

# Shirley Parish Magazine

December 2020



# SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE

CLERGY

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Social Media: [twitter.com/@ParishB90](https://twitter.com/ParishB90)  
[facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90](https://facebook.com/@AdventureinFaithB90)

## OUR PARISH PRAYERS



Give to us your people, living God,  
A renewed faith and a bold vision  
that we may proclaim  
the Good News of your Son  
with faith that your kingdom will come,  
with hope for our community  
and with love for Him  
who died and rose again  
to save us, Jesus Christ our Risen Lord  
Amen

God of Mission, who alone brings growth to your Church,  
send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,  
wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you,  
and in service to our local community.  
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen

## WORSHIP WITH US

### At St James Church

Wednesday 10am to 4pm - Church open for private prayer

Saturday 10am to 4pm - Church open for private prayer

### At home (times suggested however whenever is convenient for you is fine)

Sunday at 10am - Morning Worship on YouTube and on the phone

Sunday at 10.45am - Virtual Coffee via Zoom

Sunday at 7pm (first Sunday of the month) - Reflective Worship on YouTube and on the phone

Thursday at 7pm - Midweek Reflection on YouTube and on the phone

Saturday at 9am - Parish Prayers via Zoom

Third Saturday of the month - Messy Church

The number to dial to listen on the phone is 0121 270 9089

Church of England 'Daily Hope' number - 0800 804 8044 (free)

***Please check the weekly pewslip, emails and the website for changes to the above and details of our Christmas services***

## MIDWEEK REFLECTIONS

These will continue through Advent with each week someone from the ministry team talking about something that is special for them about Advent. There will be a break over Christmas, but we will start again in January looking at the seven signs or miracles in John's gospel - see page 33.

## THE CLOUDS WILL PASS

You can't expect fine weather and good fortune all the way;

you can't go through the world without a care

You can't have sunshine all the time and clear skies every day as along the road of life you fare

There's bound to come a time of trouble and adversity when unexpected storms break in the blue

Don't give up and don't give way but plod on hopefully

The clouds will pass and let the sunshine through.



*written by Patience Strong  
and shared by Reverend Theresa*

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£50 - Sheila Walford

£25 - Ann Randall

Members are reminded that subscriptions for the next six months (December to May) are now due, £13 for six months, £26 for twelve months.

As the Parish Office is closed it would be much appreciated if cheques could be posted direct to Lynda McPherson at 90 Dickens Heath Road, Shirley, B90 1RL

If you are interested in becoming a member of the 100 Club please telephone for full details - 0121 439 8711.

## A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

*To Shirley Parish*

*A few lines to say 'Thank You' for the delivery of my 'Welcome to Shirley Parish' magazine every week and the monthly one.*

*It has been a great blessing to me over many months now.*

*I am on my own as my daughter lives in Manchester with her husband and three children, so this news from the Parish and the articles from people have been lovely to read.*

*Many thanks to all who make this possible. I am sure I am not the only one to be grateful for all the work involved.*

*Thank you everyone,*

*Barbara*

## OUR 2020 CHRISTMAS GIFT TREE

Even the best laid plans are going astray at the moment. But a massive thank you to all those people who have not only bought gifts but taken the trouble to let me know what you have bought. Your generosity is amazing.



As Lockdown 2 loomed we made a decision to offer a box on our doorstep as an alternative means of delivering gifts. The first person to use it was our milkman who left two bottles but it was later used as intended.

As this magazine goes to print over 200 gifts have been promised and/or received and I know that there are more to come. They will be much appreciated by the clients of ADAVU with anything unused being given to clients of the Narthex.

Thank you all so much.

*Sarah and Elizabeth*

## ADVENT - 29th NOVEMBER TO 24th DECEMBER 2020

*'I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord. Our feet are standing in your gates, Jerusalem.'* (Psalm 122:1,2).

These words from Psalm 122 inspired Hubert Parry's great Coronation Anthem *'I was Glad.'* As a Song of Ascent (Psalms 120-134), it was used by pilgrims going to the great festivals in Jerusalem. For the Jews this represented *'coming home'* to worship at the Temple, the place of God's presence.

### *Our Worship of God:*

As God's people today, we are also called to worship in praise and thanksgiving: *'That is where the tribes go up – to praise the name of the Lord'* (4). Of course, currently our coming together in church to sing our praise to God is greatly restricted. We are a *scattered* rather than a *gathered* community. However, as individuals, we can still offer God the worship of our lives using the resource of psalms like this one.

### *Our prayer to God:*

The psalm encourages the pilgrims to pray for the peace of Jerusalem: *'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you be secure.'* (6). The peace referred to here is more than simply an absence of conflict. Peace speaks of wholeness of life in every aspect. This must be our prayer as we continue to struggle with the effects of the pandemic and as we seek the prosperity of the wider community: *'I will seek your prosperity'* (9).



Advent is the season when we affirm the hope of Jesus' return. As we pray for peace, we know that it is fulfilled in the coming of God's kingdom in Jesus. Despite living with so much uncertainty, we have the assurance of God's future purposes for our lives, churches and the world.

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## THOUGHTS FROM OUR VICAR

As I write this we are back in lockdown – things may not be quite so restrictive as they were in the spring, but it still means that, as far as the church is concerned, we cannot worship in our buildings or have any meetings in person. We are limited to Zoom, telephone and pre-recorded videos.

