

♦ Trinity Methodist Church ♦ Kidderminster ♦

Trinity *Tidings*



...all are welcome in this place!

December 2021 & January 2022

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH
CHURCHFIELDS, KIDDERMINSTER

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The closing date for items for the
FEBRUARY edition
Of Trinity Tidings is Sunday, 16th January, 2022

Please email articles, preferably as a Word Document to:
arleystation@aol.com

Thanks to John Harris for designing the front and back covers,
and to Jon Skitt for putting the magazine online each month.

Dear Friends,

In last month's letter I mentioned that Diane and I were hoping to travel to Husum in Germany at the beginning of December, well that trip didn't go ahead due to the increased risk of Covid and the discovery of the new variant 'Omicron' and the additional problems it could pose.

Anyway, having made the decision to cancel I decided to see if we could recoup some of the expenses we'd incurred such as airport parking etc. I presumed we'd lost the money for the flight, as it was our choice not to fly, but thought it would be right and proper to at least let EasyJet know. Well, that was easier said than done!

The flight had been booked online, so I scoured the website for where it says 'cancel flight'. It catered for every other eventuality BUT cancelling your flight (or at least letting them know we wouldn't be travelling with them). Eventually I managed to find a telephone number to ring so thought I'd give it a try. After the recorded message had informed me that I would be much better off contacting them via their website and that all telephone conversations are recorded for training purposes, I began to navigate my way through the 'options' available to me. Finally I got to the point where I was told to stay on the line and an advisor would be with me very soon. I got the dialling tone followed by some very pleasant recorded music reassuring me that I was now on hold and it would be just a matter of time before I was speaking to someone who could help me. Alas, after a couple of minutes the phone went dead and I'd obviously been cut off. Not to be outdone I tried again . . . and then again . . . after being cut off for a second time and then for a third time, I gave up!

I'm sure we've all had similar experiences when we've been told "All our operators are extremely busy at the moment, please call back again, or log onto our website . . . ", when all we want to do is just speak to a real person!!!

For some people there may be times when God can feel a bit like that hard to get hold of person, especially as we approach Christmas. Someone we're trying to contact, but who remains that little bit too elusive to get a proper conversation with. Someone whose number isn't readily available, and if we find the number, never picks up the phone when we ring (metaphorically speaking of course). Or someone we can only access via some elaborate ritual that we don't really properly understand.

In a commercialised world it is easy to lose sight of the real reason for Christmas, but this is it, it is God making himself available to us in human form, a real person.

In an occupied country, in a volatile period of history, God not only made himself available and accessible to us, but he also made himself vulnerable for us. He came amongst us as a helpless child reliant solely on his human parents, that we might see God in a human context. That we might see God in our own experiences. That we might see God in each other.

But best of all, this wasn't a 'one off' opportunity. God goes on making himself available to us through Jesus his Son.

As Christmas approaches may we all know the presence and reassurance of 'Emmanuel', 'God with us'.

Season's greetings and blessings to you all,

Nick

PRAYER CORNER

We remember in our prayers Liz potter, Les Fuller, Lyn Jones, Margot Stanton, Ray and Barbara Lee, Betty Norman, Ruth Palmer and her sister Anne, Elaine Skitt, those on the Prayer Vine and all those we know who need the love, comfort and the knowledge of Christ's presence with them.

Franchise

December

St Barnabas' Church

Franchise Community Church and its Food Bank.

Kidderminster Baptist Church

Schools and Nurseries - Franchise, St Catherine's,

Mayfield, Deerhurst and Barnabees Nurseries

Old Carolians Rugby Club

Residential housing

Retail

Rosedene Specialist Residential Home

The Talking Newspaper



Town Centre

January

New Meeting and The Mormon church.

Legal services and Banks

Town Hall

Doctors' Surgeries and dentists

Carpet History - the museum

Eateries

Weavers Wharf and Crossley Retail Park

All retail shops in the Town Centre

Kidderminster Food Bank

St Basil's Hostel

Home Start

Kidderminster College and Library



Beryl Cutts Celebrates 99th Birthday!



Beryl is wearing her 1939 – 45 Defence Medal, and her Veteran's Medal both relating to her service in the Royal Air Force in the Second World War.



From the Editor....

By the time you read this, Christmas will almost be upon us and we look forward to it with mixed emotions. Some will look forward to a happy family occasion when we can forget our troubles for a few days. Others will have a sad time, as they remember loved ones no longer with them to share the fun and laughter. Some will be lonely, on their own with only the television for company. There will be those for whom the festive time will be a time of pain and discomfort just like any other day and some will be sleeping rough, with nowhere to go, and no-one to care about them.

Christmas has a much deeper meaning than just a time to enjoy oneself, spend far too much, then say that they are glad when it is all over. Mary and Joseph were homeless, far from home, far from the comfort of neighbours to help if Mary gave birth. They were homeless, desperately looking for somewhere to rest before they made their weary journey back to Nazareth. But there, in a stable, warmed by the breath of animals, the greatest gift the world has known was given to all of us. Jesus was born. His love, compassion and forgiveness are for everyone, regardless of who we might be. It was a gift that goes on giving, and all that is asked of us is that we love him, as he loves us.

As the weather becomes colder, don't forget to put out some food for the birds. They never say 'Thank you', but the fact that they keep coming back to the bird feeders is a 'thank you' in itself.

One last comment, about storm Arwen the other Saturday. The rooks in the big sycamore trees next to the railway line, were having a wonderful time. They seemed to revel in the strong winds, just as if they were playing complicated games. You would have thought that they would have been blown away for ever, but they soon came back to their roost, and clung on tightly.

I hope you all have a very happy Christmas, and a peaceful New Year. May Christ be born in us anew this Christmas.

David



CHURCH FLOWERS

At Trinity we have a small group of flower arrangers who provide beautiful arrangements each week for our Sunday services. These flowers are then taken out to those with a pastoral need.

Sadly, next year we only have offers of donations for 11 weeks. It would be a shame if we have a church without any flowers

There is no set amount for donations. It is up to the individual. These flowers can be in memory of a loved one, for someone's birthday, anniversary or donated anonymously.

If this something you might consider helping with, please speak to Diane Collison.

Thank you

Offertories for the past five weeks are as follows

	Envelopes	Loose Cash	Standing Orders	Total
	£	£	£	£
31.10.21	111.00	90.50	539.80	741.30
07.11.21	265.00	41.00	689.75	995.75
14.11.21	146.00	90.00	689.75	925.75
21.11.21	210.00	94.00	689.75	993.75
28.11.21	196.00	42.00	689.75	927.75

In addition, offertories donated by bank transfer amounted to £70.00 making a weekly average of £930.86

In this current church year it is estimated that offertories of £1200 per week will be required to break even.

