

# PARISH LINK



The Magazine of  
St James Chapelthorpe



# DECEMBER

# 2023

50p

## THE PARISH OF CHAPELTHORPE



Vicar	Rev'd KEVIN GREAVES kevin.greaves@leeds.anglican.org	01924 256031
Lay Licenced Minister (LLM)	Mr JOHN SEACOME	257000
Churchwarden	VICKY STUART	Contacted via the website 'Enquiry Form'
Churchwarden, PCC Secretary	Miss SANDRA COGGIN	07960 029126
Parish Safeguarding Officer and Children's Coordinator	Miss SANDRA COGGIN	07939 381395
Treasurer	DONNA RICHARDSON	Contact via Rev'd Kevin Greaves 01924 256031
Organist	Mrs MARGARET POUCHER	01226 382136
Verger	Mrs BEV WAINWRIGHT	01924 240776
Sacristan	Mr KEITH WAINWRIGHT	01924 240776
Pastoral Team	07961 292224	

**Parish website** [www.stjameschapelthorpe.org.uk](http://www.stjameschapelthorpe.org.uk)



My Dear Friends,

*Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat  
Please put a penny in the old man's hat  
If you haven't got a penny, then a ha'penny will do  
If you haven't got a ha'penny, then God bless you!*



We have all sung that song as a child with the anticipation of Christmas just around the corner. The song itself appeared in print in 1882 but is accredited to be a song known to many going back possibly a 100 years before. Like so many children's songs such as 'Humpty Dumpty' and 'Mary, Mary Quite Contrary' often have a darker side to them. Often recounting a tale or a hidden message was done through songs as there was less chance of words been added or forgotten. The song at the beginning of my letter conveys to me a gentle Dickensian scene a bit like 'A Christmas Carol.' Now read it again, isn't it really telling us the story of someone first of all being comfortable enough to be able to afford a plump goose, and then we have the man with his hat wanting some pennies to survive, then it turns to us as the third person and says

'If you haven't got a ha'penny, then God bless you!'

Hinting that we may also be in a bad place and the only help will be from God. That song is over 200 years old and has anything really changed. The rich are getting richer the poor are getting poorer, across the world. I think most of us were hoping for better times after the coronavirus pandemic. Most of us were hoping for less stressful times; the war in the Ukraine continues, the conflict in the Holy Land which started in October, the continued rise in the cost of living, governmental instability the list goes on and on. It has been a testing year for many, and I hope and pray for better times ahead. As a church we continue to support our local foodbank, to pray for all those in who suffer through the hands of another and by mother nature. We may look at our world and think 'what next?'

It is something of a comfort to me to remember that Jesus was born into a world that was equally stressful. Politically, the region of the Holy Land

had been conquered by the Romans and the Jewish people had been subjugated, ruled by a weak vassal state that paid tributes to the Roman occupiers. Socially, the influence of Greek culture was growing among those living in the Holy Land, which some saw a threat to Jewish identity. And religiously, within the Jewish community there were tensions between different factions, each seeking to win over the local Jewish population to their way of doing things. So, when Jesus was born in that stable all those years ago, tensions were high, and there was likely to be a sense of deep unease and anxiety. However, there was also a great sense of hope for the coming of the Messiah, who would come and free the Jewish people from their oppressors and usher in a new era of peace and prosperity. As it says in the prophecy of Isaiah,

"For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6).

Jesus is the Prince of Peace born into a world that was full of anxiety and he brought calm. He gives us hope for a better world. The peace which Jesus brings is something that Jesus continues to share with us. Jesus wants us to feel safe and secure in the knowledge of his unending love for us, and he is with us and shares with us all our fears, our anxieties, as well as all our joys and celebrations. The problem for us is that when we are worried or afraid it can sometimes seem hard to find and feel the peace and love that Jesus has for us. At times we need to stop what is that we are doing to allow ourselves the time to find Jesus and the calm that he brings - by sitting silently, through prayer and with patience.

I pray that at this time of Advent, and especially when Christmas eventually comes, you may all be able to feel the love of the Prince of Peace.

I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas, filled with the joy of the Christ-child.

Your friend and priest  
Kevin



## Advent and Christmas

Below is an overview of services within the benefice, we hope you will be able to join us.