None of us know how all this is going to pan out as regards Christmas and New Year celebrations and beyond – although I am sure we will all want to celebrate once 2020 is over and we are at the beginning of a new year! In my own mind I am fairly certain that we won't be able to meet again freely until the Springtime at the earliest – which will mean a whole year since all our groups last met.

What I think we must do at this time is grasp this as an opportunity and a springboard for planning. We can think about the new things we have done over these past months and how we can incorporate the best of them into the future. It will also give us as churches an opportunity to ask questions about which activities and groups we see as part of our future, and which have served us well in the past but would be better not to try to get going again. These next months are vitally important as we begin this planning process.

Which is why I feel blessed at being appointed as Vicar of Shirley Parish at this time. I have been greatly encouraged by the many good wishes and congratulations messages I have received from you – and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all. I hope that as we begin to think about the future you will want to join with me in prayer, in planning and in putting things into practice when the time is right. I am confident that God has great things in store for us as individuals and as churches and I hope you are too.

*Reverend Paul Day*



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## HELPING THOSE IN NEED

**FOOD BANK:** as reported in the media, appeals to Food Banks for help have rocketed these past months. One of the Tyseley satellite banks had over forty families queuing up one evening until their shelves were empty! I was very upset to see toddlers with their mothers queuing outside in the bitterly cold wind one morning at St John's Church in Sparkhill; that picture will remain with me forever. The next week I took bags of mini Mars bars and mini Milky Ways (thanks to Val Sperry) there and asked the lady checking the vouchers to hand them out to the little ones – some instant calories to make up for their lack of breakfast and probably supper. Current shortages, as ever, are cartons of **longlife fruit juice, small bags of sugar, dried milk and crispbreads** which can be put in the collecting bins at Sainsbury's, Tesco's and Waitrose.



**NARTHEX:** recently we have been able to deliver some much-needed sheets, duvets and duvet covers. Still needed are single sheets and towels. I am happy for you to bring them to us, put them in the boot of our car and we will deliver them.



**ADAVU:** as many of you know this parish has been helping their clients for some years. Our main support has been through the Christmas parcels and party. However, inevitably this year everything is different - sadly the party cannot take place which is a great shame because it was the only social event for these folks rescued from slavery (whether domestic or sexual) and trafficking in the West Midlands. But, but, but - the Christmas parcels will be assembled and still handed out. As I write this in the second week of November donations are starting to come in and our dining room looks like Father Christmas's Grotto. Sarah Penfold is doing a wonderful job coordinating and encouraging donations. She mentions any gaps in the weekly pewslip and last-minute help to fill the gaps will be very welcome. This year we have twenty-seven women, three men and twenty-one children to provide with Christmas parcels – including seven babies born during the first Lockdown. Most of the babies' parcels will be filled with practical items such as wet wipes, nappies, and basic clothing but we would like to put one or two toys wrapped in Christmas paper as well – more for their mother's pleasure at unwrapping a parcel than the child's!

Best wishes to you all and thank you for your generous support; as I have said before, you may never meet these folks, but know that they are very grateful.

*Elizabeth Paice*





We are hoping to set up a chain of prayer through the parish beginning at the start of Advent and continuing until at least Epiphany. The idea is that everyday a household will pray for the next household on the chain and the road they live on (and also for the parish more generally). It would be good if every household could be involved.

So if you decide to take part, on a particular day (which you will know in advance) you will be phoned by another person from the parish, whose name you will be told. They will ask how you are, and whether you have any prayer requests. They will also ask a bit about the road on which you live. They will then in their own time and privately pray for you and your road (and say a prayer for the parish). The next day you will do similar – phone the next person on the list and pray for them and their road.

If you take part your phone number would be shared with the person phoning you, but no one else. The Parish Office will have the master list which will not be shared.

We will, however, share the list of which road is being prayed for on which day so that everyone in the Parish can join in with that aspect.

If you would like to take part please let the office know as soon as possible, remembering to include the phone number you want to be used – we would prefer it if these are landlines.

*Sarah Penfold*

"The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something, and enter God's realm where everything is possible. He specialises in the impossible. Nothing is too great for His almighty power. Nothing is too small for His love."

Corrie Ten Boom

## A COVID LOCKDOWN POEM

I won't arise and go now and go to Innisfree  
 I'll sanitise the doorknob and make a cup of tea.  
 I won't go down to the sea again; I won't go out at all  
 I'll wander, lonely as a cloud, from the kitchen to the hall.  
 There's a green-eyed yellow monster to the north of Kathmandu,  
 But I shan't be seeing him just yet and nor, I think, will you.  
 While the dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay,  
 I'll make my bit of supper and eat it off a tray.  
 I shall not speed my bonnie boat cross the sea to Skye,  
 Or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.  
 About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go,  
 To see the Keep Out posters or the cherry hung with snow.  
 And no, I won't be travelling much within the realms of gold  
 Or get me to Milford Haven. All that's been put on hold.  
 Give me your hands I shan't request, albeit we are friends  
 Nor come within a mile of you until this virus ends.

*Circulated on Facebook with author unknown - shared by Kate Crocker*



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## A QUIZ ON 2020

It's been a challenging year - here's fifteen questions to see what you remember about it! Answers are over the page.

