

St. John the Evangelist,

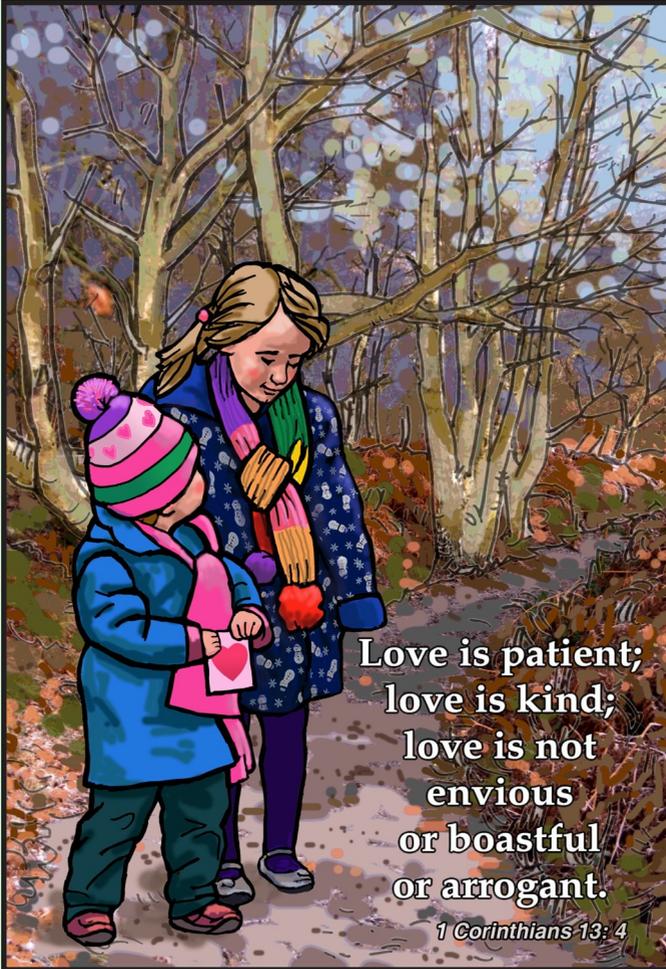
Walton



# Open Door

Bringing people to Jesus  
  
St. John's, Walton

February & March 2026



*Details of information in this magazine and more can be found at*  
[www.stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk](http://www.stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk)  
and  
[www.facebook.com/stjohnswalton/](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnswalton/)

## Sunday and Regular Services

**Sunday Morning Service 9.30 am**

**Please note new time**

Morning Worship — 1st and 3rd Sundays

Holy Communion — 2nd and 4th Sundays

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**5th Sunday Holy Communion Service 9.30am**

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**These services will be live streamed through  
our website:**

<https://stjohnschurchwalton.org.uk/>

**Holy Communion  
Sunday Service**

**8.30 am**

**1st & 3rd  
Sundays only**

**Wednesday  
Celtic Service  
10.00 am**

## Special Services

**Choral Evensong**

Sunday 8th March @ 6 pm

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**Ash Wednesday**

Communion Service

18th February @ 10 am

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**Palm Sunday**

29th March

Details to be confirmed

For Holy Week and Easter  
Services please see card  
accompanying the **next** issue

**All are welcome**



## Contact Details

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*Lay Reader*

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*Church Warden*

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*Church Warden*

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*Treasurer*

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If you would like to give to the work and ministry  
of St. John's you can use the QR code, click on this  
link [bit.ly/give-st-johns](https://bit.ly/give-st-johns), or type it into your  
browser, to take you to our online giving website.

With many thanks.



**From Rev. Jo**



Dear Friends,

We often talk nostalgically about snow. I think of my childhood in a south Derbyshire village, walking to school along lanes piled high with snow that had been cleared by the snowplough. But the reality is that snow, which we so often have had in February and March, disrupts our lives. Other countries seem to cope with it better, with their snow tyres, boots and other necessary accessories, but with us the disruption often means that things grind to a halt. But what if instead of seeing the disruption as a bad thing, we see it as an opportunity to stop, take stock and look for new ways to transform ourselves.