Service/Event	Location	Date	Day	Time
Carol Service	St James'	17th Dec	Sunday	4.00pm
Carol Service	St Peter's	19th Dec	Tuesday	7.00pm
Crib Service	St Peter's	23rd Dec	Saturday	4.00pm
Combined Eucharist	St Peter's	24th Dec	Sunday	10.30am
Christingle Service	St James'	24th Dec	Sunday	5.00pm
First Mass of Christmas	St Peter's	24th Dec	Sunday	9.15pm
Midnight Mass	St James'	24th Dec	Sunday	11.15pm
Christmas Day Mass (combined service)	St James'	25th Dec	Monday	9.30am
Combined Eucharist	St Peter's	31st Dec	Sunday	10.30am
Combined Eucharist Baptism of Christ	St Peter's	8th Jan	Monday	7.00pm

The midweek Eucharist between Christmas and New Year is cancelled. All services will start again in the New Year at there normal times.

## Holy Days

24th December

Christmas Eve

How do you celebrate Christmas Eve? It has its own customs, the most popular of which is going to Midnight Mass, or the Christ-Mas. This is the only Mass of the year that is allowed to start after sunset. In Catholic countries such as Spain, Italy and Poland, Midnight Mass is in fact the most important church service of the entire Christmas season, and many people traditionally fast beforehand. In other countries, such as Belgium and Denmark, people dine during the evening, and then go on to the Midnight Service.

The British are behind some countries when it comes to exchanging presents: in Germany, Sweden and Portugal the custom is to exchange on Christmas Eve. But the British are ahead of Serbia and Slovakia, where the Christmas tree is not even brought into the house and decorated until Christmas Eve.



Yule logs are not so popular since the decline of the fireplace, but traditionally it was lit on Christmas Eve from a bit of the previous year's log, and then would be burned non-stop until 12th Night (6th January).



Tradition also decreed that any greenery such as holly, ivy or mistletoe must wait until Christmas Eve until being brought into the house.

## Holy Days

25th December

And there were shepherds

Luke's story of the birth of Jesus is brilliantly told – the angel's visit to Mary to tell her she would be mother of the long-promised Messiah, the old priest in the Temple told by another angel that his wife would have a son to be called 'John', who would prepare the people of Israel for that event, and then Mary and Joseph making the 60 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, as required by the Roman census. When they got there, no room at the inn, and they settled instead for a convenient stable, where Mary gave birth to a boy child.

Suddenly, Luke changes the tone. 'And there were shepherds ...' – that's what he actually wrote, just like that. 'And there were shepherds', doing exactly what shepherds do, looking after their flocks by night. But this night was different: yet another angelic message – a call to abandon their sheep and go into Bethlehem to see the baby Messiah. They were given directions and a 'sign' to identify Him. He would be lying in a feeding trough. Well, at least they would recognise that.

And why the shepherds, in this glorious story of our salvation? Because the event needed witnesses, and the chosen witnesses would be this bunch of scruffy, smelly shepherds straight from the sheep-pen. Nothing could speak more eloquently of God's purpose than that. This was not a Saviour for the strong, rich and powerful, but for everybody. The carpenter and his wife guarded the Saviour of the world, and the very first witnesses were not kings or priests but a handful of shepherds.



By David Winter

## The Rectory, St James the Least of All

On how to make the most of carol singing

My dear Nephew Darren

Carol singing is not what it used to be. My fond memories of a group of choristers, muffled in scarves and overcoats, carrying lanterns, and walking from door to door in the snow, as they sang 'While shepherds watched ...' had to be suddenly revised when I saw your own music group, in T-shirts inscribed with 'Jesus loves You', singing 'Little donkey', in your shopping centre. I suspect any money you raised would just about have paid for the electricity used to power your banks of electronic equipment. Singing in the main square of the Centre next to the fountain may have looked good, but it seemed to mean that the choir members were obliged to make constant trips to the lavatory.

Here at St James the Least of All, carol singing is regarded as a staff perk for the choir; the year when the Boys' Brigade tried to break their monopoly was suppressed with a ruthlessness that would have impressed Genghis Kahn.

Our annual carol-singing route involves months of meticulous planning. We find that a transparent collection box is vital, so that donors can see what earlier patrons have given. This means that those who are bound to put in notes must be visited first – 'pour encourager les autres'. It also needs a detachable base, so that if coppers are given, they can be removed from sight before the next call.

