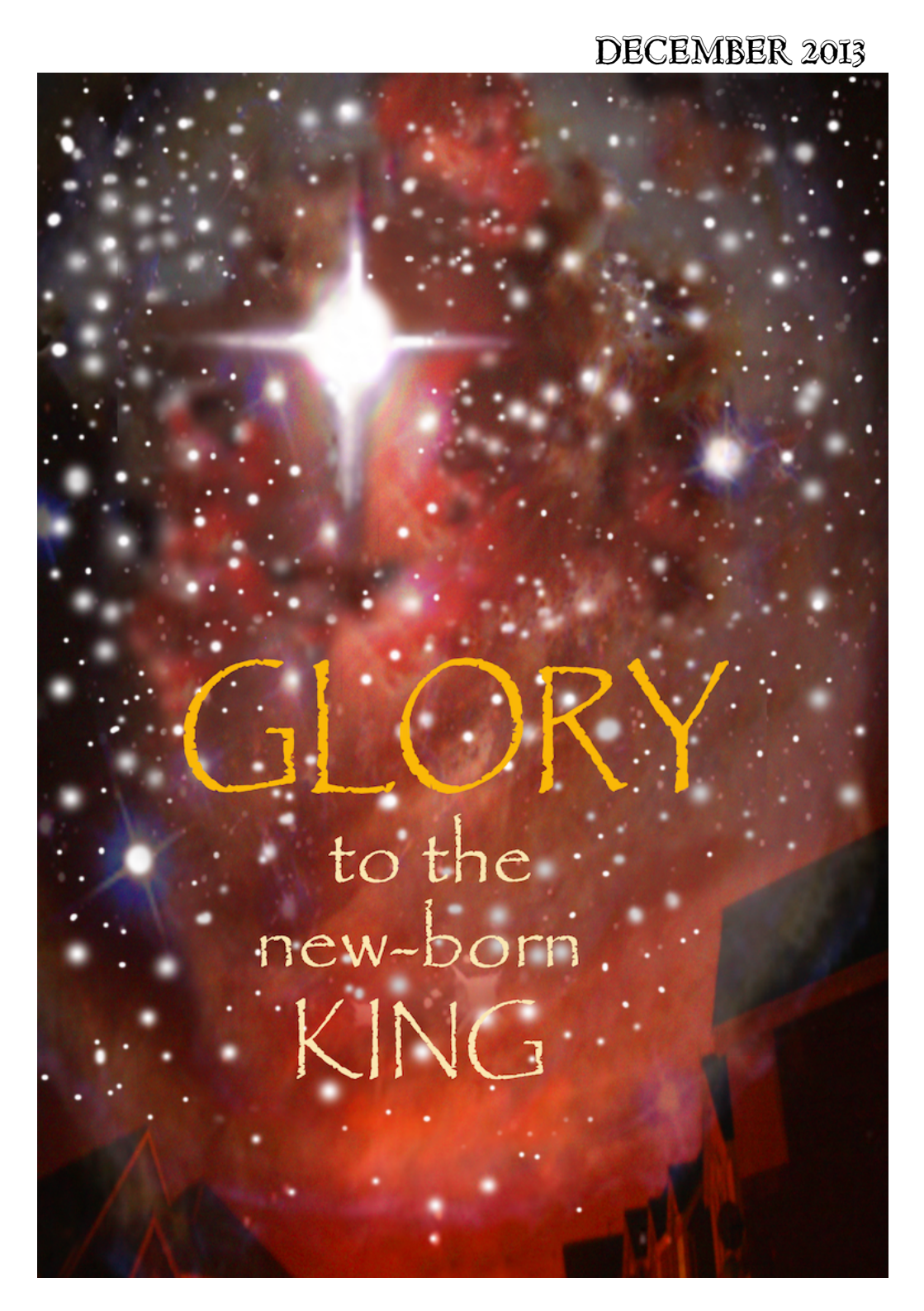


DECEMBER 2013



GLORY

to the
new-born
KING

Revd Canon D. Perkins,
The Vicarage, Edensor, Bakewell,
Derbyshire DE45 1PH Tel: 01246 386385
(Church website - www.stpetersedensor.org)



December 2013

By the time you read this article, the season of Advent will be upon us and preparations for Christmas will begin. Advent helps us to focus our thoughts on how Jesus came into this world to be one of us. It is a season of looking back at the prophecies of Old Testament times. In our services at Church we read about John the Baptist and the Blessed Virgin Mary who were part of God's great plan in changing the world. It is also a time when we can look at our lives to see if we need to change our ways. There may be a situation in our life that requires urgent attention – a disagreement with someone or a time to say sorry. Advent is the beginning of a new Christian year. And so what better time is there to reflect and make new resolutions?

