



Holy
Trinity
WATERHEAD

**Suggested
donation
50p**

December 2021

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Services at Holy Trinity Church

Sunday 11:00 am Parish Worship

Wednesday 7:00 pm Family Communion

Baptisms and marriages by arrangement with the Vicar.

Please submit items for the January 2022 magazine by 15 December.

You can e-mail files to paulmonk111@gmail.com

People at Holy Trinity Church

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Gift-aid Secretary	Vicky Heaton	(07906) 077 058
Parish Hall Manager	Naomi Parkes	(07907) 410 606
Sunday School	Yolanda Ryder	
Rainbows	Sarah Wilson and Natalie Morris	
Brownies	Val Lees and Moira Belcher	
Guides	Karen and Lisa Cannon	
Beavers and Cubs	Lee Thompson	(07907) 907 354
Scouts	Mark Dickinson	(07976) 666 512

Letter

from the Vicar

Many people treat the Christmas story as an annual event to accompany the Christmas TV, mince pies and carols. Seen this way, the Christmas story becomes an end in itself, to be forgotten as soon as January appears.

Many people treat Easter as another stand-alone story. Jesus' atoning sacrifice becomes a different seasonal item to accompany the bunnies, eggs and chocolate. It is not. Indeed, it's more than God's supreme illustration of his love for us

The underlying problem is the way we live: we are always too busy. With preparation and publicising; visiting and services; doing and being; and the inevitable form-filing that accompany all aspects of life, we become so busy that we concentrate on the small details but blot out the bigger picture.

So, before we start the appalling rush and expense of Christmas, let's re-remember the bigger picture. Christianity, when authentic and true to itself, always focuses our attention on the way God makes himself accessible to ordinary people like us. In this light, the bigger picture becomes very simple: Jesus came to earth as a human being in order that we could see what God is truly like. Jesus went to the cross to remove our sins completely and utterly, to clean us from the sins that separate us from God and his love. This way, we can recognise God when the blinds between us and him come down.

Enjoy the beauty of Christmas. Enjoy the tinsel and the glitter. Enjoy the presents and the fun. Enjoy the sight of wonder in children's eyes. But also try to remember that we celebrate the birth of a baby thousands of years ago because he enables us to come close to God. Now that is a present worth celebrating!

Wishing you all a joyful and peaceful time of great love this Advent and Christmas:

PAUL

2021 dates for your diary

- Saturday 4 December **Councillors' Surgery** at St Barnabas. All are welcome.
- Saturday 11 December Decorating the Church for Christmas from 10:00 am. Please bring some greenery please if you can come along.
- Sunday 12 December 6:00 pm: **Annual Carol Service** in St Barnabas.
- Weds 15 December 7:00 pm: **Annual Carol Service** at Waterhead Church, followed by hot drinks and mince pies, and the raffle prize draw.
- Sunday 19 December Approx. 12:00 pm **Christmas faith lunch** after the service. We will serve mulled wine as well as tea and coffee. Please join us whether you are able to bring food or not; all will be welcome.
- Friday 24 December 4:00 pm: **Christingle Service** at Waterhead Church.
- Friday 24 December 11:30 pm: **Midnight Mass** service at Waterhead Church.
- Saturday 25 December 9:30 am; **Christmas Day service** in St Barnabas Church.
- Sunday 2 January 11:00 am: **Annual Covenant service** which occurs during the liturgy of the first Sunday of the year.



It was hot in the desert so the Magi put the top down on their camels.

Bible readings for December

Sunday 29 November

Advent Sunday

First: Isaiah 64:1-9
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Gospel: Mark 13:24-end

Sunday 13 December

Third Sunday of Advent

First: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-end
Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Thursday 24 December

Christmas Eve

First: Isaiah 52:7-10
Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-4
Gospel: John 1:1-14

Sunday 27 December

First Sunday of Christmas

First: Exodus 33:7-11a
Epistle: 1 John 1
Gospel: John 21:19b-end

Sunday 6 December

Second Sunday of Advent

First: Isaiah 40:1-11
Epistle: 2 Peter 3:8-15a
Gospel: Mark 1:1-8

Sunday 20 December

Fourth Sunday of Advent

First: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 19-26
Epistle: Romans 16:25-end
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Friday 25 December

Christmas Day

First: Isaiah 9:2-7
Epistle: Titus 2:1-14
Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

Sunday 3 January

Epiphany

First: Isaiah 60:1-6
Epistle: Ephesians 3:1-12
Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Path

For a path to be a path, you have to be able to see it, or at least catch glimpses of it, every so often. And for that to happen, somebody needs to have walked it ahead of you. We may not be able to see them, but here and there they have left a sign: a shoe or a boot abandoned in the muck: something they have dropped, a pile of stones, a depression in the grass, a way marker inscribed with an arrow pointing the way—or simply the holiness of their lives.

