

# Shirley Parish Magazine

January 2021



The Lord God says, “Stand at the crossroads and look, and ask for the eternal paths, where the good way is; walk in it and you will find rest for your souls.” Jer 6:16

# SHIRLEY PARISH GUIDE

CLERGY

## Vicar - Reverend Paul Day

18 Widney Lane, Solihull B91 3LS  
email: pgday@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 0121 537 9672

## Reverend Wendy Carter

134 Shakespeare Drive, Shirley B90 2AR  
email: revwendy@sky.com

Tel: 0121 744 6315

## Reverend Nick Ball

12 Apsley Croft, Kings Norton, B38 0AF  
email: nicholaseball@hotmail.com

Tel: 0121 243 1336

## Reverend Theresa Jones

email: theresaj1@btinternet.com

Tel: 01564 822687

## Parish Office, Church House, Church Road, Shirley, B90 2AX

Telephone: 0121 745 8896

email: admin@shirleyparish.co.uk

Parish Website: <https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk>

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

Sunday 11am - Holy Communion

Wednesday 10.30am - Holy Communion

Wednesday 11am 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 9.30am - Morning Worship on YouTube and on the phone

Sunday at 10.15am - 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 (see page 4)

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**

***Please check the weekly pewslip, emails and the website for any changes to the above***



*I think that it's time to raise our hats and give a big cheer to all the lovely people who deliver our weekly 'church envelope'; real stalwarts. With many, many thanks and blessings.*

*Liz Blakey*

Thank you also to all those who bought jigsaws - £195 was raised, and to all who bought 'Gill's Lockdown walks' calendar - £150 was raised.

## MIDWEEK REFLECTIONS

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



### Tudor Grange Primary Academy St James

*Nurture, Learn, Achieve*

**Executive Principal for Primary - Miss S Deakin**

For details about the school contact the PA to the Principal - Mrs G Sutton

Tudor Grange Primary Academy St James, Halifax Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 2BT  
Phone: 0121 744 7897 office@stjames.tgacademy.org.uk www.stjames.tgacademy.org.uk

## FEBRUARY 2021 PARISH MAGAZINE

PLEASE SEND INFORMATION & ARTICLES TO THE EDITOR BY  
Tuesday 12th January please

## THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES 100 CLUB

**Congratulations to the December winners**

£80 Christmas prize - Christine Beeston

£50 - Sue Pitham £25 - Margaret Kew

## GREETINGS FROM YOUR PARISH WARDENS

December 8th saw the licensing of Reverend Paul Day as Vicar of Shirley Parish. It was a joyous occasion marred slightly by the fact that, due to the pandemic, attendance had to be restricted. However, our PCC members were invited to represent the Parish and we hope that everyone else has now had the chance to watch the recording on YouTube.

Many thanks to Sarah and Paul who videoed the 2020 'Journey to the Stable' so that schools could watch it on YouTube instead of coming to St James Church. We see that the naughty shepherd was there acting his usual self, he has been likened to Darth from Star Wars. He was hoping to be let off the hook next year, but no, Sarah insisted on giving him a penance and said to behave properly next time. Oh well, a good try!

We give thanks to Kate Crocker for organising our Christmas Fayre, over a thousand pounds was raised for church funds. Thank you to everyone who supported this event. Congratulations to all those who submitted entries for the Christmas Tree Art Competition – lots of talent on display there which you can see on the Parish website.

St John's annual 'Coffee and Carols' event was held over Zoom this year, congratulations to Bernard Watkins for winning the quiz and to Shirley Beedon for winning a bottle of wine in the prize draw.

As we write, we are looking forward to all our festive season events and services – both in church and online – including singing some carols outside Trinity Apartments and Phoenix House to try to cheer a few residents up and show them that they are not forgotten.

We hope that as many people as possible are able to join us online or in St James Church as we celebrate St John's Patronal Festival on Sunday 27th December. Another 'thank you' to all those who have decorated St James Church for the season – the flowers, the tree and the crib scene.

2020 was a frustrating and difficult time for many of us but with the hope that Christmas brings to us we move on into the New year with 'comfort and joy'.