For most of us Christmas will bring all its joys of sending and receiving cards, exchanging presents and generally making merry. But for some, Christmas can be a time of great loneliness. We are all aware of the desperate situation in the Philippines where thousands of people have lost members of their families, their homes and their livelihoods. Members of the armed forces will be parted from families as they serve in the Middle East. It is so important not only to remember these people but also to do something practical. Knocking on a neighbour's door and spending some time with them – donating money or other essential goods to the people of the Philippines – sending a card to someone serving abroad. There are organisations who will help us to carry out these important tasks. Just think what a difference we could make to someone's life by doing just one of these things.

Jesus Christ came into this world to show us how to live a life of caring, loving and sharing. He came as a gift from God and taught his first disciples to show compassion and forgiveness. He didn't come with a set of rules and regulations in order to frighten and scare us. He simply came to shower us with his love. All he asks of us is that we accept him and trust him.

As we celebrate Christmas this year, why not spend some time thinking about why we are celebrating. It would be so good to see you at one of our services over Christmas (all of which are advertised in this magazine) and when you hear the Christmas story or sing a carol, to remember who it is that makes Christmas the wonderful festival it is.

A very happy and blessed Christmas to you all
Canon Dave

ADVENT SERVICE OF LIGHT

ST. PETER'S CHURCH ~ 1ST DECEMBER 6PM

A candlelit service to mark the beginning of the Christian year, this service will include anthems sung by a choir, Advent hymns, readings and prayers. Everyone is welcome to attend this special service.

LECTIONARY

A lectionary is a book containing readings appointed to be read at divine services.

As from 1st December (Advent Sunday) the readings appointed for St. Peter's Edensor and St. Anne's Beeley at the Sunday morning services will follow the pattern of the Church of England liturgical year. The readings follow a three year cycle. On Advent Sunday we begin Year A in the Calendar. This pattern allows an extensive choice of readings and is now being used almost everywhere worldwide in Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches. For teaching and preaching purposes it helps the minister to explore more of the New and Old Testament Scriptures.

2014 - Gift Aid Envelopes

With 2014 not too far away, now is the time to order your 52 week set of gift aid envelopes.

These are the small blue envelopes which are individually numbered and are personal to you for you to use for your weekly offering.

There is no need to write your details on the front and they are far more convenient than using the larger yellow envelopes, which are really designed for visitors and non regular members of the congregation.

If you would like a set of envelopes for the new year, please ask either Liz Bradshaw or David Jackson.

<u>Telephone Numbers</u>			
St. Anne's	Wardens:-	Rupert Turner	01629 732794
		Fiona Swain	ex directory
<u>St. Peter's</u>	Treasurer:-	<i>to be confirmed</i>	
	Wardens:-	Elizabeth Bradshaw	01246 582421
		David Jackson	01246 583452
	Treasurer:-	Mark Titterton	01246 582245
		e-mail: mtitterton@btinternet.com	

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - DECEMBER

- 1** 6pm St Peter's, Edensor - Candlelit Advent Service
3 7.30pm St Peter's Church, Edensor - Christmas Music with Mosaic
10 BEELEY WI Monthly Meeting 7.30pm Village Hall
 Annual wreath making & The Christmas Party Muddle
Tea & Raffle: All
11* CHATSWORTH WI Monthly Meeting - Edensor Tea Cottage 7pm
 * **2nd Wednesday - CHRISTMAS PARTY**
 Competition: Handmade Christmas Bauble
Special Christmas Hamper Raffle
18 7pm St. Peter's, Edensor - 'A Service of Lessons & Carols'
19 2pm St. Peter's, Edensor - Pilsley CofE School Carol Service
24 6pm St. Anne's, Beeley - A Service of Nine Lessons & Carols



From the Registers *St Peter's, Edensor* *Interment of Ashes*

2nd October ~ Joyce Harbottle aged 92 years

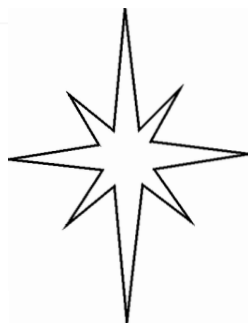
1st November ~ Jack Thompson aged 75 years

A Service of Thanksgiving

13th November ~ Marjorie Bateman aged 69 years

Christmas Music

with
MOSAIC



St. Peter's Church,
Edensor

Tuesday 3rd December, 7.30pm

Entry Free. Retiring Collection in Aid of Church Funds

Beautiful Carols from Six centuries, sung
by the Eight voices of MOSAIC:

*Palestrina, Gesualdo, Mendelssohn, Bruckner, Lauridsen,
Holst, Warlock, Chilcott, Todd, Stopford and many others*

A QUIET LIFE By Tim Lenton

I had a quiet life
until the angel interrupted me:
everything going along smoothly
in the normal way.

Suddenly I was full of grace
(Had I been full of grace before?)
and God was with me,
and my quiet life was over.

It was like going through a sudden
door in a wall that had not been
there:
a door into a different kind of life,
beyond imagination.

I was disturbed, of course, and afraid:
something impossible
was going to happen.

Something that didn't happen
in a quiet life:
something noisy.

I could see that I was going to have
to think about it:
to ponder it in my heart –
but I had already said yes by then.