James Koester

Society of Saint John the Evangelist

We all love counting down to Christmas: Advent calendars, Jesse trees, even the increasingly popular misconception, beloved of social-media managers, that the 'twelve days of Christmas' refers to a countdown of the days *before* Christmas (rather than the days after). We become obsessed with marking time during Advent, which is the darkest part of the darkest season of the year. No wonder we celebrate with light.

In the medieval Church, monks and nuns attended seven services a day. To stop them becoming repetitious, each had separate sentences and responses in just the same way that today we have a Lectionary that tells us which Bible readings to use in church each Sunday. They said different sentences and responses in each type of service and in different seasons of the year. They are called 'antiphons'—literally, the 'sounds before' a verse or sentence. In the same way, we say the antiphon, 'Glory to you O Lord' when the Gospel passage is announced but before the actual words of scripture are read aloud.

Each of the last seven days of Advent has a different antiphon said (or sung) at the beginning and at the end of the Magnificat during the service of Evening Prayer. By ancient tradition, they are often called 'The O Antiphons' (or the 'great Os'). They get this name because the title of each of them begins with the particle 'O'.

Each antiphon gives a different name of Christ, and describe his attributes as mentioned in Scripture. They start on 17 December and progress through to 22 December. In order, they are,

- O Sapientia** (*O Wisdom*) from the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1
- O Adonai** (*O Lord*) from 'as king he shall reign wisely' in Jeremiah 23
- O Radix Jesse** (*O Root of Jesse*) from 'he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah' in Luke 1
- O Clavis David** (*O Key of David*) from 'the Lord will give him the throne of his father David' from Luke 1
- O Oriens** (*O Dayspring*) from 'the Lord, your God, is in your midst' in Zephaniah 3

O Rex Gentium (*O King of the Nations*) from 'he has come to the help of his servant Israel' in Luke 1

O Emmanuel (*O King of the Nations*) from 'and suddenly there will come to the temple the Lord whom you seek' in Malachi 3

O Morning Star from 'the dawn from on high shall break upon us' in Luke 1

And we've all sung them (possibly without knowing it) in the hymn *O come, O come, Emmanuel* which paraphrases them in a versified form.

The Great Os have been part of our liturgical tradition since the very early days of the Church. Their importance is twofold. First, each is a title for the coming Messiah and, second, each refers to the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the coming of the Messiah.

The antiphons relay a magnificent theology that employs ancient images from the Bible: they draw their power from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as a fulfilment not only of Old Testament hopes, but of present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative 'Come!' symbolises the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.

Looked at this way, the O Antiphons become more than a simple countdown to Christmas. Most of us *are* impatient for Christmas to come so, responding to any sense of irritation or exasperation, they encourage us to explore the source of our impatience and invite us to understand the nature of our own desire. Part of the O Antiphons' appeal concerns the way they help express an urgent longing. Although they are clearly addressed to Jesus, these titles also speak of the kind of things all of us want but rarely (or ever) find in this world: perfect wisdom, peace, justice, true freedom, light in the darkness, companionship which will never fail us. Indeed, the ideas touch a powerful chord whether we believe these desires can be fulfilled by the promises of Advent or not.

Further reading

- <https://www.jesuit.org.uk/articles/o-antiphons-advent>
- <https://aclerkofoxford.blogspot.com/2015/12/the-anglo-saxon-o-antiphons-o-jerusalem.html>
- <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/prayers-and-devotions/prayers/the-o-antiphons-of-advent>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Antiphons

The great 'o's

Holy
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Carol Service
Wednesday 15 December
at 7:00 pm

holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Holy
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*Midnight
Mass*
Christmas Eve

Service starts at 11:30 pm
All are welcome

Holy
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WATERHEAD

**Christingle
Service**

Christmas Eve at 4:00 pm

All are welcome
holytrinitywaterhead.co.uk

Barnabas
CLARKSFIELD

Christmas Day
Celebration and Eucharist
Service starts at 9:30 am: all are welcome

medlockhead.co.uk

I'm dreaming of a green Christmas



It's December—the season of twinkling lights, wrapping up warm, and eating your own body weight in chocolate. But it's also the time of year when our pointless plastic footprints go through the roof. Even when we manage to avoid buying plastic presents, shops bombard us with plastic at every turn—satsumas in plastic nets, shiny wrapping paper and a lot of glitter. It's therefore time to

find out how to reduce plastic during the festive season.

We are in a climate emergency and single-use plastic packaging is made from precious natural resources. It's then manipulated into packaging that we don't need. So this festive season let's make sure to get creative and avoid excess plastic ending up in our air, water, food and environment.

Here are some ideas showing how to reduce plastic use and have fun this Christmas.

1. Get creative with your wrapping

Shiny wrapping paper looks great, but the shininess also makes it impossible to recycle. Instead, why not try plain brown paper jazzed up with fabric ribbon? Or, even better, seek out re-usable options like fabric wraps or gift boxes and bags that can be used again next year. Or save paper from pressies you open to wrap other people's gifts in.

