

The Voice of St Paul's

Winter
2019



TEAM VICAR: THE REVD. HELEN SCALAN

Tel. 0161 432 1227
E-mail: helen.scanlan@btinternet.com

CHURCHWARDEN

Mrs June Rolph 432 3431
Claire Nash Tel. 07837 947049

ASSITANT CHURCHWARDENS

P.C.C. SECRETARY

Dr Judith McGovern Tel. 431 0683

P.C.C. TREASURER

Mr David Bradshaw Tel. 431 4661

GIFT-AID SECRETARY

Dr John Langrish Tel. 432 8699

ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER

Mrs Kathryn Chesworth Tel. 432 1719

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS

Mrs Wendy Corbridge
Tel. 718 2513

MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS:

Editor: Mrs Virginia Lloyd Tel. 432 1013
ginia.lloyd@outlook.com

CHURCH HALL

To hire the Church Hall contact
Margaret Hardstone, Tel. 431 9761

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Mr Gordon Viney, M.B.E.
Tel. 432 7896

ORGANISATIONS:

Church Choir	Fridays at 8.00 p.m.; Gordon Viney, Tel. 432 7896
Lay Assistants' and Readers' rota	Jane Fleming 07887 812385
Flower rota	Ann Sawer, Tel. 432 7285
Baptism Prep	Beryl Divine, Tel. 442 4147
Maintenance	Julian Hardstone, Tel. 431 9761
Toddlers Group 'Little Fishes'	Thursdays, 9.30 am.; Helen Scanlan Tel. 432 1227
Rambling Group	2nd Saturday of each month; Gordon Viney, Tel. 432 7896
Website coordinator	David Bradshaw Tel. 431 4661 email: office@stpaulsheatonmoor.org.uk

A LETTER
FROM

THE REVD. HELEN SCANLAN



Dear Friends

Silent night, Holy night,
All is calm, All is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

There is nothing more beautiful than seeing the look of pure love on parents' faces when they see their child for the first time after giving birth. The moment is enfolded in a blanket of love where all is calm.

I have been blessed in the past few months to have two granddaughters born into the family this year: Evie Layla arriving on the 4th July and Olivia Violet on the 1st November. They are precious. Along with Jackson and Loretta, they are all loved beyond the fibre of our being. We do our best to keep them healthy and safe.

I can't begin to comprehend what the Blessed Mary went through to get to Bethlehem, not knowing where she was going to give birth, not knowing where she would lay her child.

On that journey, nothing was calm.

God has a way, though, of stilling our innermost being to reach out to each and every one of us. Wanting to connect, waiting patiently to be allowed the freedom of our hearts.

Christmas is one of those times when our senses are more attuned to the spiritual, be it the Christmas carols which stir our souls, or the invocation of Christmases past when our loved ones joined us around the table or television to celebrate this season of the Saviour's birth.

Jesus joins us each year, wanting to know us more, wanting to help us more, and wanting to change us more. Let the peace of Christ come into your homes this Christmas and start the New Year afresh with the love of Christ.

Have a very peaceful and blessed Christmas.

Helen

A Christmas Prayer

Jesus, the Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth, may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts, and the poor to receive the greatest news the world had ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. *Amen*

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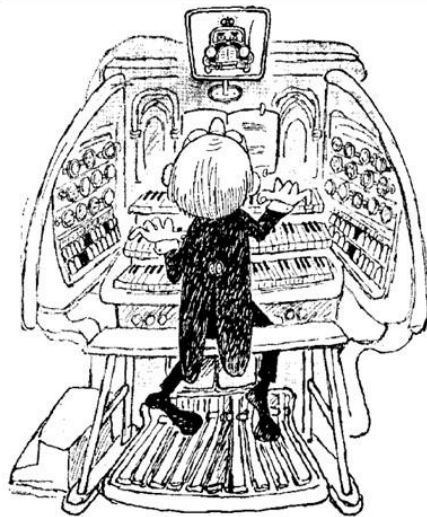
Why the world was ready for Christmas

Ever wonder why Jesus was born when He was? The Bible tells us that "when the time had fully come, God sent forth His Son..." The Jewish people had been waiting for their Messiah for centuries. Why did God send Him precisely when He did?

