



Parish Magazine
December & January

50p

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Café opening times: Wed, Thurs and Friday– times as advertised.

Parish Website: www.whitehavenparish.org.uk

From the Rectory

As people love to tell clergy at this time of the year; "Your busy time is coming up!" It might be busy, though not necessarily busier than many other times of the year, but it certainly is a lovely time of the year. And I am looking forward to my first Christmas in parish ministry for many years, so I'm looking forward to the whole experience of school nativity plays, carol services, Christingle and of course Christmas Midnight service.

But before we can enjoy the celebration of the birth of God's son we have the season of Advent to help us prepare, to really be able to know in our hearts and lives the mystery of the incarnation, God with us. This year Advent is as short as it can be, just three weeks and one day. So we need to make the most of these three short weeks of preparation. The dual themes for Advent is both looking forward to the birth of Jesus and his second coming. Hence many of the Old Testament readings for these weeks are from the prophet Isaiah, who is foretelling the coming of "...a child....he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." However, the gospel readings, mostly taken from Matthew's gospel, point towards the end of time and Christ's second coming, this is the other Advent theme, a time that is to come, when we hear in The Book of Revelation, "... he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." So, I invite you to make the most of the preparation season of Advent, and to then celebrate with great joy the birth of the Christ child. Church services over the next weeks will help us to reflect on these themes, so please do come and join us at St James' church and the St Nicholas Centre for our Advent and Christmas offerings, something for every age range.

As this magazine is a double issue, as well as wishing you a joyous Christmas, I also wish you a blessed new year.

With love and prayers from,

Alison
Priest-in-charge



SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2023

Sunday 3rd December – 10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist – Advent 1

Sunday 3rd December – 3:00pm St. James'

Advent Carol Service

Thursday 7th December – 09:30am St. Nicholas

Friday 8th December—7pm St. James'

The BIG Christmas Sing

Sunday 10th December – 10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Advent 2

Thursday 14th December—09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 17th December—10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Advent 3

Sunday 17th December—3:00pm St. James

Christmas Carol Service

Thursday 21st December—09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 24th December—10:00am St. James

Parish Eucharist—Advent 4

Sunday 24th December—4:00pm St. James'

Christingle

Sunday 24th December—11:30pm St. James'

Midnight Mass

Monday 25th December—10:00am St. James'

Christmas Day Eucharist

Thursday 28th December—09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 31st December—10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Christmas 1



SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2024

Thursday 4th January – 09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 7th January – 10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Epiphany 1/ Baptism of Christ

Thursday 11th January —09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 14th January —10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Epiphany 2

Thursday 18th January —09:30am St. Nicholas

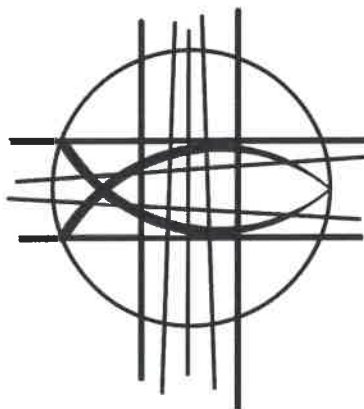
Sunday 21st January —10:00am St. James

Parish Eucharist—Epiphany 3

Thursday 25th January—09:30am St. Nicholas

Sunday 28th January—10:00am St. James'

Parish Eucharist—Epiphany 4/Presentation of Christ in the Temple



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**ADVENT CAROL SERVICE
3RD DECEMBER AT 3PM**

**THE BIG SING
8TH DECEMBER AT 7PM**

**CAROL SERVICE
17TH DECEMBER AT 3PM**

**CHRISTINGLE
24TH DECEMBER AT 4PM**

**MIDNIGHT MASS
24TH DECEMBER AT 11:30PM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE
10AM (EUCHARIST SERVICE)**

**ALL OF THE SERVICES WILL BE HELD IN ST.
JAMES' CHURCH**

PLEASE COME AND JOIN US



High Days and Holy Days for December

6th December St Nicholas, a much-loved saint

One account of how Father Christmas began tells of a man named Nicholas who was born in the third century in the Greek village of Patara, on what is today the southern coast of Turkey. His family were both devout and wealthy, and when his parents died in an epidemic, Nicholas decided to use his inheritance to help people. He gave to the needy, the sick, the suffering. He dedicated his whole life to God's service and was made Bishop of Myra while still a young man. As a bishop in later life, he joined other bishops and priests in prison under the emperor Diocletian's fierce persecution of Christians across the Roman Empire.

Finally released, Nicholas was all the more determined to shed abroad the news of God's love. He did so by giving. One story of his generosity explains why we hang Christmas stockings over our mantelpieces today. There was a poor family with three daughters who needed dowries if they were to marry, and not be sold into slavery. Nicholas heard of their plight and tossed three bags of gold into their home through an open window – thus saving the girls from a life of misery.

The bags of gold landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry. Hence the custom of children hanging out stockings – in the hope of attracting presents of their own from St Nicholas - on Christmas Eve. That is why three gold balls, sometimes represented as oranges, are one of the symbols of St Nicholas.

The example of St Nicholas has never been forgotten - in bygone years boys in Germany and Poland would dress up as bishops on 6th December, and beg alms for the poor. In the Netherlands and Belgium 'St Nicholas' would arrive on a steamship from Spain to ride a white horse on his gift-giving rounds. To this day, 6th December is still the main day for gift-giving and merry-making in much of Europe. Many people feel that simple gift-giving in early Advent helps preserve a Christmas Day focus on the Christ Child.

25th December Christmas throughout the Christian world

For nearly four weeks leading up to Christmas Christians recognise a period called Advent. It means 'coming'. It is a time of spiritual preparation. 'Coming' refers to Jesus' first coming as a baby, but it also looks forward to a day when Jesus is expected to return in triumph at His 'second coming' to establish perfect justice and a new order of peace.