With our best wishes to you all

*Margaret and Gill*



## ADAVU, FOODBANK AND NARTHEX NEWS

**ADAVU:** I was recently asked for a definition of modern slavery. It seems to encompass several forms, covering sexual and labour exploitation, domestic servitude, organ harvesting and criminal exploitation. At any one time, Liisa and her team at ADAVU will be supporting thirty clients and their children who have been rescued, giving them support as they transfer from very secure Home Office accommodation to more independent living. They help with advice on legal, health, education and financial matters and offer the hugely important emotional support.

Each year, Shirley Parish provides Christmas parcels for the clients - these contain toiletries, new underwear and socks, chocolate, jars of coffee, notebooks, warm gloves and scarves etc. - even the odd tin opener (they always go missing in hostels). Usually we provide cakes and items for a party too but in 2020 it could not happen - a great pity because it was the sole social occasion for the clients to get out and enjoy some company and the children to have some fun.

As an experiment I made up twenty-seven separate bags of toiletries for the ladies which help to boost their self-respect. I didn't have any toiletry bags – inspiration! - I bought twenty-seven Sainsbury's net vegetable bags and put some tinsel around the top. Each bag had fourteen items; the basics were the same in each, but I threw in whatever else I had. The nail varnishes are always a great success.

As ever, you came up trumps. Sarah P did an efficient and very time-consuming job of organising and receiving the gifts, keeping tally of the shortages and using the cash donations to cover those. Did you see her scurrying in and out of the charity shops along the Stratford Road searching out extra gifts for the Little Ones?

When the gifts arrived chez nous, David wrapped and labelled them where necessary and I made up the complete bags for the men (three) (chiefly practical items of toiletries, new underwear, torch etc.) and for the children (twenty one – seven being under one year old) who had practical items but each also had at least two new toys maybe two more in very good condition, plus some warm items of knitted clothing and colouring books and pens. I rough sorted the other items into 'Bags for Life' – jars of coffee, biscuits, nappies and wet wipes, notebooks and pens, knitted mittens and hats, scarves and jewellery, etc.



## ADAVU, FOODBANK AND NARTHEX NEWS continued

Thanks to Kate Crocker's appeal to the Shirley Lions, we received a donation of £150 which allowed us to give each family an Aldi voucher for fresh fruit and vegetables to augment their Christmas fare – food in a hostel can be very basic and repetitive.



And finally, Liisa came to collect it all; there were forty-six 'Bags for Life' lined up from the porch, down the hall and into the sitting room. It seems as if in 2020 you were more generous than ever; I don't know why we had worried that we couldn't put labels on the Christmas Gift Tree as in previous years. You received the message loud and clear - and boy, did you come good!

Many thanks from folks you will never meet but whose meagre lives you improved with your thoughtfulness and kindness.



**FOODBANK:** numbers of applicants are increasing steadily. Occasionally I see the queue waiting to go in for their parcels at Sparkhill. It's the listless children standing in line which upset me greatly. I used some of the Christmas sweets to be given to them as they waited. The constant shortages are **longlife fruit juice, dried milk, small bags of sugar, and tinned fruit**. Please put your donations in the collecting bins at Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose. There is also one at the One Stop Shop in Prospect Lane.

**NARTHEX:** the appeal recently is for warm coats/anoraks for boys and men. We took a large delivery of bedding down before Christmas which went out almost as soon as it arrived. More please if you are turning out your airing cupboards or moving house.

Thanks everyone, I hope 2021 is better for you in many ways,

*Elizabeth Paice*

## LITTLE NICK – STOWAWAY AT THE LICENSING OF THE NEW VICAR OF SHIRLEY

I could not believe it. There was Sarah wearing proper clothes and shoes, putting her coat on to go out and it was dark. Nobody goes out in the evening now. When I asked to go as well, I was firmly told that I couldn't because I'm not on the PCC and only PCC members were going to Paul's licensing. I always enjoy parish events and even when she pointed out there would be no food afterwards, I was determined to be there. That meant squeezing into Sarah's jacket pocket when she wasn't looking.

Now usually we sit at the back so I was amazed to find that we had to sit in the front row, just us. But it seemed that Sarah had a special job to do. I broke cover and after a scolding settled down on the pew.