Many biblical scholars believe that the 'time had fully come' for Jesus because of the politics of the time. The Roman Empire's sheer size and dominance had achieved something unique in world history: the opportunity for travel from Bethlehem to Berwick on Tweed without ever crossing into 'enemy territory' or needing a 'passport'. For the first time ever, it was possible for 'common' people to travel wide and far, and quickly spread news and ideas. And all you needed were two languages – Greek to the east of Rome, and Latin to the west and north. You could set sail from Joppa (Tel Aviv) and head for any port on the Med. And the Roman roads ran straight and true throughout the empire.

So the Roman Empire achieved something it never intended: it helped spread news of Christianity far and wide for 400 years. After that, the Empire crumbled, and the borders shut down. Not until the 19th century would people again roam so freely. The time for Jesus to be born, and for news of Him to be able to travel, had indeed 'fully come'.

(Parish Pump)



The organist by Gerard Hoffnung

This cartoon has been up on the vestry notice board for sometime—what is Gordon trying to tell us!

It is part of the wonderful collection of musical instruments dreamed up by cartoonist Gerard Hoffnung (1925-1959)

Regular Services at St. Paul's

Service	Language	Day	Time
All Age Service	Modern	1st Sunday	10.45 a.m.
Parish Eucharist	Modern	3rd & 5th Sunday	10.45 a.m.
Service of the Word	Modern	2nd & 4th Sunday	10.45 a.m.
Choral Evensong	BCP	2nd Sunday	6.30 p.m.
Communion	BCP	Wednesday	9.00 a.m.
Rainbow Church	Modern Inclusive	Every Sunday	4.00 p.m.
Little Fishes Toddler Group	In church hall	Thursday in term time	9.30 a.m.

The Parish magazine costs about £50 to produce each issue.. Donations to defray these costs would be gratefully received. If you would like to contribute please email our treasurer, David Bradshaw, at office@stpaulsheatonmoor.org.uk

We are experimenting in publishing this edition in colour and would welcome comments. We hope it will not cost significantly more to produce, You can still view the magazine on the website: www.stpaulsheatonmoor.org.uk

Special Services and Events at St Paul's

Sunday 1st December 10:45am Toy Service

Saturday 7th December 11am – 2pm Christmas Fair

Sunday 8th December 4.00pm Rainbow Church, Family
Christmas Crafts

Sunday 15th December 4.00pm Christingle Service

Sunday 22nd December 6.30pm Nine Lessons & Carols

Tuesday 24th December 3.00pm Crib Service
Christmas Eve 11.00pm Midnight Communion

Wednesday 25th December 10.45am Family Service
Christmas Day with Communion

Sunday January 5th 10.45am All Age Service

Sunday January 12th 6.30pm Choral Evensong

Ash Wednesday is February 26th 2020

Lent Course to be arranged

Sunday March 22nd Mothering Sunday

Easter Sunday is April 12th 2020



'Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.' Luke 2:10

Advent starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The word 'Advent' is from the Latin word 'adventus' meaning 'coming'. Sometimes called 'Little Lent', it's a time to prepare our hearts for the future Second Coming, as well as the birth of Christ.

We celebrate the season with advent calendars, candles and evergreen wreaths – symbolising Christ as Light of the world, bringing new and everlasting life.

Here are seven simple tips to help you experience and share the joy of Advent!

1. Connect with your inner child: Think back to the time when you were a child, on the simple things that made you happy at Christmas. Focus only on the good and feel the joy of Christmas come flooding back!
2. Keep it simple: This year, go for gifts and cards that share the meaning of the season, shop early and stay within your budget.
3. Be people focused: Remember the story of Mary and Martha – keep meals simple and allow yourself time and space to focus on enjoying the company of your guests.
4. Make Room for Jesus: Take some time at the beginning of each day to read your Bible, meditate on Scripture and pray. Focus on giving thanks to God for His gift of Christ to the world and for all He has done for us.
5. Me Time: God wants us to prosper in body, soul and spirit, so try to eat healthy, don't overindulge, take time for long walks and enjoy the good and simple things in life!
6. Wear a smile and share the Joy! Finally, being joyful is a choice, it's not about your circumstances. So, decide to be thankful this season. Wear a smile, act and talk positively, do small things with great love, be on the lookout for opportunities to do good to people. Give to the homeless, visit the sick, or take gifts to lonely neighbours.
7. If people ask you about your joy, don't be afraid to share your faith. Simply explain to them that 'Christ lives in my heart, and He can live in yours too.'

