



# **St Mark's Parish Magazine**

**December 2019**

# THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT MARK, REIGATE

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## Your Views & Contributions

Next issue will be available from Sunday 5 January 2020  
All contributions to the editor by Friday 13 December 2019

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## LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends,

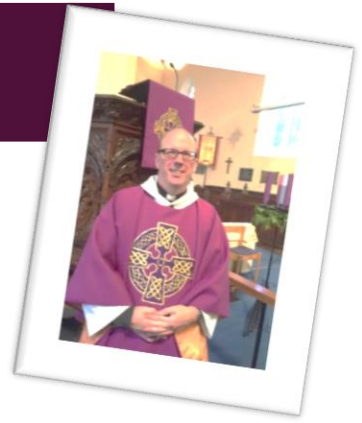
We don't really have to wait for anything, these days. Apps downloaded on a smartphone keep us updated as to precisely which trains have been cancelled or are running late. They can tell us how long our journey by car will take. Technology enables delivery companies to predict to within 30 minutes when the parcel will arrive. We no longer need to look out expectantly for the arrival of a letter from the person we love, since email is instantaneous. Once, an international phone call had to be booked in advance and the family waited for the appointed time to wish a daughter in Australia a happy birthday down a crackling line. No need to wait for that now. We're told that we can 'take the waiting out of wanting' if we only sign up for a credit card. A properly organised life, using all that the most modern technology has to offer, needs no waiting. This is just as well since we're all so busy that waiting seems to be a frustrating waste of time. Instant gratification can be ours. We also crave certainty and so we desire control over our future lives. This need to exercise control is borne of fear and anxiety about the unknown. We want to do things that will bring about our desired ends at a time and in a manner of our own choosing.

We are entering a mysterious, poignant, wonderful time of waiting in the season of Advent. A dark time of the year with short days and little sunlight. We wait, in the darkness, for the day when we celebrate the birth of Christ in that holy night, when the Word became flesh. Advent is a season of penance as we prepare to welcome the baby who was to become the Saviour of the world.

We can be sure that the 25th of December will arrive. But Advent is also a time for remembering that we are awaiting the Second Coming of Christ: that is open-ended waiting. In this waiting, we must have faith that Christ has died, Christ is risen and Christ will come again. We must give up control and trust in God's perspective of time. In holding that trust, we might take the opportunity in this season of Advent to trust also that God's perspective includes plans for us. We can have no control over this process but must let our infinitely patient God define our lives according to his unending and unconditional love of us as individuals. Henri Nouwen said that "we wait, actively present to the moment, trusting that new things will happen to us, new things that are far beyond our own imagination, fantasy or prediction. That, indeed, is a very radical stance toward life in a world pre-occupied with control".

It is not easy to let go; there is a fear that, if we do, we might drown, or get lost, or fall off a cliff. In this season of Advent, in the darkness, we might pray for faith that we are held in God's hands and that we may trust the unknown enough to enter it.

With every blessing.



## The origins of our Christmas traditions

As we look towards our Christmas celebrations we will be enjoying a number of traditions within our families. From puddings to presents, this article looks at the origins of some of our festive favourites.



Christmas pudding – Also known as Plum Pudding was originated from a 14<sup>th</sup> century savoury porridge which contained beef and dried fruits. It evolved over time to become thicker and include oats and sweet ingredients. Tradition says it should be made on 'Stir-up Sunday' the last Sunday before advent and each person in the family should take a turn to stir it. This comes from the 1549 Book of Common Prayer; where the Collect states 'stir up, we beseech thee'.

Mistletoe – One theory is in Norse Mythology; mistletoe is a sign of love and friendship and where the tradition of kissing under the mistletoe comes from. It is believed that Frigg, the goddess of love declared mistletoe a symbol of love after her son Baldur was resurrected from death, by the gods, after being shot with an arrow made from mistletoe.



Christmas stockings – Another tradition from Norse Mythology, it is believed that the stocking started as a shoe. Children would leave out straw and carrots for the horse of the Norse God Odin, named Sleipnir and would be rewarded with sweets and small gifts. It was then adapted for St Nicholas.

Giving presents – the tradition of giving presents started on the day of Jesus' birth when the wise men gave baby Jesus three gifts: Frankincense, Myrrh and Gold. However, it has greater significance as a symbol that God gave us the greatest gift of all, his Son. John 3:16, says: 'God loved the world so much, that he gave his one and only Son, so that whoever believes in him may not be lost but have eternal life'.



Whatever your festivities involve have a wonderful Christmas.

References:

<https://www.whychristmas.com/customs/trees.shtml>

<https://www.foodheavenmag.com/christmas-pudding-history/>

<https://www.history.com/news/why-do-we-kiss-under-the-mistletoe>

## News from the Church of England

### Calls to the Church to be good stewards of our earth

The Church of England's Environmental Advisory Group has called for all parts of the Church to recognise the Climate Crisis and step up its action to safeguard God's creation.