The prophet Isaiah says this:

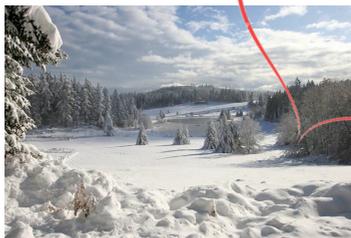
‘ Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.’ Isaiah 1:18

When we first get a covering of snow, everything looks pristine and beautiful; but as soon as the traffic starts to move, people walk down the street, children make snowmen, the snow becomes grey and uninviting. The dirt takes over again and needs to be transformed. We, fallible human beings need to continually stop, take stock and re-orient ourselves towards God, who wants to turn us white as snow each day.

You don't have to wait for the snow to disrupt, God is waiting to transform each one of us into what he designed us to be.

Love from

Rev. Jo



## Bishop Julie coming to St. John's

We look forward to Bishop Julie, the Bishop of Birkenhead, taking our morning service of Holy Communion on 22nd February at 9.30 am. It would be wonderful if you could join us in person for the occasion, so that we may give her a really warm St John's welcome.



## Lent 2026

Our **Lent Course** this year, run under the auspices of **Tuesday Group**, will begin on **17th February**

We will be using '**The Bible Course**' produced by Bible Society and written by Dr Andrew Ollerton

This is a course for those who know little or nothing of the Bible as well as those who may consider themselves 'old hands'.

The Bible is not actually ONE book but an amazing library of books and this course aims to provide tools and skills to help in its understanding.

**When** Tuesdays 7.15 pm — 9.00 pm

**Venue** St. John's Church Community Hall



Please note that a course booklet is required (at a small cost) so if you intend joining us please let Noelle know asap to ensure arrival in good time.

To order this booklet or for further details about Tuesday Group please speak to Noelle or contact her via [noelle\\_briggs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:noelle_briggs@hotmail.co.uk)



*Have you heard?*

*With Lent in mind...*

*just some things to ponder*



"Still water and still religion freeze the quickest."  
Anon

"Every action of our lives touches on some chord that will vibrate in eternity."  
E H Chapin

"It is dangerously possible for activity to be no more than a dizzy whirl around a central emptiness."  
Anon

# Dates for your diary

## Prayer Groups

2nd Tuesday Lady Chapel 6.30pm  
4th Wednesday Lady Chapel 11.00am

### February

Tuesday 10th  
Wednesday 25th

### March

Tuesday 10th  
Wednesday 25th



*If you would like to join us it would be great to see you*

## Tuesday Group

7.15 – 9.00 pm

Church Community Hall



### February

17th  
24th

### March

3rd  
10th  
17th  
24th  
31st

## Knit and Natter

1.30pm—3.30pm

Church Community Hall



### February

Tuesday 3rd  
Tuesday 17th

### March

Tuesday 3rd  
Tuesday 17th

## PCC Meeting

Monday 9th March

CCH @ 7.30 pm

**DON'T FORGET!!!!**



Clocks move forward

**March 29th**

British summertime begins

## A religious upbringing helps your health in later life

Elderly people who had a religious upbringing have been found to be physically healthier, according to a recent study.

Scientists believe that one reason may be that they did not use drugs, cigarettes or alcohol when they were young. The data found that such people are reporting fewer difficulties with daily activities such as dressing or washing.

The study looked at older people across Europe, and the results were published in the journal Social Science and Medicine.

Many children in Europe who grew up after the Second World War had families who attended church on a regular basis, and who had Christian moral beliefs and values. For many children, this provided a sense of meaning in life, and a sense of belonging. They felt more 'connected', and hence more mentally and physically stable.

Prayer  
pages



## A Prayer for Candlemas

Lord Jesus Christ, light of the nations  
and glory of Israel: make your home among us,  
and present us pure and holy to your heavenly Father,  
your God, and our God.  
Amen.