Originally Christians marked Advent as a time when they refrained from excessive eating and drinking. Then Christmas Day reintroduced them to the joys of feasting. Christmas celebrations lasted for 12 days, with gifts exchanged as a climax at Epiphany.

Today, however, Advent is more likely to be associated with accelerating festivity, with the days following Christmas something of an anti-climax until 'twelfth night', on which decorations are removed. Many Christians worldwide are trying to revive the spirit of Advent by setting aside time to pray and address global poverty.

Christmas Day is celebrated as the anniversary of Jesus' birth, although the actual date is not known. Most Christians celebrate it on 25th December. However, the Orthodox Church (the ancient churches in Eastern Europe and parts of Asia) follows a different calendar and celebrates on 7th January. Christians make a point of taking communion on Christmas Day. Many make it the first thing they do as the clock strikes midnight.

On 6th January the Christmas festival continues with a celebration of Epiphany, which means 'the appearance'. Christians remember the visit of wise men (magi) to Jesus, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Christmas tradition of exchanging gifts originally honoured these men, who were the first non-Jews (Gentiles) to worship Jesus. It forms a reminder that in Jesus God was giving Himself for the benefit of the entire world.

Orthodox Christians use this day to recall the baptism of Jesus as a grown man. The significance of Jesus being baptised was that He identified Himself with human beings in all their need. They mark the day by praying for God's blessing on rivers, wells, and water sources.

Christmas has never been just an escapist festival for Christians. Those who treat it seriously recognise that not all the world is able to face the days with frivolity or joy. The day after Christmas, Boxing Day, was historically marked as the feast of St Stephen. He was the first man to be put to death rather than give up his belief that Jesus was God.

And two days later a day remembering the Massacre of the Innocents recalls Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus by killing all male babies in Bethlehem. Although not so widely marked as Christmas Day, it gives Christians the opportunity to pray for children in today's world who suffer as a result of the actions of adults.

26th December St Stephen – the first martyr

Have you ever stopped to consider that the very first martyr of the Christian Church was a deacon? (But no, he wasn't worked to death by his church.) It was Stephen, one of the first seven deacons of the Christian Church. He'd been appointed by the apostles to look after the distribution of alms to the faithful poor, and to help in the ministry of preaching.

Acts 6 and 7 tells us all that we know of his life, and the passages seem to suggest that he was an educated Hellenistic Jew. Certainly, Stephen's famous challenge to the Jews reveals him to have been learned in the Scriptures and the history of Judaism, besides being eloquent and forceful.

Stephen's proclamation on the day of his martyrdom pulled no punches. He told the Jews that God did not depend on the Temple. The Temple was but a temporary institution destined to be fulfilled and superseded by Christ, who was the prophet foreseen by Moses as the Messiah for whom the Jewish race had so long awaited.

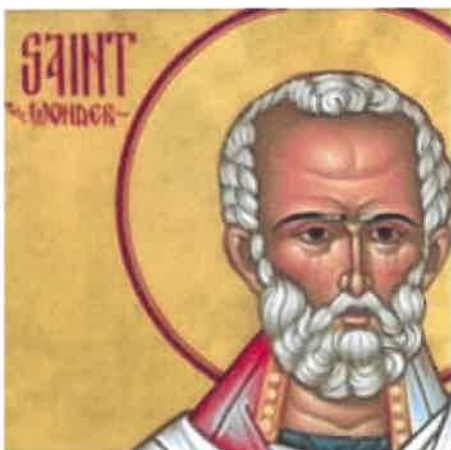
Stephen then challenged his hearers for resisting the Spirit and for killing the Christ, as their fathers before them had killed the prophets. The Jews were so outraged by this that they stoned Stephen on the spot for blasphemy.

As he died, (c 35 AD) Stephen saw a vision of Christ on God's right hand. The men who were witness to the stoning placed their clothes at the feet of Saul (afterwards Paul), who (to his deep regret later) consented to Stephen's death.

By the fourth century Stephen had his own feast day in both East and West Churches. When his supposed tomb was discovered in 415, his popularity soared. His (supposed) relics were taken to Constantinople and then Rome, along with some stones (allegedly) used at his martyrdom.

Early on the Church made Stephen the patron saint of deacons. In the late Middle Ages he was also invoked to help against headaches (?!).

In England, 46 ancient churches are dedicated to him, most of them built after the Norman Conquest. In art Stephen is usually given a book of the Gospels and a stone, and sometimes the palm of martyrdom.

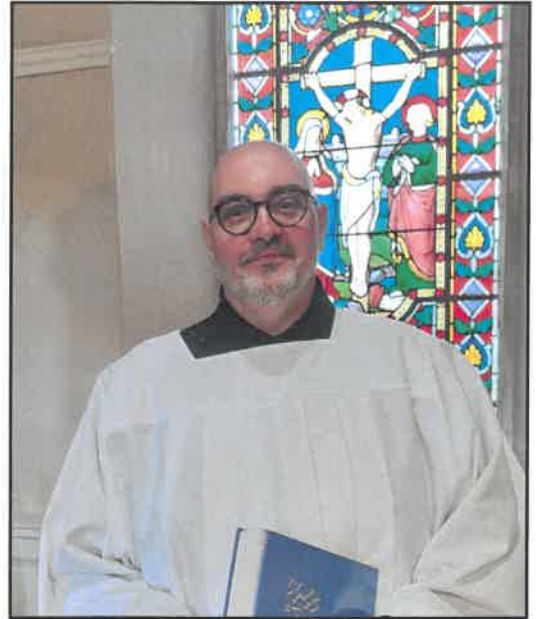


AN ORDINAND'S JOURNEY

As I sit down at my desk to write this article the first term of my final academic year has just finished and the season of Advent and the feast of Christmas is almost upon us. Where has this year gone?

Last Christmas I made myself a promise to be more organised for Christmas this year. In the past I have always been pretty much a last minute Christmas shopper, but I can no longer afford to be.