SERVICES IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

Dec 5 th	10.30am	Rev Hazel Ratcliffe
	6.30pm	Mr Phillip Bridgewater
Dec 12 th	10.30am	Mr David Skitt
	6.30pm	Mr Mike Dernie
Dec 19 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison (Joint service with Baxter)
	4.30pm	Rev Nick Collison (Carol Service)
Dec 24 th	11.30pm	Rev Nick Collison (Midnight Communion)
Dec 26th	No Services	
2022		
Jan 2 nd	10.30am	Mr David Millinichip
	6.30pm	Mr David Skitt
Jan 9 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison (Covenant & Pastoral Visitors)
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison (Café Worship)
Jan 16 th	10.30am	Mrs Sue Stinton
	6.30pm	Rev Sue Levitt
Jan 23 rd	10.30am	Mr Mike Dernie
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison (Praise Service)
Jan 30 th	10.30am	Rev Sue Levitt
	6.30pm	Mr Phillip Bridgewater
Feb 6 th	10.30am	Rev Nick Collison (Holy Communion)
	6.30pm	Rev Nick Collison (Café Worship)
Service every Thursday at 12.30 pm		

Service every Thursday at 12.30 pm



NEW Roof Project...

The recent 'Quinquennial Report' completed in March 2021 found some serious defects in the state of the building roof at Trinity.



The Problem...

The Hall, Lounge and Toilet Roof areas and the connecting gulley, at the foot of the tower, require urgent replacement.



The Answer...

A New Roof complete with the latest materials giving improved insulation and new waterproof roof coverings.

Quotations for the works **Total £60,490.00**

These costs are beyond our financial reserves, and we are seeking grants from various trusts to assist in financing the project.

But there will be a significant shortfall....



£65,000

£60,000

£55,000

£50,000

£45,000

£40,000

£35,000

£30,000

Funds
Raised
to Date

How you can Help!...

Everyone is therefore encouraged to play whatever part they can in helping this project by supporting:

- Fundraising Events – please watch out for information soon!
- Donations – Please contact Iestyn Davies Tel: 01562 740429
Email: iestyn.davies@btopenworld.com to make a donation
- Interest Free Loans - Please contact Iestyn Davies for information

The future is Bright...

With the completion of this major project Trinity will maintain its position in the local community for worship and meetings across a broad spectrum.
If you would like more detailed information on any aspects of this Major Project, please contact John Bacon – Tel: 01562 744502.

As at 29th November '21
£27,387.00

Made up of
£11,387.00
Donations and
£16,000.00
Interest Free loans

Please give this appeal your careful and prayerful consideration and support! Thank you.

SOCIAL EVENTS & FUND RAISING

The Social/Fund Raising group met recently, and several events have been planned. We hope you will give each of them your full support. They are opportunities to meet socially, as well as to raise money for the "Raising the Roof" fund

HIGHLEY BRASS BAND CONCERT

December 10th at 7.30pm
Tickets -- £5 -- on sale now

BRING AND BUY, AND AUCTION

Saturday 15th January, 1.30pm for a 2.00pm start

VALENTINE'S QUIZ

Friday 11th February. 6.00pm for a 6.30pm start
Fish and chips supper. Cost to be notified nearer the date.

EASTER BUNNY DRIVE

(Similar to a Beetle Drive)
Friday 8th April - Time to be notified

DAY TRIP TO SALISBURY

Friday, May 6th. Depart Trinity at 8.45pm. Tickets £20 will be on sale after Christmas.

If you have any questions, then please ask any member of the Social/Fund Raising group, they are: Stephe, Rachel, Sarah and David



*We don't sing carols no more...
you 'ave to listen to 'em off me iPod!*

Christmas Fair

Saturday 13th November saw The Social Committee's first non- virtual event in over eighteen months.

We were most fortunate to have extra special guests at the occasion; Father Christmas and two of his elves. There were lots of happy children clutching a



gift from Santa.

Other attractions were the numerous stalls from the local community and special thanks to



Janet selling jigsaws and Jane on the tombola; all their monies going to the church roof fund. Not forgetting Diane selling church Christmas cards and homemade crafts.

The smell of bacon butties seemed a big attraction and a huge thanks goes to those feeding and watering the crowds (also those who donated cakes for sale).



At the time of writing, we have made £545. Thank you.

Trinity Social Committee

Keep an eye open for more events in the New Year

Trinity Methodist Church Kidderminster

Highley Colliery Brass Band

Conductor: Chris Cobon

Presents

Raise the Roof Christmas Concert

An evening of brass band classics,
Christmas music and two world premieres.

on

Friday 10th December 2021
at 7.30pm

at Trinity Methodist Church
Churchfields, Kidderminster DY10 2JL

TICKETS

£5 Each

...ON SALE NOW!

Tickets available from the
Church Stewards or Social Committee
Email: Trinitysocialcommittee@gmail.com

Raise the Roof! Raise the Roof!



All proceeds in aid of the
Trinity **NEW** Roof Project

Valentine's Quiz



Friday 11th February

6pm for 6.30pm start

£8 or 2 for £15

(includes chip supper)