It wasn't like the last time that we licensed Paul (on a Sunday afternoon with the church full of people and I got to sit with the LogIn children) but even with people sitting apart and wearing their masks I could see that there were lots of smiles. And it felt like a happy place.

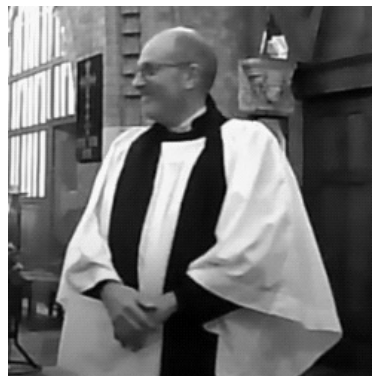
People arrived. The Bishop, the Archdeacon, the Area Dean. I recognised them. Why? Because I had seen them preaching on YouTube services or on Zoom meetings. I have been much more included in church things since Lockdown started. Everyone was masked and trying hard to keep their distance.

We listened as Paul said the legal bits to us and to the Bishop, and the Archdeacon talked about us and Paul. Then I found out why we were at the front. Sarah was videoing the bit of the service when the new Vicar goes to the door to get his keys and to ring the bell. There she went trailing after the official procession, up the aisle to the back, hiding behind an iPad. At this point I wished I had stayed at home. The rest of the service was filmed by a camera on the lectern.

So, there were no hymns but Kevin played the organ, no 'bunfight' afterwards but the Bishop made it clear that we could go home and raise a glass to our new Vicar. We noticed that a lot of people who usually ooze competence seemed a bit nervous – but they didn't need to be.

Now we have a new Vicar to lead us into 2021, supported by our wardens and readers. Well done everyone.

*Nicodemus Penfold - Parish Raconteur*





## OUR PRAYER CHAIN

As mentioned in last month's magazine, a chain of prayer is currently working it's way around the Parish. Every day a household prays for the next household in the chain and the road they live in (and also for the parish more generally).

Liz Yates has shared her experience of the chain -

"Reverend Wendy phoned me early Saturday morning asking me what I would like her to pray for, my family, friends etc. and then we talked about the road in which I live, which I think of as being typical of Shirley - good family homes with good size gardens. Because of the age of the properties, we have a good age range, with young growing families moving in modernising and extending their homes. People like me who have lived here for over forty years and appreciate where I live with the countryside on our doorstep. There are a few homes with people in their nineties, others who are not so well, but I think because of Covid more people have been 'exercising' and people have been more chatty. It is good to visualise these neighbours and to be able to pray for them. Saturday rolled on and by the end of it, I felt truly blessed and knew I had been prayed for.

Therefore it was a pleasure for me to phone Jan Gardner on Sunday morning and ask her what she would like me to pray for in the same way Wendy had prayed for me. I hope Jan felt blessed by the end of the day, and so it continues."

We'll be setting up another chain for Lent - please contact the Parish Office if you would like to be part of it.

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## OUR VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Congratulations to the winners of our Christmas Tree Art Competition:

**Adults:**

Artistic merit: Pat Coward & John Thompson

Bake off tree: Kate Hilditch

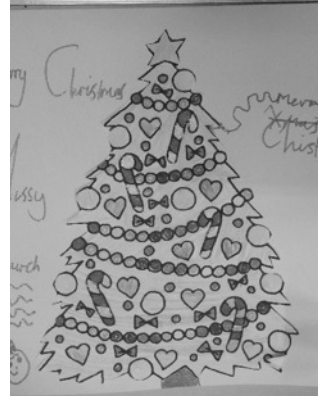
Lockdown tree: Jean Wall

Special award: Bernard Watkins

**Children:**

Under 5's: Thomas and Alex

5-11s: Poppy and Holly



You can see these and the rest of the entries on the Parish website -  
<https://www.shirleyparishb90.co.uk/art-comp-2020>

The Raffle prize winners were Joan Hirst, Linda Pitt and Doris Hyde

## VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS FAYRE CAKE

We thoroughly enjoyed the (anonymous) coffee and walnut cake which we purchased online at the Christmas Fayre - and we also enjoyed the anonymous poem which came with it!