*(From the Church of England website)*



Candlemas is on 2nd February.

It is the day the church celebrates when Mary and Joseph took Jesus and presented him at the temple in Jerusalem.

You can read more about this in Luke 2:21-40.

## Prayers of Reflection during Lent

*Firstly a couple from the Compassion UK website*

Heavenly Father, thank you that in every circumstance you draw me near. When I pray for things to change, I remember that you long for righteousness and justice. When I feel heartbroken about those living in fear and conflict, I remember that you are the Prince of Peace. When I'm overwhelmed with grief, I remember how Jesus wept when his friend Lazarus died. When I'm afraid, I remember that you broke the chains of death. May I live every day with the true hope that is found in Christ. Amen.

Our Father, today please lead me in all I say and do. Whenever I fall out of step from your will, draw me back. Lead me to repent and try again. Guide me with the light of your love now and always. Amen.

@@@

God Almighty, I thank you that in prayer I leave a world of not being able to do something, and enter your realm, where everything is possible – nothing is beyond your power or your reach. Nothing is too great for your Almighty power, and nothing too small for your love. I thank you for being God of the impossible. Amen

*Written by Corrie ten Boom and taken from 'I Stand at the Door and Knock: Meditations by the Author of The Hiding Place'*

*Corrie was a Dutch Christian whose family helped many Jewish people escape from the Nazis during World War II by hiding them in their home. Upon being caught and arrested, she was sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp where she found and shared hope in God. She later recounted her experiences in 'The Hiding Place'.*

Information about further reflection resources and prayers for Lent can be found by searching online for the following:

[The Church of England - Draw Near: Life-giving habits for Lent](#)

[Compassion UK - Lent Prayers](#)

[Compassion UK - Lent Bible Verses to Help You Reflect](#)

[24-7 Prayer - Lent and Easter Prayers](#)

*Mothering Sunday is always celebrated on the fourth Sunday of Lent*

## A Prayer for Mothering Sunday

Creator God,

We thank you for your love which shapes us and helps us to grow.

On Mothering Sunday we give thanks for all women who have been examples of self-giving love, who have given time, wisdom and care to the nurture of children, their own or others.

We pray for those who find this a difficult day, who do not have happy memories of their own mothers, those who grieve for their mothers or for their children, and those who long to be mothers but cannot be.

We remember mothers in the Bible, giving thanks for the tenacity of Sarah, the generosity of Hannah and the courage of Mary.

May your Spirit continue to shape us, heal us and guide us today.

Amen.

*(written by Revd Michaela Youngson, the Assistant Secretary of the Methodist Conference, from The Methodist Church Resource Hub Website)*



### Local Community leadership

Just and compassionate God, thank you for individuals who feel called to serve their communities as local Councillors, especially during times which continue to be challenging in many ways.

We pray for Walton Parish Council and Warrington Borough Council and those elected to them.

Grant them wisdom and guidance so that decisions made and actions taken are done with integrity, fairness, justice and compassion.

Amen

### St. John's Prayer Chain



As part of our Pastoral Ministry at St. John's some church members make up our Prayer Chain. They pray daily for those in need, with requests normally being included for two weeks.

If you would like prayers to be offered on behalf of yourself or someone for whom you have a particular concern at this time, then we would be pleased to do so.

To make a request please contact any of the following:

Rev. Jo Mackriell  
on 01925 968729 or 07359 546362

Ian Jerrard-Dinn (Lay Reader)  
on 01925 265 557

Gill Povey-Robins (Pastoral Worker)  
on 07970 983 308

## Mothering Sunday & Mother Church

The Fourth Sunday in Lent was called 'Mid-Lent' or 'Refreshment Sunday', when the rigors of Lent were relaxed more than was normal for a feast day. It is called Mothering Sunday as a reference to the Epistle reading for the Day (Galatians 4:21-31). The Lenten Epistles follow from each other with teaching about our life as Christians and how we are to follow Christ.