**Speak to Sarah or email [trinitysocial-
committee@gmail](mailto:trinitysocial-committee@gmail.com) to book**

CHARITY AUCTION

Saturday 15th January

Doors open at 1.30pm for a 2pm start

Proceeds to go to the Church Roof Fund

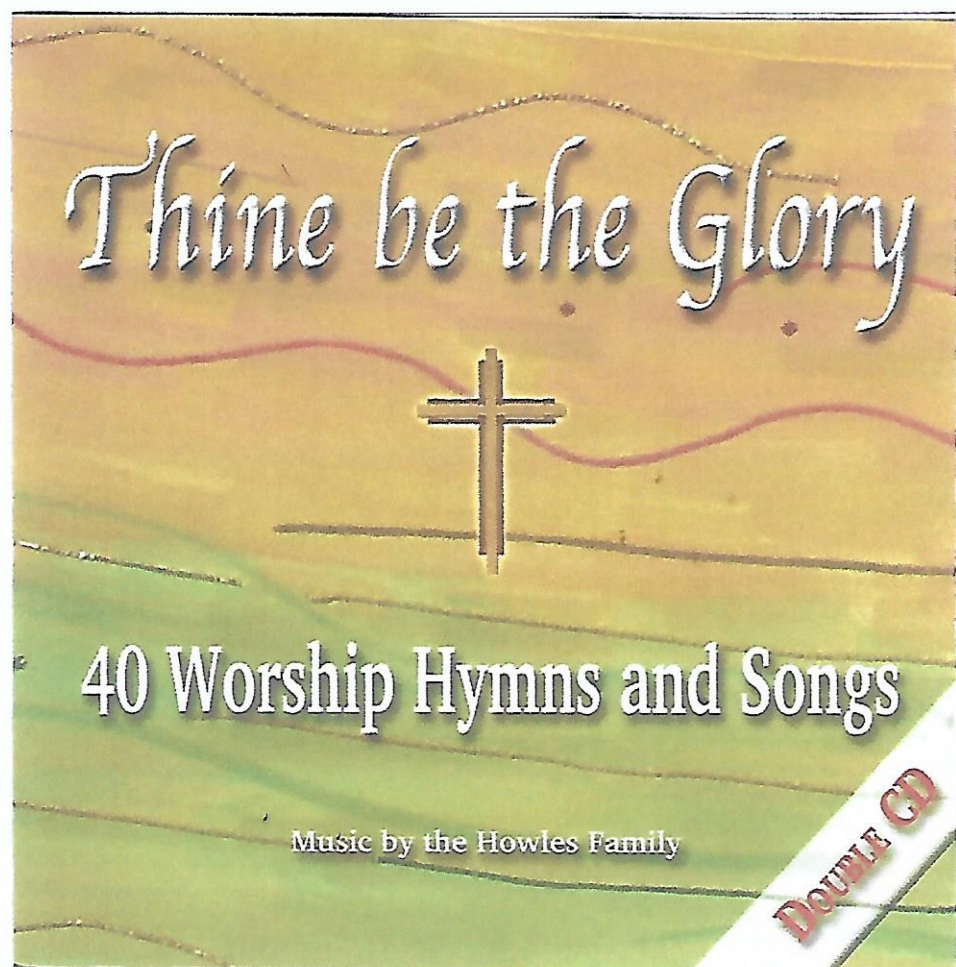
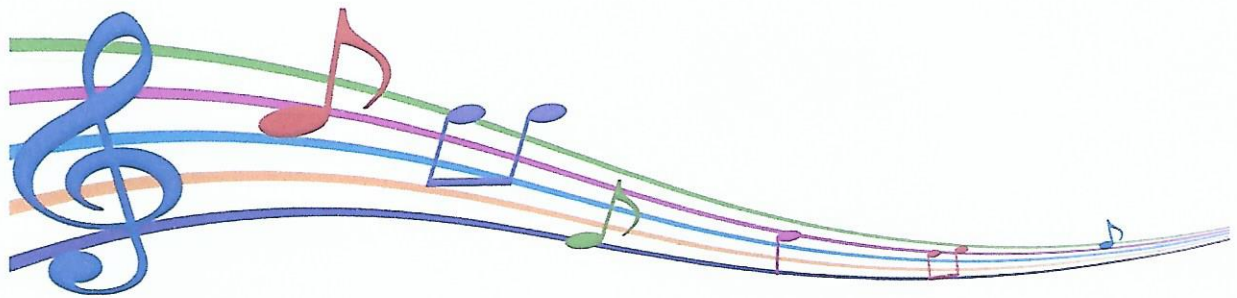
**If you have a donation for auction, please
talk to one of the Social Committee**

Refreshments available

Now available – a double CD containing 40 hymns and songs recorded during lockdown that featured on Nick's weekly online service. Over two and a half hours of music, with a mix of traditional and modern songs.

Price £10, also available by mail order at £12 to cover P & P.

Available at Trinity, or contact David Howles on 01562 63262 or email - davidhowles@me.com



The CD would make a lovely Christmas present!

This poem for Christmas written for us by Sarah Weston.

Christmas Lamb

In the deepening dark, a star haze swirled and shimmered overhead
As I leant into my mother's side, craving warmth on that cool Judean night.
A sudden flash fired the dry, stubbled field with blinding brightness, and
When thunder rolled across the quivering ground, I shrank in terror, too paralysed to resist.
Then my shepherd came and cradled me in reassuring arms.
Stroking my unblemished head, he carried me to shelter in the shrouded hillside town,
And bowing low, placed me before a young mother, face radiant with reverential joy.
Smiling, she made an offering in return, holding aloft her swaddled, new-born son.
The babe reached out a perfect hand and touched my fleecy brow,
And in that shrunken moment, where space and time collide, I felt dull fears subside,
And heard the susurrations of soft wheat. Bathed in the glow of risen sun
I found myself in verdant grass, sprawled and peaceful, near a tranquil stream.
Then, giving a contented sigh, he nestled in the depths of her devotion,
And up above, a star pierced the heavens, bright light defeating darkness.



Rev Francis Kilvert was curate in Clyro on the Welsh border, near Hay on Wye for 8 years. He kept a diary of his years there. These are two Christmas extracts

Christmas 1870

As I lay awake praying in the early morning I thought I heard distant bells. There was an intense frost. I sat down in my bath upon a sheet of thick ice which broke in the middle into large pieces whilst sharp points and jagged edged stuck all round the sides of the tub, not particularly comforting to the naked thighs and loins, for the keen ice cut like broken glass. The ice water stung and scorched like fire. I had to collect the floating pieces of ice and pile them on a chair before I could use the sponge and then I had to thaw the sponge in my hands for it was amass of ice. The morning was most brilliant. Walked to church and the road sparkled with millions of rainbows, the seven colours gleaming in every glittering point of hoar frost. The church was very cold in spite of two roaring stove fires. Mr Venables preached.

26th December

Much warmer and almost a thaw.

Christmas Day 1878

Very hard frost last night. At Presteign the thermometer fell to 2 degrees, showing 30 degrees of frost. Last night is said to have been the coldest night for 100 years. The windows of the house and church were so thick with frost rime that we could not see out. We could not see through the church windows all day. Snow lay on the ground and the day was dark and gloomy with a murky sky. A fair morning congregation considering the weather.

Immediately after dinner I had to go back to the church for the funeral of little Davie of Old Weston who died on Monday was fixed for 2.15. The weather was dreadful, the snow driving in blinding clouds and the walking tiresome. Yet the funeral was only 20 minutes late. The Welcome Home Bell, as it chimed softly and slowly to greet the little pilgrim coming to his rest, sounded bleared and muffled through the thick snowy air. The snow fell thickly all through the funeral service and at the service by the grave a kind woman offered her umbrella which a kind young man fellow came and held over my head. I asked the poor mourners to come in and rest and warm themselves but they would not and went into the church. The poor father, David Davies the shepherd, was crying bitterly for the loss of his little lamb. Owing to the funeral it was rather late before we began the afternoon service. There were very few people in church beside the mourners. The afternoon was very dark. I was obliged to move close to the great south window to read the lessons and could hardly see even then. I preached from Luke ii. 7. 'There was no room for them in the inn' and connected the little bed in the churchyard in which we laid Davie to rest with the manger cradle at Bethlehem.