1. Job applications from weirdos and misfits were invited from people to work at which place in London?
2. Which famous actor who died this year is associated with the phrase "I am Spartacus?"
3. In February the Church of England advised against the practice of 'intinction' – what is it?
4. In a world "where you can be anything, be \_\_\_\_\_" – what, wrote actress Caroline Flack on Instagram in December 2019?
5. What were we supposed to do in March while singing the National Anthem or Happy Birthday twice?
6. This year was a leap year. What do we call other years?
7. Which village in the Peak District is associated with self-isolation during a previous plague?
8. How long, literally, is quarantine?
9. Why did President Macron visit Britain on 18th July? What other Anglo-French anniversary could he have remembered but for some reason it was not mentioned?
10. How many countries launched space rockets to Mars this year?
11. Who, in their resignation letter in August, on Twitter posted, "I have championed our work, built our relationships and celebrated the diversity of our staff ... and will always be an ambassador for the UK and the new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office" after a four year career in Downing Street which had included scraps with a neighbour? He was going to spend more time with a family in the country.
12. Which day is the furthest away from Christmas Day?
13. What was the Battle of the Tennis Court and why was it remembered in August?
14. The BBC banned singing the lyrics from which song from the Last night of the Proms, because it had a link in their mind with slavery and colonialism?
15. This year marked the 400th anniversary of the voyage of the *Mayflower*. What event did they start which led to a public holiday?

## ANSWERS FOR A QUIZ ON 2020

1. Job applications from weirdos and misfits were invited from people to work at 10 Downing Street.
2. Kirk Douglas was the famous actor who died this year and is associated with the phrase "I am Spartacus".
3. In February the Church of England advised against the practice of 'intinction' – which is dipping the communion wafer in wine.
4. In a world "where you can be anything, be *kind*" wrote actress Caroline Flack on Instagram in December 2019.
5. We were supposed to wash our hands in March while singing the National Anthem or Happy Birthday twice.
6. This year was a leap year. We call other years common years.
7. Eyam is the village in the peak district is associated with self-isolation during a previous plague.
8. Quarantine is forty days long, literally, the word derives from the Italian expression quaranta giorni.
9. President Macron visited Britain on 18th July to commemorate De Gaulle's broadcast to France in 1940. It was also the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.
10. The United States, Europe, Russia and China have all launched space rockets to Mars this year.
11. The Foreign Office cat, Palmerston, was going to spend more time with a family in the country.
12. Boxing Day is the day furthest away from Christmas Day (because you cannot travel backwards in time - think about it)
13. The Battle of the Tennis Court was part of the Burma Campaign during the Second World War. It was remembered in August as part of VJ commemorations.
14. The BBC banned singing the lyrics from Rule Britannia from the Last night of the Proms because it had a link in their mind with slavery and colonialism. The decision was later reviewed.
15. This year marked the 400th anniversary of the voyage of the *Mayflower*. Their celebration of harvest gave rise to Thanksgiving.



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## Virtual Coffee & Carols

*Wednesday 9th December at 10.30am*

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## A REFLECTION ON JOHN THE BAPTIST

John the Baptist was a longed-for child. A beloved child. Secure, and sure of his place in the world, and his purpose. And this was the place from which he was able to preach the gospel so powerfully. A realigning of people's world view. An offer of forgiveness without having to offer sacrifice at the temple. A once and for all baptism in the flowing, life-giving water of the River Jordan. A new way of being.

Even in his mother's womb, John recognized the presence of the Holy. Growing up as the child of a priest meant that he was familiar with the rituals and laws of the temple.

But John had a radical message and he imagined a different way. (I like to think of him as a bit rock n roll). Instead of the people going to God (in the temple), John took God to the people (in the fields and the countryside). 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near!' One translation for the Greek word for repent, '*metanoia*' is 'to rethink'. People were invited to rethink the way they related to God, the way they related to each other, and the way they related to themselves. And to symbolise that by a new kind of baptism in the cleansing waters of the River Jordan. Not a ritual cleansing at the temple, but a baptism of forgiveness leading to a new way of living; a new way of being.

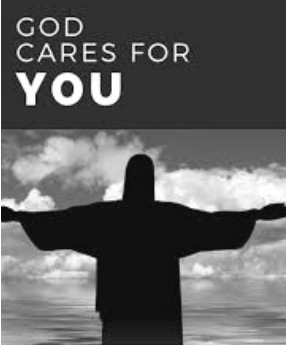
Like Jesus, he was not afraid to challenge the authorities of the day and to expose their hypocrisy. He related to people where they were and challenged them to a new way of life, free from the oppressiveness of the temple laws. At the same time, he was clear in his message - repentance should produce fruit.

John lived on the edge of society, had a rather strange diet and dress sense, and yet crowds of people were drawn to him and the message he preached. They responded to his words of hope and of love. He told of the One who was to come. Secure, and sure of his place in the world, John knew his purpose was to pave the way for Jesus' ministry. To point to the coming of the One who was promised, the One who would change the world.

How were people prepared to receive Christ? By admitting first that they needed him.

Cynical tax collectors, war weary soldiers, people on the margins of society; John, like Jesus, was no doubt accused of mixing with all the wrong people. But these were the people who knew they needed forgiveness, who knew they wanted to change, who were willing to listen, and who responded to the message.

## A REFLECTION ON JOHN THE BAPTIST continued



So often it is only through our own poverty, losses or failures that we can finally admit we need help, forgiveness and healing. And God is there, arms wide open, waiting for us. All of us.