2. Deck the halls

I have always loved foil lametta and leaving fake snow for reindeer, but that's before I realised the impact it has on people, wildlife and the planet. Unfortunately, it all turns into microplastics that enter the food chain. But luckily there are lots of options to deck the halls without hurting the planet. How about making your own decorations with loved ones? That could be making paper chains and ornaments from old cards and wrapping paper or making your own wreath.

3. Ditch the plastic fruit and veg

Supporting your local markets, greengrocers or farm shops can be a great way to reduce your plastic footprint and support local businesses. If you shop at supermarkets, go for the loose fruit and veg—this can also really help to reduce food waste as you can buy what you need.

4. Choose plastic-free presents

Instead of buying gifts filled with plastic, treat your friends and family with presents which create as little waste as possible.

7. Tone down the glitter

Popular though it is, glitter is not good news for the environment. It's effectively tiny pieces of plastic, which can end up being washed down the sink. These eventually end up in our rivers and oceans. While glitter is definitely not one of the major causes of plastic pollution, it's still plastic going into the ocean. Avoid glittery make-up and cards and stick to sparkle that won't go down the plughole.

9. Grab some reusable shopping bags

It's become clear that bags for life aren't working as we wanted them to: the average household is buying 54 every year. We know it's something extra to remember, but it really makes a huge difference. So in whatever ways you can, remember to take reusable shopping bags this shopping season.

From <https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/9-ways-reduce-plastic-use-christmas/>



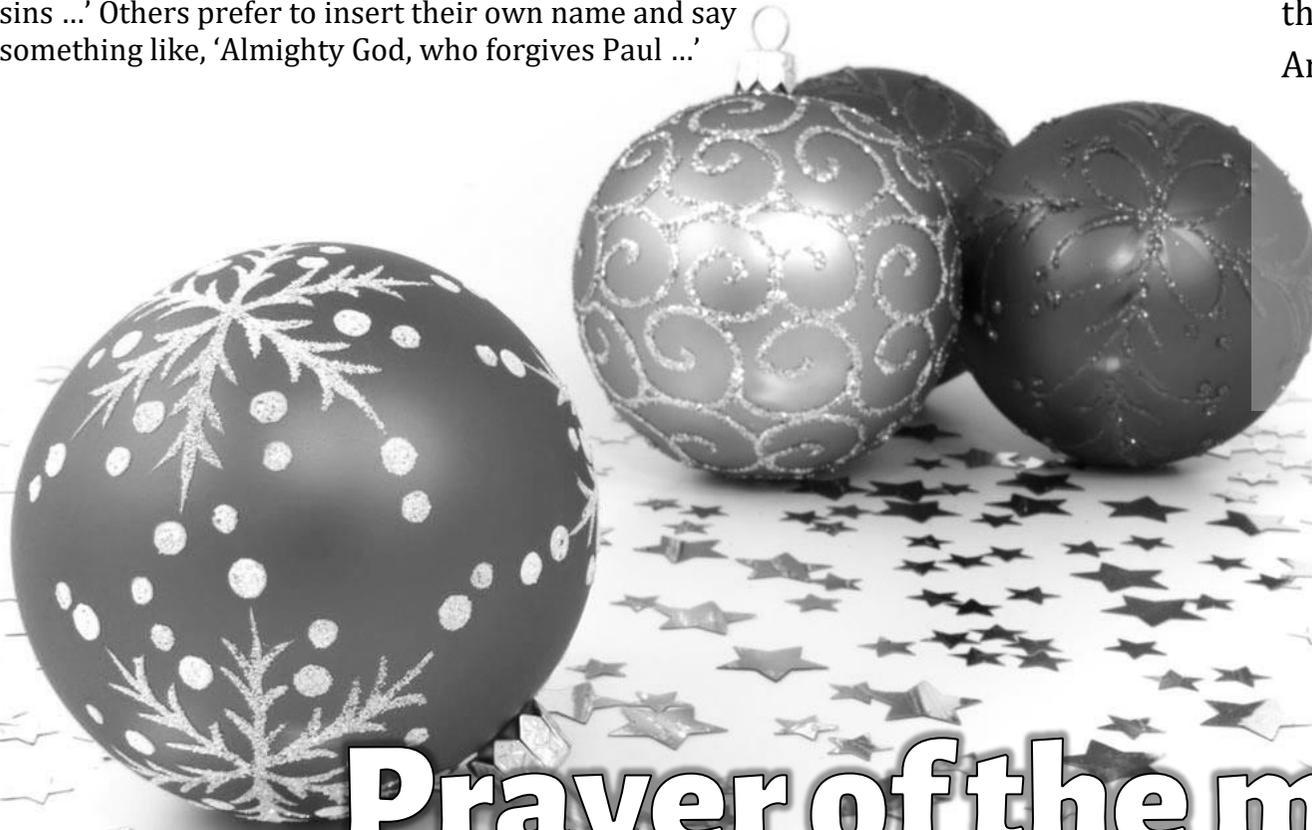
The Bible insists that God is so loving He yearns to forgive us. For example, St John in his first letter says, 'If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9).