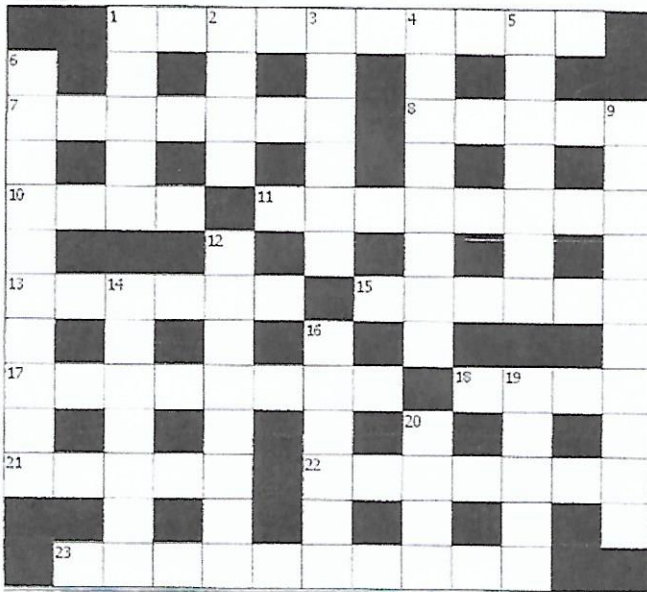
Although Francis Kilvert was a curate, he had two services and a funeral on Christmas Day.

A History Quiz

1. Where did Queen Victoria die?
2. Why was the coronation of Edward VII delayed?
3. David Lloyd was known as "The Welsh Wizard". What was his other nickname?
4. In WW1 which cabinet minister conceived the disastrous invasion at Gallipoli?
5. How did Emily Davidson die?
6. When were women allowed to vote?
7. What happened to the airship R101?
8. Who returned from Germany, waved a piece of paper and said "Peace for our time"?
9. What was "Operation Dynamo"?
10. Which branch of the armed forces did Princess Elizabeth join in WW2?
11. When did Prince Philip and Princess Elizabeth marry?
12. Who was the Prime Minister when the National Health Service was created?
13. Which Prime Minister was misquoted by the Sun newspaper as having said "Crisis, what Crisis"?
14. Which Prime Minister said "The lady's not for turning"?
15. What is the origin of that quote?
16. What was the TML?
17. When were the 'pub bombings' in Birmingham?
18. Who renounced his peerage to become Prime Minister?
19. Whose official residence is 11, Downing Street?
20. Where is Winston Churchill buried?
21. A female member of parliament told Winston Churchill that he was drunk. What was his reply?
22. R A Butler got an important bill through parliament in 1944. What was it?
23. When did Argentina invade the Falkland Islands?
24. Where was President John F Kennedy when he was assassinated?
25. Whose famous speech contained the words, said several times, "I have a dream"?
26. When did Marilyn Monroe die?
27. Which US president was forced to resign in August 1974?
28. Who was the first man to reach the South Pole?
29. What hymn is reputed to have been played as Titanic sank?
30. Which Prime Minister is buried on the Isles of Scilly?
31. Who was the Prime Minister when Edward VIII abdicated?
32. What ceremony takes place at the Menin Gate in Ypres at 8.00pm every day of the year?
33. What was Sir Donald Campbell attempting to do when he died?
34. When Princess Anne visited this area, how did she travel from Bewdley to Kidderminster?
35. Which long serving M.P. – now retired – was known as "The Beast of Bolsover"?



Parish Pump Crossword



Sudoku puzzle

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

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Across

- 1 Provisional meeting place of God and the Jews (Exodus 25:9) (10)
- 7 David's third son, killed when his head got caught in a tree during a battle with his father (2 Samuel 18:14-15) (7)
- 8 They ruled much of the west coast of South America in the 15th and early 16th centuries (5)
- 10 Small deer of European and Asian extraction (4)
- 11 Seized control of (Numbers 21:25) (8)
- 13 Terror (Luke 24:5) (6)
- 15 First World War heroine shot by the Germans in Brussels, Nurse Edith ____ (6)
- 17 Stormy (8)
- 18 A bitter variety of this, together with lamb and unleavened bread, was the Passover menu for anyone 'unclean' (Numbers 9:11) (4)
- 21 Arson (anag.) (5)
- 22 How John Newton described God's grace in his well-known hymn (7)
- 23 Habitation (Isaiah 27:10) (10)

Down

- 1 '____ and see that the Lord is good' (Psalm 34:8) (5)
- 2 'The wicked man flees though no one pursues, but the righteous are as ____ as a lion' (Proverbs 28:1) (4)
- 3 One of the exiles, a descendant of Parosh, who married a foreign woman (Ezra 10:25) (6)
- 4 He escaped from Nob when Saul killed the rest of his family and joined David (1 Samuel 22:19-20) (8)
- 5 City and lake in Central Switzerland (7)
- 6 'Offer your bodies as living _____, holy and pleasing to God' (Romans 12:1) (10)
- 9 Pouches carried by horses (Genesis 49:14) (10)
- 12 One who accepts government by God (8)
- 14 Aromatic substance commonly used in Jewish ritual (Exodus 30:1) (7)
- 16 He asked Jesus, 'What is truth?' (John 18:38) (6)
- 19 Are (Romans 13:1) (5)
- 20 'You are to give him the name Jesus, because he will ____ his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21) (4)

Going Green for Christmas

Here are 8 easy things you can do, to help encourage positive change and have a more sustainable Christmas this year:

1. Eat with Season

Most of our beloved veg heroes at Christmas, including potatoes, sprouts, carrots, leeks, and parsnips, are all in season throughout the winter.

Opting for seasonal, organic food means supporting the UK's nature-friendly farmers, who grow using fewer pesticides, on British farms that support diverse wildlife and healthy, living soils



2. Cut down on festive waste

Don't let your leftovers go to waste this Christmas, there are plenty ways to use them up in tasty meals.

3. Sign up a friend for a veg. box

Imagine the sight of a box filled with beautiful veg under the tree this Christmas! When you gift a friend or family member a veg box subscription, you'll be signing them up to an amazing community of citizens, farmers and growers who are making sure the way we farm and eat is better for nature and the climate.



4. Make an informed choice about your tree

Real vs. fake – the great Christmas tree debate continues! In our view, a real tree that's been grown with care is the most sustainable choice for Christmas. If you're looking for a sustainable Christmas tree that's been grown using fewer pesticides, your best bet is a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®) certified, or a Grown In Britain tree. These will have been responsibly managed and grown using a minimal amount of pesticides

5. Get creative with gift wrapping

It's estimated that each year in Britain, we throw away enough wrapping paper to circle the globe 9 times. If you are to use wrapping paper, make sure that the paper you use is FSC certified. And don't go for the paper without forgetting tape cannot be recycled. So try and find inventive ways that will ensure tape isn't used.



6. Support your local shops

It's never been more important to embrace our local indies! Opting to buy food from local farmers and producers in a nearby indie is a great way to show some love for the organic movement in your area this Christmas.

7. Re-think your Christmas Gifts

Going green over the festive period doesn't have to mean cutting back on gift-giving. Getting creative with your gifts and spark some joy this Christmas by enabling a loved one to get growing at home. Have you learned any new skills this year? If you have the time, consider making an up-cycled or homemade gift yourself.

