggs, separated

1 level tbsp caster sugar

Fresh cherries, halved and pitted, to decorate

Set aside 1 square of chocolate, for decorating.

Melt the rest in a heatproof bowl, over a pan of gently simmering water, without stirring.

Leave to cool for 5 minutes.

Add the egg yolks and caster sugar and whisk until smooth.

Put the egg whites in a clean glass bowl and whisk until they form medium stiff peaks.

Using a metal spoon, add a large spoonful of egg whites to the chocolate, folding it through to loosen the mixture.

Gently fold in the remaining egg whites.

Divide the mixture between 4 dessert dishes, cover with clingfilm and chill for 1 hour.

Remove clingfilm, top with the cherries and a grating of chocolate from the remaining square.

The mousses can be stored without the topping for up to 3 days.

*Serves 4.*



COME JOIN US FOR

# *A Solstice Celebration*

ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 6.00PM - 7.30PM



Come and share the seasonal warmth of fire and friendship in the new Community Garden of St John the Evangelist, entrances in Knoyle Road and Preston Road.

This family-friendly event will include a short play, "As the Year Turns" an age-old Solstice story. It's the Holly King's bid to keep the world in Winter darkness and prevent the coming of the Light. Spoiler alert - he doesn't succeed! This will be followed by mince pies, mulled wine, or hot chocolate, with carol singing around the fire as we welcome, together, the coming of the Light - marking in our own way the Christian message of light overcoming darkness."

*Wrap up warm and bring your own lantern!*

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE  
[INFO@BRIGHTONSTJOHN.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@BRIGHTONSTJOHN.ORG.UK)**

# **Diocesan Training Opportunities**

Dear All,

We have a number of events coming up over the next 5 months. The first page of the diocesan website has details, but for ease they are below. Please do share with your wider congregation - open to everyone.

## **The Year Of Matthew, Seminar 1, Led by Canon Peter Sills. Thursday 20 November 2025 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Zoom**

Although placed first in the New Testament, Matthew's Gospel was the second to be written. Composed around AD70 for a Jewish Christian community, possibly situated in Syria, it has a distinctive style and layout. This Zoom seminar, the first of two, explores when, why and by whom the Gospel was written, the sources on which it is based, its distinctive features, and its major themes. The second seminar (April 23, 2026), will look more closely at Matthew's teaching and his picture of Jesus.

**Booking - <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FKSF>**

## **The Theology of Hymns. The Revd Thomas Pelham Thursday January 22nd, 7pm-8.45pm. Zoom**

Join Revd Thomas Pelham for an online talk and discussion on the Theology of Hymns. Hymns are more than musical expressions—they are theological declarations woven into melody. Rooted in Scripture and tradition, hymns articulate the beliefs, hopes, and praises of the Christian faith. They serve as communal prayers, doctrinal affirmations, and spiritual reflections, often encapsulating profound truths in poetic form.

**Booking – <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FOJC>**

## **Faith and Political Discipleship. The Very Revd Dr Edward Dowler, Dean of Chichester. Thursday 5th February, 10am-12. Zoom**

Faith and political discipleship with the Very Revd Dr Edward Dowler, Dean of Chichester. Join online for an informative talk and discussion about engaging public life through the lens of the Gospel, seeking justice, peace, and the common good. Grounded in scripture and with attention to writing in the early centuries of the Church as well as more modern sources, it calls believers to act with compassion, uphold human dignity, and participate in civic life as an expression of

love for neighbour and obedience to Christ. Thursday 5th February, 10am-12.

Zoom

Booking - <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FOJE>

**Holy Week: Rituals and Traditions. The Revd Catriona Cumming All Saints Church, The Drive, Hove BN3 3QE. Sunday 1st March, 3.00 pm until 4.30pm,**  
Join the Revd Catriona Cumming for an insightful exploration of the solemn and richly ceremonial liturgies of Holy Week.

This special occasion offers a chance to rediscover the spiritual depth and beauty of the Church's most sacred season, reflecting on Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection. It's an opportunity to deepen your understanding of why liturgy is celebrated in such a profound way during this pivotal time in the Christian year. Please note that there is street parking around All Saints, but no dedicated parking at the church. Hove train station is a convenient 10-minute walk from the church.

Booking - <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FOJH>

Best wishes,

Greg Moore, Officer for Lay Ministry and Training

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## *Have you heard of the 'five-gift rule' for Christmas?*

In recent years a new trend for choosing presents has emerged on blogs and social media platforms. It advises that we should give others only a limited number of gifts, and then, only in specific categories. So, the emphasis has shifted to quality rather than quantity, and to be giving something the person actually wants, needs, wears, reads and experiences.