*Rachel Hind*

## EVERYDAY CHRISTMAS

Light a candle,  
Look into the light,  
Pray.

*Light and life to all He brings,  
Risen with healing in His wings*

As the flame rises,  
Smooth, bright,  
Know the comfort of Christ  
In the carol speaking  
Afresh.  
Bringing Jesus  
Into heart and prayer.



Emmanuel, God with us.  
Light of the world,  
Out of the stable  
Into our situations.

Because of Jesus  
Christmas is everyday.

The Lord is here.  
Hallelujah.

*By Daphne Kitching*

*Bible references - Malachi Chapter 4 verse 2  
Matthew Chapter 1 verse 23*

## SMILE LINES

We do our best to proof read this magazine and our pewslips. These have slipped into some other church bulletins - thanks to Kate Crocker for sharing.

*Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.*

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

*At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.*

Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.



## JOURNEYS OR LOCKDOWN THIS CHRISTMAS?

Christmas is usually a busy time for travel, as many of us venture a great distance to see family or friends again. But this year coronavirus has put an end to all that. Seeing all our loved ones this Christmas will be difficult, if not impossible. Soon we may not be travelling anywhere very much at all.

Have you noticed that the Christmas story is about journeys? It begins with Mary and Joseph travelling from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Then, some shepherds receive news from an angel about a special birth. They travel through the night, across dark fields and down unlit streets to search for the baby Jesus.

After this, in an eastern country some wise men see a new star, one that heralds a new king. They leave home and set out with only the star to guide them, and their faith to reassure them that someone special is waiting at the end of their journey.

All these travellers must have wondered what really lay ahead. Nothing was fully understood, carefully planned for, or safe. They all travelled with questions and uncertainties. But God had come unexpectedly into their lives, and suddenly they were given new roles to serve Him. Despite worldly circumstances that could have crushed them, they stood firm and trusted God all the way.

These travellers' tales tell us that God may suddenly enter into our familiar, or this year, unfamiliar circumstances. He may come in surprising ways, to prompt us into new avenues of service. At first His call on us may be uncomfortable and challenging.

If our response is anything like Joseph, Mary, the shepherds and wise men – to be obedient to His call in serving, witnessing and worshipping, we shall be greatly blessed and rewarded.

We are all on life's journey. If we travel with God, He will be faithful and lead us to His heavenly home.



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## THE STORY IS STILL THE SAME

'Christmas may look different, but the story is still the same!'

That's the message for Christmas in 2020. Coronavirus will make our celebrations this year look very different from usual. However, the message of the baby born in Bethlehem is still relevant!



In one nativity play, the highlight was to illuminate Jesus, with a light in the manger, when all the other lights were turned off. At the appropriate time, all the lights went out, including the manger one. The silence was broken when one of the shepherds loudly whispered: 'Hey, you turned off Jesus.' Of course, nobody can turn off Jesus this Christmas!

The angels announced, '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.' (Luke 2: 10,11). The birth of this baby brings great joy and good news for everyone! As the king of the universe, He has come as our Saviour. In an uncertain world, He offers joy and hope, because He holds this pandemic in His hands. This is a real cause for joy!

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favour rests.' (Luke 2:14). We may feel anything but peace amid the anxieties over our current circumstances. How can a Jewish infant born to a peasant family in first century Palestine bring peace to our lives today?

Jesus established peace with God through His death on the cross. Trusting the Prince of Peace for our lives brings God's peace amid the huge uncertainties we face. As the carol says, 'Joy to the world, the Lord has come, let earth receive her King.'

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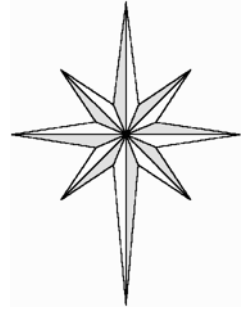
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## FOLLOW THE STAR!

Do you remember in the first Lockdown back in the spring many people put rainbows in their window as signs of hope. What started small grew into something large, and as the weeks went on more and more homes were displaying rainbows.

As Christmas approaches all the churches in Shirley are encouraging members and others to put a star in their window. Remember the Christmas story - the Magi were searching for the Messiah and found Jesus - hope, peace and joy - under a star. Wouldn't it be great if as Christmas approached we began to see stars appearing in many homes across Shirley. Spread the news to your friends and neighbours.



It doesn't have to be anything elaborate. Maybe a Christmas decoration, perhaps a home-made star made from a cereal box covered with silver foil. The important thing to remember is that far from being cancelled, this Christmas is more important than ever as we seek to bring the hope of Jesus into people's lives.

## COMFORT & JOY

Churches all over the country will be marking Advent and Christmas in both new and familiar ways this year. 'Comfort and Joy', the Church of England's 2020 Christmas campaign, will help enrich your Christmas.

It features daily reflections for the Christmas season from Kate Bottley, Jonathan Bryan, Bob Chilcot, Martha Collison, Stephen Cottrell, Guli Francis-Dehqani, Chine McDonald, Sally Phillips and Justin Welby.

Beginning on Christmas Day and ending on 2nd January, each day explores a Bible reading and a familiar carol, encouraging us to consider Christmas in these extraordinary times, and inviting us to hear again the message of the angels - good news of God's unfailing love for a world that is weary and hurting.