*I trust this cake will give you pleasure  
Although I know in equal measure  
It's bought to swell St James' coffers  
And with the sweetness that it offers  
Brings matching peace and joy sublime  
To lift your hearts at Christmas time.*

Whoever you are, thank you for both your creations,

*Elizabeth and David Paice*



  
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## SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

This time last year we were looking forward to 2020. None of us knew what would lie ahead. I suspect as 2019 came to a close we looked forward to the new year with a mixture of hope and uncertainty.

I wrote a piece for last January's magazine in which I compared the new year to one of those rough books from school days. As we started a new rough book at the beginning of the school year, we had hopes that it would remain neat and tidy, but deep down we knew that would never be the case. There would always be mistakes, crossings out, untidiness and mess. And 2020 has shown clearly that this is true about life ...

And in 2020, as always, through the pain and the tears and the mess of what has happened, we can see that God has been alongside us. He has been teaching us new things and encouraging us. He may not have taken away the difficult things we have had to face, but he has helped us through them.

I look back and see the tremendous support that we have had for each other across the Parish. I see new friendships being formed, and I am sure that pastoral care for each other is now stronger than it has ever been. I look back and see a resourcefulness and a willingness to try new things and do things differently. Who could have believed that we would regularly be holding meetings using video conferencing and worshipping God on YouTube?

I look back and I see a generosity as we have continued to support the Foodbank, Narthex and Adavu as well as contribute towards hampers for school children's families.

But I also look back and sense the sorrow of those who have lost loved ones, and perhaps especially those who were not able to be with them in their last days. I share the pain of those who could not embrace family when hugs were sorely needed. I know how hard it has been for people on their own who have not been able to see families for months on end. I see the sadness of weddings being cancelled and baptisms postponed. Life has indeed been hard.

I think at times like these, words from the psalms can be a great comfort and encouragement to us. The psalms are songs and prayers written from the heart, full of the varied experiences of life, expressing to God some of the thoughts that come to mind as we struggle with the way things are. They teach us that we can be honest to God – we can share all our thoughts and concerns with him, we don't have to pretend.

## SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR *continued*

And so, I leave you with these words from what is perhaps the most well-known of psalms (23) in which the psalmist expresses a deep and certain faith in God, even though life seems to be like a dark valley.

*Reverend Paul Day*

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
 He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
 he leads me beside still waters;  
 he restores my soul.  
 He leads me in right paths  
 for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
 I fear no evil;  
 for you are with me;  
 your rod and your staff—  
 they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me  
 in the presence of my enemies;  
 you anoint my head with oil;  
 my cup overflows.  
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
 all the days of my life,  
 and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
 my whole life long.



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## SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB

### ***Those who are loved* by Victoria Hislop**

This was our book for late October and early November and what turned out to be a bit of a surprise was how so many members of the Book Club expressed delight when they discovered that a Victoria Hislop book had been recommended. Since her first novel, *The Island*, several of our group have been devoted followers.

Sue Harries said that she is a fan of Victoria Hislop so was pleased when *Those who are Loved* was a Book Club choice. 'I really enjoyed the book; I love her style of writing and the research is thorough. I learnt a lot about the Greek civil war, which I knew nothing about before. Believable and interesting characters, a great story with a historical setting. Great!'

Margaret Foreshew too, 'really enjoyed this book, in fact I couldn't put it down and was up half the night finishing it. What made it so interesting for me was the Greek history. I remember King Constantine being deposed and living in England. I have just read that he has returned to Greek land.'

Even though it covers some of the history of Greece (since the end of WW2) and some of the group are getting a little fed-up of war-related stories, they found that this novel has a 'gentle approach to history'. Sarah Penfold.

'Victoria Hislop writes about Greece with love and understanding,' said Jill Abbey. 'She is accurate in history and observations. A most touching and revealing story about Greece during turbulent tragic times, told through the personal valour of a family, A really good read. Looking forward to her next book.'

Mary Hobbs is another who has over the years 'read many of Victoria Hislop's books set in Greece. I have visited Greece and Crete many times and recognise many of the places she mentions. This book in particular answers many questions for me as I knew nothing about the political upheavals in Greece in the last century but was aware there had been many from the many statues, plaques & monuments I saw on my visits.' Mary concludes with: 'I just can't put her books down once I've started - I find them all riveting. Looking forward to her next one which is called *One August Night* and is a sequel to *The Island*.'