Those homes that contain several children are visited just after bedtime, so that parents will give generously simply to get the choir to go somewhere else. Veiled threats to stay and sing more carols (unless they give generously) are usually very effective. Getting whoever looks the most innocent and photogenic to ring the bell and ask for money is a far more subtle way of ensuring a donation than planting any number of mafia lookalikes (such as our church treasurer) on the doorstep.

The choir always finishes its evening at the local pub – but again, the timing must be carefully managed. Too early and there will only be the landlord, his wife, and their Labrador to listen; too late and people will be so full of Christmas cheer that any carols will be hi-jacked and become the equivalent of back-of-the bus rugby songs.

Your loving uncle,  
Eustace



## Poetry Corner

### The Robin on my Christmas Card



### *The Robin on my Christmas Card*

*Upon a postbox, red –  
He fixed me with a gaze quite hard  
And this is what he said:*

*“O, viewer of this Christmas card  
“I bet that you don’t know  
“Why I upon this card am here  
“To bring a yuletide glow?”*

*I said to him, “O birdie, do  
“Reveal your secret deep  
“I see you all the yearlong through  
“And hear your joyful cheep!”*

*“So why, O Robin, tell me why  
“When you’re around all year  
“On lawn, or branch, or in the sky  
“Why now this Christmas cheer?”*

*He said to me that long ago  
The postmen you would see  
Their jackets vivid red would glow –  
“In fact, they looked like me!”*

*“From then till now my bright red breast  
“And cheery trilling tweet  
“Has come upon the Christmas fest  
“To bring a Christmas treat!”*

*By Nigel Beeton*

## All in the month of December

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.

**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.

**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.

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

**Also 20 years ago**, on 13th December 2003 that during the Iraq War, former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was captured by US forces, who found him hiding in a hole at a farmhouse in ad-Dawr, near his hometown of Tikrit.

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

## Beatrix Potter

It was 80 years ago this month, on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1943, that Beatrix Potter, the children's writer and illustrator, died. Her animal characters such as Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin, Mrs Tiggly-Winkle, and Jemima Puddle-Duck brought her worldwide fame – and made her loved by children right round the world.



Helen Beatrix Potter (28 July 1866 – 22 December 1943) had enjoyed an upper-middle-class childhood, but it was also solitary. Instead of access to childhood friends, she was given numerous pets and spent holidays in Scotland and the Lake District, where she learned to love landscape, flora and fauna.

Beatrix Potter was in her thirties when she first self-published *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1902. Its immense success meant that she began writing and illustrating children's books full-time. In all, Potter wrote more than 60 books. Her best-known ones were her 23 children's books. Her books went on to sell more than 250 million copies. When in 1903 Peter Rabbit was made into a patented stuffed toy, he became the first fictional character to have this honour.

Potter used the sales of her books and a legacy from an aunt in 1905 to buy Hill Top Farm in Near Sawrey, a village in the Lake District. Over the following decades, she bought many additional farms, in order to preserve the unique hill country landscape from developers.

In 1913, when she was 47, Beatrix married William Heelis, a local solicitor in Hawkshead. By now she was also a prize-winning breeder of Herdwick sheep and a farmer.

In 1943, when she was 77, Potter died of pneumonia and heart disease at her home in Near Sawrey. She left most of her property to the National Trust, which means that she deserves the credit for so much of the land that now makes up the Lake District National Park.

More at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/helen-beatrix-potter-1794#>

## The story behind 'The Night Before Christmas'

It was 200 years ago this Christmas, on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1823, that the famous poem '*The Night Before Christmas*' was first published (anonymously) in the Sentinel newspapers in Troy, New York.

It was light-hearted and full of fun, and not at all what you might have expected from its author, Clement Clarke Moore.

For Moore had been born in 1779 into a prominent New York family. His father, Benjamin Moore, the Episcopal bishop of New York, had even taken part in the inauguration of George Washington as the nation's first president.

As for Clement Moore, he was a scholar of Hebrew and a professor of Oriental and Greek literature at the General Theological Seminary in Manhattan.

But on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1822, the night that Moore composed the poem, he was traveling home from Greenwich Village. He had gone there to buy a turkey, in order to fill the last of a number of baskets that his family donated to the poor during the Christmas season.