That's why a priest, who acts as a representative of the Church, says this prayer of absolution near the start of most Church services. It may be the priest who speaks but the forgiveness actually comes from God.

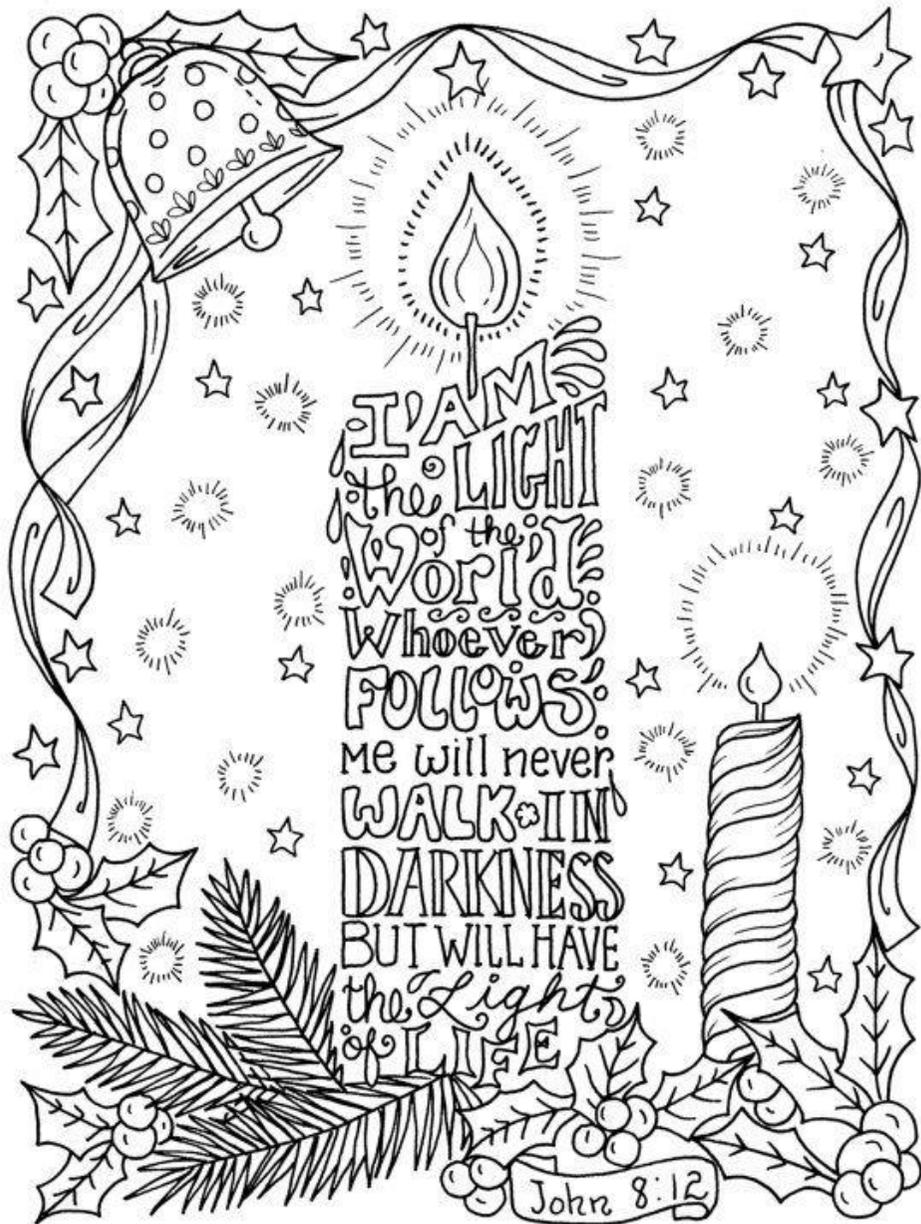
Some people find it useful to pray the prayer of absolution for themselves. They may say it silently or speak out loud saying, for example, 'Almighty God, who forgives *me* because *I* truly repent, have mercy on *me*, pardon and deliver *me* from all my sins ...' Others prefer to insert their own name and say something like, 'Almighty God, who forgives Paul ...'

Prayer of absolution

Almighty God,
who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all
goodness,
and keep you in life eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Prayer of the month



Colour this page

Christmas wordsearch

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

Advent, Alleluia, Angelic, Angels, Announcement, Astrologers, Babe, Baby, Bethlehem, Birth, Camel, Ceremonies, Christ child, Creche, Donkey, Immanuel, Epiphany, Flocks, Frankincense, Gifts, Gloria, Gold, Goodwill, Holy, Incarnation, Inn, Jerusalem, Jesus, Joseph, Lord, Magi, Manger, Mary, Miracle, Myrrh, Nativity, Pageant, Prince of Peace, Proclamation, Prophecy, Sacred, Saviour, Shepherds, Stable, Star, Wise men

We all love the thrill, sights, smells, and sounds of Christmas. But have you ever wondered where the actual word 'Christmas' comes from?