On Mid-Lent Sunday the Epistle talks of bondage and freedom; the bondage of the Law and the Old Covenant as compared to the freedom in Christ, "the promised one", and the New Covenant. Verse 26 reads "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." We gain our freedom from Christ and, as it was seen before the Reformation, the Church.

Thus, Mothering Sunday is about the freedom that we gain through the promise of Jesus Christ delivered through our Mother the Church. People were encouraged to go to their 'Mother Church' (their home church or their home Cathedral) to worship and give thanks. Hence apprentices, and others, went home for the weekend and often brought gifts (or accumulated pay) home to their family.

On the other hand, Mother's Day is a secular festival invented in 1904 and is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday in May in most countries in the world. The UK seems to be the exception. In recent years Mothering Sunday has been hijacked to take the place of a special, secular day to give thanks for our mothers.

### This year Mothering Sunday falls on 15th March

#### Some anniversaries from February and March

**20 years ago**, on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb 2006 the Rolling Stones played the world's largest free rock concert on Copacabana beach, Rio de Janeiro. An estimated 2 million people attended.

**65 years ago**, on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 1961 the Beatles played at the Cavern Club in Liverpool for the first time.

**80 years ago**, on 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 1946 the Bank of England was nationalised

**125 years ago**, on 1st Mar 1901 the Australian Army was founded.

**150 years ago**, on 7th March 1876, Scottish-born American inventor Alexander Graham Bell was granted a U.S. patent for the telephone.



## St John's Ensemble Christmas Concert 2025



A great evening of music by the St John's Ensemble was enjoyed by a filled church on Saturday 6th December.

Mr Alan Thornecroft had put together an imaginative and varied programme of songs interspersed with readings and organ pieces. The choir sang some well known favourites as well as some that were perhaps new to the audience, ably accompanied by Cathy Leung, our very own church organist.

For me, the highlights were Tavener's, 'God is with us', in the Eastern Orthodox style, a difficult piece for any choir, adeptly sung by St John's Ensemble with the soloist Eugene Liem. It was a very moving rendition.

I very much appreciated "Lux Aurumque" by Eric Whitacre, something of a favourite of mine. It was performed with tenderness and joy.

It was great to hear the organ really brought to life at the hands, and feet of Alan, in Toccata on 'Veni Emmanuel' by Andrew Carter, as well as Sleigh Ride, despite the sleigh coming to a crashing halt when a key stuck!

All in all a lovely way to spend an evening and start to feel that Christmas is just around the corner. We look forward to the next appearance of the St John's Ensemble.

Rev Jo

### Can you get across the pedestrian crossing in time?

Have you ever had to hurry to make it to safely across the street because the pedestrian crossing light is about to turn red again?

If so, you are not alone. A recent study has found that pedestrian crossing timings are simply too brief for many elderly people and especially those with mobility problems.



The length of time given at crossing points usually assumes a walking speed of 1.2m per second. But the study found that the average speed of adults aged over 65 is only 0.77m per second. So more than half of older people need to increase their normal walking speed by about 50 per cent, just to reach the other curb safely.

One of the researchers said: "This isn't just a safety issue – it's potentially a barrier to independence, physical activity, and social connection, all of which often decline in later life." Another said: "Allowing enough time to cross the road can boost confidence, support independence, and help them remain engaged in their communities, all key to a better quality of life."

The study was published in the journal *Age and Ageing*.

## The Winter Olympics returns to Europe

If you like snow-sports, you are in for a great month. From 6<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> February, Italy will be hosting the 2026 Winter Olympics, officially known as Milano Cortina 2026. The opening ceremony is at football's famous San Siro stadium. The Paralympic Winter Games follows, from 6<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> March.

For the first time the Winter Games will have two host cities, Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, with events spread across 15 venues in northern Italy, using existing infrastructure to reduce costs. (Thus, Milan will host indoor events like hockey and figure skating, while Cortina hosts alpine skiing and snowboarding.)