Other gifts that can help lead towards a more sustainable Christmas include:

- Gifting an experience
- Adopt an animal
- Gift a charity donation

One other simple way to be eco-friendly with your Christmas presents is to simply buy less. There are on average about 70 million unwanted Christmas presents. Buy less and enjoy being closer to your community, family and friends with the time save because you aren't out buying presents

8. Wrap up warm in organic wool and cotton

If you'd like to update your wardrobe this Christmas but are worried about the impact of fast fashion on the environment, look out for organic cotton and wool. Working with nature, these are two of the most sustainable materials you can buy.

Eco Committee

GARDENING NOTES FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

December is the first month of winter and the 21st is the day when the sun is 'way down south', seeming to appear stationary over the Tropic of Capricorn and the hours of daylight at their shortest over the Northern Hemisphere.

December is a typical winter month, but it can take on the characteristics of late autumn. Very mild weather can be experienced when south-westerly breezes flood the country with damp, moisture-laden air from the sub-tropical Atlantic. With little in the way of solar heating to the land.

Our heaviest snowfall here in the Midlands often results from a cold easterly flow clashing with milder air pushing to the south, our region then becoming 'the battlefield'. Snowfall, when deep, is a good insulator to plants that could otherwise be exposed to very low overnight temperatures.

Jobs in the garden will have to be undertaken as and when the weather allows, both time and daylight will be limited. If nothing else, try to keep the garden tidy and prepare the ground for the coming season.

If not already done it is not too late to trim lightly long shoots of roses to prevent 'wind rock' during the winter. However, if the weather is frosty or cold leave well alone and don't cut back too hard as this could lead to soft, sappy growth during mild spells which will only be killed by frosts. Don't compost shoots that have blackspot - burn them! Where soil has become compacted, or you've recently walked over it, use a spade or fork gently to chip or break up the upper layers, allowing frost action to get to work. Don't dig too deeply; this will take cold soil down deeper into the bed. Limited planting is possible where the weather allows, but only if soil conditions are favourable. Don't plant if it is frozen or waterlogged. Deciduous hedging should be planted as soon as possible.

Keep a check on forced bulbs for Christmas flowering, as they should be nearing the pint where they will need moving into a cool well-lit position. Frost can loosen the soil around recently planted shrubs and trees, so periodically check for 'lifted' plants and re-firm where necessary. 'Wind rock' can also loosen plants, so check for this at the same time.

For early winter colour you can do no better than the charming cyclamen coum. Often in flower just before Christmas C.coum is very hardy and, I believe, should be established in every garden, or in small alpine trough. Flowers can be white, delicate shell pink beautiful rose or deep magenta, the glossy dark green to patterned silver and the kidney shaped foliage only adds to its charm. A carpet of C.coum around the base of a mature tree in the darkest days of winter can really lift the heart. The soil should be well drained and the site slightly shaded during the summer, remaining moist during autumn through to spring. Top dress the site with leaf mould and grit and be sparing with fertiliser. They will reward you with a truly spectacular carpet of colour. One note of caution, hardy cyclamen are generally dormant during the summer, so remember where you planted them and do not hoe them out! As seedlings appear leave them to mature, and you will see the carpet of colour increasing year by year.

It may be cold outside, the ground frozen, but the shortest day is at hand and it can only get lighter from 21st onwards. The new gardening year starts soon!

Have a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year and enjoy your garden.

Bob

Just Missed it

“For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders’. And He will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his Kingdom, establishing it and upholding it with Justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this” (Isiah 9; 6-7 NIV).

Written around 700BC by the Prophet Isiah. Nobody listened, well certainly not the people in the Inn some 600 years or so later; well, let’s face it, were they expecting it? I doubt it, but they had been forewarned.

This was just a normal day in the Middle East. We’ll assume it was December 24th, end of the day, workers in the fields probably dropping by and sharing a goatskin of wine before going home for their evening meal. (you didn’t eat out in those days). However, on this night the Inn was full. This was Bethlehem and there was a census being held and everybody had to go to the house and line of who they belonged to. Being of the line of David, Joseph and Mary found themselves in Bethlehem where they were to register. This certainly wasn’t a “Welcome Inn” because it was full up and Joseph and Mary hadn’t booked. There was no room for them at the Inn, every room was taken up by those travelling for the census, so they had to find somewhere for the night. Where? Nobody knows. Nowhere in the Bible does it say Jesus was born in a stable, but He was certainly born close to that Inn. Perhaps a lean-to or a shed, not the stable. It was here Mary gave birth to her firstborn. “She wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the Inn”. (Luke2:7 NIV). While inside the inn everybody was eating, drinking or sleeping, unaware that outside History was being made. The birth of Jesus Christ, right on their doorstep, and they just missed it.

You have to remember that this was the Middle East and if we take December 25th as the day Christ was born, it would have been quite mild, certainly no snow on the ground, so sleeping in a shed or even a tent would have been no problem. Yes, it could get quite cold but you didn’t need a hot water bottle and there were plenty of sheepskins if you began to feel a chill. However, if those people in the inn missed the arrival of The Messiah, others didn’t.

Out in the fields above Bethlehem were shepherds watching over their flocks at night. Probably sitting around their fire, having a meal. Shepherd’s pie? Who knows? Then an Angel of the Lord appeared to them and they were scared. These simple people were the first to know of the birth of Jesus. How wonderful is that? So they hurried off down to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, who was lying in a manger. “When they had seen Him, they spread the Word and everybody was amazed at what the shepherds told them about Baby Jesus”. The word of the shepherds would eventually spread all over the world. It is remarkable that all through His life shepherds and sheep would be a part; the Good Shepherd and His flock.

Whether the customers of that inn on that Christmas eve ever knew what took place on that night we’ll never know. But let’s face it, they just missed it, we didn’t.

Mike

Mike's Smile Lines

Fred: The last time I went on a cruise I lost all my clothes.

Dave: How? What happened?

Fred: The wife thought the porthole was a washing machine and threw everything in.

**

A woman takes her little boy to the hospital and says he's swallowed a clock. "Does it bother him?" says the doctor. "No", she says "but it bothers me. Every time I go to wind it up he bites my finger"

**

I sent for a correspondence course on how to become a comedian in 10 easy lessons. I only received the first one and the last one. I don't know what happened to the other eight but the postman's now playing at the Palladium.

**

I went on a garlic diet. I lost 10 pounds and 20 friends.

**

There was a man who couldn't make decisions. He's got a six-year-old son and he hasn't named him yet!

**

I met a woman once who reads tea leaves. I didn't even know you could write on them.

**

You'll never believe who I bumped into the other day in Specsavers – everybody!

**

Hear about the bloke who came from a long line of boxers – except his father, he was a Dalmatian.

**

When I was young I was always smiling, I could eat a banana sideways.

**

I was always into keeping fit – there was nothing like a cold bath, full of hot water.