(Parish Pump)

We Three Kings of Orient arewhat?

"A cold coming they had of it at this time of the year, just the worst time of the year to take a journey, and specially a long journey, in. The way's deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, in *solstitio brumali*, the very dead of winter."

It was 1622, and the Bishop of Winchester, Launcelot Andrews, was preaching a magnificent sermon to King James I. Reckoned one of the best preachers ever, Launcelot Andrews' words were later taken up by T S Eliot and transformed into his wonderful poem 'The Journey of the Magi'. What a vivid picture – we can see it all! The camels' breath steaming in the night air as the kings, in their gorgeous robes of silk and cloth-of-gold, and clutching their precious gifts, kneel to adore the baby in the manger.

Yet the Bible does not give us as much detail as some people think. Tradition down the centuries has added a great deal more. For instance, we know from St Matthew that the magi were 'wise', or learned men of some sort, but we do not know if they were kings or not. The Bible tells us there were several; tradition has decided upon three, and even named them: Balthassar, Melchior, and Caspar (or Gaspar). But the Bible does tell us that the magi gave baby Jesus three highly symbolic gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Gold stands for kingship, frankincense for worship, and myrrh for anointing – anticipating His death.

There is this lovely ancient mosaic in Ravenna, Italy, that is 1,500 years old. It depicts the wise men in oriental garb of trousers and Phrygian caps, carrying their gifts past palm trees towards the star that they followed... straight to Jesus.

(Parish Pump)



Celebrate Christmas at St Paul's!

Candlelit Traditional Service of
Nine Lessons and Carols on
December 22nd at 6.30pm



Crib Service—especially for children
at 3 o'clock on Christmas Eve

Midnight mass at 11pm on
Christmas Eve



And at 10.45am on Christmas morning—
Family Service with communion.

SINGERS!

In October the Halle Choral Leadership Team led a workshop for local singers as part of the Heart of the Heatons Festival. This proved to be very popular event and at the end of in two hours the group of over a hundred people were entertaining an appreciative audience and filling the church with wonderfully rich harmony.



We hope that this successful event will be offered again in the Heart of the Heatons Festival next year.

The Bronze Hymn Board Above the Pulpit – (and an earlier one) by Raymond Prior

Two identical boards were given in memory of Joseph Duckworth who died in 1931. It was not until the 1960s that pulleys were added to raise and lower them. One board, that above the lectern, was removed at some later stage.

A reader may wonder why there is one row on the hymn board not used. It can be seen that the reason for its non-use is that it is too narrow for the hymn numbers. It had however had a use, to take the word PSALMS for services of Morning and Evening Prayer (Matins and Evensong) as these include the singing of at least one of the 150 Psalms from the Book of Common Prayer. Three more rows of standard size then follow.

Three rows for Psalm numbers may seem excessive, but the Psalms vary very much in length and occasionally three very short psalms used to be sung, depending on which were set for the particular day. Psalm 119 is exceptional as it contains 176 verses! I cannot think that that one was ever sung in full; eight or sixteen verses would be used as announced by the officiant.

Psalm 150 was for many years a great favourite, especially at the end of a Sung Communion Service: just six lines starting "O praise God in his holiness: praise him in the firmament of his power..." The choir seemed to put everything into the singing of the wonderful tune which went with the fine words.