**Comfort**  
and Joy

For more about 'Comfort and Joy' online services, and the free app including audio versions of all the featured carols, go to: [www.churchofengland.org/ComfortAndJoy](http://www.churchofengland.org/ComfortAndJoy)

## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2020

In normal times we would have a long list of carol services and other special events planned for the weeks around Christmas. This year of course is different!

At the time of this magazine going to print, we are not sure what we will be permitted to do in our church buildings, but we are planning ahead. Of course, we recognise that plans may well have to be changed, but this is what we have so far:

**Tuesday 1st December** – YouTube Memorial Service – as we remember those who have died

December – Journey to the Stable – this year will be on YouTube for the children in our local schools to join in

**Tuesday 23rd December** – YouTube Crib Service

**Christmas Day** – Christmas service on YouTube and in St James Church

**Sunday 27th December** – St John's Patronal Service on YouTube and in St James Church



We also hope to have some outdoor carol singing as we share the good news of Christmas around the parish. So, pencil these dates in your diary – Saturday and Sunday afternoons **12th, 13th, 19th and 20th December**. All being well, one of these will be outside Phoenix House.

***Please keep a regular eye on the pewslip and all our other means of communication – things can, and probably will, change at very short notice!***

*Reverend Paul Day*



## MEMORIES OF MY AUSTRALIA TRIP

Is it really twelve months since I was getting ready to visit relatives down under? How time flies by.

I was recently looking at photographs of my visit and I thought why not share a few of my adventures with you.

When all the welcoming was over and the jet lag over with, we sat and wrote down places that we wanted to visit or even do as was the case with the Koalas. So a visit to the Country Park which is situated in the Adelaide Hills, was instigated by my niece. It was there that we had the chance to hold a “cuddly” Koala Bear. These bears, although they look and feel lovely and soft can be quite vicious at times and the keeper was near by feeding it with bamboo shoots just in case it should suddenly turn aggressive. It was a lovely experience and one I would gladly to do again given the chance.



Our visit took place a week before the fires started. All visitors to the park and the hills were banned from entering the area. The devastation was awful and lots of animals were burnt quite badly and many people lost their homes too. All very upsetting.

Although the area where I was staying was not affected by the fires, we did experience lots of smoke and therefore having to stay inside. So, although it was hot outside, all windows were kept closed. Good that all Australian homes have air conditioning.

Christmas day started with a service in church based on the Anglican services, so I felt at home straight away. I noted that the churches there have the same problem as we do, aging parishioners. There were four children at the service, two of which were the vicar’s, and they presented each Parishioner with a Christmas Card which they had made during their previous Sunday School classes. I shall be displaying mine this year along with my families. I would like to say that the children were encouraged to participate in the service, i.e. reading and collecting and in taking the chalice up to the altar, I am all in favour of this as after all they are the future of the church.

Then came our Christmas lunch. Fourteen of us all tramped down to the hotel where we were met with a lovely sight of an arrangement of food from around the world, all laid out beautifully. The fish bar was the first port of call for some members, especially my grandson, there was so much variety that it was difficult to choose and especially to remember that there would be more courses. There were all kinds of pasta dishes, cold meat and a salad bar. Not to mention a lovely roast Christmas meal. The sweets were out of this world, all kinds of different ones, too many to list, plus the fact I cannot remember, only the chocolate ones.

## MEMORIES OF MY AUSTRALIA TRIP *continued*

My Christmas day was very different from my usual one at home, snuggling up in front of a fire with a glass of wine and waiting for the Queen's speech to come on.

Although my grandson was the reason for me going over for Christmas it was an added bonus to spend it with my sister and her family as it was the first Christmas we had spent together since she emigrated 56 years ago.

After Christmas, we made our way to Port Lincoln, where Shaun, my grandson, intended to swim with the sharks, apparently this is the place to go. After a gruelling journey, remember it was in the thirties and at times forties, I remember stopping at one place to break the journey, the heat was so intense that you could hardly breathe, beautiful place by the sea but we were unable to enjoy it as we couldn't wait to get back into the car for the air conditioning.

Shaun, and Kayley his wife, spent the day on a boat waiting for the sharks to appear, incidentally they were quite safe as they go down to the deep in a cage attached to the boat. To Shaun's disappointment the sharks kept away that day, they must have had word that he was about to snap them. At least he did have most of his money back and a voucher for him to go next year, but it is such a long way to travel that he is thinking of flying out there next time. Alison and I enjoyed our day looking around Port Lincoln.

New Year's Eve saw us at Adelaide airport waiting to board a plane to Sydney. We stayed with Shaun and Kayley and, as they both had a few days off from work, they were able to take us out and about. And yes, we did go to Bondi Beach, but we were not impressed and wondered what all the fuss was about. We had lots of walks along the cliffs and saw some lovely views. We also saw the dolphins splashing around near to where we were swimming. We did miss seeing the whales though, perhaps next time!!

Of, course we couldn't leave Sydney without walking along the famous bridge and visiting the Opera House, both very impressive.

We said our goodbyes to Shaun and Kayley at the airport and boarded our plane to our next destination, Hong Kong.

Well, I was absolutely taken in by this small island, small in size but home to millions of people. When vehicles stop at a red light, hundreds of people rush across the road, you have to witness it to believe it. The shops are open all hours, so I suspect that a lot of job sharing goes on, I guess it would have to to keep people in work. Impossible to keep two metres apart though!!!!