**

I am a worried man, I can't help it. So I went to a bloke and offered him a £1,000 to worry for me. "Where's the £1,000" he said. "That's your first worry" I replied.

**

It was a pressing engagement. Two dry-cleaners getting married.

**

Hear about the girl called glug-glug? When she was about to be Baptised, the vicar fell in the font.

**

"I will now read from the book of Numbers" said the preacher. Then he opened a telephone directory.

**

Man: How much is a haircut?

Barber: £10

Man: How much is a shave?

Barber: £5

Man: Shave my head.

**

Teacher: Can anyone name a deadly poison?

Tommy: Aviation.

Teacher: Where did you get that from?

Tommy: Well, one drop and you're dead

It's Christmas!

"It's Christmas" yells Noddy Holder from Slade, and suddenly we know it is. No, it's not the decorations in the shops from August that starts Christmas, it's the cry from a 70's pop star. Turkeys will be in short supply - Charles Dickens would be lost. Ebenezer Scrooge waking up on Christmas day and buying the large turkey in the butcher's shop? No chance. Bob Cratchit and his family would have to manage with a Bernard Matthews turkey joint, though Tiny Tim could still come up with "God Bless us everyone". Carol singers should be back – Covid allowing – on the doorstep again. How we've missed that wonderful chorus "Oh, come let's kick the door in" ! Salvation Army bands back in the precincts again and the chance to tuck in to the Good King Wenceslas pizza – deep pan, crisp and even. If you're baking mince pies remember you have to go somewhere over the rainbow to weigh a pie. Please don't forget those lovely children when you sing carols, the lovely John Virgin and Molly Faithful - "Round John Virgin mother and child", plus "O come Molly faithful, joyful and triumphant". What memories. The thing that most people forget though, is that Christmas was the birth of the baby Jesus, a new world on that Christmas morning.

However, the birth meant nothing to Jesus. He spent the first few months travelling, firstly fleeing to Egypt then home again to Nazareth. His early days were probably spent riding on a donkey. We know nothing about His childhood. He must have spent them mostly with His father Joseph, obviously helping him in his work as a carpenter. Then He suddenly appears around the age of 12 in a temple and it's there His life begins. He never reflects on His birth in Bethlehem. Sadly, He is more concerned with the future and realises it's His death not His birth that will revolutionise the world.

So why do we celebrate Christmas? Obviously for those reading this it's to celebrate the birth of Christ but for some others it's different; eat, drink and be merry. So why did Jesus come. He was the only man in history who chose to be born and eventually chose to die. The only reason for Him coming at Christmas was to die at Easter. (No, not 3 months). His birth technically meant nothing; He came simply to give His life for us. His birth, of course, was the main reason for us giving presents at Christmas. It reminds us of the gift He gave to us, His life. Unbelievably it was a Russian who gave us the best description of the child born to be a man. "I believe there is no one lovelier, deeper, more sympathetic and more perfect than Jesus. I say to myself, with jealous love, that not only is there no one else like Him, but there could never be anyone like Him". These are the words of the great author Dostoevsky. At Christmas we remember the fact that Jesus entered the world to supply our deepest need. To help us make relationships, not only with God, but with one another. So who tells it better? How about John Betjeman:

“And is it true? And is it true
This most tremendous tale of all
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue
A baby in an ox's stall?
The maker of the stars and sea
Became a child on earth for me?

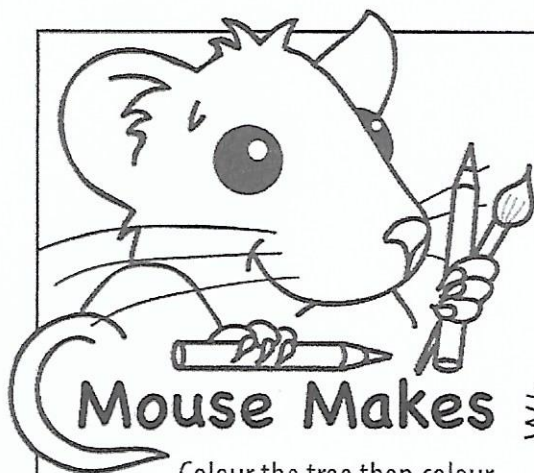
No love that in a family dwells
No carolling in frosty air
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare.
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives today in bread and wine.”

Yes, Jesus came to us at Christmas and let the Herald Angels sing His birth. Let us not forget that a dog (sorry – God) is not just for Christmas but for life.

Merry Christmas.

Mike

(Mike Knott, Stourport Wesley)



Colour the tree then colour
in one star each day until Christmas.
Leave the large star at the top of the
tree to colour in on Christmas day!

What's on the Christmas Tree?

Presents at Christmas
under the tree,
A red Christmas stocking
waiting for me,
But what really is Christmas,
What is it about?
Just look and the Bible
and you will find out!
It's about **JESUS**
- the best present of all,
JESUS our Saviour,
God's gift to us all!

A STAR
shows the way
to Jesus
Read
Matthew 2:1-12

ANGELS
bring messages from God
Read about
Gabriel's message in
Luke 1:26-38

Read the
shepherd's story in
Luke 1:26-38

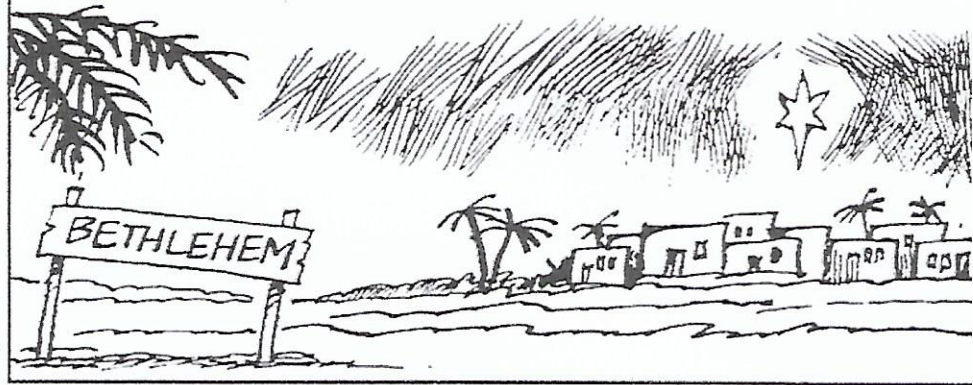
**LIGHTS
AND CANDLES**
remind us that Jesus
lights our way to God
Read Luke 2:29-32

PRESENTS
remind us of God's
special gift to us ... **JESUS!**

"For God loved the world so much that He
gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes
in him may not die but have eternal life." John 3:16

A Very Special Baby

JESUS WAS BORN ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO IN THE SMALL TOWN OF BETHLEHEM, NEAR JERUSALEM.



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD MARY SHE WOULD HAVE A VERY SPECIAL BABY.