If you are struggling for Christmas present ideas this year, would these categories give you any inspiration?

Something they want: a fun gift that the person will enjoy.

Something they need: a practical gift, such as a new backpack or a useful kitchen gadget.

Something to wear: an item of clothing or an accessory that matches with their style.

Something to read: a book that will interest them, like a novel, biography, or even a cookbook.

Something to do: an experience, like a day trip to a local attraction, or a creative gift such as the chance to make jewellery.



## 10 Fun Facts about Christmas trees



Even before the time of Christ, evergreen trees were seen in winter as a symbol of fertility.

It was the 16<sup>th</sup> century monk, Martin Luther, who is credited with the idea of having lights on Christmas trees. He added candles to his tree, to look like stars in a forest.

Windsor Castle got its first Christmas tree in 1800, brought by Charlotte, wife of George III.

It was in 1835 that the term 'Christmas tree' was first used in English.

It was in the 1840s, when Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, began bringing trees inside, that led to their popularity throughout the UK.

It was Woolworths who first sold manufactured Christmas tree ornaments – back in 1880.

The tree in London's Trafalgar Square has been a gift from the city of Oslo, Norway since 1947.

The world's tallest Xmas tree, at 221ft high, was erected in a Washington shopping mall in 1950.

In a survey of the nation's favourite smells, real Christmas trees came eighth, just behind the sea, but ahead of perfume.

About five million real Christmas trees are sold in the UK each year.

# Readings & Collects

## Sunday 7 December – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

**Readings**    Isaiah 11: 1-10    Romans 15: 4-13    Matthew 3: 1-12

### 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 14 December – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

**Readings**    Isaiah 35: 1-10    James 5: 7-10    Matthew 11: 2-11

### 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 21 December – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**Readings**    Isaiah 7: 10-16    Romans 1: 1-7    Matthew 1: 18-end

### **Collect**

God our redeemer,  
who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary  
to be the mother of your Son:  
grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour,  
so we may be ready to greet him  
when he comes again as our judge;  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

## **Sunday 28 December – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

**Readings**    Isaiah 63: 7-9    Hebrews 2: 10-end    Matthew 2: 13-end

### **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 4 January – Epiphany**

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

### **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 11 January – Baptism of Christ**

**Readings**    Isaiah 42: 1-9    Acts 10: 34-43    Matthew 3: 13-end

### **Collect**

Eternal Father,  
who at the baptism of Jesus  
revealed him to be your Son,  
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:  
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,  
that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children;  
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



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers

**0800 804 8044**



[www.faithinlaterlife.org](http://www.faithinlaterlife.org)



## Messy Church at St John's

is on the second Sunday of the month from 4.00 to 5.00pm in the church

Each month there is a bible story, crafts and activities,  
and afternoon tea with sandwiches & cake!

*Sunday 11 January 2026*

*Sunday 8 February 2026*



BRIGHTON & HOVE ARTS  
ORCHESTRA

# CHRISTMAS CONCERT

**Seasonal music and audience carols**

**Saturday 13th December at 4:00pm**

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, KNOYLE ROAD, BRIGHTON,  
BN1 6RB



*Including special guests  
Hove Harmony*

Free Admission with retiring collection,  
proceeds after concert expenses going to local charity Chomp

[bhao.org](http://bhao.org)

# CALENDAR

## DECEMBER

Tuesday 2	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	7.00 pm	Advent Course <i>in the Vestry</i>
Wednesday 3	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot
Thursday 4	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	2.30 pm	Advent Course <i>in the Vestry</i>
Friday 5	2.00 pm	Friday Club <i>A Victorian Christmas ~ Sarah-Helen Snow</i>
Saturday 6	7.30 pm	Brighton Orpheus Choir Christmas Concert
Sunday 7	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist Ministry of prayer for healing
Tuesday 9	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	7.00 pm	Advent Course <i>in the Vestry</i>
Wednesday 10	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot
	6.00 pm	Solstice Event <i>in the Community Garden</i>
Thursday 11	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	2.30 pm	Advent Course <i>in the Vestry</i>
Saturday 13	4.00 pm	Brighton & Hove Arts Orchestra Christmas Concert
Sunday 14	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist
	4.00 pm	Christingle

Tuesday 16	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday 17	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot
Thursday 18	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Friday 19	2.00 pm	Friday Club Christmas Party
Sunday 20	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist
Tuesday 22	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday 23	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot
Thursday 24	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	4.00 pm	Crib Service
	11.30 pm	Midnight Mass
Friday 25	10.00 am	All- Age Worship for Christmas Morning
Sunday 28	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist
Tuesday 30	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday 31	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot

## **JANUARY 2026**

Thursday 1	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 4	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist
		Ministry of prayer for healing
Tuesday 6	8.00 am	Morning Prayer

Wednesday 7	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
	10.00 am	Said Eucharist
	10.45 am	Preston Coffee Pot
Thursday 8	8.00 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 11	10.00 am	Parish Eucharist
	4.00 pm	Messy Church



to  
 Rols Ham-Riche on the 11<sup>th</sup>  
 Christine Eden on the 14<sup>th</sup>  
 Graham Warnes on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
 Pauline Chamberlain on the 25<sup>th</sup>  
 and  
 Christina Hardwick on the 30<sup>th</sup>



*With New Year's Resolutions in mind, here is John Wesley's rule of conduct:*

Do all the good you can  
 By all the means you can  
 In all the ways you can  
 In all the places you can  
 At all the times you can  
 To all the people you can  
 As long as ever you can.

# CURRENT NEEDS LIST

## TINNED MEAT

- Spam, Corned beef, Meatballs, Mince, Steak, Chicken Curry, Hot dogs, Ham

## TINNED FISH

- Tuna, Mackerel, Sardines, Salmon

## TINNED VEGETABLES

- Sweetcorn, Potatoes, Carrots, Peas

## TINNED TOMATOES & PASSATA

## TINNED PULSES

## PASTA & CURRY SAUCES

## NOODLES & RICE

- Including microwave options

## TINNED FRUIT

## TINNED DESSERTS

- Custard, Evaporated milk, Rice Pudding

## INSTANT COFFEE

## SOMETHING TO MAKE OUR CLIENTS SMILE



Thank you so much for your amazing support.

## True story

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from 'house' to 'house' knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them.

As they continued to get 'no room' answers, a little voice called from the back of the church: "You should have booked!"

## Well known pilot

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures to illustrate a biblical story. The teacher was startled to see one little boy was drawing an airplane. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy explained. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the figure in the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."

## The Wrong Gift

A young couple began to assemble a special Christmas gift they had bought for their children. They had bought a kit for a tree house, but it didn't make sense. Then they realised that the materials were for a sailboat, so they wrote to the company to complain. The company's reply was brief: "While we regret the inconvenience this mistake must have caused you, we are more concerned about the man who is out on a lake somewhere, trying to sail your tree house."

## Know what?

As we were putting out cookies for Father Christmas one Christmas Eve, I accidentally dropped one. I picked it up and dusted it off before placing it back on the plate. "You can't do that," argued my four-year-old. But I assured him that Father Christmas would never know.

He shot me a dubious look. "So, he knows if I've been bad or good all year, but he doesn't know if you dropped his cookie on the floor?"

# PRESTON FRIDAY CLUB



Crowhurst Community Centre,  
Knoyle Road, Brighton BN1 6RB  
[behind Knoyle Hall]