'Christmas' is a medieval contraction of the two words 'Christ' and 'Mass'—the service of Holy Communion used to celebrate and give thanks for the birth of Jesus.

During the Christmas service, we remember the way God intervened in human history. This idea is brought out perhaps most clearly in a service of nine lessons and carols when, to use the traditional words from its prayer of introduction, we 'hear afresh the Holy Scriptures and the story of the loving purposes of God which led to our glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child.'

The joy and gifts of Christmas are always wonderful but we can make the season bigger and better by consciously bringing to mind the reason for the season. That way, mere Christmas grows into Christ-mass.

May the Lord bless you as we live, celebrate and explore 'the loving purposes of God'!



Celebrating Christ-mass

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

It's almost 'The Most Wonderful Time of the Year' again! One of my favourite seasons in the church. We wear white or gold vestments and the altar is covered with a white frontal—signs of celebration and joy. I'm hoping and praying that this year will be a time of celebration and joy for everyone, after the difficult times we have all been living through over the past year and a half.

Just as exciting though is that next year, 2022, is the 150th anniversary of St Thomas Church being here in the community at Moorside and Sholver, and open for worship. This is a wonderful opportunity for us all to give thanks for the church and its mission, and to raise the profile of the church even higher for the local and wider community. We have even modified our logo, see above.

This is a brilliant chance to show our friends and neighbours that the Church plays an important part in our lives, and in the lives of many other people. So many people I meet have a connection to St Thomas; memories of the school perhaps, or time spent singing in the choir or past vicars. During the year it would be great to collect and share these memories. Could you help by sharing your recollections? Do you have objects or artefacts that are part of the history of the church? Could we display them in church?

Please keep an eye out for information about events that will be happening.

So, first of all, I wish you all a joyful Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Secondly, tell people about the 150th anniversary. Spread the good news of the Gospel and the Church!

Yours in Christ

Revd Denise



Incarnation

He's grown, that baby.
Not that most people have noticed.
He still looks the same,
lying there in the straw, with
animals and shepherds looking on.
He's safe there, locked in that moment
where time met Eternity.

Reality of course is different,
he grew up, astonished people with his
insight, disturbed them into
new maturity.

Some found him
much too difficult to cope with,
nailed him down to fit
their narrow minds.

We are more subtle,
keep him helpless,
refuse to let him be the Man he is,
adore him as the Christmas baby
eternally unable to grow up
until we set him free.

By all means let us pause there
at the stable, and
marvel at the miracle of birth.
But we'll never get to know
God with us, until we learn

to find him at the Inn,
a fellow guest who shares the joy and sorrow,
the Host who is the life we celebrate.

He's grown, that Baby.

Ann Lewin



A modern nativity set made in a minimalist artistic style

This level of understatement is only matched by an omniscient, omnipotent God choosing to becoming a human baby.

Congratulations!

Huge congratulations to Whitley Griffith on the birth of Vinnie on Friday 29 October. Mum and baby are doing well.

From the Parish Registers

Holy Baptism

Sunday 7 November

Benjamin Buckley

Sunday 21 November

Lillia and Tommy Byrne

Sunday 28 November

Amelia and Robert Lizaro

Did you know?

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. ... The Word became flesh and lived among us. (John 1:1-3, 14)

For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, your all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed. (Wisdom 18:14-15)

The ancient Israelites thought of God as both transcendent (so vastly distant) but also immanent and therefore approachable, so very close. His transcendence conveyed His utter purity and holiness while his immanence was a way of demonstrating His desire to operate in the lives of us, His children, in works of comfort, love, and miracle.

God's transcendence came to outweigh His immanence. As a direct result, there arose a wide array of devices to enable His people to refer to Him. They employed indirect and roundabout ways of referring to Him. For example, they invented metaphors like shepherd, rock, horn, bridegroom—the list is too extensive to catalogue.

The Hebrew spoken by the Chosen People was ideally suited to poetry and allusion. It was therefore possibly inevitable that they developed more abstract ways of talking about God, so the Bible brims with phrases like 'The Name [of God]' because it was easier to talk about 'The Name' than talk directly about God. Think of the Lord's Prayer when it says, 'Holy is your *Name*'. Other abstract metaphors include 'the Face [of God]', the Glory [of God]', 'The Wisdom [of God]', 'The Word [of God]', and so on. The list is again long.

Then something very strange happened. These attributes shifted to become almost like beings in their own right. It was the genius of St John to suggest that Jesus was not simply an incarnation of God the Almighty but also the coming to birth of all His different attributes.

Jesus is therefore not merely an incarnation of God but embodies the word of God made flesh, the glory of God, ...

It's a way of saying that he contains all the positive attributes of God: power, glory, etc. By saying Jesus is the Word of God, it means he has creative power, which reflects Genesis 1 where God speaks and creation occurs.