If an angel calls
into your quiet life
you have to say yes
Don't you?

'THE BRIDGE' Magazine Subscription

Your magazine subscription for 2014 is now due - £7.20. Please give the money to the person who delivers your copy of the magazine or if I post it to you please include a book of 12 stamps with your subscription.

Cheques should be made payable to Edensor PCC.

Thank you for your continued support and remember we always welcome any suitable items for possible inclusion in 'The Bridge'.

Thank You

A big 'thank you' to everyone who has helped in any way at our two churches this year. The cleaners, coffee makers, flower arrangers, readers, sidesmen, our organists at St. Peter's Lynn & Joe Clark and visiting organist Roger Briscoe, Ian and Judith at Beeley, Clive Robinson for keeping the clock wound, those who clean the brasses, Richard Finney - mowing, Barry Bateman - putting out parking signs and all those who helped during the interregnum and with the preparations for the Licensing service. Apologies to anyone we've left out, we do appreciate all the help you give.

Due to the printers having extra work at Christmas, items for the JANUARY magazine should reach me NO LATER THAN MONDAY 9 DECEMBER

Mail to:

liz.bradshaw@w3z.co.uk

'The Bridge' Parish Magazine 60p per copy (£7.20 per year.)

WEDDING FLOWERS 2013

The flowers have delighted our wedding couples and also raised £568 for St. Peter's Church. Thank you to everyone who has helped.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



FROM ST. PETER'S & ST. ANNE'S

With all good wishes for Christmas & the New Year to friends,
fellow members of both congregations and readers of 'The Bridge' from:

*Stan Liddicot, David & Margaret Jackson, Jean Clarke, Pauline & Vernon Mather,
Dorothy Cooper, Gloria & Roger Sherwood, Duncan & Cynthia Gordon,
Pat & Roy Bosett, Margaret Thomas, Margaret & Gary Nelson, Ann & David Hall,
Liz & Ray Bradshaw, Dorothea Owen, Jill & Michael Gowdey, Lynne & Joe Clark,
Janet & Peter Machin.*

As usual we would ask you to place your donation in an envelope marked 'Christmas Greetings' and place it on the collection plate in church on any Sunday during Advent.



Cleaning Rota - St. Peter's

After many years on the cleaning rota (I've just looked at the back copies of the magazine and find they started being on the list in May 1999), Margaret Thomas and Janet and Peter Machin have decided that the time has come to hang up their brooms and wash their dusters for the last time. Thank you for your hard work over the years - I wonder how many tins of polish etc. you've used?

It does mean that we are now down to eight couples, so we really do need more people to help with the cleaning -

REMEMBER the more people we have the less often your name comes round! If you are interested let David Jackson, Liz Bradshaw or Dave Perkins know.



St. Peter's Church 100 Club October Draw 2013

1st Prize £30 - no. 34
Marjorie Bateman

2nd Prize £20 - no. 21
Zoe Penrose

Funds to church this
month - £50



Spread a little happiness at
Christmas.... **W.I.S.H**

There is still time to help victims of domestic violence through a local charity called W.I.S.H., which is based in Glossop and covers Bakewell and the Hope Valley area. Last year the response was incredible and we are hoping that once again members of our congregations and readers of this magazine will feel able to help by donating non-perishable foods, Christmas treats, toiletries etc. Items could include tins of beans, soup, tuna/ meat, packets of pasta, boxes of cereals, biscuits, tea bags, coffee, jams & chutneys, soap, deodorant, shower gel, cosmetics etc. and perhaps some seasonal goodies such as mince pies, Christmas puddings and a few

chocolates - in fact all the things we take for granted and enjoy during the festive season.

When you are shopping perhaps you could pop something extra in your basket or on the 'buy one get one free' offer donate the 'free' one.

The collection points are in St. Peter's Church; Edensor Tea Cottage or Pilsley Post Office. The last day for donations will be Sunday 15th December.

Please help us to make Christmas a little more joyful for those in a position most of us, hopefully, will never have to experience.

Thank You



Girls choir for Canterbury Cathedral – after 900 years

After more than 900 years of all-male singing, Canterbury Cathedral is going to introduce a girl's choir. It will be the first time in the history of the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury that a girls' choir will be assembled under its own name.

The Cathedral hopes to draw about 20 girls aged 12 to 16 from local secondary schools to

form the Canterbury Cathedral Girls' Voluntary Choir. After auditions in November, it is hoped that the choir will start by the end of the year. The Dean of Canterbury, the Very Rev Dr Robert Willis, says: "It will add a further dimension to the cathedral's worship and be an exciting addition to the cathedral's long history of musical achievement."





KATHER'S KITCHEN

For one night only Beeley Hill Top Cottage will become the venue for a

POP-UP RESTAURANT

Date: Friday 24th January 2014

Time: 7.30 for 8.00 pm

A WILD WINTER DINNER OF THREE COURSES

The dinner will be cooked by Katherine Marland of Kather's Kitchen
(www.katherskitchen.co.uk)

"Kather's stunning wild canapés and her roulade of foraged greenery with smoked trout and pennywort filling were gastronomic highlights of my year.