Ursula Ison wrote, 'After a slow start for me it became a compelling if at times uncomfortable read. I had no idea of Greek history and so was shocked at how the people suffered over so many years, and so many of them at the hands of their fellow countrymen or women. In our comfortable life it is hard to feel the fierce compulsion that Themis had to serve and fight for her political believes.'

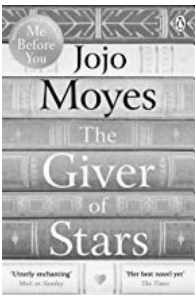
## SHIRLEY PARISH BOOK CLUB *continued*

It did however confirm my belief that no cause, religious, political or economic, is worth hurting or killing another person for. The relationships described throughout the book were extraordinarily strong, from the arguments between the four siblings and the love of their grandmother for them all, through the bond between Themis and Aliki, to her love for her husband, Giorgos. It was nice to see how Themis' children gave Uncle Thanasis a happy life in the end. My final thought - never underestimate an old woman! ‘

‘It is nice book and a pleasant read’ thinks Meryl Davies. The historical timeline is essential in that it holds the characters and story together and give the narrative strength that otherwise I feel would be lacking. The female characters are strong throughout the book but for me the characters in general are lacking umph as many of them only seem to have a brief spot in the limelight and then they are gone. I feel, in the end, that the book is weak as a history or fiction or as fiction set in history. For me I wasn't as absorbed enough by the characters or the story and I've been left a little underwhelmed/flat.’

‘I felt that to some extent, Victoria Hislop's novel wears it's research into recent Greek history too much on its sleeve. I thought that several of the relationships were hugely moving and involving – I'm thinking of the school friend who starved to death and the comrade who died during the civil war and left the main character with her children to bring up. These elements in the plot were powerful, but the book hurtled through time a little too quickly for me. I loved the way several of the characters were desperate to acquire an education.’ Ray Speakman

Sue and Andrew Guy both ‘found the book to be an enjoyable read - although certain parts were quite upsetting. This was partly because the writing was so good but mainly because we had no idea of about what Greece has suffered since WW2. Like most novels set in times of conflict, it is the everyday lives that have such an emotive power, rather than the accounts of military conflicts and the wider political situation.’



Talking about novels that involve us in their characters' hunger for an education, the next book that we are all submerging ourselves in is ***The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes**. It's about an English girl who goes to live in Kentucky in the USA in the 1930s and becomes involved in delivering books to isolated and neglect homesteads. It's not due to be finished and commented on until early in January but some of thought we would have a quick look now – and could not put it down! Why not join us?

*Ray Speakman*

## RECYCLE YOUR REAL CHRISTMAS TREE FOR CHARITY



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Book on <https://www.roundtabletickets.com/event/treecycle/>

Collection: Friday 8th January, Saturday 9th January or  
Sunday 10th January



**Wednesday  
13th January  
from 10.30am**

**Why not join us for a chat?**

**H**eaven's gift of another year  
**A**s the old departs and the new is born,  
**P**lans for a future and a hope  
**P**reparing us for each new dawn.

**Y**esterday has gone forever,  
**N**ew days and ventures lie ahead,  
**E**ven darkness turns to light  
**W**hen we make the Lord our head.

**Y**ielding to the Holy Spirit  
**E**ver mindful that He's there,  
**A**s we live our lives before Him  
**R**ejoicing in His loving care.

*An acrostic poem  
by Megan Carter*



## I WORRIED by Mary Oliver

I worried a lot. Will the garden grow, will the rivers  
flow in the right direction, will the earth turn  
as it was taught, and if not how shall  
I correct it?

Was I right, was I wrong, will I be forgiven,  
can I do better?

Will I ever be able to sing, even the sparrows  
can do it and I am, well,  
hopeless.

Is my eyesight fading or am I just imagining it,  
am I going to get rheumatism,  
lockjaw, dementia?

Finally I saw that worrying had come to nothing.  
And gave it up. And took my old body  
and went out into the morning,  
and sang.