Last year I experienced Christmas from the perspective of one involved in ministry in the church and the busyness of the season simply does not allow for disorganisation and doing things last minute. I am glad to say that this year all my gifts are bought and I feel prepared...Phew!



This term we ordinands have been studying the sacraments. Depending on who you speak to you will get different answers as to what the sacraments are and this is because as the Church of England we are a very broad church with many traditions from very high church to low church. Some might say there are seven sacraments; Baptism, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Confession, Anointing the Sick and Ordination, however officially within the Church of England we say there are only two and they are Baptism and the Eucharist.

Why is this you ask? The reason why we say that Baptism and the Eucharist are the two sacraments is because only these two have a direct instruction from Jesus to do them. "Go therefore and baptise all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" for Baptism, and "Take, eat, this is my body...Take, drink, this is my blood...Do this in memory of me" for the Eucharist.

The other rites which still have their foundation in scripture are not unimportant of course, but for us as Anglicans they are not direct instructions from Christ to do them. Confirmation, Holy Matrimony, Confession, Anointing the Sick and Ordination are still recognised as extremely meaningful and certainly look and feel sacramental and are a part of the life of the church universal and full of rich tradition.

For some ministers hearing formal confession is very important and indeed for some church goers this is something they value deeply. For people who have something weighing deeply on their conscience actually hearing the pronouncement of God's

absolution of their sins is very liberating. Although this is something we might think of as being very Catholic with a big C, it is something that is still widely practised within the Church of England in the high church settings and it is something I am keen to be trained to do and will form part of my ministry in years to come for those who wish to avail themselves of it.

This term has been very exciting and incredibly formational as we each wrestled with our own theologies and questioned long held beliefs about the sacraments. This led to very spirited debate amongst my fellow ordinands and brought home to us how rich the traditions of the Anglican church actually are. Wherever you are in your church tradition, be it very high church or low church we all agree that Baptism and the Eucharist are very important and are central to our faith.

There were of course disagreements as to what is exactly going on during the Eucharist, is the bread and wine transformed into Christ's body and blood or is the meal merely a memorial of Christ's sacrifice or is it something else?...but that is something best left to another time and for someone far better educated than me to debate.

2023 has been an exciting year for us all with many things coming to a close and new chapters opening. 2024 promises to be no less exciting and interesting with the start of our youth choir and hopefully recruiting some altar servers for church, but for now let me wish you all a very blessed and peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

Dave Flitcroft



Christmas Prayer 2023

Almighty Father,

Thank you for your indescribable gift of Jesus – the Light of the world. Thank you that He brought light and life to all who received Him during His life on earth and that He still brings light and life to all who receive Him.

Lord, how this broken world needs your light today. As we rejoice and give thanks for Christmas, we pray that the light of Jesus will pierce the darkness of self-interest and hatred – and change the hearts of those who do not love you or their neighbours.

We pray that by the power of your Holy Spirit you will deliver your people from evil, and that Your kingdom will come on earth as in heaven. Thank you, Father, that because of Jesus, light will *always* shine in the darkness and the darkness will *never* be able to extinguish it.

Glory and thanks and praise to You Father God, this Christmas and always. In Jesus' saving and powerful name.

Amen.



The Big Bash!



JESUS OFTEN TOLD
STORIES WITH
HIDDEN MEANINGS



ONE STORY WAS ABOUT A RICH
MAN WHO DECIDED TO HAVE A
PARTY

HE SENT OUT LOTS
OF INVITATIONS

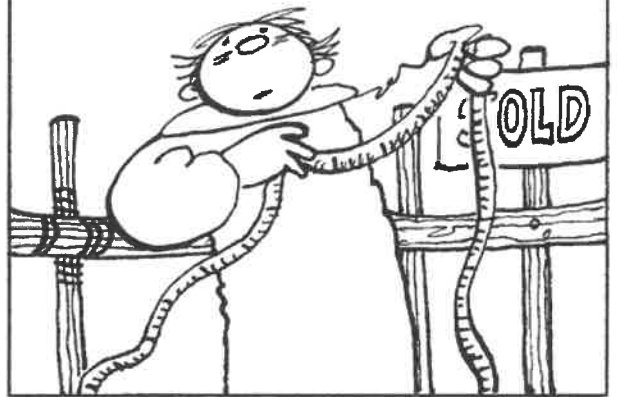


OH!
NO!!

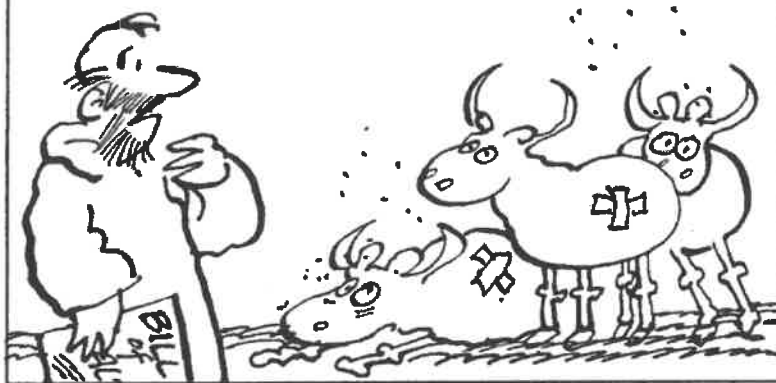


BUT PEOPLE STARTED
MAKING EXCUSES

ONE MAN SAID HE HAD BOUGHT A
FIELD, BUT NEEDED TO MEASURE IT



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE NEEDED TO TEST
DRIVE THE OXEN HE HAS JUST PAID FOR



ANOTHER MAN SAID HE HAD JUST GOT
MARRIED - AND HIS WIFE WOULDN'T
LET HIM OUT!

SO THE RICH MAN INVITED ALL
THE POOR AND NEEDY INSTEAD.



YES - I CAN
COME TO YOUR
PARTY

THE PARABLE MEANS WE SHOULDN'T MAKE
EXCUSES FOR NOT FOLLOWING JESUS.