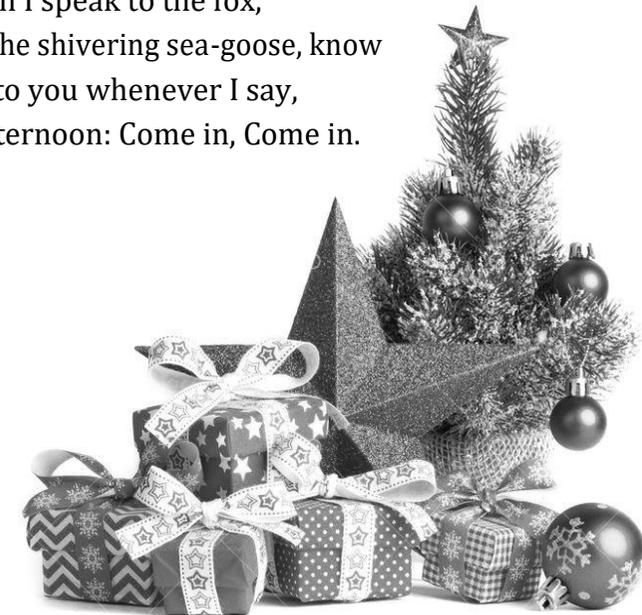


Making the house ready

A poem for Advent

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice, it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances but it is the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-geese, know
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

Mary Oliver



Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda y Ahumada was born in 1515 in Ávila, Spain. Her mother brought her up as a dedicated Christian but died when Teresa was eleven years old. In her grief, Teresa embraced a deeper devotion to the Virgin Mary and called her 'spiritual mother'.

Teresa was sent to the Augustinian nuns' school at Ávila. After completing her education, she initially resisted the idea of a religious vocation but relented after a stay with her uncle. In 1536, aged 20 or 21 and against her father's will, she entered the local easy-going Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation in Ávila.

The convent at Ávila was known for its leniency, for example, permitting relationships with those outside the convent and allowing worldly possessions within. Teresa enjoyed this lax life and her faith waned. A serious, prolonged, illness—maybe malaria—forced her to spend three years in relative quiet. She returned to the convent on recovering and resumed what was, in retrospect, 'a half-hearted spirituality'.

Then, one day while walking down a hallway in the convent, her glance fell on a statue of the wounded Christ and the vision of his love 'pierced her heart'. She later described the way Jesus gently but powerfully began to break down her defences and reveal to her the cause of her spiritual exhaustion: her dalliance with the delights of sin.

Teresa immediately broke with her past and underwent a final conversion and began to talk of profound mystical experiences. For the rest of her life, she gave herself completely to her spiritual growth and the renewal of the Carmelite monasteries.

Teresa devoted much of the rest of her life to travelling around Spain setting up new convents based on the ancient monastic traditions. She spent days on end travelling the countryside establishing reformed Carmelite convents. She called them 'discalced' (meaning 'unshod') that is, more simple. She convinced John of the Cross to join her in this work. Her success as an administrator and reformer (she founded 14 monasteries) was due in part to her natural leadership gifts and tenacity.

Her health suffered in later years, as did her reputation as the Church authorities sought to restrict her influence. She died in 1582.

More information

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/innertravelers/teresa-of-avila.html>

https://www.biographyonline.net/spiritual/st_teresa_avila.html

<https://biography.yourdictionary.com/teresa-of-avila>

Today, it is her gift of spiritual direction for which she is best known today. She was hesitant to put her insights on paper and had to be ordered by her superiors to do so. Thankfully for later generations, she obeyed: she wrote her three works, *Autobiography*; *Way of Perfection* teaching her nuns how to reach their goal; and *Interior Castle* which describes the various stages of spiritual evolution leading to full prayer. The books contain some of the most profound insights into the spiritual life ever written and explain why she is today considered one of the greatest Christian mystics.

Teresa was always afraid of being thought un-orthodox. In context, her paternal grandfather was a Jew who was forced to convert to Christianity. And her father, while outwardly a successful wool merchant and one of the wealthiest men in Ávila, had been condemned by the Spanish Inquisition when only a child for allegedly returning to the Jewish faith.

Teresa was therefore determined that her account should be clear, authoritative and straightforward. It represents a safe spiritual 'map', describing the way toward absolute commitment to God—a state she describes as 'spiritual union' with God. Her writings portray a pioneering feminist who made a great contribution to our knowledge of human psychology. Today, she is greatly admired for her teachings on prayer and her ability to combine contemplation with other activity in her daily life.

*Let nothing upset you,
let nothing startle you.
All things pass;
God does not change.
Patience wins
all it seeks.
Whoever has God
lacks nothing:
God alone is enough.*

Teresa of Ávila



Sweet symbol

Sweet Symbol

A significant symbol of Christmas

Is the simple candy cane.

Its shape is the crook of the shepherd,

One of the first who came.

The lively peppermint flavour is

The regal gift of spice.

The white is Jesus' purity.

The red is sacrifice.

The narrow stripes are friendship.