Around 3,500 athletes from more than 90 countries are expected to compete for 195 medals across 16 Olympic disciplines. New this year is ski-mountaineering.

Snow gets an occasional mention in the Bible. Job tells how God "Says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth' ... He stops all people from their labour. The tempest comes out from its chamber, the cold from the driving winds. At His direction they swirl around over the face of the whole earth to do whatever He commands them."

Let's hope that the snow does a good deep swirl around Italy this month.



## Ideas for Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day was begun by Pope Gelasius the 1<sup>st</sup> in 496, in honour of St Valentine, the saint who had shown such kindness and love to all who crossed his path. It has become the day when we celebrate the joys of human love.

If you have a romance in your life, Valentine's Day is easy: you can celebrate your shared love with everything from a candlelit meal to red roses to love letters, to revisiting the place where you first met each other.

But even if you do not have a romance in your life, that need not stop you enjoying Valentine's Day (after all, the saint had no romance in *his* life). Instead, why not seek out and show love and kindness to several people? How about hosting a Valentine's meal to enjoy each other's company and to share God's love for us all?

At the very least, why not be on the 'look-out' to do people a random act of kindness this month? Ask God to help you be sensitive to even a stranger who needs a helping hand.



## St David's Day—1st March

The time when the Welsh wear daffodils or leeks.

Shakespeare called this custom 'an honourable tradition begun upon an honourable request' - but nobody knows the reason. Why should anyone have ever 'requested' that the Welsh wear leeks or daffodils to honour their patron saint? It's a mystery!

We do know that David - or Dafydd - of Pembrokeshire was a monk and bishop of the 6th century. In the 12th century he was made patron of Wales, and he has the honour of being the only Welsh saint to be canonised and culted in the Western Church. Tradition has it that he was austere with himself, and generous with others - living on water and vegetables (leeks, perhaps?!) and devoting himself to works of mercy. He was much loved.

In art, St David is usually depicted in Episcopal vestments, standing on a mound with a dove at his shoulder, in memory of his share at an important Synod for the Welsh Church, the Synod of Brevi.



## Weddings

*Emma Tierney and Alex Amato*



## Remembering your loved ones at St John's

Have you thought about celebrating or remembering a special event or person by sponsoring the flowers at St. John's?

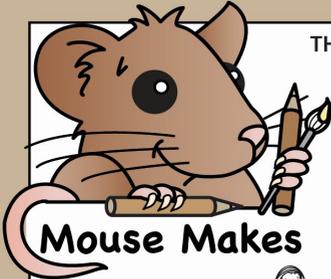
We would love to hear from you.

Please contact Christine Hughes on 01925 210 792 to discuss a donation.



# For the children

(and young at heart!)



## Mouse Makes

Read the story in  
Luke 4:1-13



### THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9



### FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Man shall not live on bread alone."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:

Read the Bible

Learn God's word.



### SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

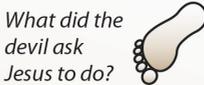
JESUS REPLIED:

"Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him."

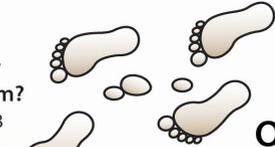
Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:

Put God first  
Worship only Him.



What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9



T W L D G  
R O G L O R Y L O  
I B A P T I S E D  
V O F O O T H D  
S E R V E B T I  
J O R D A N J E G  
L O R D N H



F O R T Y D A Y S S O N K L O R D N H  
T D O W N O N W O R S H I P  
T E S T W O R L D L T U N B  
L V T E M P T A T I O N G R  
E I A M J E S U S F N G D E  
N L K P D E S E R T E R O A  
T H O L Y S P I R I T Y M D  
I M J E R U S A L E M F S J  
W I L D E R N E S S J U M P

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WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL  
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD  
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH  
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT



### THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:

"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:

"Do not put the Lord your God to the test."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:

God cares, trust

Him do not test Him.



## Social goings on



Enjoy

singing?