IT WAS.....

800 years ago, on 25th December 1223 that St Francis of Assisi created the first nativity scene, in Greccio, Italy, after visiting Jesus' birthplace in the Holy Land. It proved enormously popular and inspired other communities to stage their own nativity scenes.

250 years ago, on 16th December 1773 that the Boston Tea Party took place in Massachusetts. American patriots boarded ships and threw chests of tea belonging to the British East India Company into Boston Harbour, as a protest against the British tax on tea.

200 years ago, on 23rd December 1823 that the poem *The Night Before Christmas* was first published (anonymously) in the Sentinel newspapers in Troy, New York. It was written by Clement Clarke Moore.

175 years ago – on 19th December 1848 that Emily Bronte, British novelist and poet, died of tuberculosis, aged 30. Best known for her only novel, *Wuthering Heights*.

100 years ago, on 6th December 1923 that Ramsay MacDonald became the first Labour Prime Minister. The General Election had resulted in a hung parliament, and the Labour Party had formed a coalition with the Liberal Party.

Also 100 years ago, on 31st December 1923 that the BBC broadcast the chimes of Big Ben for the first time, to welcome in the New Year. The tradition continues to this day.

80 years ago, on 22nd December 1943 that Beatrix Potter, children's writer and illustrator, died. She created animal characters including Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin, Mrs Tiggy-Winkle, Jemima Puddle-Duck, and many more.

75 years ago, on 10th December 1948 that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

Also 75 years ago, on 24th December 1948 that the first Midnight Mass to be televised was broadcast from St Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

70 years ago, on 10th December 1953 that former US Secretary of State George Marshall was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for creating the Marshall Plan. The aid package helped Europe rebuild after WW2.

IT WAS..... (cont.)

65 years ago, on 5th December 1958 that Britain's first motorway, the Preston By-pass, was officially opened. (It is now part of the M6 and M55.).

60 years ago, on 21st December 1963 that the Daleks made their first appearance on the British science fiction TV series *Doctor Who*.

50 years ago, on 21st December 1973 that the Geneva Conference opened in Switzerland, aimed at finding a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. No agreement was reached, but Israel signed a military disengagement agreement with both Egypt and Syria in 1974.

40 years ago, on 10th December 1983 that Polish Solidarity leader Lech Walesa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. (It was accepted by his wife, as he feared he might not be allowed back into Poland if he travelled to Norway to accept it.)

30 years ago, on 10th December 1993 that Monkwearmouth Colliery in Sunderland closed down. It marked the end of more than 800 years of coal mining in the region.

Also 30 years ago, on 30th December 1993 that Israel and the Vatican City agreed to recognise each other and established diplomatic relations.

25 years ago, on 10th December 1998 that the UN General Assembly listed anti-Semitism as a form of racism.

Also 25 years ago, on 10th December 1998 that the Palestine Liberation Organisation voted to remove clauses in its charter that called for Israel's destruction.

20 years ago, on 1st December 2003 that using a handheld mobile phone while driving became illegal in the UK.

10 years ago, on 5th December 2013 that Nelson Mandela died. This anti-apartheid revolutionary and politician had become President of South Africa 1994-99. He served as President of the African National Congress (ANC) 1991-97. Winner of the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize.

TODDLER CHURCH

The smallest of people take their first steps to God.

Come join us and be sure of a warm welcome, where everyone can feel relaxed. From the tiniest of babies right up to those starting school and their carers.



St Nicholas' Church, Whitehaven

5th December

1:30 ~ 2:30pm

Looking forward to Christmas,
with Christmas treats and a small present



CHRISTMAS 1958

We were lucky to be given, for the MU Archives, a copy of 'home and family' the MU journal for Christmas 1958, also lucky that it contained "News from the Carlisle Diocese". While it was sad to see the names of many branches that are now closed it was good to see St. Nicholas and St. James in there.

St Nicholas, Whitehaven

Our Young Wives are steadily growing in numbers and have enjoyed many talks on varying topics, religious, educational and social. MU members join with them often in meetings where the topics interests both, and also for Valentine, Halloween and Christmas parties, when they enjoy concert items of drama, singing and dancing. Some of our members have excelled this year in a "ballet" which has been greatly admired and have entertained other organisations.

Talks and film of the Church of England Children's Homes bore fruit, and one of our members became secretary for the area, another the boxes distributor. Beauty demonstrations were enjoyed and discussed, and we have more "down to earth" demonstrations of washing machines, 'supper dishes' to look forward to, as well as the annual outing which is to Dumfries and district this year. We also have a visiting Bishop from Queensland to address us in May. Our thanks are due to our secretary and treasurer and committee who spend many hours working for our organisation. E.G.

Whitehaven – St. James

Principal activities of the Group during the year have been the various efforts held to raise funds for the new parish hall. These have included teas, coffee mornings and private sewing parties held in connection with the Annual Sale of Work.

A variety of Speakers at our fortnightly meetings have lectured on many interesting subjects, including Fire Prevention in the Home, Civil Defence etc. Demonstrations have been given to the group by representatives for the Gas Board and the Singer Sewing Machine Co. A most interesting visit was paid to the local mill of Messrs. Quaker Oats. The Group entertained St. Nicholas Young Wives to a social evening.



Also in the magazine was a quiz with a nod to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents entitled.....

HOW SAFE IS YOUR HOME THIS CHRISTMAS?

1 Christmas decorations – are they fireproof? Are they hung in such a way that they could not possibly come in contact with any naked flames?

2 Does Father – or whoever puts up the decorations – use a steady step ladder, or balance precariously on a chair?

3 Do you think the use of Christmas candles, however pretty, is worth the risk of fire when children are around?

4 Are the Christmas tree lights, and all other electrical fittings properly wired, with no trailing flexes?

5 If the grandparents or other elderly people are coming to stay, have you made sure that there are no loose floor or stair coverings, and that stairs, landings and passages are well lighted?