And the nearness of his love.

Eternal, sweet compassion,

A gift from God above.

The candy cane reminds us all

of just how much God cared.

And like His Christmas gift to us

It's meant to be broken and shared.

Author Unknown

*The candy cane reminds us all
of how much God cared.
And, like His Christmas gift to
us, it's meant to be broken and
shared.*

Author unknown



Have you purchased, or been gifted an Advent calendar yet this year? I have noticed a number of innovations over recent years to the simple card ones I remember as a child. Chocolate calendars have been with us for a while, but now you can find ones containing nail varnishes, beer, Lego, gin, cheese, beauty products, tea, jam, and 'Chatsworth Luxury Jewellery and Gift Advent Calendar' on sale for £2,495, or the *Tiffany & Co* Advent calendar which starts at an eye watering \$150,000 (£111,565).

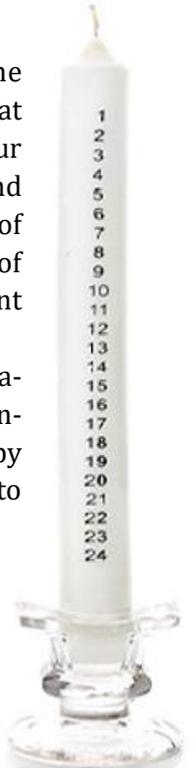
Last year I was given an Advent candle of the kind where there are a series of 24 marks along the length of it to burn down to each day. I used it to make time for Advent prayer and reflection. I consciously made space in my day (usually in the evening) to light my candle and sit in a quiet, darkened room using a book of Advent prayers and readings to start me off. I found that much more valuable and rewarding than eating a morsel of chocolate every day.

Advent is a time when we await the coming of The Light of the world and also when we reflect on His glorious second coming at the end of time. We may patiently open the little doors on our Advent calendars to remind us that each day draws us nearer and nearer to the last (usually larger) door and a remembrance of that first Christmas Eve, but I think I'll eschew the delights of chocolate, cheese, nail varnish, etc., and purchase another Advent candle this year.

You might like to do the same, or simply light any candle or tea-light to hand for a short time of prayer and to ponder the wonders of the incarnation—of God coming to be with us as a baby born in a humble stable in Bethlehem and of His promise to return.

A Happy Christmas to you all.

Revd Jane



Curate's Corner



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Nativity set made from driftwood

This representation of Jesus' birth is made from driftwood that washed up on a beach. The wood is stained and possibly not good for much.

Many of us will think it a good metaphor for our lives as we try to portray Jesus.



Quiz night

The quiz night on 20 November was the best ever, with a record number of 10 teams competing for a cash prize of £30.

It was very well attended with 50 people. Once again it was a very close-run contest with only 5 points between the winners and the two joint runners-up. In total, we raised £670—yet another record for a quiz night, and more than the sum of both quizzes in any year so far. We will be using this money towards the cost of a new kitchen in the Parish Hall.

Many thanks to all those who participated. Special thanks to Linda and John, Daniel and Lily for their help with the preparations, and especially Daniel for his sterling work manning the bar. Thanks also to everyone who contributed the raffle prizes as we had a good selection of items. Speaking of raffles ...

Christmas raffles

This Christmas, as in previous years, we will be holding two raffles. The prize in one raffle will be a substantial Christmas hamper, and in the other raffle all the prizes will be chocolates. Boxes for donations of prizes can be found at the back of the church, with a list of suggestions. Donations by Sunday 12 December please, so we can draw the raffle after the Carol Service on 15 December.

Tickets for both raffles are on sale and will be on sale up to and including 15 December. Good luck!

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Christmas Eve!

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We have had a tree removed at home. This was a Japanese flowering cherry of the fine variety called Amanogawa which had become over-mature with branches dying back and a sap-like fluid oozing from the rotting trunk. Its

Evidence

name translates as 'Milky way'. This loss has left a bigger gap than expected. The tree provided a good

screen between our house and those behind and when blue tits nested in the garden they were never out of it. I would have loved to have kept this declining tree for the wildlife value but cherry trees can deteriorate after 30 years or so, as in this case.

It has often been stated that our two species of native oaks support more biodiversity than any other trees. Aljos Farjon, a very senior botanist long associated with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew has led a study of ancient oaks growing at Blenheim Park in Oxfordshire revealing fascinating

results. The trees are many centuries old and fallen wood is never cleared from the site. A team of the most erudite specialists was assembled to survey the birds, fungi, wasps, spiders, mosses and everything else living on or around the historic oaks. The survey (not yet completed)



Amanogawa

began in early 2017 and has yielded surprising results: 334 different fungi, 611 moth species, 531 assorted beetles and weevils, 224 lichens and much else besides. A spectacular moth, the Clifdon nonpareil, was found, having remained unrecorded since before World War Two and also a colony of the rare and edible Roman snail, together with a species of bee which nests in the empty snail shells. Aljos Farjon has written the story of this survey in great style in *Pulse*, a journal published by the Linnaean Society of London. In a very telling phrase he states that 'These oaks link the biology of the site with the deep past'. He has expanded his passion for them into a book: Farjon, A. 2021. 'Ancient Oaks and Biodiversity'. *Pulse* 48:10-13. (Linnaean Society of London).