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## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Perhaps this was a question the Wise Men asked after seeing the infant Jesus. They had come from a distant land to Jerusalem. They had followed a star and expected to see a royal child. Now in Bethlehem, they saw things differently. No doubt, Mary and Joseph shared with these men their recent experiences and knew God was with them. Now the Magi had to have eyes of faith to recognise that this child was God in the flesh.

On 6th January many churches will celebrate Epiphany. On this day we remember the Eastern Men bringing their gifts to Jesus. The word 'epiphany' describes their 'revelation' or 'insight' that this was no ordinary baby. Who could they tell? Not King Herod. They had a dream warning them to return home a different way.

Their return to familiar surroundings was going to be different. They couldn't be silent about what they had experienced. Their lives were now changed. On returning home they faced new circumstances and challenges.

Doesn't this sound a bit familiar to us today? The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all of us in one way or another. Where do we go from here? We have celebrated our Lord's birth, but now we are returning to our previous activities. The festive break is over, and we are returning to changed, very difficult circumstances.

We go into a New Year that is so different from this time last year. While we might be downcast with all the upsets around us, there is one thing that has not changed.

It is almighty God! He is our rock. We can look to Him in this world of confusion and uncertainty. Perhaps, from now on, we shall be worshipping and serving Him in different ways. So, with the challenges that lie ahead, let's continually seek His guidance.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding....and He will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)*

## FIVE THINGS I'D LIKE TO SEE IN 2021

I keep hearing people say that 2020 was a 'year like no other.' Friends have been writing a special journal recording the year, so they can pass it on to their grandchildren. Others just want to leave 2020 behind and look to a happier new year. Both reactions are completely understandable. But I've been looking ahead to 2021 and thinking about the five top things I'd like to see in the year ahead. I wonder if you'll agree with them or not? Maybe you could put together your own list.

## FIVE THINGS I'D LIKE TO SEE IN 2021 continued

### ***Let's make sure the vaccines are distributed fairly and speedily.***

Those who need the vaccine most urgently should receive it first, with a fair system for ensuring everyone else can be vaccinated quickly and efficiently. We need to ensure that everyone receives the vaccine wherever they live in the world – from the poorest to the richest. Especially, in those parts of the world where there is war, and people are living as refugees.

### ***Let's learn the lessons of the pandemic –***

Not just going back to how life was, as quickly as possible. Many of us learnt to appreciate our family so very much more – especially when we could not be with them for months on end. We learnt lessons about how important our neighbours and local businesses are, how precious our NHS, medical researchers, care providers and other frontline workers are. Let's not forget them.

### ***Let's value nature.***

Those of us with gardens, or with parks or fields nearby, have been massively blessed. I've learnt to pay attention to birdsong, to the changing colours of the trees, and how unexpected plants have taken root in our garden. Pets have played a major part in helping us endure the lockdowns, especially for people who live alone. May we all learn to value the natural world on our doorsteps in the year ahead and beyond.

### ***Let's bless technology.***

Without the use of the internet, meeting people 'online' or keeping in touch via email, Facetime or other technologies, 2020 would have been a whole lot tougher. Churches across the country moved their Sunday services online, and soon adapted to a different way of worshipping – not the same, but still helping us to worship together and see familiar faces. Let's continue to give thanks for the science that made that contact possible in 2020.

### ***Let's value our church family.***

Imperfect we may be, like any family. But the months without being physically able to worship with them, share communion with them, sing alongside them have been hard. I value so much how many churches have risen to the pandemic challenge and sought to serve their communities in all kinds of ways. May we take all this experience into 2021 and build upon it.

Whatever 2021 holds for you and all those that you love, I pray that you may know the love of God in your life, and be able to pass it on to others.