Perhaps Moore was inspired by the plump, bearded Dutchman who took him by 'taxi' sleigh on his mercy errand through the snow-covered streets of New York City that night. But whatever it was, Moore scribbled down 'A Visit from St. Nicholas' for the amusement of his own six children, to whom he read the poem when he got home that evening. His description of St Nicholas drew upon the Dutch-American and Norwegian traditions of a magical, gift-giving figure who appears at Christmas time.

The following year, Christmas 1823, the poem was made public, without his permission. Moore was said to have been at first embarrassed to be named as the author of such a light-hearted verse, and then astonished by its quick rise to popularity. He finally published it under his own name in 1844.

*...But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night."*



# ST JAMES CHURCH

## Social Committee



Saturday December 2nd	Christmas Fair 1pm - 3.30pm
Saturday January 27th	Table top sale 1pm - 3pm
Saturday February 24th	Coffee morning with flower arranging demonstration 10.30 - 12 noon
Saturday March 16th	Elysian Singers 7pm
Sunday March 24th	Home-made cake stall after service

*All St James' Church social activities are detailed on the notice boards, both inside and outside of church.*

### LIGHT LUNCH

*Bev, Margaret and their band of helpers would like to thank all who have supported them throughout the year.  
They would like to wish everyone a joyful and peaceful Christmas.*

*The Light Lunches will resume on THURSDAY MARCH 24th 2024*



## CHRISTMAS FAIR

**Saturday 2nd December  
1pm - 3.30pm**

**St James' Church**

***Come along and get into  
the festive spirit.***

**Many traditional stalls, including Raffle, Lucky bags, Lucky Dip, Christmas gifts and decorations, children's games, toys and SANTA! Refreshments and lots more.**

**Santa arrives at 1.45pm.  
Come and visit Father Christmas in his grotto (£3 per child)  
Each child will receive a gift**

**We look forward to seeing you there!**

***All proceeds to St James' Church***



## TABLE TOP SALE

Saturday January 27th

1-3pm

St James' Church

Come and sell your unwanted items from a table top instead of a car boot.

To book a table (please book early as these are limited)

**Contact: Katie Jones 07594250813**

Trestle tables: £10

Small tables: £5

The church will be open from 10.30am for all stall holders.

**Sorry, electrical goods cannot be sold in church**



### CRIGGLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meets at 6pm on the first Tuesday of the month except in August and the 2nd Tuesday in January in The Village Institute, High Street, Crigglestone, WF4 3EB. Anyone wishing to bring any issue to the attention of the Parish Council can do so during the 15 minutes public participation session held at the beginning of the monthly council meeting.

The vacancy for a parish councillor is still open. Could you be interested? If you would like to know more, then please contact the Clerk on 07419 585 227.

Community Hero Award 2023 – Nominees will be considered during December with the winner's presentation taking place on Tuesday 6th February 2024 6pm at the Village Institute, Crigglestone.

The Parish's Public Rights of Way The Planning and Rights of Way Committee are undertaking to research and ensure the parish's Public Rights of Way/Bridleways/Access paths are properly registered with WMDC through the Definitive Map Modification Order process before the closing date of 2026. This is a big undertaking and will take a considerable amount of time, but it is worth it historically and for the future benefit of the parish residents.

6TH JUNE 2024 D-DAY 80th Anniversary. Details of how we will be marking the event will follow in due course.

#### Christmas Trees in the community

Painthorpe Community were again successful in their Parish Council Grant Aid application to fund their community tree.

Calder Grove will have a tree this year in addition to Durkar, Hall Green and Newmillerdam.

The 'Nelson' will have a replacement tree courtesy of Freedom Contractors who recently conducted ground works which sadly resulted in the current tree's demise.





**Keep yourselves safe, be aware and report anything suspicious, unusual or concerning dial 101**  
**In an Emergency always dial 999**

**Safe Scheme (additional policing for our Parish)**

The Safe Scheme report from PC Firth (Safe Scheme Co-ordinator) for the preceding months can be viewed on the Parish Council website at <https://www.crigglestonepc.org/police-safe-scheme/>



**'101 live chat' Contact the Police via the internet - Type in the link**

[www.westyorkshire.police.uk/101livechat](http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/101livechat) This gives direct access to the Police without waiting on the phone, you can type in the details which can be distributed speedily to the appropriate Neighbourhood Police Team.