6 Do you make sure that all gas taps are properly turned off at night and all appliances in order?

7 Have you got fixed guards to protect the children from all open fires? Are all other heating appliances adequately protected?

8 Do you know that you can buy flame-resistant fabrics for night and day clothing, children's party dresses and even furnishing fabrics?

9 Do you provide plenty of ashtrays, insist on their use and discountenance smoking in bed?

10 Do you keep all medicines, tablets, liniments, disinfectants etc. Out of the reach of small children?

**WITH ALL THIS IN MIND A HAPPY AND SAFE
CHRISTMAS FROM THE MOTHERS' UNION**

As we consider 2024 stretching ahead:

Hope means expectancy when things are otherwise hopeless. -*G K Chesterton*

When you flee from temptation, be sure not to leave a forwarding address. - *Anon*

The quest for excellence is a mark of maturity. The quest for power is childish. -*Max Lucado*

There are no short cuts to spiritual maturity. It takes time to be holy. - *Erwin Lutzer*

Lose an hour in the morning, and you will spend all day looking for it. - *Richard Whately*

Peace is to the soul what health is to the body: a sign of balance and order. - *Guy Appere*

You are today where your thoughts have brought you; you will be tomorrow where your thoughts take you. - *James Allen*

Obedience is the key that unlocks the door to every profound spiritual experience. -*Dorothy Kerin*

The noblest revenge is to forgive. -*Thomas Fuller*

We know not what the future holds, but we do know who holds the future. -*Willis J Ray*

Christians may not see eye to eye, but they can walk arm in arm.- *Anon*

Miscellaneous observations on modern life

Carpe diem. Seize the day. Make your lives extraordinary. -*Dead Poets Society*

There's no place like home. -*The Wizard of Oz*

The greatest happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved, loved for ourselves, or rather, in spite of ourselves. -*Victor Hugo*

A weak mind is like a microscope, which magnifies trifling things but cannot receive great ones. - *Lord Chesterfield.*

The cross is 'I' crossed out. - *Anon*

Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we stoop than when we soar. - *William Wordsworth*

You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you don't trust enough. -*Frank Crane.*

Opportunity knocks but once, but temptation leans on the doorbell. -*Anon*

Persecution is the legacy bequeathed by Christ to his people. - *Thomas Watson*

I have had more trouble with myself than with any other man I have ever met. -*Dwight Moody*

The last thing one knows is what to put first. -*Blaise Pascal*

**THANK
YOU**



**TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR SUPPORT
TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR HELP
TO EVERYONE INVOLVED**

Seasonal Wishes from Dorothy, Susan and Alan.

SOCIAL and FUNDRAISING TEAM



FRIDAY DECEMBER 8TH 7.00PM

**“BIG”
CHRISTMAS SING
Concert**

ST JAMES CHURCH WHITEHAVEN

**COMMITTED2ROCK CHOIR
CATH and JOHN MARCANGELO
St.James Junior School Choir**

**PROCEEDS TO
FOOD BANK AND ST.JAMES COMMUNITY PANTRY**

**Tickets £5.00
Available from St Nicholas Centre
Rock Choir/St.James Junior School
St James Church (Susan Kitchen)**



WILD AT HEART. Number 7.

As we all know, the world's wildlife is in a parlous state, not least due to climate change, and this and most other problems are in turn due to our own mishandling, in many ways, over many years. World governments keep having meetings and in some cases take action, but it seems that other local, national and international bodies make more determined efforts, most of which are on the basis of voluntary contributions and often the hard work of volunteers. We have local bodies such as the Cumbria Wildlife Trust, national bodies such as the RSPB, (of which I formed the Cockermouth branch myself some 40 years ago!). Then there are international bodies, such as Flora and Fauna, of which Sir David Attenborough is Vice President, formed at the Natural History Museum, London, in 1903, which was a Founder Member of the World Conservation Union and a driving force in conservation ever since. In 2023, for example, FandF as it is known and its partners contributed to the conservation of more than 55million hectares of vital habitat – an area the size of France – at 335 sites in nearly 50 countries. Then there are bodies like the Gorilla Organisation, whose Rangers continually risk life and limb, when rescuing gorillas from snares laid by poachers, which means not only facing dangerous wild animals but the hazards of facing the poachers themselves as well as jungle and mountain, work in which a number of Rangers have lost their lives. Closer to home, we are facing ever increasing threats to our wildlife. Tens of thousands of wild birds have died as a result of the Avian Influenza outbreak which began last year; this has so far affected 21 of the 25 species of UK breeding seabirds. In fact overall we have lost 1 in 5 of our birds in the last 50 years including 90% of our Nightingales. There is also a new parasitic disease call Trichomonosis, which is affecting such birds as Greenfinches and Chaffinches – one reason why it is so vital to thoroughly clean and disinfect feeders and nest boxes. The information on how best to deal with all such problems calls for urgent action depending in turn on staff and equipment, all of which costs money, and thus the funds provided through modest membership fees and annual donations are vital. In return, not only do members have the satisfaction of knowing that they are playing an important part in the very future of our wildlife, for the benefit of future generations, but they are also provided with high quality illustrated reports of progress .But to finish on a local note – the extra heavy crop of Hawthorn berries this year will ensure frequent visits of mixed flocks of Fieldfares and Redwings, which will be noisily devouring them, as is their custom at this season.

Alan Gane.

LAKELAND AUTUMN.

On lower slopes, each hill
Rich bracken draws, as t'were a scarf,
Around itself in readiness cold blasts
Toward away.

Each mountain dons a purple hue
As heather mirrored mists
Lull ragged rocks to sleep,
Snug from Winter's coming snows.

While way aloft, so high
The eye is sorely taxed,
Tho' keen ears catch the eerie notes,
As geese, in formal majesty, fly south.

Rest well, great Fells,
As storm and tempest roar,
Sleep on, 'til Spring
Bursts open new life's door.