I'll never look at hedgerows in the same way again."

Clare Hargreaves, Seasonal & Local Food Editor, BBC Good Food

Tickets - £30

For bookings and further information please telephone 01629 732794 or e-mail Rupert.turner@btinternet.com

All proceeds in aid of Saint Anne's Church, Beeley



Sales last month were very good at £1409, which included £20 at

the Rwanda Cafe, £100 at the Agricultural Service, £46 at the Cancer Christmas Fair, £68 at the Oxfam Christmas Fair and £184 at the Traidcraft Sale and Coffee Morning.

If you are stuck for a Christmas present for a friend or relative who really has pretty well everything they need, and which of us isn't, why not purchase a Gift for Life? For £10 you can help a fish farmer in Bangladesh to feed and clothe his family and educate his children. £15 enabled Madina Akhter to join Traidcraft's farming project and learn to keep ducks - she now has 400. She can now put money aside for her children's education as well as

provide them with a more nourishing diet.

£25 could help Molo and Elisibeth, bee keepers in Kenya, gain the extra skills they need to earn a better income so their family can thrive. There are other examples on p70 of the Traidcraft catalogue. If you purchase a gift like this for a friend you will receive a card to pass on to them telling them how their gift is being used and the difference it will make to the recipients life.

I will be happy to take orders for Christmas up until Dec 20th, but try not to leave it too late as items can go out of stock. Please give me a call for whatever you need. And enjoy your Gifts for Life.

Peter Bird (01629 813087 –
pabird@gmail.com)

Church of England welcomes Scout decision that 'Duty to God' stays in the Promise

The Church of England has welcomed the recent decision by the Scout movement to keep a 'Duty to God' in its core promise, and to introduce an additional alternative promise for those without a religious faith.

The Church of England feels this decision "affirms the importance

of spiritual life and does not restrict meaning to arbitrary self-definition." Referring to the last census, it argues "we remain a faithful nation where the majority of families and individuals find identity, affiliation and meaning in religious belief. For many years a rich relationship between Scouts and the Church of England has borne fruit in the lives of generations of young men and more recently young women."

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

*O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear...*

What wonderful words of hope and faith in the coming of Jesus, our Messiah! You've heard that Advent carol every Christmas-tide of your entire life. But if it wasn't for a quiet, High Anglican English vicar who was once warden of an almshouse in East Grinstead, most likely you would never have heard of it.

John Mason Neale (1818-66) had always loved words. As a child of 10 he had edited his own handwritten family magazine. As a young man he enjoyed long solitary walks in the English countryside, pausing only to do a bit of brass-rubbing or to collect the architectural details of the country churches he discovered.

Neale was something of a scholar: he was captivated by the Middle Ages and the medieval church, the early church fathers and the lives of the saints. As one small girl at his almshouse orphanage once observed, Mr Neale (then in his 40s) "must be very old, to have talked to so many saints and martyrs".

John Mason Neale's place in history was assured when he decided to translate old hymns into English. He went on to become the greatest of all translators of hymns from the old Latin, Greek, Russian and Syrian churches. 'O Come O Come Emmanuel' was just one of them; it began as an old Latin hymn of doubtful date. Today it is loved round the world. *The English Hymnal* (1906) contains 63 of translated hymns and six original hymns by Neale.

Whatever happened to RE?

Pupils are leaving school with a 'very limited understanding' of Christianity because of an alarming dip in standards of religious education, according to Ofsted. The education watchdog has warned parents that teaching about Christianity is now 'one of the weakest aspects' of RE lessons in English state schools.

RE is compulsory in all state schools but it is not part of the national

curriculum. Individual schools and councils draw up their own syllabuses in order to try and reflect their local community. Ofsted has now recommended that the system be put under review. The historian David Starkey, himself a well-known atheist, says that there should be a greater focus on religion to help in the understanding of other subjects. "We have to put God back into history."

Canon David Winter, a former Head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC, reflects on the birth of Jesus Christ...

The Way I See It : In the Shepherd's Field: the strangest sign

A feature of listening to familiar words is that they slowly lose their power to shock or surprise. Familiarity doesn't necessarily breed contempt, but it does induce deafness. It's especially true of things we hear regularly - and among them, of course, is the story of Christmas.

We've been hearing it since we were toddlers, year after year. We've acted it in nativity plays and sung it in carols. Even for those who are not churchgoers, this is one bit of the Christian story which we feel we know. Like an old and comfortable pullover, we slip into it each December and slip out of it again at the New Year.

We think of the familiar Christmas story as reassuring, heart-warming and homely. But in fact it's disturbing, shocking and revolutionary. Take, for example, Luke's story of the birth of Jesus - indeed, try to think of it as though you've never heard it before, even though you can probably recite it by heart. 'There were shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night, and lo, the angel of the Lord appeared to them and said, "Fear not; I bring you good tidings of great joy"'

The shepherds, thus rudely awoken from their slumbers, were 'sore

afraid', but the angel told them that the long-promised Messiah was to be born that night in the nearby town of Bethlehem, and even invited them to go and visit him. As a simple guide to his whereabouts he added: 'this will be a sign for you. You will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a feeding trough'. That is the literal version of the angelic travel instructions, probably the most spectacular anticlimax in the whole of the Bible.