Alternate Friday afternoons in term time  
2.00pm to 4.00pm

Talks, activities, tea & chat with friends

~~~~~

Friday 5<sup>th</sup>  
A Victorian Christmas ~ Sarah-Helen Snow

Friday 19<sup>th</sup>  
Christmas Party

*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...*

## **Your first parish ...**

The Rectory  
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

And so, the old year draws to a close, and you are packing to move to your own first parish in January. Let me give you some final words of advice.

Curates, you will have noticed, are forgiven everything. I hope you have appreciated this period of grace, because come 1<sup>st</sup> January, all that will change. You will then become responsible for everything that goes wrong in your church. You must be able to mend leaking taps, shovel snow, arrange flowers, mow the churchyard and run jumble sales. You will be expected to know the moment someone falls ill – preferably the day before. In addition, they will expect you to preach profound sermons - in seven minutes flat, and to lead a life of prayerful solitude while being the life and soul of the parish. From the day your predecessor left, he will have turned into a saint. *You will be their new disappointment.* Be assured that *whatever* you do, you will *always* disappoint someone.

Be prepared for phone calls at 3am telling you that someone has left a light on in church, and shouldn't you go and turn it off? You will be asked about car parking arrangements for the October Harvest Service by mid-January, while hymns for the 9 Lessons and Carols will be required by early summer. I suggest you buy in extra pullovers, overcoats and scarves for life in your vicarage. A good number of mousetraps may well come in useful too.

Welcome to your new life of an incumbent.

Expect that each Sunday morning, as you prepare for the service, there will be a straggling queue of people who want to tell you an astonishing variety of things: there is a large cobweb 30 feet up over the pulpit, they don't like the second hymn on the board, the flowers look rough this week, there may be a bat in the vestry, some child has left a shoe in the back porch, and the car park has broken glass in it.

You may find this a distraction as you prepare for a worship service. But remember that at least they have bothered to come to church at all. In my experience, congregations are always irritating, but at least they do take up a lot of space, and that looks good in the pews. The church would look empty without them.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace



## **The Incarnation**

The incarnation of Christ is the clearest affirmation of the truth that man is created in the image of God. - *Lawrence Adams*

To perceive Christmas through its wrapping becomes more difficult each year.  
- *E B White*

Filling the world He lies in a manger! - *Augustine*

Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. – *Anon*

The world is equally shocked at hearing Christianity criticized and seeing it practiced. - *D Elton Trueblood*

Remember, Christ was not a deified man, neither was he a humanized God. He was perfectly God and at the same time perfectly man. - *C H Spurgeon*

This world is all a fleeting show, For man's illusion given;  
The smiles of joy, the tears of woe, Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,  
There's nothing true but Heaven. - *Thomas More*

# A Christmas-y Quiz – what else?

- 1 What is the best-selling Christmas song of all time?  
a) Last Christmas      b) All I want for Christmas is you      c) White Christmas
- 2 Stollen is the traditional fruit cake of which country?  
a) Germany      b) Lapland      c) Austria
- 3 What is the name of the angel in the film *It's a Wonderful Life*?  
a) Cedric      b) Clarence      c) Christopher
- 4 Which Christmas decoration is a parasitic plant?  
a) Poinsettia      b) Mistletoe      c) Holly
- 5 Which popular Christmas song was actually written for Thanksgiving?  
a) Jingle Bells      b) Let it Snow      c) Winter Wonderland
- 6 Which ocean is Christmas Island in?  
a) Pacific      b) Indian      c) Arctic
- 7 Which dish was served in the song *We wish you a merry Christmas*?  
a) Christmas pudding      b) Panettone      c) Figgy Pudding
- 8 What is the name of the Grinch's dog?  
a) Pete      b) George      c) Max
- 9 In which year was *Love Actually* released?  
a) 2001      b) 2003      c) 2005
- 10 In *The Night Before Christmas* what did children have visions of?  
a) Sugar Plums      b) Candy Canes      c) Stockings stuffed with presents
- 11 In the 4<sup>th</sup> century which Roman emperor declared 25 December as the official date for celebrating the birth of Jesus?  
a) Constantine      b) Theodosius      c) Jovian
- 12 How many ghosts visited Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve?  
*1 point for each one you can name*

13 Which artist is the only one to have had four consecutive UK Christmas number one singles?  
a) Marty Wilde   b) Cliff Richard   c) Elvis Presley

14 Where was the historical Saint Nicholas born?  
a) Poland   b) Greece   c) Turkey

15 What is the most popular vegetarian alternative to turkey as Christmas dinner?  
a) Nut roast   b) Mushroom pithivier   c) Parsnip, sage & apple wellington

16 Who 'invented' the Christmas cracker?  
a) Dick Smith   b) Tom Jones   c) Tom Smith

17 Which of his plays did Shakespeare write as a Christmas present for Elizabeth I?  
a) The Merry Wives of Windsor   b) A Winter's Tale   c) Twelfth Night

18 Which ballet is traditionally associated with Christmas?  
a) The Red Shoes   b) The Nutcracker   c) Cinderella

19 When was the first royal Christmas message broadcast?  
a) 1930   b) 1931   c) 1932

20 How many gifts in total were given in the 12 Days of Christmas song  
a) 248   b) 364   c) 412

*Can you remember which artist/s sang which Christmas song?*

|                                    |                                           |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 21 White Christmas                 | 26 Do they know it's Christmas?           |