The psalms are still sung at St Paul's once a month at Choral Evensong, including the wonderful setting to Psalm 150, and, as you can see from the photo, we still make use of the narrower space at those services! (Editor)

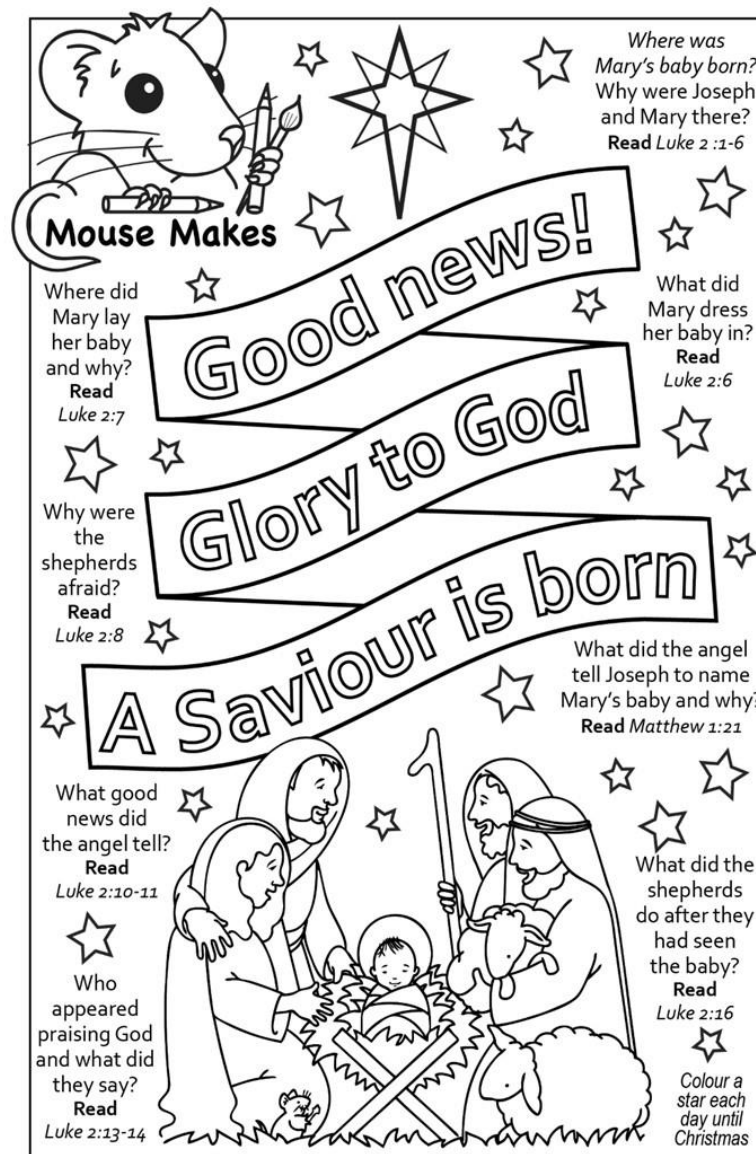


And from Gordon Viney:

A look back in time to Christmas Day and the annual presentation of "new shillings" to boy choristers at the end of the morning service:

The psalm and the hymn boards were erected as a memorial to Joseph Duckworth a devoted worshiper in this church from its earliest days until he died in July 1931. He was one of the original trustees, a Sunday School teacher and a generous supporter of all the great evangelical societies of the church. A sum of money invested in consols perpetuates the gift he made to the boys of the choir each Christmas morning.

A framed copy will be found displayed on the wall behind the lectern.



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FROM THE REGISTER

Baptisms

22nd September Harold David Pearson

19th October Freddie James Leedham

27th October Olivia Grace McGreevy

3rd November Harry David Woodruff

Weddings

10th November Mark Rhol McKinley and Kari Anne Barrow

Funeral

10th September Nola Ashworth

31st October Margaret Knowles



A Prayer to Follow the Star

Lord, may I be like the Wise Men who were guided to you by the Star of Bethlehem. Give me the wisdom to seek you, a light to guide me to you, the courage and persistence to search until I find you, the graciousness to worship you and the generosity to lay my gift before you, who is my King and my God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

www.dailyprayer.us



Sacred Art of Joking. Margaret Hardstone

I recently read a book called "The Sacred Art of Joking" by a comedy writer, James Cary. James is also a Christian, and the book takes a look at the role of humour in the Church.