A 'feeding trough?' What would such a child be doing lying in a feeding trough, presumably in a stable? The fact that the instructions were given to the accompaniment of a massed heavenly choir singing 'Glory to God in the highest' makes the angel's words even more bizarre. It's a great tribute to the shepherds' faith that they nevertheless set off on this strange hunt for a baby.

The reference to the feeding trough ('manger' sounds way too cosy for the reality of it) is not just a detail in this story of the shepherds on Christmas night. It is **the** story. This is the 'sign', and that word is hugely significant in the Gospels. John's Gospel uses it to describe the way in which the miracles of Jesus showed that he was the Son of God. The trough is important! It tells us who Jesus is - not a superstar, not a conquering king, not a starry visitor from another planet, but one of us. Divine, yes - but born human, sucking his thumb in a feeding trough.

On the Feast of Stephen - *by David Winter*

Everyone knows that it was on the feast of Stephen that 'good king Wenceslas looked out'. After all, it's in a Christmas carol - but why? There's nothing about Christmas in it: a splendid young page who rustled up some flesh, wine and logs, an old man out in the snow ('deep and crisp and even') and a kindly monarch. But Christmas?

The clue is in 'the feast of Stephen', which falls on 26th December, or 'Boxing Day', as we know it. That, too, has nothing to do with Christmas, beyond the fact that in the past people put a contribution in tradesmen's boxes as a kind of Christmas present for their services during the year.

The Stephen whose feast day falls on the day after Christmas was the first Christian martyr. (You can read his story in the book of Acts). He was a member of the church in Jerusalem in its very early days, and found himself involved with six others in administering the allocation of food to those in need. The apostles, who were the leaders of the church, felt that it wasn't appropriate for them to abandon preaching and 'serve tables', so they selected these seven to do the job for them. Stephen, however, quickly revealed hidden gifts as an eloquent spokesman for the Christian cause.

The Temple authorities, who had already had trouble with the apostles, were soon alerted to this new and hitherto unknown evangelist. They decided to make an example of him, thus firing a warning shot, as it were, across the bows of the apostles themselves. So they arrested Stephen and accused him of speaking against the two central elements of their religion - the 'holy place' (the Temple) and 'the customs Moses handed down to us' (the Law). It's always dangerous to criticize a monument or a custom!

Given the right to defend himself, Stephen instead launched into an eloquent and at times biting account of Jewish history, culminating in the accusation that they had committed the worst possible sin by killing the Messiah. Inflamed by his words, his hearers abandoned any pretence of legal impartiality, rushing towards him and dragging him out of the city to a place where they began to stone him to death. Stephen, the rank and file Christian, died under a hail of rocks for claiming that Mary's Son was the promised Messiah.

That, I suspect, is the reason why the first martyr is honoured on the day after we celebrate the birth of the Saviour. It's a bit like the myrrh in the gifts of the Wise Men - a reminder, as we celebrate, that the bitter shadow of a cross is never far away from this story.

As Advent begins, Prebendary Richard Bewes considers the coming of the Christ.

We can spread it out before the Lord

*'The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light'
(Isaiah 9:2)*

'Melt-down' is an over-used cliché today, much resorted to by journalists – but Isaiah's word '*darkness*' is better, when describing a situation in which no one is certain what to do, nor where any future hope can be found.

Fascinatingly the prophet Isaiah – in foretelling the coming light of Christ into the world – was writing in what could be called *the tense of the prophetic past*. So certain was his vision, that he wrote of God's blessings in the future as events that had already happened. Other prophets did the same, as they cast themselves forward in time, seemingly to look backwards on the sure actions of God in coming days.

And yet in 733 BC, Isaiah's own people were facing the biggest menace they had ever known. Assyria, boasting the world's first professional standing army, was massively armed; unprincipled, heathen and contemptuous of every god and religion in sight. But Judah's young king Hezekiah, faced by a threatening letter from Assyria's king Sennacherib, was to find encouragement from Isaiah. Prayerfully taking the letter into the temple, he 'spread it out before the

Lord' (2 Kings 19: 14). Isaiah for his part sent a message of godly defiance to Sennacherib. Unexpectedly there then took place the God-given collapse of the hostile army, and Sennacherib's withdrawal.

Believers today can learn from Hezekiah. Whatever happened to the epic of the Reformation? To the writing of Bunyan, the preaching of Spurgeon, the great awakenings under Wesley and Whitefield? What became of the triumph of the Sunday Schools, the rock face of marriage, the hold that the Christian Sunday once had upon our islands? What of the persecution of Christ's disciples in many countries today? How to react when faced by some banner headline of violence, secularism or aggressive atheism?