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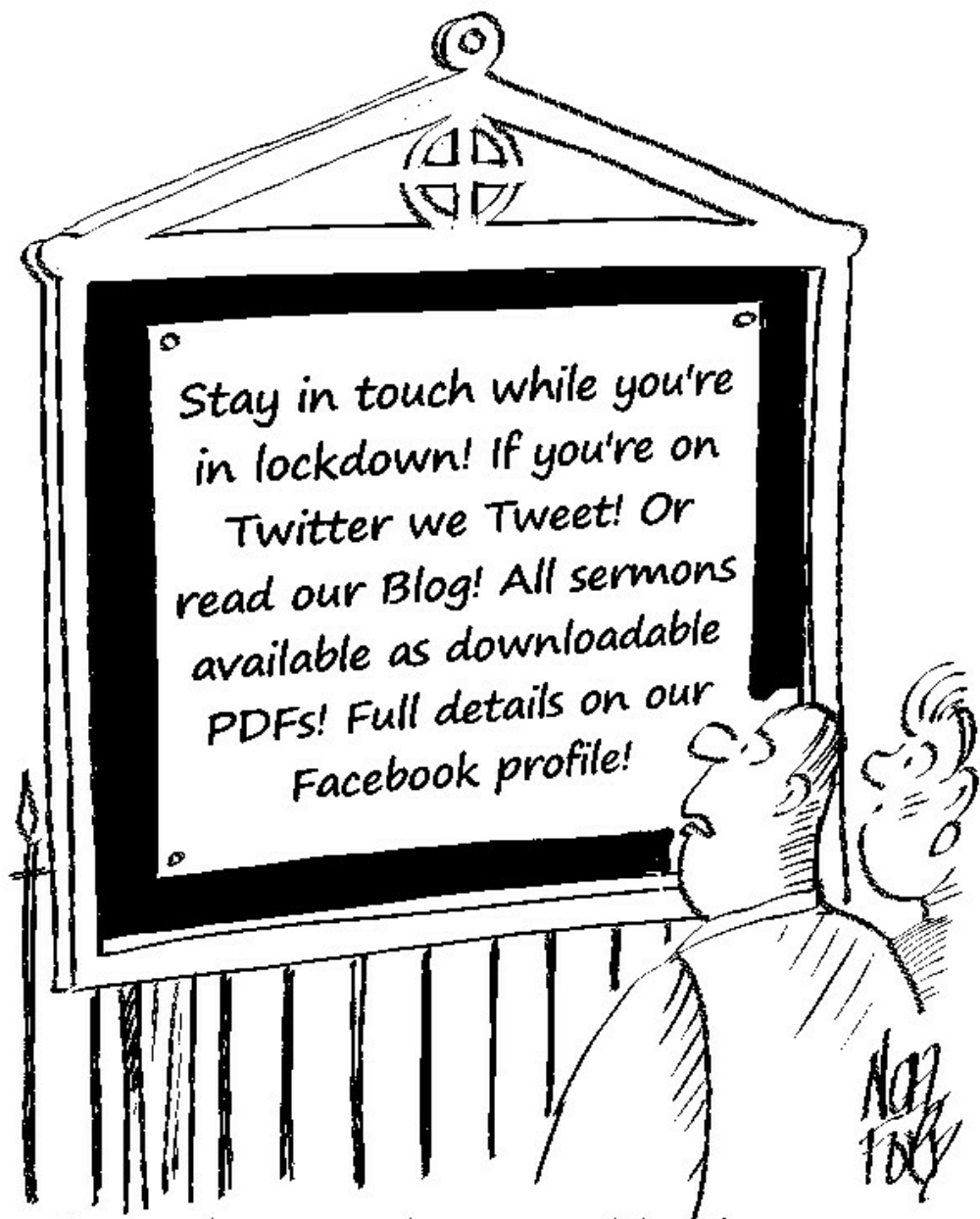
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"...and we used to grumble about not understanding archaic church language!"

## THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD

### Across

- 1 'Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a — began to crow' (John 18:27) (4)
- 3 Fetters (Job 33:11) (8)
- 8 Perform on a musical instrument (1 Samuel 16:23) (4)
- 9 Paul describes it as 'the third heaven' (2 Corinthians 12:2–4) (8)
- 11 Loyally (Deuteronomy 11:13) (10)
- 14 Hens? Me? (anag.) (6)
- 15 Not visible (Matthew 6:6) (6)
- 17 Predicted site of the final great battle (Revelation 16:16) (10)
- 20 Jacob's youngest son (Genesis 35:18) (8)
- 21 One of Zophar's eleven sons (1 Chronicles 7:36) (4)
- 22 For example, London, Paris, Rome (8)
- 23 United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1,1,1,1)