The more notifications 101 receives, the higher the incident figures show for that particular concern. This enables the Police to delegate officers to attend/make further enquiries.

**Need a venue for your party, gathering, coffee morning or class?  
 Then look no further and contact**



**Crigglestone Village Institute**  
 Charity Registered No. 510193  
 Tel: Clerk to the Trustees 07384 977 412  
 36 HIGH STREET, CRIGGLESTONE, WF4 3EB

A venue that has undergone a noticeable upgrade and which will meet your needs when holding your children's parties, coffee mornings/afternoon teas, regular user group sessions or as a small training venue. Kitchen facilities, baby changing and ample parking to the rear of the building with disabled access are available.

**Party/one off bookings:** Contact the Caretaker Mrs Gordon on 01924 257350 between 6pm -9pm Monday to Friday. Please note a £10 deposit and completed booking form is required to secure the booking. Visit the website for the hiring policy and booking form.

**Regular bookings:** Contact Claire Cooper - Clerk to the Village Institute Trustees email: [vicc@crigglestonepc.org](mailto:vicc@crigglestonepc.org) [Tel: 07384 977 412](tel:07384977412). Please see the website <https://www.crigglestonepc.org/village-institute/> for the timetable of individual groups and their contact details.

**CRIGGLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Would like to wish everyone a very enjoyable festive season and a healthy and hopeful 2024!**



## How Father Christmas got where he is today

One person you are bound to run into this Christmas season is Father Christmas. These days he seems to frequent shopping malls and garden centres. If he looks tired, just remember that he has been around a long time and gone through a lot of transformations.

Father Christmas wasn't always the red-suited, white-bearded star of the retail trade that he is today. He began life as Nicholas, born way back about AD260 in Patara, an important port on the southern coast of what is now Turkey. When his parents died and left him a fortune, Nicholas gave it away to the poor. He became a bishop of the nearby city of Myra, where he almost certainly suffered persecution and imprisonment at the hand of the Roman Emperor Diocletian. Nicholas was a serious theologian: he was a participant at the First Council of Nicaea, which formulated the Creed which we still say today. He even, reportedly, slapped another bishop in a squabble over the exact nature of the Trinity.

Nicholas died in Myra about AD343, but the stories of his generosity and kindness were just beginning.

One enduring tale tells of the three girls whom he rescued from certain prostitution by giving them gold for their dowries. When the father confronted him to thank him, Nicholas said he should thank God alone.

In the UK, Nicholas became the basis for Father Christmas, who emerged in Victorian times as a jolly-faced bearded character. Meanwhile, Dutch and German settlers had taken him to America with them as Sinter Klaas and Sankt Nicklas.

It was in America that Nicholas received his final two great breaks into real stardom. The first was when the Rev Clement C Moore, a New York Episcopal minister, turned from his life-work of writing a Hebrew/English lexicon, to write a fun poem for his children one Christmas. His 'The Visit of St Nicholas' is now universally known by its first line: 'T'was the Night Before Christmas'.

From Clement Moore we discovered that St Nicholas is round and pink-cheeked and white-bearded, and that he travels at night with sleigh, reindeer and a sack of toys on his back. It was Clement Moore who also revealed that St Nicholas enters houses down chimneys and fills children's stockings with toys and sweets.

So how did we find out that Father Christmas wears red? That was the US Coca-Cola advertising campaign of 1931, who finally released the latest, up-to-date pictures of Father Christmas: wearing a bright red, fur-trimmed coat and a large belt.



These days, it is good that Father Christmas uses reindeer and doesn't have to pay for petrol. In order to get round all the children in the world on Christmas Eve, he will have to travel 221 million miles at an average speed of 1279 miles a second, 6,395 times the speed of sound. For all those of us who are already exhausted just rushing around getting ready for Christmas, that is a sobering thought.



## Where did Christmas cards come from?



Christmas cards have a history which may surprise you: their origins are not of the Church, but of the Post Office and railways.

Of course, very early 'Christmas cards' had been around for hundreds of years, in the form of a simple exchange of Christmas greetings in private letters. The earliest such letter on record was written in England in 1534.