Alan Gane.



LOOKING AHEAD

Junior Choir

We are aiming to start a Junior Choir in January for children aged 8 years and over. The weekly practice night will be Fridays 6pm to 7pm, with a snack midway through. The expectation is that, once the children are ready they will sing at the 10am Parish Communion service on the first Sunday of each month. The choir practice will be led by our organist Sigi and Dave our Ordinand. First practice **FRIDAY 12TH JANUARY 2024**, in St James Church. Just turn up or book a place through the Parish Office.

Servers

We are looking for children aged 8 years and over to act as servers in church at the 10am Parish Communion Service. This could include being an acolyte (carrying a candle) and helping to lay the altar for communion. Training will be given. If you know of a child who would be interested in being a server, please talk to Rev Alison.

Toddler Church

Toddler Church will start up again on the 9th of January at 1:30 ~ 2:30pm in St Nicholas'. A great way for a gentle and infant friendly introduction to Church. Refreshments included too. If you require anymore information please contact Rev Alison or the Parish office.

Rectors Drop in

Reverend Alison's first Drop in session of the year, shall be on the 11th January 10:15 ~ 11:15 in St Nics. Then each first Thursday of the month after that. Its a lovely way to catch up, and have a chat with your Vicar.

COMING UP IN THE NEW YEAR (continued)

Mission Community

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity runs from Thursday 18th to 25th January. The theme this year is; "You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself". The material for services has been put together by Christian churches in Burkina Faso. The Whitehaven Mission Community are encouraging their members to get involved in this week of prayer. At the 9.30am Communion Service at St Nicholas on the 18th we will be start the week off, and on 25th, the feast of the conversion of St Paul we will close the week, and on Tuesday 23rd January, St Peter's Kells will be leading a service. Please do join us at one or all of these services.

To keep updated with all our events why not give us a follow on facebook

Parish of Whitehaven

St Nicholas Centre

St James Community Centre

**Also don't forget our website
Whitehavenparish.org.uk**

**All entries for the February mag must be submitted to Donna at the Parish Office
by January 15th .**
whitehavenparish@btinternet.com

TIME FOR A GIGGLE!!!

A vicar was extremely fond of Cherry Brandy and was promised a bottle by one of his parishioners, as long as he would acknowledge her gift in the weekly news letter. "Of course", said the vicar, who was true to his word. The following week an item in the news letter read. The vicar would like to thank Mrs. Smith for her donation of delicious cherries and for the spirit in which they were given.

Submitted by Doris Rumney



Why?

A young couple invited some people to dinner. At the table, the mother turned to their six-year-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?"
"I don't know what to say," the girl replied.
"Just say what you hear Mummy say," the father answered.
The daughter bowed her head and said, "O Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?"

Church-speak

MAGI: The most famous trio to attend a baby shower.
PEW: A medieval torture device still found in some churches.



AMEN: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.
BULLETIN: Your receipt for attending a church service.

Miscellaneous observations on daily life...

If you love someone, let them nap.

Take my advice. I'm not using it.

I'd like to help you out. Which way did you come in?

Cats know how we feel. They don't care, but they know.

Life is like a box of chocolates. Sometimes it makes you sick.

Some people like living in the past. For one thing, the rent is a lot cheaper.



**A Massive thank you to everyone who supported the
Christmas Fair, a whopping £947.00 was raised!!!!**

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ON THEIR MEANING AND ENJOY SINGING THEM.**

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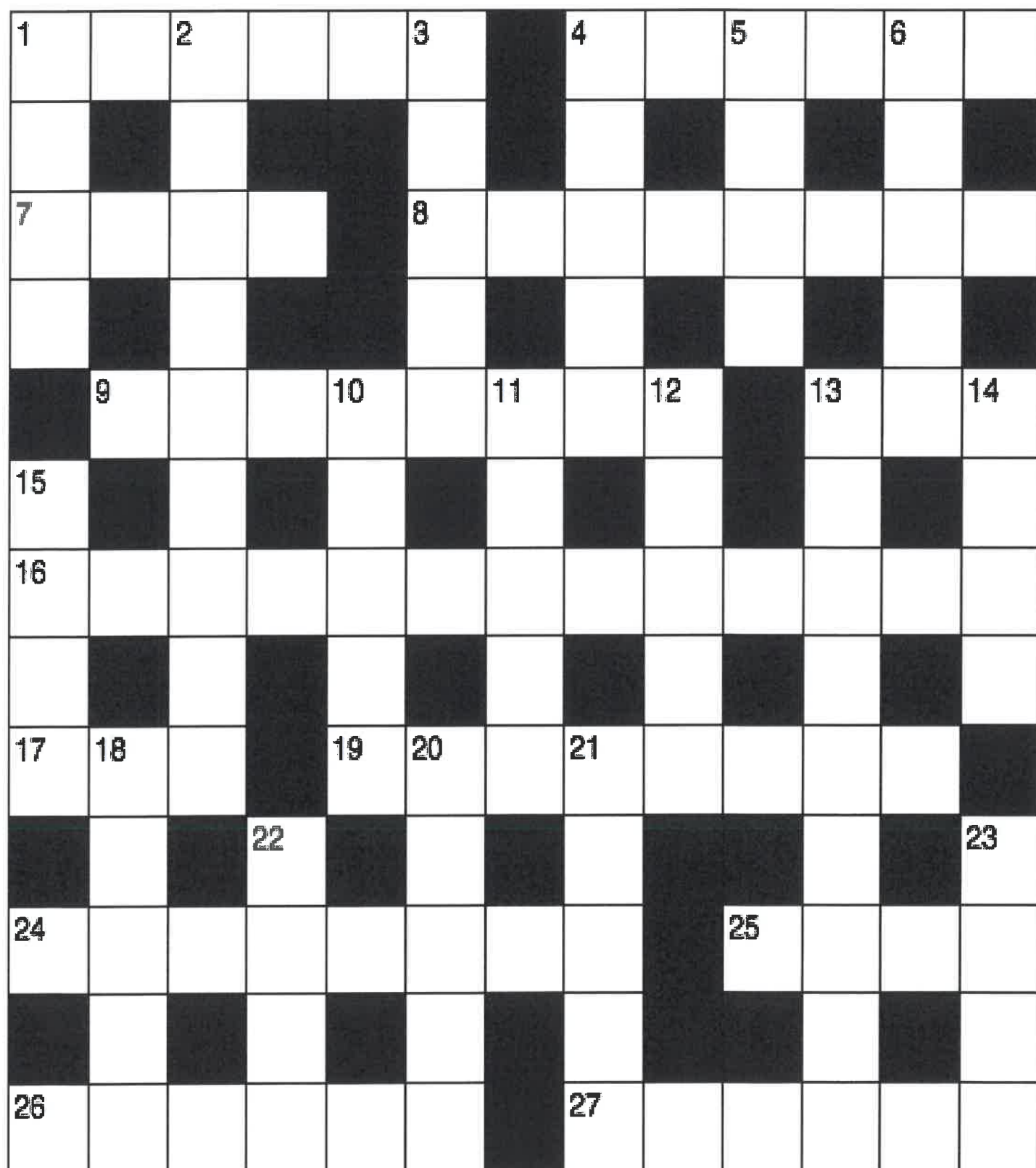
**WHY NOT COME AND JOIN US AND BRING A FRIEND
TOO**

LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.



Time for a cuppa and a puzzle..

(Answers are in the back of the mag)



Clues for the crossword...

Across

- 1 Rely (Psalm 62:7) (6)
- 4 'He stretches out the heavens like a — , and spreads them out like a tent to live in' (Isaiah 40:22) (6)
- 7 What the dove carried the olive leaf in, when it returned to Noah's ark (Genesis 8:11) (4)
- 8 Annoy (1 Samuel 1:6) (8)
- 9 Judah's last king, who ended his days as a blind prisoner in Babylon (Jeremiah 52:11) (8)
- 13 'They all — and were satisfied' (Luke 9:17) (3)
- 16 Eliphaz the Temanite was one; so was Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite (Job 2:11; 16:2) (4,9)
- 17 National Association of Evangelicals (of the USA) (1,1,1)
- 19 Popular song for New Year's Eve, Auld — — (4,4)
- 24 Able dock (anag.) (8)
- 25 The number of stones David chose for his confrontation with Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40) (4)
- 26 Elgar's best-known 'Variations' (6)
- 27 Soak (Isaiah 16:9) (6)

Down

- 1 Money owing (Deuteronomy 15:3) (4)
- 2 Conciliatory (Titus 3:2) (9)
- 3 'Do this, whenever you — it, in remembrance of me' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (5)
- 4 A group assisting in the governance of the Roman Catholic Church (5)
- 5 One of the gifts Joseph's brothers took with them on their second journey to Egypt (Genesis 43:11) (4)
- 6 'Reach out your hand and — — into my side. Stop doubting and believe' (John 20:27) (3,2)
- 10 Be outstandingly good (2 Corinthians 8:7) (5)
- 11 'What — — that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?' (Psalm 8:4) (2,3)
- 12 Horse's feet (Judges 5:22) (5)
- 13 Notice (Deuteronomy 17:4) (9)
- 14 Comes between 2 Chronicles and Nehemiah (4)
- 15 One of Israel's northern towns conquered by Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:20) (4)
- 18 Narnia's Lion (5)
- 20 One of the two rivers in which Naaman would have preferred to wash (2 Kings 5:12) (5)
- 21 Avarice—one of the evils that come from inside people (Mark 7:22) (5)
- 22 Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George (1,1,1,1)
- 23 Jacob's first wife (Genesis 29:23) (4)



The volunteers at St Nicholas's Café, would like to thank all our customers for their support during 2023 and wish everyone a happy Christmas.

The Café will be closed from the 20th December and reopen on the 10th January. We look forward to seeing everyone in the new year.



The Parish office will close at 2:15 on the 20th December and open again on the 5th January.



New year prayer 2024

Lord,

We stand on the threshold of a new year. Some of us are excited, some of us are fearful. We don't know what 2024 will bring, but we know that there will be ups and downs, joy and sadness mixed in with the months.

As we step into this new year, help us to keep our eyes fixed on you; to know for certain that, whatever happens, you will be in it with us, not watching from the sidelines, but right in the middle of it with us.

Help us to put our trust in what Jesus did on the cross, maybe for the first time, maybe as a New Year re-commitment, so that we will know that nothing can separate us from you. Let the storm rage, let the sun shine – we are safe! In the name of the risen, living Lord Jesus. Amen.