Personally I could not live without trees and experience a sinking sensation when I see drone footage on TV of built-up areas with very few trees visible. Well chosen civic amenity specimens make a big difference to our quality of life. When we were gathered at the Service of Remembrance at the War Memorial I could see wedged into an adjacent corner a Persian ironwood (or Parrotia) displaying varied autumn colours, the interesting name suggesting tough and useful timber. Not only that but it was named for F.W. Parrot 1792-1841, a German traveller and botanist noted for his ascent of Mount Ararat.



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From the memorial book

- 1 **Norman Smith** died 1992 aged 77 years. Taken from our lives but always in our thoughts.
- 2 **Margaret Hammond** (nee Whitehead) died 1991, aged 45 years. O for the touch of a vanished hand And the sound of a voice that is still.
- 5 **Jack Preece** beloved husband of Amy, died this day 1994, aged 71 years. 'Loved and Remembered Every Day.'
- 6 **Nellie Atkinson** died this day 1989. Reunited with Harold Atkinson who died 10 August 1981.
- 7 **Winifred Kershaw** 'Pal of my childhood days' Born this day 1942. Died 2nd November 1992.
- 9 **Edith Robinson** died this day 1986. 'Loved and remembered always.'
- 13 **William Oliver MD** Edin. died 1926. A loving father and compassionate physician.
- 14 **William Robinson** died this day 1969, aged 50 years. Treasured memories of 'BILL'.
- 18 **Reverend Charles Edward Shaw MBE BA FLS** Vicar of Waterhead from 1957–1994, died this day 1994. He saw God in Technology, Man and Snowdrop.
- 20 **Peter Barnes** (Skip) died 1998. Forever in our hearts. Birthday memories for 24th December. Jenny and Family.
- 21 In affectionate remembrance of **Edgar Hanson** who passed away in 1983. **Jessie Whittaker** died this day 1989 aged 74. A sorrow too deep for words.
- 22 **Kenneth Shawcross** died this day 1997, aged 81 years. Loving husband and uncle. Will be remembered always.
- 23 **Thomas Wainwright** died 1974. 'Loved and remembered every day.' **Constance Himsworth** Loving wife, mother, grandmother and a dear friend, died 1966 aged 71. 'Memories of you will never die.'
- 29 **James Pearson Robinson** died 1995. Loved and Remembered Always.
- 30 **Ida Fletcher** died 1991. Dearly loved. Happily remembered. **Michael Wynn** died 2006. Forever in our thoughts.
- 31 **Jimmy and Annie Mills** Two wonderful parents remembered with love. Great-grandparents of Lisa. **Lisa Kershaw** died April 27th 1999 aged 16 years. Treasured birthday memories of a daughter more precious than gold. Loved and remembered always. **Harold and Elsie Prendergast** – a special mum and dad. Loved and remembered always and forever. Now with precious granddaughter Lisa in heaven.

Silk button galls

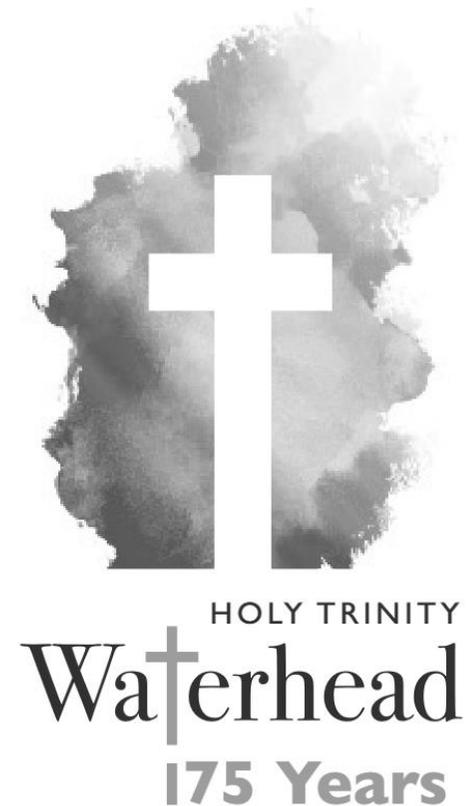
A modern nativity set made using face masks

This nativity set combines the contemporary themes of the Covid pandemic and recycling. But it also suggests safety: wearing a face mask protects us and those around us and, in showing love for neighbour, demonstrates our Christian commitment.



175th Anniversary

Next year, Waterhead Church remembers its 17th anniversary of consecration in 1847. Expect 2022 to be a year of heritage, history, and celebration! Appearing here is the draft logo we'll use for all aspects of the anniversary. It will appear everywhere—our magazine, publicity, and will also appear on a range of merchandise and products.





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