Answer: Take it and spread it out before the Lord – with the message of the prophets and apostles at your side. For tomorrow has always belonged to them, never to the military dictators, terrorists or political opportunists.

We will then, like Hezekiah, gain a fresh confidence from the light of Jesus' Advent among us. Aware of events on every continent we will even be surprised to learn that Christ's is the fastest-growing family of belief in the world. Such a Light can never be put out. Augustine declared, as long as sixteen centuries ago –

"This Child of Bethlehem fills the world"

GOD IN THE ARTS

The Rev Michael Burgess surveys works of sacred art that can be found in various museums...you can see the image by googling the title of the painting and the artist.

‘He gave us eyes to see them’: Madonna and Child from Donatello’s workshop

Each month during this year we have visited art galleries and museums in England that are often overlooked by the tourist trail, but which contain treasures that can inspire and deepen our Christian faith. Our final visit in this series is to a gracious, elegant Georgian villa rejoicing in the odd name of the Ranger’s House. It is outside the western wall of Greenwich Park in London and is home to the Wernher collection of art.

Julius Wernher was a diamond magnate who died in 1912, and in his lifetime he amassed an amazing array of 700 works that make up this collection. There are paintings by Joshua Reynolds and Romney, Renaissance jewellery, and a marble statue by Bergonzoli, ‘The Love of Angels.’

But this month we focus on another love – the love of a mother and child by the workshop of Donatello. When I was a student I visited Florence for the first time, and I can always remember the

impact of entering the Bargello and being greeted by the sculptures of Donatello. It was a special moment of revelation to be able to look around and wonder at the glorious works of this sculptor filling the second floor of the castle.

By contrast the Madonna and Child in the Ranger’s House is a miniature, a bronze plaque just 4 inches square. Our Lady is depicted in classical profile with flowing robes and wavy hair, but the mood is one of tenderness as she cradles the Christ-Child. She holds his left hand in hers, while he looks down at something that has caught his attention. Perhaps it is a noise at the stable door or the sound of an animal in the Bethlehem night. Perhaps it is St Joseph getting everything ready for the Holy Family to leave. We don’t know, but it is another special moment of revelation caught in this little plaque. It may not be by Donatello himself, but we sense the master overseeing the creation of this work.

At Christmas we ponder the mystery of infinity caught in a little space, the cradle at Bethlehem, just as the mystery of love, maternal and divine, is caught in the little space of this plaque. Margaret Rizza’s carol, ‘Jesus is our joy’ captures the mood of wonder, joy and hope as we open the stable door to see the love of a mother

and her new-born baby expressed here and at the heart of the Christmas gospel:

*'Lovely in your littleness,
longing for our lowliness,
searching for our meekness.....*

*Held in Mary's tenderness,
tiny hands are raised to bless,
touching us with God's caress.*

*Joy then in God's graciousness,
peace comes with gentleness,
filling hearts with gladness.'*



Pilgrim – new discipleship course for all

A new Christian discipleship course for church congregations and groups of all traditions has just been published - the first time ever that a national course has been commissioned by the House of Bishops of the C of E.

Aiming to offer “participation, not persuasion”, *Pilgrim: A Course for the Christian Journey* is a part of the Church of England’s focus on spiritual and numerical growth.

The core authors are the Bishops of Chelmsford, Sheffield and Stockport, (Stephen Cottrell, Steven Croft, Robert Atwell) and Dr Paula Gooder, writer and lecturer in New Testament studies. Assuming little or no knowledge of the Christian faith, *Pilgrim* can be used at any point on the journey of discipleship and by every tradition in the CofE. The course is personally endorsed by both archbishops.

The Bishop of Chelmsford, Stephen Cottrell, explains: “For most people today becoming a Christian is like a journey. We therefore need resources that will help turn fellow travellers and interested enquirers into pilgrims. This is what *Pilgrim* sets out to do. Like other courses it deals with the basics of the Christian faith.

“Unlike other courses, it includes discipleship and is deeply rooted in a long tradition of catechesis and nurture. Drawing on a rich spiritual heritage, *Pilgrim* encourages you to think and pray; to be an apostle as well as a disciple. We hope that it is a refreshing blend of old and new which will enable many more parishes to develop a ministry of evangelism and nurture.”

Pilgrim is published by Church House Publishing. Details:

www.pilgrimcourse.org/

GOD IN MUSIC

The Rev Michael Burgess continues his series looking at great works of music, this year based on various saints of the church.

‘In sweet music is such art’:

BENJAMIN BRITTEN’S ‘ST NICHOLAS’

This year is the 100th anniversary of the birth of the composer, Benjamin Britten, and this month sees the feast of St Nicholas on 6 December. Nicholas was a 4th century bishop of Myra, the origin of our Santa Claus, but also the patron saints of Greece, Russia, sailors, and of course children. Like all the saints, Nicholas’ life gave rise to some extraordinary legends and fables – as a child we are told he prayed for two hours at his first bath, and he refused his mother’s milk on Fridays and fast days. Eric Crozier was invited by Britten to study this life in all its facets to prepare the libretto for a cantata commissioned of the composer by Lancing College for its centenary celebrations in 1948.