### St. John's Ensemble

meets In **Church**  
on

**Thursday** from **7.30 pm**

Why not come along and  
join us?

Ability to read music a  
help but not essential.



**Tuesday Group**

Want to learn more about God and the Christian faith outside the formal setting of Church?

Friendly, ordinary folk getting to grips with what living in the 21st Century means for their personal faith.

If you're interested, please speak to Noelle or contact her at [noelle\\_briggs@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:noelle_briggs@hotmail.co.uk)



Feeling lonely?

Fancy a cuppa?



Why not come along to

### St. John's Knit and Natter

(You don't *have* to do any knitting)

**1st and 3rd Tuesday** of the month

**Church Community Hall**

1.30pm — 3.30pm

**Guaranteed a warm welcome**

For more details please contact

Mrs. G. Hatch on 01925 262315

OR

Mrs. G. Bruce on 07876 058934

## Did you know?

**St John's Church Community Hall is available for hire**

Situated in the heart of Walton village

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*parties* *societies and clubs* *fitness classes* *a rehearsal*  
*local community meetings*

- ◆ Grade 2 listed building
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- ◆ Kitchen
- ◆ Disabled toilet and baby change facilities

Bookings are available for local groups or private hire.

Please contact Nina Chadwick on 07840119659 or



Raise a smile;



### After Eden

Adam was out walking with his sons Cain and Abel. As they passed by the ruins of the Garden of Eden, one of the boys asked, "Father, what's that place?"

Adam replied, "Boys, that's where your mother ate us out of house and home."



### Note from the editor

Every effort is made to produce a magazine which looks inviting and contains correct information, spelling, and grammar. However, no-one and nothing is perfect (especially myself), hence errors can get missed, both in production and proof-reading (done by someone else). As you peruse 'Open Door' award yourself 5 points when you find any mistakes which have escaped correction. Have fun! Hopefully you won't find too many! No need to report back.

# RIGBY LENNON & Co

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[www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk) — for some of the articles and graphics included

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*Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York, where he is a spiritual director, considers ...*

### **The staggering vision of '2001 A Space Odyssey'**

I recently saw an excerpt from the film '2001 A Space Odyssey', and had to remind myself that it was released in the early summer of 1968. I was so enthralled and mystified by the film that I saw it twice that year, and it's still staggering in its realisation.

No computer-generated imagery back then; it was all shot with realistic models of spaceships, slow-spinning space-stations, lunar bases, star-scapes, against the blackness of space. It recreated all the stuff needed to make people believe that what they saw on the screen was credible as a vision of what, in 1968, lay 30 years ahead. Painstaking, detailed and exact camerawork obviously played a big part, too. One critic has even said that the scenes in the space station and the space ships, especially of the humans piloting or guiding those machines, look more credible than anything NASA put out.

'2001' still takes my breath away nearly sixty years later. It looks soooo convincing! Now, here's the confession bit; I haven't really grasped the ending, when Dave (the astronaut we've followed throughout the film) reaches out to embrace the future as a star-child. At least, I think that's what the ending is about, but I still have questions.

All this has parallels with our faith, at least for some of us. Christian faith offers us a vision, and a staggering one at that, where we can embrace the future with hope, even though we've no clear sense of the ending beyond our earthly pilgrimage. We are given some clues in the Scriptures and the words of Jesus, but much of it is hidden from us.

And as we live out our faith, committing our ways to God each day, I trust we have discovered it is a credible faith, one that keeps us keeping on through the yearly cycle of Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Pentecost, Advent. 'God is with us', 'God is for us', 'God is in us', 'God is near us' All those truths, experienced day by day, are staggering, and take a lifetime to digest. We don't know all the answers, but we have enough to go on to trust God in the here and now.

Are there films, tv series, books, maybe a magazine article, which have cast some light on your pilgrim path? Which have helped you follow God with more understanding? What comes to mind? Give thanks for all the ways God leads you on the daily path.

#### **Some words spoken by Jesus:**

**"The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."**

*John 6: verse 29*