He poses some fascinating questions, like

Do Christians have a sense of humour?

Was Jesus funny?

Why is Christianity an easy target for jokes?

What is funny about Easter?

While the questions were thought provoking, the answers were less satisfying. Mr Cary acknowledges that it takes some time and effort to unearth the humour in the Bible – often because we are so familiar with the stories that they no longer surprise enough to make us laugh. Also we are not exposed to the more outrageous stories, which fall outside the Liturgy. Sometimes the jokes are lost because of the way they are told. It takes skill to tell a joke well and to get the punch line in the right place at the right time, so that it doesn't fall flat.

For example, there is a story called the Witch of Endor, when Saul, who is in a spot of bother, visits a medium, spiritualist, to summon up Samuel from the dead, because he needs some advice. Samuel grumpily appears saying, "Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up? -implying that he was having a nice doze and didn't want to be disturbed.

And then there was Adam, always one for blaming the wife, and Moses who did everything he could to dodge responsibility from the Boss. In the past, playing the Bible for laughs was more acceptable. The writers of the medieval mystery plays knew how to play to the gallery. Noah was portrayed as a drunken fool and his wife a shrewish nag. The soldiers at the foot of the cross were the comic buffoons, incompetent and arguing amongst themselves.

Before the Reformation, priests told jokes in their Easter day sermons. It was called "the Easter Laugh", or "Risus Pascalis". The Easter joke was that God had tricked Satan. Satan had been deceived into serving God's

purpose by contriving the death of Jesus, but the last laugh was on the devil, because Jesus rose from the dead. The practice of humour in the Easter sermon fell out of favour when the jokes became too bawdy.

But was Jesus funny? He certainly went out of his way to cause offence to the religious establishment – not unlike Dave Allen? You might imagine Jesus mimicking, or impersonating the Pharisees and their hypocritical behaviour. Jesus used comic exaggeration with the specks and logs in the story about seeing faults in others.” Why do you see the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own?” He uses cartoon imagery when straining out a gnat and then swallowing a camel; getting a camel through the eye of the needle; shocking people with the idea that a father might consider giving his child a scorpion when he asks for an egg. He banters with the Syrophenician woman about the crumbs under the table.

And what about the Wedding at Cana story. You can imagine the servants thinking that Jesus was “off his rocker” asking them to fill up the wine vats with water, only to be amazed when it turned into wine. What a magnificent joke!

There is also a funny side to the Walk to Emmaus story – the disciples try to tell Jesus what he already knows, “how to suck eggs” as it were, and then they have the tables turned on them, when he reveals his identity. After this walk, Jesus appears to a group of disciples, and at the end of a meeting up that was indescribable, beyond words, he asks in a rather mundane way for something to eat. It is like puncturing the moment by saying “Crumbs, I could murder a curry” And as the disciples watched him eating the broiled fish, might Jesus have laughed at their bewilderment.?

Who knows? but in Psalm 2 the writer tells us “He who sits in the heavens laughs; and the Lord has them in derision.” God is certainly laughing at us, and undoubtedly with good cause.



Music Notes

David Bradshaw



If you are reading this before 6.30 on Sunday December 1st you may like to join us for the launch of David Jepson’s CD in church. In any event, his CD will be on sale at our Christmas Fair on Sat Dec 7th

David Jepson has been a member of St. Paul’s church choir from the age of 10. He became Head Chorister, aged 14, and chose to follow a musical education. Having gained his music qualifications from the RCM in Manchester, and subsequently London University and the Royal Academy of Music. He was Head of Music in schools and colleges, became an examiner and adjudicator in later years but most importantly, has been a composer of merit throughout his life and an active supporter of our church choir over that time.



We have been privileged to sing his compositions and give first performances over the years. Much of his music has been published and ‘Banks Music Publications’ has listed several of his pieces in their prestigious “Eboracum Choral Series”. Choirs up and down the country have enjoyed performing his compositions and many items have been broadcast but have never been available as a collection.