*... continued over the page*

## MEMORIES OF MY AUSTRALIA TRIP *continued*

We took the bus to the Peak and enjoyed the lovely views of the whole Island (we stayed in Kowloon and crossed over to the Island by ferry). We came down by train and this was a wonder in itself. Just think how long ago it was built and the knowledge these people had then, I was so impressed. This is an architect's paradise. Given the chance I would willingly go back and explore more of this lovely island. We visited a place called Aberdeen, it was fascinating to see all the different boats, especially the red sail Chinese junk boats, known as Aqua Luna, we didn't have time to sail on one but never say never!!

We returned to Kowloon where we walked along the sea front, quite a stretch too. We were told to experience it at night so, our last night saw us walking along the front again to see the lights on the opposite side of the water. Apparently, Hong Kong is famous for its skyline and the neon-lit streets along the waterfront. Quite an experience and lovely to see.

We bade our farewells and left for England.

*Margaret Foreshew*

## AUSSIE JINGLE BELLS

Dashing through the bush  
In a rusty Holden Ute  
Kicking up the dust  
Esky in the boot  
Kelpie by my side  
Singing Christmas songs  
It's summertime and I am in  
My singlet, shorts & thongs

*Oh, Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells  
Jingle all the way  
Christmas in Australia  
on a scorching summer's day  
Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells  
Christmas time is beaut  
oh what fun it is to ride  
in a rusty Holden Ute*

Engine's getting hot  
Dodge the kangaroos  
Swaggy climbs aboard  
He is welcome too  
All the family is there  
Sitting by the pool  
Christmas day, the Aussie way  
By the barbecue!

*Oh, Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells ...*

Come the afternoon  
Grandpa has a doze  
The kids and uncle Bruce  
Are swimming in their clothes  
The time comes round to go  
We take a family snap  
Then pack the car and all shoot through  
Before the washing up

*Oh, Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells ...*

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## SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB - BEST READS 2020

Book/author In order of popularity	Average score /10	Highest individual score for each book
1. <i>The Dean's Watch</i> Elizabeth Goudge	8.8	10
2. <i>A Gentleman in Moscow</i> Amor Towles	8.6	10
3. <i>The President's Hat</i> Antoine Laurain	8.3	10
4. <i>The Boy at the Back of the Class</i> Onjali Q Rauf	7.8	9
5. <i>Once Upon a River</i> Diane Setterfield	7.7	10
6. <i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i> Delia Owens	7.4	10
7. = <i>Winter in Madrid</i> C.J. Samson	6.6	9
= <i>The Gustav Sonata</i> Rose Tremain	6.6	10
8. <i>Moon Tiger</i> Penelope Lively	6.4	9
9. <i>Clay</i> David Almond	6.1	9
10. <i>The House of Hopes and Dreams</i> Trisha Ashley	4.6	7

We think that these titles and scores show what a varied group of readers we are!

Six out of the ten reads were judged by at least one person as their best read of the year!

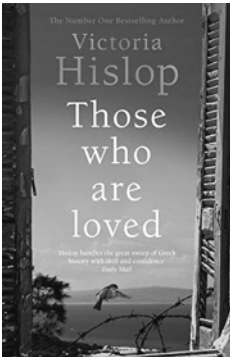
The choice of novels is similarly wide ranging: four have a contemporary setting, six set in the past; five are set in England, one in Russia, one in Spain, one in Egypt, one in America and one in France; six are by women writers, four by men and one was originally written for young people (*The Boy at the Back of the Class*) - and is also the most recently written of the selections. Nine of the novels were chosen by individuals taking turns and intended as whole group reads, but one just happened when we had a free choice; the word spread, and most people ended up reading it (*The Dean's Watch*). This was also the oldest of the novels – published in 1936.



## BEST READS 2020 continued

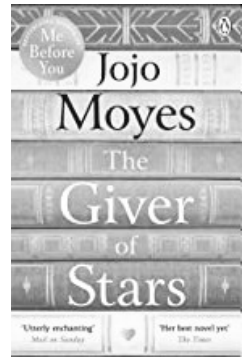
In these difficult times we have turned into an online book club – apart from one person who still gets snail mail. Over the past year two of the group have temporarily stepped back because of personal or family illness, and two have left the parish. Nevertheless, all of these four still want to be kept in touch with what we are reading and how we are reacting to our reading. That leaves twelve of us still reading, responding, and introducing each other to books we would probably never have read without each other. (We have also had a joint meeting with the book club based at St John's).

So! Do you want to join us? You can read what the rest of us are reading, how we feel about each book and let us know what you think, or just be kept informed by email. You could also, of course, simply read the Parish Magazine for our updates.



Currently we are reading, *Those Who Are Loved*, by Victoria Hislop (due to be read by the end of November) and after that - to get us through Christmas – *The Giver of Stars* by JoJo Moyes.