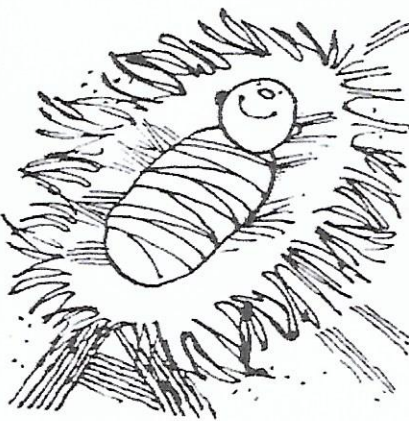


MARY AND JOSEPH MADE THE LONG JOURNEY FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM. THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED THERE FOR THE CENSUS.

BUT THE TOWN WAS FULL...



...WHICH IS WHERE JESUS WAS BORN.



SHEPHERDS IN FIELDS NEARBY RACED TO SEE THE BABY.



AN ANGEL HAD TOLD THEM WHERE JESUS HAD BEEN BORN.

WISE MEN CAME FROM THE EAST. THEY TOO WANTED TO SEE JESUS. THEY HAD BEEN GUIDED BY A STAR.



BUT MARY, JOSEPH AND BABY JESUS SOON HAD TO ESCAPE TO EGYPT...



Several years ago, the Peterborough Column of the Daily Telegraph delightedly reported on a little sign that someone had spotted over a church door in rural Cheshire.

It ran:

'This is the house of God. This is the gate of heaven. (This door is locked in winter months.)

Well, our churches are still the house of God, and hopefully this Christmas their doors will NOT be locked, but instead wide open.



Let's welcome everyone who wants to join our celebration of the best news the world has ever known – that God sent his Son into the world to die for us, so that we could call God our Father, too. What can be better news than that?

Parish Pump 2021

The man who married Mary

The traditional Nativity scene on our Christmas cards has Mary with the Holy Babe. Around her are the shepherds and Magi. We may also see stable animals, angels and a star! While Joseph is often included, his presence seems to be of minor importance.

After all, we praise God for Jesus with our familiar Christmas carols, mentioning angels, shepherds, Wise Men and Mary but the name of Joseph is absent! Why is Joseph given a low profile? For he is a man to be remembered.

Joseph was a resident of Nazareth. He worked as a carpenter and his skills would have included making furniture, repairing buildings and crafting agricultural tools. Although Joseph had an honourable profession, he would not have been a man of great wealth.

The gospel writers Matthew and Luke give Joseph a few brief mentions. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary go to the temple in Jerusalem to dedicate the Baby to God. Afterwards, they flee into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod and much later return to Nazareth. 12 years later, Mary and Joseph go with Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. Here they lose Jesus, only to find Him in the Temple talking with religious leaders!

Apart from these verses, the New Testament is silent about the rest of Joseph's life. However, we do know that Joseph was father to other children by Mary. His four sons are named, and they had at least two daughters. (See Matthew 13:55)

And we also know that Joseph was someone who quietly and humbly took on the awesome role in caring for the early life of the Son of God. Joseph would have taught Jesus many things – not just the skills of a labourer, but the lore of the countryside which was evident in our Lord's teaching. Jesus grew up within a loving family and described God as 'Father', knowing also the good fatherly qualities of Joseph.

In the Christmas story, Joseph is placed into a situation that brought him misunderstanding and suspicion. But Joseph remained faithful in the knowledge that as long as God had spoken, the opinion of others mattered little. Before Jesus began His ministry, it is believed that Joseph died. It is likely Jesus took on many of His father's responsibilities before He left home.

In the eyes of the world, Joseph was a nobody. He was not a man of valour, fame and fortune. But he was the one who had parental responsibility for the greatest person who has ever lived! It is sad that we often equate ordinariness with ineffectiveness. Down the ages, God has used many ordinary people to accomplish great things. God continues to use ordinary people. Like Joseph, we need to know that doing God's will is the most important thing in life. May we, this Christmas, respond to God's call to us and please Him in all that we do.

Parish Pump 2021

The story of mince pies

Did you know that mince pies have been traditional English Christmas fare since the Middle Ages, when meat was a key ingredient? The addition of spices, suet and alcohol to meat came about because it was an alternative to salting and smoking in order to preserve the food. Mince pies used to be a different shape – cradle-shaped with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

Parish Pump 2021

World's oldest fake tree

Did you know that it is a family in Wiltshire, the Parkers, who claim to own the world's oldest artificial Christmas tree? It was bought in 1886, and it is still put up every year.

Parish Pump 2021

Those unwanted gifts

What will you do with the Christmas gifts you don't want? Depends on your sex. It seems that women are 60% more likely than men to return or give away Christmas presents they don't want. What are considered unwanted presents? One list includes potato peelers, a carpet cleaner, a sleeve ironing board, a mop and bucket, and out-of-date Bailey Irish Cream liqueur.

Some of us will sell our unwanted gifts on Ebay, while others of us will give them away, or to the nearest charity shop. *(Or you can bring them to Trinity's 'Bring and Buy, and Auction on Saturday 15th January! 2.00pm start)*

The survey was done by *Which?*

Parish Pump 2021

All in the month of December

It was:

1500 years ago, on 7th December 521 that St Columba, Irish missionary who spread Christianity in Scotland, was born. He was one of the Twelve Apostles of Ireland.

175 years ago, on 21 December 1846 that the first surgical operation in Europe using anaesthesia took place. Robert Liston amputated a servant's leg at University College Hospital in London.

80 years ago, on 7th December 1941 that the Japanese made their surprise bomb attack on Pearl Harbour, Hawaii. The USA, UK, Netherlands, New Zealand, and other countries declared war on Japan the following day. The War in Europe had now become a World War.

60 years ago, on 4th December 1961, that birth control pills became available on the NHS.

30 years ago, on 25th and 26th December 1991, that Mikhail Gorbachev resigned as President of the Soviet Union, and the next day the Soviet Union was officially dissolved. The 12 remaining Soviet republics became independent states.

25 years ago, on 10th December 1996, that South African President Nelson Mandela signed a new constitution, completing the transition from white minority rule to full democracy.

Parish Pump 2021

Parish Pump Smile Lines

In Jane's Christmas drawing, two of the camels were approaching the inn, over which was pictured a large star. The third camel and its rider were going directly away from it. "Why is the third man going in a different direction?" her mother asked. Jane replied: "Oh, he's looking for a place to park."

**

Two snowmen were standing next to each other. One said to the other: "Can you smell carrots?"

**

Mother decided that ten-year old Cathy should get something 'practical' for Christmas. "Suppose we open a savings account for you?" she suggested. Cathy was delighted. "It's your account, darling," mother said as they arrived at the bank, "so you fill out the application." Cathy was doing fine until she came to the space for 'Name of your former bank.' After a slight hesitation, she put down 'Piggy'.

**

Father Christmas enters through a hole in the chimney and leaves through a hole in your pocket.