The result was ‘St Nicholas’ for tenor, boy soloists, choir, strings, piano duet and percussion. Britten wanted to provide music for the young of all abilities – as a result it is only the tenor and percussionist who need to be professionals. The other parts can be sung and played by amateurs. In an interview in the

1960s Britten praised ‘the very fresh and unrestrained quality of music produced by amateurs’ and that spirit is at the heart of this cantata.

‘Across the bridge of sixteen hundred years’ as the choir sings, we are treated to a mixture of waltz and march, storms at sea and alleluias to depict the saint’s life from birth to bishopric, from prison to piety, from Palestine to the saving of three pickled boys. Britten captures the colour and drama of this life in a way that Paul Spicer has likened to a Harry Potter story: there is the magic of the miracles, the drama of the storm, imprisonment, and even the wand of the bishop’s crozier. That may be an extreme comparison, but the cantata shows how children and young people inspired Britten to compose works like ‘St Nicholas’ that can grip the heart and even move some to tears. No more so in this work than when the audience join in two hymns, ‘All people that on earth do dwell’ and ‘God moves in a mysterious way.’

In another work Britten quotes a line by W B Yeats, ‘The ceremony of innocence is drowned.’ The innocence of the young we know only too well in our day is a fragile gift, easily abused and destroyed. St Nicholas shines out here in this month of Christmas as the patron

saint of the young, who expressed in his life and miracles that love of our Lord which welcomed children into the divine fold of comfort and safety. The cantata's final hymn 'God moves in a mysterious way' invites us to rejoice in the mystery of grace and

creativity that moves in the lives of composers like Britten. A grace and creativity that moves also in the lives of the holy ones of God like St Nicholas, and that moves in the wonder and innocence of a babe born in a stable.

CHRISTMAS: THE STORY OF THE CHRISTINGLE

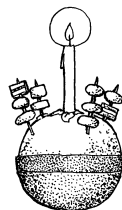
The word 'Christingle' actually means 'Christ Light', and celebrates the light of Jesus coming into the world. Stories of how the Christingle began look back to the Moravian Church, which is found in the Czech Republic. The Moravians have held Christingle services for more than 200 years, and according to them, this is how the first Christingle might have been made:

Many years ago the children in a village were asked to bring a Christmas gift to put beside the crib in the church. One family was very poor, and had no money for gifts, but the three children were still determined to take something. The only nice thing they had was an orange, so they decided to give the Christ-child that. But then they discovered the top was going green, so the eldest cut it out, and put a candle in the hole. To add some colour, one of the girls took a red ribbon from her hair and tied it around the middle of the orange. It was hard to make the ribbon stay still, so they fastened it in place with toothpicks. The toothpicks looked a bit bare, so the youngest child added some raisins to them.

The children took their decorated orange lantern to the church for the Christmas Mass. The other children sneered at their meagre gift, but the priest seized upon it with joy. He held it up as an example of the true understanding of the meaning of Christmas, for the following reasons: the orange is round, like the world; the candle gives us light in the dark, like the love of God; the red ribbon goes round the 'world', as a symbol of Christ's blood, given for everyone; the four sticks point in all directions, and symbolise that God is over all: North, South, East and West; and the fruit and nuts remind us of God's blessings.

The Children's Society first introduced the Christingle Service to The Church of England in 1968, and it has since become a popular event in the church calendar. This candlelit celebration is an ideal way to share the key messages of the Christian faith, while helping to raise vital funds to help vulnerable children across the country. Visit:

www.childrenssociety.org.uk



St Nicholas – patron saint of children

Father Christmas seems to be as old as Europe. Once he was Woden, lashing his reindeer through the darkness of northern midwinter. Then he encountered the Church, and She transformed him into a saint, the much-loved Nicholas, Bishop of Myra (in south-west Turkey) in the fourth century. St Nicholas became the patron saint of children, and was given 6 December as his day.

Since the 6th century St Nicholas has been venerated in both East and West, though virtually nothing is known of his life. Some believe he may have been one of the fathers at the Council of Nicea (325), imprisoned during the Emperor Diocletian's persecution.

According to legend, Nicholas was an extremely generous man. He revived three schoolboys murdered by an innkeeper in a tub of pickles. He rescued three young women from prostitution by giving their poverty-stricken father three bags of gold. (Hence the use of three gold balls as the pawnbroker's signs.)

Over the centuries many, including children, sailors, unmarried girls, pawnbrokers and moneylenders have claimed him as their patron.

Perhaps it was on account of St Nicholas' generosity that in recent centuries children began to write little notes sometime before 6th December, to tell him about the toys they specially wanted. These notes were then left on the windowsill at night - or else on a ledge in the chimney.

But St Nicholas' Day chanced to lie in the magnetic field of a much more potent festival.... and after awhile his activities were moved towards Christmas. Then in Bavaria the children still left their notes on the windowsill, but they addressed them to Liebes Christkind - Krishkinkle as they knew him - and the saint's part in the matter was simply to deliver the letters in heaven.