### Down

- 1 Favourite church activity: Fellowship round a — — — (3,2,3)
- 2 Divinely bestowed powers or talents (8)
- 4 Pile together (1 Thessalonians 2:16) (4,2)
- 5 Commanded to justify (John 8:13) (10)
- 6 Timothy's grandmother (2 Timothy 1:5) (4)
- 7 Killed (Psalm 78:34) (4)
- 10 One of Graham Kendrick's best-known songs, — — King (3,7)
- 12 Indecency (Mark 7:22) (8)
- 13 Unceasing (Jeremiah 15:18) (8)
- 16 He prophesied 'the abomination that causes desolation' (Matthew 24:15) (6)
- 18 British Board of Film Classification (1,1,1,1)
- 19 Pans (anag.) (4)

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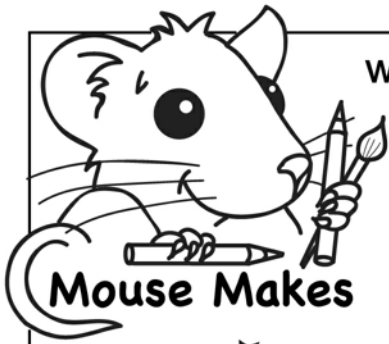
# THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|----|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| 1  |  | 2 |  |  | 3 | 4 |  | 5 |  | 6 |  | 7 |
|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 8  |  |   |  |  | 9 |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 11 |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 14 |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
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| 18 |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 20 |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
|    |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |
| 22 |  |   |  |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |



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

Answers are on page 27



What happened after Jesus had been born in Bethlehem?

READ Matthew 2:1-12

Who came from the East?



Why had they come?



What were they following?



Who was alarmed by their arrival?

Who had the prophet written about?

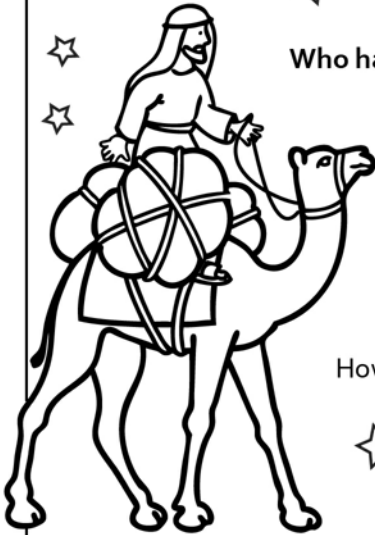
Where were they then sent?

What were they to look for?  
..... and why?

Where did the star lead them?

Who did they see? .... What did they do?

How were they warned to go home another way?



READ Matthew 2:13-23

Who appeared to Joseph?

What was he told? .... Why? What did he do?

Who then became angry?.... and why? What horrible thing did he then do?



When Herod died where was Joseph told to take his family?

Where did Jesus finally grow up?





## WORDSEARCH

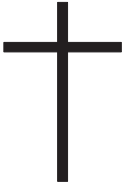
The Christmas story carries on into the New Year, with Epiphany and the arrival of the Wise Men, led by the Star in the East. Through the eyes of faith, they saw Messiah in that small baby, and worshipped him, giving gifts that foresaw his life and work. New Year is also a time of new beginnings for us – resolutions about diets and paying the bills and doing better at work ... Happy New Year!



*Answers are  
on page 27*

BABY  
BILLS  
CAMELS  
EPIPHANY  
FRANKINCENSE  
GOLD  
GYM  
HEROD  
JESUS  
MEN  
MYRRH  
NEW  
RESOLUTIONS  
RUNNING  
STAR  
STUDY  
WISE  
WORK  
WORSHIP





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**PUZZLE ANSWERS**

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

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



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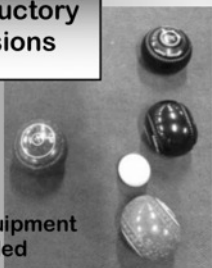
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|------|-----------------------|----|
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| 24th | Margaret May Pitt     | 89 |
| 26th | Terrence John Grimsey | 76 |

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