**

Did you know? By replacing potato chips with grapefruit as a snack, you can lose up to 90% of what little joy you still have left in your life.

**

A professor was lecturing his physics class. "If molecules can be split into atoms and the atoms split into electrons, can the electrons be broken down any further?"
"I'm not certain," replied one of his pupils, "But a sure way to find out would be to post some of them in a Christmas package marked 'fragile.'"



History Quiz answers

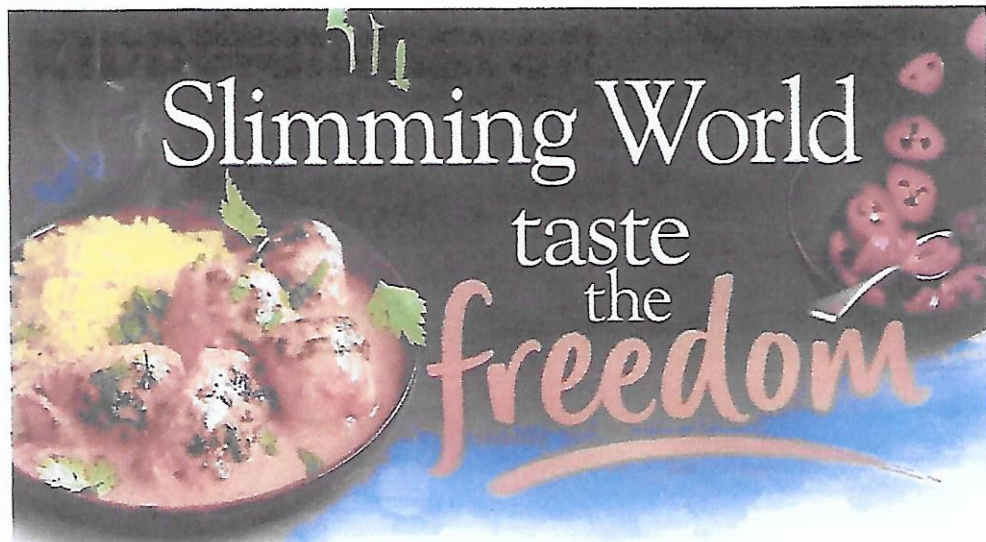
1. Osborne House, Isle of Wight
2. He had an emergency operation to remove his appendix
3. The Welsh Goat. (I'll leave it to you to work out why!)
4. Winston Churchill
5. She ran on to Epsom racecourse on Derby Day and threw herself under the king's horse.
6. In February 1918 women over 30 were given the right to vote
7. It crashed in France, and because it was full of hydrogen it was destroyed by fire
8. Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain
9. It was the code name for the evacuation from Dunkirk
10. ATS – Auxiliary Territorial Service, as a mechanic and driver
11. 20th November 1947
12. Clement Atlee
13. Jim Callaghan
14. Margaret Thatcher
15. It was a misquote of the title of a play by Christopher Fry, "The Lady's not for Burning"
16. Trans Manche Link. The French and British consortium which built the Channel Tunnel
17. 21st November 1974
18. Alec Douglas-Home
19. The Chancellor of the Exchequer
20. St. Martin's Church, Bladon, just outside Blenheim Palace
21. "My dear, you are ugly, tomorrow I will be sober, but you will still be ugly"
22. The 1944 Education Act
23. 2nd April 1982
24. 22nd November 1963 in Dallas, Texas
25. Martin Luther King
26. 4th August 1962
27. Richard Nixon after the Watergate scandal
28. Roald Amundsen in 1911
29. "Nearer my God to Thee"
30. Harold Wilson
31. Stanley Baldwin
32. The Last Post
33. He was trying to break the world water speed record on Coniston Water
34. On the footplate of a GWR steam engine
35. Dennis Skinner

Sudoku solution:

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

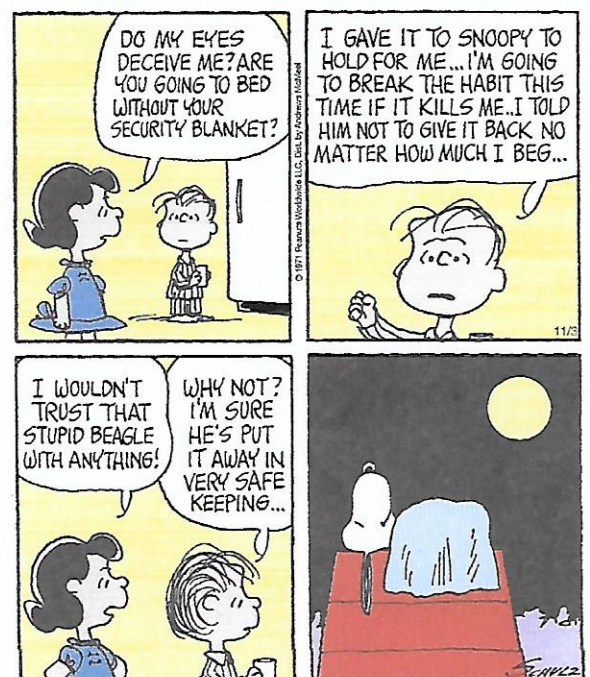
Crossword answers:

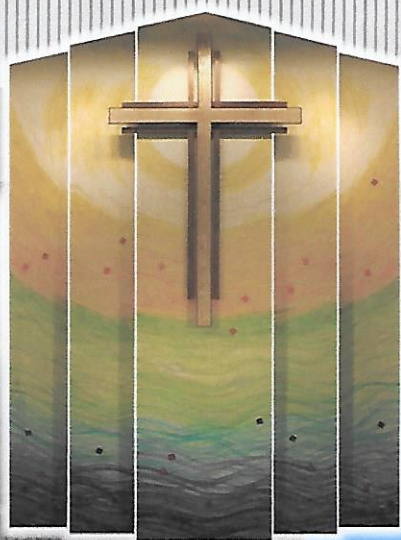
- ACROSS:** 1, Tabernacle. 7, Absalom. 8, Incas. 10, Roes. 11, Captured. 13, Fright. 15, Cavell. 17, Cyclonic. 18, Herb. 21, Sonar. 22, Amazing. 23, Settlement.
- DOWN:** 1, Taste. 2, Bold. 3, Ramiah. 4, Abiathar. 5, Lucerne. 6, Sacrifices. 9, Saddlebags. 12, Theocrat. 14, Incense. 16, Pilate. 19, Exist. 20, Save.



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- **Evening Worship at 6.30pm**

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Every Thursday 12.30pm – 1.00pm

Trinity Toddlers **Every Tuesday**

9.45am – 11.15am

Contact:

Mrs Stella Batson - 01562 863503

Rev'd. Nick Collison - 01562 823300

Trinity **Luncheon Club** **Every Wednesday**

at 12.15pm

Co-ordinator:

Mrs. Jill Green

Trinity Methodist Church, Churchfields, Kidderminster, DY10 2 JL

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