In 1611 a HUGE Christmas card made a one-off appearance. It measured a whopping 33" by 24", and was given to King James I of England (who was also King James VI of Scotland). It featured an illustration of a rose, four poems, a song, and a Christmas message for the king and his son.

Then in 1843 came the creation of Christmas cards as we know them today. One enterprising man was responsible for this: Sir Henry Cole, a senior civil servant who had helped launch the 'Public Record Office', now called the Post Office.

Sir Henry Cole helped to introduce the Penny Post, as it was called. Until then, only rich people could afford the Post, but with the building of the railways, which carried far more packages than a horse and cart (and went much faster), suddenly the Penny Post became possible.

Sir Henry wanted to encourage 'ordinary' people to use the new service. So he came up with the bright idea of a creating a simple card that people could send each other for Christmas. His friend, John Horsley, was an artist, who designed a three-panel card. Two panels depicted people caring for the poor, and the middle panel showed a family enjoying a large Christmas dinner.

They printed about 1000 cards that first year, and advertised under the slogan: 'Just published, a Christmas Congratulations Card; or picture emblematical of old English festivity to perpetuate kind recollections between dear friends!'

The cards sold for one shilling each and could be posted to friends and family for a Penny. There was an immediate, warm response from the public.

Printing methods improved, and by 1860 Christmas cards were produced in large quantities. By 1870 the cost of posting one had dropped to half a penny, and the custom was rapidly gaining popularity. By the early 1900s, the custom had spread across Europe.

The first cards usually included a Nativity scene, and in late Victorian times, robins and snow-scenes. Robins were chosen because the postmen in those days were nick-named 'Robin Postmen', because of their red uniforms.

Christmas cards appeared in the USA in the late 1840s. They were mass produced from 1875, and in 1915 John C Hall and two of his brothers created Hallmark Cards, which today offers 2,000 different designs of Christmas card.

Charity Christmas cards began in Denmark in the early 1900s. They spread to Sweden and Norway, and then on throughout Europe and America.

Last year the Royal Mail estimated that it had delivered 150 million cards during the Christmas period.

## IN THE NEWS!



### Stop mist on your windscreen

If you will be out in your car a lot this Christmas, here's an easy way to stop your windscreen from misting up:

Simply clean it with shaving foam. It provides a protective barrier which stops mist forming. Ice hockey players use it to stop their face masks from steaming up while they're on the ice.

It's easy to do. Put a good dollop of shaving foam onto a clean towel, and then wipe it all over the windscreen. Then take a second clean towel, and gently wipe off the shaving foam. This leaves a protective barrier, but it will need to be regularly reapplied, to continue to work.

This tip can be found on the RAC website: [www.rac.co.uk](http://www.rac.co.uk)



## On the Feast of Stephen

26th December

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

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

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

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



*handed down to us' (the Law). It's always dangerous to criticise a monument or a custom!*

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

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



Thank you to Irene Wainright for supplying the following articles.

## The meaning of Christmas

Jesus, I need to get this off my chest,  
because if I don't I'll get very depressed.  
I know it's your birthday and we all should have some fun  
But I'm oh so glad Christmas is over and done.

I've been at it for weeks buying cards, gifts and food.  
I've spent all my money, which isn't so good.  
In return for the great gifts I bought for my mates,  
I was given some things that I really hate!

Stockings with lycra and seams up the back,  
And fingerless gloves in red, green and black.  
The bath cubes and talc will last me for years,  
And I've got white cotton hankies coming out of my ears!

My mother went over the top with the bird;  
The size of it's legs was really absurd!  
They hung well over the sides of the tin,  
So we hacked them off, just to fit them all in.

It fed us all week and was juicy and tender;  
We might still be eating it come next December!  
After lunch the old folk all dropped off to sleep,  
leaving congealing dishes piled high in a heap.

Santas, snowmen and reindeer amused all the kids,  
but depleted the stocks of the National Grid.  
Who'd have thought a small babe born so long ago  
Could be our excuse to put on a show.

*But the tinsel and glitter and bright lights we see  
have taken the word CHRIST out of CHRISTMAS  
for me.*



## Why Jesus is better than Santa Claus



Santa lives at the North Pole...

**JESUS is everywhere.**

Santa rides in a sleigh...

**JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.**

Santa comes but once a year...

**JESUS is an ever present help.**

Santa fills your stockings with goodies...