The most popular result of the cult of St Nicholas has been the institution of Santa Claus. He is based on Nicholas' patronage of children and the custom in the Low Countries of giving presents on his feast. Santa Claus has reached his zenith in America, where the Dutch Protestants of New Amsterdam (New York) united to it Nordic folklore legends of a magician who both punished naughty children and rewarded good ones with presents.



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

November
solution



December
Sudoku



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

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And now for something completely different! Did you know that on 21st December the crossword puzzle will be 100 years old? Nigel Beeton has written a poem with some crossword clues within it! Nigel admits: "Trying to get crossword clues to rhyme and scan was a bit of a challenge! I fear that the number of letters in brackets interrupts the flow a bit, but it's only a bit of fun." (So you'll find clues in verses 3 & 5 and the answers in verses 4 and 6 – have fun!)

CROSSWORD FUN

A cryptic crossword brings great fun
(If you've got a twisted mind)
With gems like anagrams and puns
And hidden clues to find.

For a hundred years we have been
clued
For words across and down
It's wondrous how the setters
brewed
Such clues to make us frown!

Lots of lucre, but little luck? (5,7)
For nothing squared's a cube (3)
Japanese once flew a duck! (4)
Men used to wear this tube. (4)

A 'small fortune' should come to
you
An 'oxo' cube you know;
A 'Zero' was a plane they flew,
And 'hose' – worn long ago.

You may have seen a cake walk
If you had plenty (9) at the time
Or heard within a science talk
A line concerning lime (6)

A cake walk, or 'a bun dance'?
'Alkali' you'll not have missed –
Are you, dear friend, by any chance
A cruciverbalist?

By Nigel Beeton

SERVICES & ROTAS FOR DECEMBER 2013

<u>ST. ANNE'S, BEELEY</u>			<u>FLOWERS</u>
1	9.30am	Holy Communion	Advent - no flowers
8	9.30am	Holy Communion	" "
15	9.30am	Holy Communion	" "
22	9.30am	Holy Communion	" "
24	6pm	Service of Nine Lessons & Carols	Christmas Decorations
25	9.30am	Holy Communion for Christmas Day	(Mrs Mather) "
29	9.30am	Holy Communion	
<u>ST. PETER'S, EDENSOR</u>			<u>SIDESMEN</u>
1	10.45am	Holy Communion	J Bowns/M Pindar
	6pm	Advent Service of Light	
8	10.45am	Holy Communion	Mrs Thomas/S Liddicot
15	10.45am	Matins	Mr & Mrs Gordon
18	7pm	Service of Lessons & Carols	To be arranged
19	2pm	Pilsley CofE School Carol Service	
22	10.45am	Holy Communion	Jean Clarke & Mrs Jackson
24	11.30pm	Midnight Mass	To be arranged
25	10.45am	Holy Communion for Christmas Day	To be arranged
29	10.45am	Holy Communion	Mr & Mrs Machin
<u>COFFEE</u>		<u>CLEANING</u>	<u>FLOWERS</u>
1	M Douglas/Diana Maskery	Mr & Mrs Wardle	Advent - no flowers
8	Mr & Mrs Carter	Mr & Mrs Carter	" "
15	Clive & Joy Thrower	Mrs Boyd/Mrs Robinson	" "
22	Mr & Mrs Bosett	Mr & Mrs Nelson	Christmas Decorations*
29	Mr & Mrs Sherwood	Judy & Freddie Harding	" "
*We will be decorating the church and Christmas tree on Tuesday 17 th from 10.30am. You are very welcome to come along and help.			
<u>READINGS</u>		<u>ST. PETER'S</u>	<u>ST. ANNE'S & SUNDAY SCHOOL</u>
1	Isaiah 2: 1 - 5 Matthew 24: 36 - 44	Gloria Sherwood <i>First Sunday of Advent</i>	Sarah Porter S.S. Sarah Porter
8	Isaiah 11: 1 - 10 Matthew 3: 1 - 12	Molly Marshall <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	Rupert Turner/Lynda Hinxman-Allegri S.S. Fiona Swain
15	Isaiah 35: 1 - 10 Matthew 11: 2 - 11	Michael Douglas <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>	Claire Cadogan S.S. Sarah Porter
22	Isaiah 7: 10 - 16 Matthew 1: 18 - 25	Diana Walters <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	Judith Fraser-Martin <i>No Sunday School</i>
24	Isaiah 9: 2 - 7 Luke 2: 1 - 14	Reader to be arranged <i>Midnight Mass at Edensor</i>	
25	Isaiah 52: 7 - 10 John 1: 1 - 14	Reader to be arranged <i>Christmas Day</i>	Reader to be arranged
29	Isaiah 63: 7 - 9 Matthew 2: 13 - 18	Margaret Thomas <i>First Sunday of Christmas</i>	Fiona Swain <i>No Sunday School</i>