

CHURCH News

January 2025



Newsletter no: 118

The Epiphany.

A stable's a good place for revelations.

Some of the most profound discoveries
are made in back rooms, half by accident,
by people half-exhausted, looking for something else.

Just as we felt like giving up,
when the whole thing had become ridiculous
and had gone on much too long, and we were blaming
everybody else for our mistakes,
we came upon the unexpected answer
in the most unlikely place:
a speechless, thoughtless, helpless child
who just lay there, needing to be loved.

In this subversion of all natural things
was born the enabling power of sacrifice—
a being whose ambition was to seek
its own destruction, and then call upon
his followers to do no more or less.
What kind of way was this to rule a world?
He just lay there, needing to be loved.

It must be stopped: each Herod would conspire
to kill it when it cannot be tempted
with possessions or subdued with pain,
or lulled to sleep with alcohol or television.
Here was something we could not buy or cure,
digitise, transplant, upgrade, invest in,
analyse or write a business plan for.
He had no army, text-book, voters' mandate
or computer markup language

with which to implement his great design:
he just lay there, needing to be loved.

It was the most implausible demand.
Anything else we might negotiate
but not this life of grace secured through death:
grace, born out of deprivation,
grace born of the endurance of the oppressed,
grace born of the hardships of the poor,
grace born of the forgiveness of the intolerable,
grace borne in the dignity of silence, grace born
from incomprehensible submission
to the absolute abuse of power.
In the strength of his weakness
he just lay there, needing to be loved.

Aeons after energy exploded into matter
here in this stable was let loose
the yet more potent power of perfect love,

Our gifts were tokens. There was nothing more to do
but leave the child to his own terrible story,
and return by different routes
to our own countries, strangers to us now,
yet seeing them as if for the first time,
how they just lie there, needing to be loved.

The last of four poems in the sequence, Magi
Godfrey Rust



January Services 2026

Sunday 4th January

9.00a.m. Holy Communion, St. Mary's, Lowdham

11. 00a.m Holy Communion, St. Helen's, Burton Joyce

Sunday, 11th January

9.00a.m. Morning Worship, St. Mary's, Lowdham

11.00 a.m Morning Worship, St. Helen's, Burton Joyce.

Sunday, 18th January

9.00a.m. Holy Communion, St. Mary's, Lowdham

11. 00a.m Holy Communion, St. Helen's, Burton Joyce.

Sunday 25th January

9.00a.m. Worship for All, St. Mary's, Lowdham

11.00a.m. Worship for All, St. Helen's, Burton Joyce

Please note there are no Tuesday Holy Communion services this month

What's On...

Our churches are living communities at the centre of village life, offering help, fellowship and welcome to everyone. Do come and join us. We'd be delighted to see you.

Coffee Chit Chat

Mondays 9.15a.m—11.30a.m

St. Helen's Church Centre, Burton Joyce

Come and join us for a cuppa and a natter!

Parents & Toddlers

Monday 9.30 –11.00a.m. (term time only).

St. Helen's Church Centre, Burton Joyce.

Everyone is welcome. With refreshments

The Tea Shop at St. John's

Tuesdays 9.30a.m. –12 noon at St. John's,
Gunthorpe. *Join us for coffee, cake and chat.*

Churches Together' Baby & Toddler Group

Tuesday 9.15 –11.00a.m. (term time only)

Methodist Chapel, Lowdham. Coffee & snacks, crafts & songs.

£2.50/family to cover costs.

Home Groups

Come and join us as we share prayers, explore the bible and grow together in faith and friendship . *For more details, please contact Tracey, the Vicar's P.A.*

Contact us...

Revd Anna Clarke

0753 501 7591

reverend.anna.alls@gmail.com

For enquiries, including church bookings, weddings, baptisms and funerals please contact:

Tracey Akehurst

Vicar's P.A. & Benefice

Administrator:

0115 965 2114/ 0780 516 2088

administrator@stmaryslowdham.org.uk

We take safeguarding very seriously. If you have any concerns or questions please contact:

Heather Brown

BJBSB Parish Safeguarding Officer

sgbj@united-benefice.org

Zena Cameron

LCG Parish Safeguarding Officer

zenabramall@hotmail.com *St. Mary's Church*

Find us...

Facebook at Revd Anna & Friends or the United Benefice of Burton Joyce & Lowdham

A Church Near You:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com>

Each church has its own individual web pages where you can find further information

*Jesus Christ
is the same
yesterday and today
and forever!
Hebrews 3.6*