He has finally decided to make a CD of a selection of pieces so that, at last, we can all savour his compositional and tuneful style whenever we wish and his family of two daughters and five grandchildren can have a lasting legacy of his talent. I attended the recording day, held in October here at St. Paul’s, with the RNCM graduates ‘Kantos Chamber Choir’ and a professional pianist/organist, which was a pleasure and a privilege.

On Saturday December 1st there will be the first public performance of David’s only CD – a collection of Carols and Sacred music which will be played through the producer’s professional equipment.

4th December St Osmond - an immigrant before Brexit

Osmond is the saint for you if you regret Brexit, and believe that immigrants can bring good to Britain. Osmond came to England from France back in the days before EU regulations. It was shortly after 1066, and he was a Norman, following William the Conqueror.

Osmond himself was no soldier, but a gifted and godly man, with a great gift of administration. He became royal chaplain, and then chancellor in 1072, producing numerous royal letters and charters for the king. In 1078 he was made bishop of Salisbury. As such, he completed and consecrated the cathedral, and formed such an outstanding chapter and constitution that it later became a model for other English cathedrals.

Osmond took part in the preparation of the Domesday Book, and was present when it was presented to William in April 1086. He died in 1099, well respected for his purity and learning, and his lack of avarice and ambition.
(Parish Pump)



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St. Paul's Church is a community of Christians who meet each week to worship God: Creator, Saviour and Sustainer. It is part of the HEATONS' TEAM MINISTRY, which comprises **four** other parishes:

St. John – Heaton Mersey

St. Mary – Heaton Reddiah

St. Thomas – Heaton Chapel

Christ with All Saints – Heaton Norris

<http://www.heatons-team.org.uk/>



HEATONS' TEAM COUNCIL:

Area Dean: Revd Helen Scanlan

The Team Rector & Chair of the Council: vacant

Secretary: The Revd. Janet Butterworth

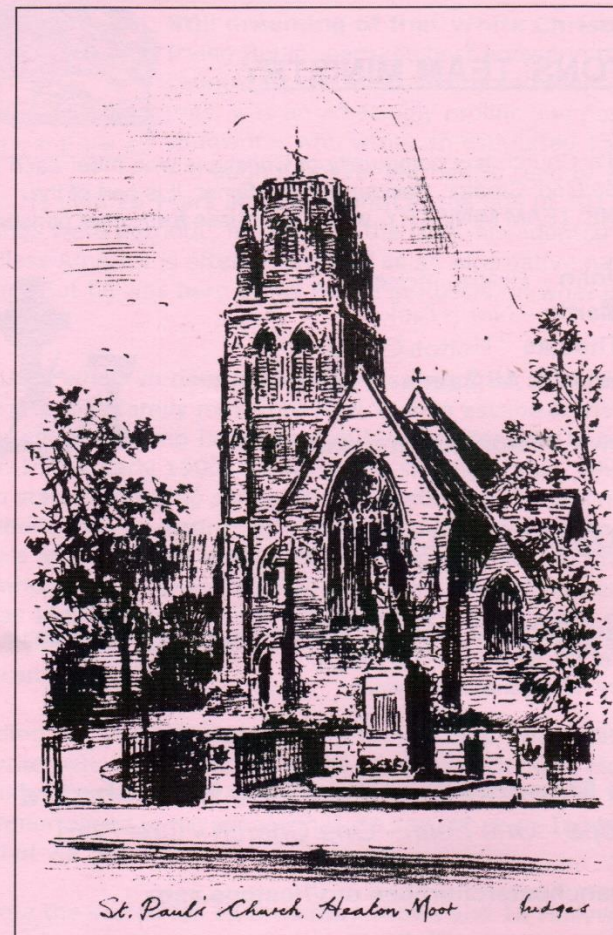
South Manchester Churches Noticeboard

One Hope - One Faith - One Church - One Lord

<http://manchesterchurches.org/Heatons.aspx>

An initiative of The Churches Together In The Heatons and Heatons' Churches Partnership.

A resource for all the churches in the Heatons.



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