**JESUS supplies all your needs.**

Santa comes down the chimney uninvited...

**JESUS stands at your door and knocks, and then enters your heart when invited.**

You have to wait in line to see Santa...

**JESUS is as close as the mention of his name.**

Santa let's you sit on his lap...

**JESUS lets you rest in his arms.**

Santa has a belly like a bowl full of jelly...

**JESUS has a heart full of love.**

All Santa can offer is HO HO HO...

**JESUS offers health, help and hope.**

Santa says 'You better not cry'...

**JESUS says 'Cast all your cares on me for I care for you.**

Santa may make you chuckle but...

**JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.**

While Santa puts gifts under your tree...

**JESUS became our gift and died on a tree-the cross.**

**So we do need to put Christ back in CHRISTmas;**

**Jesus is still the reason for the season.**

*'For God so loved the world, that he have His one and only Son, that whoever  
believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life'. (John 3:16).*

# WORDSEARCH FOR DECEMBER 2023

The story of 'Silent Night'



This much-loved carol comes from Austria, where it was first sung as Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht on Christmas Eve, 1818. It was written by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at St Nicholas parish church, in the village of Oberndorf bei Salzburg. As Christmas 1818 approached, he asked the local schoolmaster, Franz Xaver Gruber, to compose a melody for his carol. Gruber was organist in the nearby village of Arnsdorf, and so was happy to oblige. On Christmas Eve they presented the carol to the church during the midnight mass. The carol went on to become loved world-wide; and the version sung by Bing Crosby is the third best-selling single of all time.



Deadline date for inclusion in the next edition of Parish Link is:  
**December 15th 2023**  
 Editor:  
*Kenneth and Dawn Poucher*  
 Any contributions can be forwarded to  
 Rev. Kevin Greaves, David Wainwright,  
 Keith Wainwright or Margaret Poucher

- |         |           |          |          |
|---------|-----------|----------|----------|
| SILENT  | SUNG      | FATHER   | MIDNIGHT |
| NIGHT   | STILLE    | JOSEPH   | MASS     |
| LOVED   | NACHT     | MOHR     | MELODY   |
| CAROL   | HEILIGE   | YOUNG    | SINGLE   |
| AUSTRIA | CHRISTMAS | PRIEST   | BING     |
| FIRST   | EVE       | ORGANIST | VERSION  |
|         |           |          | THIRD    |

## SUDOKU

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

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## November Puzzle Answers

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

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

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

Switchboard 01924 306 090  
Typetalk 18001 08458 506 506

Email Address: [es-contactcentre@wakefield.gov.uk](mailto:es-contactcentre@wakefield.gov.uk)

### Environmental Services (24 Hrs) - 0345 8 506 506

Abandoned vehicles, Air Pollution, Anti-Social Behaviour, Blocked Drains, Bulky Refuse, Car Parking, Cesspools, Cleansing, Clinical Waste, Dead Animal Collection, Dog Fouling, Fallen Trees/Branches, Floods, Food & Hygiene, Fly Tipping, Graffiti, Grass left after Cutting, Highways Maintenance, Hypodermic Needles Disposal, Ice on Footpaths, Leisure Enquiries, Litter, Noise, Noxious waste, Overflowing Litter bins, Overhanging Vegetation, Pest Control, Potholes, Recycling, Refuse Collection, Septic Tanks Skip Hire, Snow Clearance, Spilled Refuse, Street Cleaning, Traffic Matters, Traffic Signals, Weeds Overgrown.

### Social Care Direct (24 Hrs) - 0345 8 503 503

Adult Services, Advice, Assessment of need, Bus Passes \*Disabled), Children's Services, Community Meals Service, Fostering, Guidance, Help with Adoption, HIV/Aids, Home Care

### Wakefield District Housing (24 Hrs) - 0845 8 507 507

For all housing enquiries including: Allocations, Arrears, Lettings, Repairs, Tenancy Issues

Citizens Advice.....0844 499 4138

Council tax & Housing Benefits.....0345 8 504 504

Gas Emergency.....0800 111 999

Floodline.....0345 988 1188

NHS (24 hr non emergency).....111

Metro Access Bus.....0113 348 1903

Police (non emergency number).....101

Street Lighting Faults.....0800 783 1654