*Ray Speakman*



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## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD

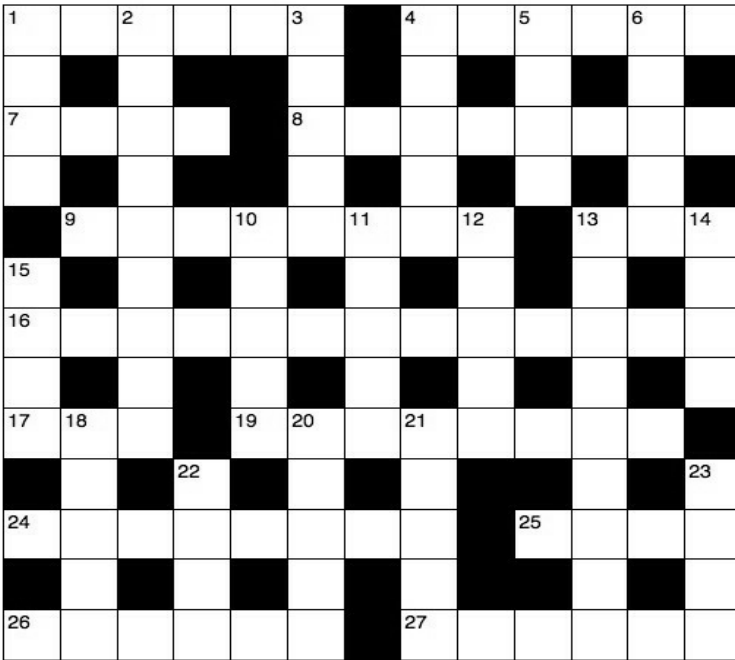
### Across

- 1** Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4** 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7** What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8** Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9** Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
- 13** 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
- 16** Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
- 17** National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
- 19** Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
- 24** Able dock (anag.) (8)
- 25** The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
- 26** Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
- 27** Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

### Down

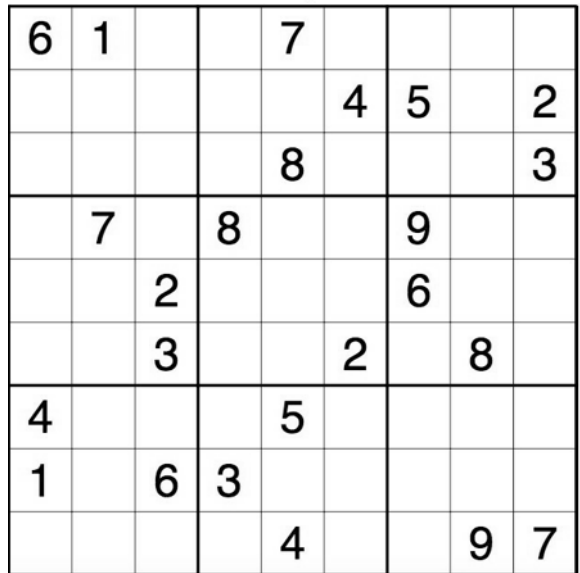
- 1** Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
- 2** Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
- 3** 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
- 4** A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
- 5** One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
- 6** 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
- 10** Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
- 11** 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
- 12** Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
- 13** Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
- 14** Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
- 15** One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
- 18** Narnia's Lion (5)
- 20** One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)

# THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU



*Answers are on page 31*

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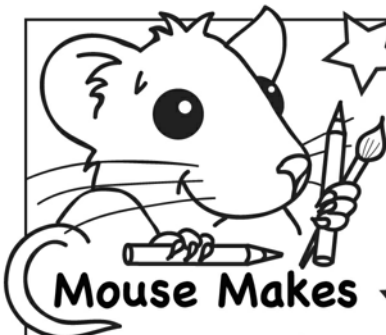


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**21** Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)

**22** Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)

**23** Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)



"I bring you **good news** that will bring great **joy** to all people. The **Saviour** has been born today! ...

*Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased".*

from Luke 2 vs. 10,11,14

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

Read the Christmas story in Luke 1:1 - 2:21



A picture to colour for Christmas. Colour in one star each day as you count down to Christmas!

## WORDSEARCH : SILENT NIGHT

This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.

Answers are  
on page 31

AUSTRIA  
BING  
CAROL  
CHRISTMAS  
EVE  
FATHER  
FIRST  
HEILIGE  
JOSEPH  
LOVED  
MASS  
MELODY  
MIDNIGHT  
MOHR  
NACHT  
NIGHT  
ORGANIST  
PRIEST  
SILENT  
SINGLE  
STILLE  
SUNG  
THIRD  
VERSION  
YOUNG

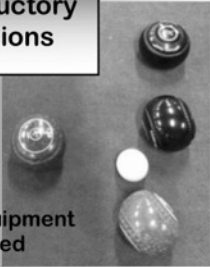


S	I	I	O	E	V	E	T	E	T	A	L
T	H	I	R	D	G	H	N	L	F	Y	E
T	V	O	G	G	G	I	E	G	A	O	L
I	E	I	A	I	N	E	L	N	T	U	O
P	R	S	N	I	J	U	I	I	H	N	R
B	S	D	I	H	R	O	S	S	E	G	A
S	I	E	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C
M	O	V	T	F	I	T	S	E	I	R	P
C	N	O	S	L	I	R	H	U	P	E	T
I	E	L	L	A	H	R	V	G	A	H	U
V	M	E	L	O	D	Y	S	B	I	N	G
S	S	A	M	N	A	C	H	T	H	N	H

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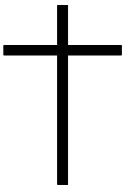
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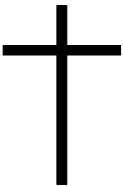
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## PUZZLE ANSWERS