| 22 Last Christmas                  | 27 Blue Christmas                         |
| 23 Driving home for Christmas      | 28 Merry Christmas Everybody              |
| 24 Mary's Boy Child                | 29 Santa Baby                             |
| 25 All I want for Christmas is you | 30 I wish it could be Christmas every day |

## And the answers to last month's Armchair Traveller quiz

1. Which famous bridge stands at the entrance to San Francisco bay?  
b) Golden Gate
2. Which building was built for the Paris exhibition of 1899? c) Eiffel Tower
3. Which palace did King Louis 14th build? d) Versailles
4. Which one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World stood in Ephesus?  
d) Temple of Artemis
5. What is the name of the lost city of the Incas discovered in Peru in 1911?  
b) Machu Pichu
6. In which country would you find the original Legoland a) Denmark
7. If you were reading Le Figaro with your morning breakfast, where would you be?  
a) France
8. Which composer is celebrated at the Music festival in Bayreuth in Germany ?  
d) Wagner
9. Near which Egyptian city would you visit the Colossi of Memnon? c) Luxor
10. Which famous novelist lived at Haworth Parsonage? c) Charlotte Bronte
11. Who had an estate called Graceland? d) Elvis Presley
12. Which Asian capital city did Edwin Lutyens design? c) New Delhi
13. Which world famous landmark was built on Bedloes island?  
d) Statue of Liberty
- 14 . Which Irish city is served by Shannon airport? c) Limerick
15. On which sea is the resort of Rimini? a) Adriatic
16. Which European Capital city has a main line railway station named after a battle of 1805? c) Paris
17. Whose official residence is Lambeth palace? a) Archbishop of Canterbury
18. From which palace did the BBC broadcast? a) Alexandra Palace

19. The palace of the Duke of Mantua provides the setting for which Verdi opera?  
d) Rigoletto

20. What is the unit of currency of Poland? d) Zloty

**Match the character to the ship they sailed on - with apologies for not including the options last month!**

21. Christopher Columbus      e) Santa Maria

22. Jacques Cousteau      h) Calypso

23. Popeye      a) The Olive

24. Horatio Nelson      i) Victory

25. Blackbeard      g) Queen Anne's Revenge

26. Captain James Cook      b) Endurance

27. Captain Pugwash      j) The Black Pig

28. Pilgrim Fathers      d) The Mayflower

29. Charles Darwin      f) Beagle

30. Pinky & Perky      c) Melody Maker

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*Are you dreading some Christmas presents?*

Do you expect to like all the presents you will receive this year? Not if last year was anything to go by... It seems that many of us expect to unwrap at least one item that we do not want this Christmas.

What do you do with those weird gifts? Some of us admit to dumping them – straight into the bin. (Yet we are very polite about it – and pretend delight so that we do not hurt anyone's feelings.) A better way of getting rid of unwanted presents is to donate them to charity.

# CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

|                                   |                                                                                |                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>MESSY CHURCH</b>               | Every second Sunday (except August & December) in the church<br>4.00 - 6.00 pm |                                                                                                |
| <b>FLOWERS</b>                    | Contact the Church Office                                                      | 01273 553311<br><a href="mailto:office@brightonstjohn.org.uk">office@brightonstjohn.org.uk</a> |
| <b>HALLS/CHURCH<br/>for HIRE</b>  | Halls Administrator                                                            | 07847 352889<br><a href="mailto:halls@brightonstjohn.org.uk">halls@brightonstjohn.org.uk</a>   |
| <b>PRESTON<br/>COFFEE POT</b>     | Every Wednesday after the 10.00 am service                                     |                                                                                                |
| <b>PRESTON<br/>FRIDAY CLUB</b>    | Crowhurst Community Centre alternate<br>Fridays in term time 2.00 - 4.00 pm    | Sue O'Malley<br>01273 700150                                                                   |
| <b>THE CHILDREN'S<br/>SOCIETY</b> | Judith Lawson                                                                  |                                                                                                |

## 6<sup>th</sup> / 7<sup>th</sup> PRESTON PARK GUIDES - Crowhurst Community Centre

|                       |                                                                              |                                                                                  |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rainbow Guides</b> | Tuesday in term time 5.30 – 6.30 pm<br>Wednesday in term time 5.30 - 6.30 pm | Mrs Jackie Vidler<br><a href="http://girlguiding.org.uk">girlguiding.org.uk</a>  |
| <b>Brownie Guides</b> | Tuesday in term time 6.15 - 7.45 pm                                          | Ms Jo Mander<br><a href="http://girlguiding.org.uk">girlguiding.org.uk</a>       |
| <b>Guides</b>         | Wednesday in term time 6.45 - 8.45 pm                                        | Miss Helen Emerson<br><a href="http://girlguiding.org.uk">girlguiding.org.uk</a> |

For more information about activities at St John's please see our website  
[www.brightonstjohn.org.uk](http://www.brightonstjohn.org.uk)



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:*



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[www.brightonstjohn.org.uk](http://www.brightonstjohn.org.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/prestonstjohn](http://www.facebook.com/prestonstjohn)

*Parish Office opening times: Mondays & Fridays 9:30am-12.30pm*

*Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sue Seymour  
[safeguarding@brightonstjohn.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@brightonstjohn.org.uk)*



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