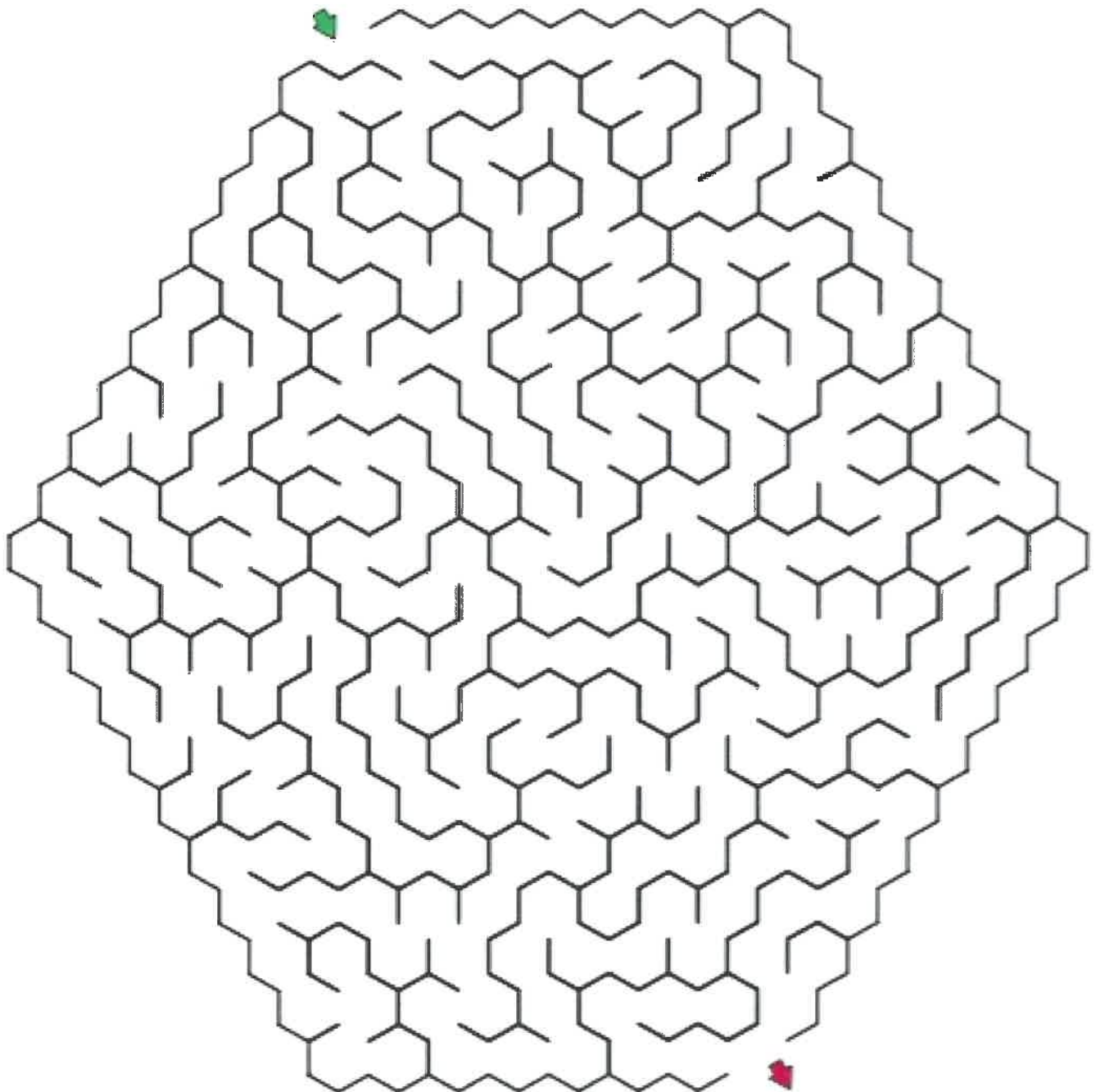


Crossword answers... How well did you do ?

ACROSS: 1, Depend. 4, Canopy. 7, Beak. 8, Irritate. 9, Zedekiah. 13, Ate. 16, Job's comforter. 17, NAE. 19, Lang Syne. 24, Blockade. 25, Five. 26, Enigma. 27, Drench.

DOWN: 1, Debt. 2, Peaceable. 3, Drink. 4, Curia. 5, Nuts. 6, Put it. 10, Excel. 11, Is man. 12, Hoofs. 13, Attention. 14, Ezra. 15, Ijon. 18, Aslan. 20, Abana. 21, Greed. 22, GCMG. 23, Leah.

A little maze.. Don't get lost!!!





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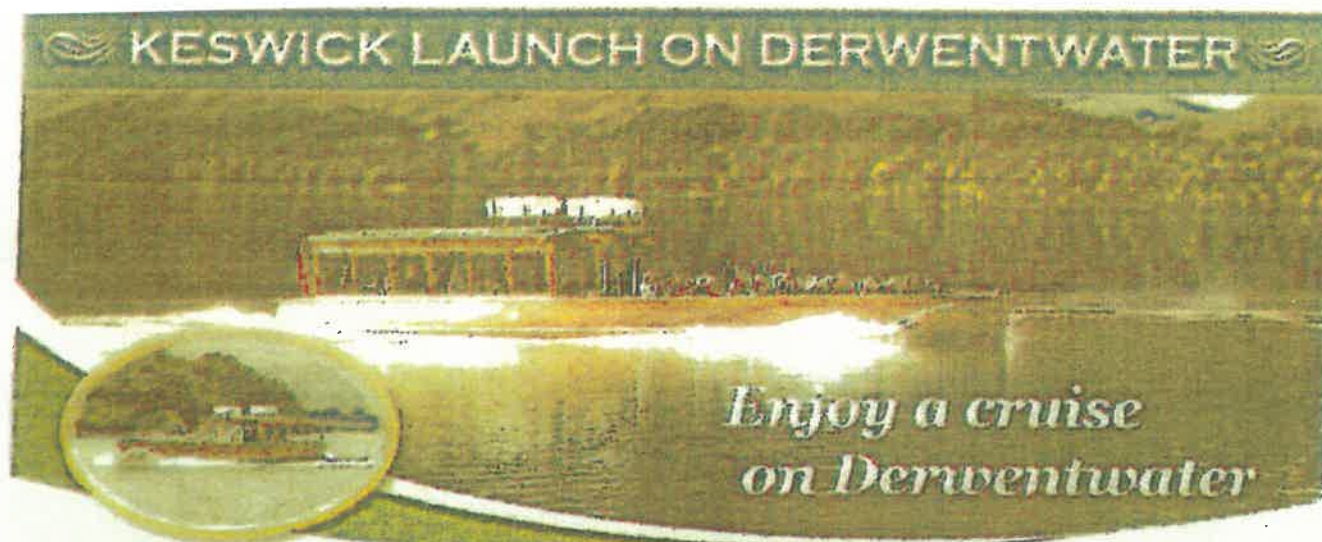
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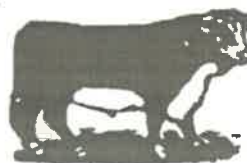
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**For Information please find us at
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