6	1	5	2	7	3	8	4	9
3	8	9	1	6	4	5	7	2
7	2	4	5	8	9	1	6	3
5	7	1	8	3	6	9	2	4
8	4	2	7	9	5	6	3	1
9	6	3	4	1	2	7	8	5
4	3	7	9	5	8	2	1	6
1	9	6	3	2	7	4	5	8
2	5	8	6	4	1	3	9	7

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

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



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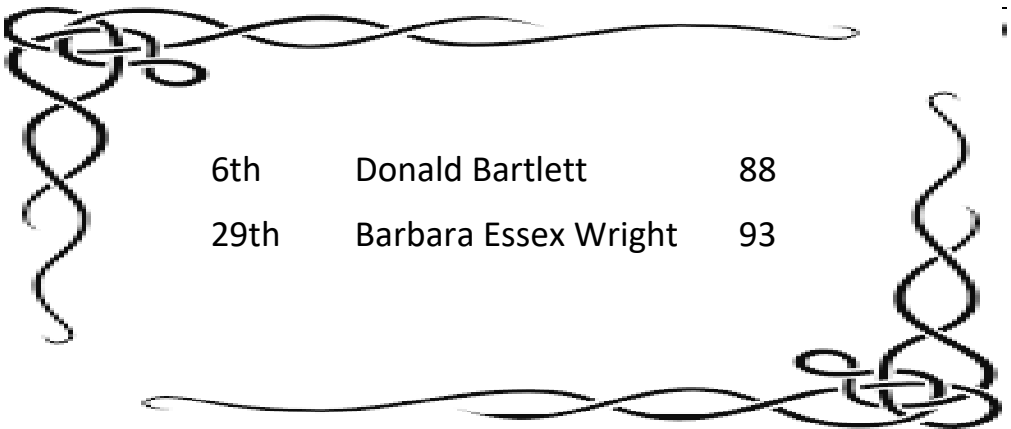
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## PARISH FUNERALS - OCTOBER



6th	Donald Bartlett	88
29th	Barbara Essex Wright	93

## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021

Our midweek reflections for the start of 2021 will be looking at the seven signs or miracles in John's gospel:

Date	Bible passage in John's Gospel	Title
January 7th	Chapter 2 Verses 1 - 11	Turning water into wine
January 14th	Chapter 4 Verses 46 - 54	Healing of the official's son
January 21st	Chapter 5 Verses 1 – 15	Healing of the paralytic at Bethseda
January 28th	Chapter 6 Verses 5 – 14	Feeding of the five thousand
February 4th	Chapter 6 Verses 16 – 24	Walking on water
February 11th	Chapter 9 Verses 1 – 7	Healing of the man born blind
February 18th	Chapter 11 Verses 1 - 45	Raising of Lazarus



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# SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE *continued*

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Tel: 01564 822606

## CHURCH WARDENS

**Parish Wardens**

Margaret Foreshew Tel: 0121 603 9833

email: mhforeshew@gmail.com

Gill Hanton Tel: 0121 733 2347

email: gill.hanton@btinternet.com

**Deputy Wardens - St James the Great Church**

Kate Crocker

Linda Pitt

Tel: 0121 258 2956

Tel: 0121 744 6777

**Deputy Wardens - Christ the King Church**

Denise Smith

Graham Smith

Tel: 01564 822606

Tel: 01564 822606

**Deputy Wardens - St John the Divine Church**

Linda Alford

Sue Barnard

Tel: 0121 430 4785

Tel: 0121 430 4453

## SHIRLEY PARISH



## KNOWING CHRIST MAKING HIM KNOWN

## MUSIC

**Bellringers - St James the Great Church**

Colin Baugh

Tel: 0121 744 1361

**Organist & Choirmaster - St James the Great Church**

Kevin Gill

Tel: 0121 705 0987

**Organist - St John the Divine Church**

Shirley Beedon

**PCC SECRETARY**

Belinda Piasecki - email: belinda.piasecki@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 0121 244 9637

**PCC TREASURER**

David Paice - email: dlpaice2@talktalk.net

Tel: 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)

**SAFEGUARDING**

Tel: 0121 745 8896 (c/o Parish Office)

**Registered Charity number 1131912**



# C Bastock Ltd

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Independent Family Owned Funeral Directors since 1856

### Shirley Funeral Home

100, Stratford Road  
Shirley. B90 3BH  
0121 726 2626

### Solihull Funeral Home

67-71 Warwick Road,  
Solihull. B92 7HP  
0121 706 4040

### Yardley Funeral Home

112 Church Road,  
Yardley. B26 8UX  
0121 784 3230



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Peace of mind with secure affordable options

Whether you have a traditional, contemporary or eco funeral in mind our family are here to help you. Our dedicated team will guide you through the choices and decisions to ensure a unique and befitting funeral.

Free, no obligation help and advice.

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



## Bastock & Bruce Ltd

FUNERAL DIRECTORS



A partnership between C. Bastock Ltd and Bruce Bragg

Bruce is now the only remaining member of the Bragg family still in the industry following the sale of the family business in Shirley. This partnership brings a family business to Knowle with generations of experience ensuring the truly personal service you would expect from an independent business.

### Knowle Funeral Home

Brisker Court, 1685, High Street, Knowle. B93 0LN

**01564 335577 (24 hour)**

Serving all the surrounding areas

*If Knowle is difficult to get to we will happily visit you at home or you can meet Bruce at any of the Bastock funeral homes.*

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