A paper has been created and sent to Bishops, dioceses and church leadership teams detailing environmental guidance on everything from energy suppliers, providing refuge for those affected by adverse weather, church buildings and investment assets. The paper has been created by the Environmental Working Group (EWG).

The EWG is chaired by the Bishop of Salisbury and brings together experts and representatives to oversee the church's environmental program; it is currently focusing on a number of work streams including taking a proposal to the General Synod (the Church of England's self-governing body) to target net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and developing an environmental based 2020 Lent Campaign.

The Church's national investing bodies have already divested from companies deriving more than 10 per cent of their revenues from the mining of thermal coal or the production of oil from oil tar sands, as these are the highest carbon fossil fuels. The national investing bodies have made commitments to start to divest in 2020 from further companies that are not taking seriously their responsibilities to assist with the transition to a low carbon economy.

**The Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Holtam**, said: "As Christians and as a Church we hope to be good stewards of God's creation and to care for the environment. We commit to respond to the serious circumstances we face".

"It will need the commitment of everyone in the Church to engage strongly with our communities and establish creative policy frameworks that get the best out of people, not just because of anxiety but for the love of this wonderful creation."

Article adapted from: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/church-englands-environment-group-calls-greater-action-climate-change-across>

## Church News

### Confirmation Service

On Saturday 16 November, we had the pleasure of hosting the Service of Confirmation for 33 candidates from the Parishes of St Mark's, Kingswood, St Philip's, Charlwood, Merstham and Gatton and Sidlow Bridge. There were 11 candidates from St Mark's: Suzanne Baker-Hedge, Charles Cooper, Terri Delahunty, Alexander Hardy, James Hessey, Alys Jones, Cian Jones, Saffron Oxley, David Perkins, Rachel Perkins and Rachael Taylor. We welcomed the Rt Revd Dr David Atkinson, Assistant Bishop in the diocese, who presided over the proceedings.



## Fundraising

### Collections during December

We will be collecting for various charities during our Christmas services. The full list is below:



Carol Service – 22 December at 6.00pm: Renewed Hope Trust



Crib and Christingle Service – 24 December at 4.00pm: The Children's Society, plus we will be taking toy donations for the Redhill woman's refuge.



Midnight Eucharist – 24 December at 11.30pm: Reigate Samaritans.

Thank you to all those who donated during the Remembrance Sunday Service, the total amount raised for Combat Stress was £520.

### Amazon Smile

If you haven't already finished your Christmas shopping or you hoping to make some last minute purchases via Amazon, please consider signing up for Amazon Smile.



are

Amazon has launched a new scheme where it will donate 0.5% for every purchase you make via the Amazon Smile link, to a charity of your choice. St Mark's Church has been set up using its official charity name:

Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish Of Saint Mark, Reigate.

Use the URL: <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> to access the Amazon website and start shopping.

Every small amount adds up.



## Church events

### Crib and Christingle Service

On Christmas Eve we will be celebrating with a Crib and Christingle service at 4.00pm, where we will raise money for the work of the Children's Society.

At the back of the church you will find candle boxes, which if you would like to contribute, can be filled throughout December and then brought to this service, or if you are unable to attend on the day, please return them on any Sunday before Christmas Eve.

During the service children may also wish to place gifts around the crib. Please label wrapped gifts with either 'boy' or 'girl' and include an age group. These presents are donated to the local Women's Refuge and are always gratefully received.

**Debbie and Dino Pelekani**

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### Community Lunches

On the second Sunday of the month we provide a Community Lunch at St Mark's...

A lovely Sunday roast with all the trimmings followed by a traditional dessert provided by our wonderful team of volunteers for the senior members of the community, who would otherwise be on their own.



Members should RSVP by 20 December to join us on 12 January, this will enable us to reallocate any spaces.

We need more volunteers to enable us to host more guests!

For more information or to volunteer as a driver or helper please contact:  
Robert Cramp or Alison Stagg

## Environmental News

### The threat to biodiversity

The biodiversity on planet Earth is under threat but just what exactly is biodiversity? What is the big issue? And what is causing its demise? This article looks at the facts.



Biodiversity is pretty much what the name suggests, the variety of species on Earth. This ranges from the animals, plants to microscopic organisms. It refers to the generic diversity we have from this range of life.

A wide range of biodiversity makes up and inhabits the various ecosystems we have on Earth from forests and oceans to deserts and tundra.

Biodiversity is crucially important to our planet, not only because it is the make-up of God's creation but without it, more selfishly it can impact human survival.

At present, biodiversity is diminishing at a significant rate, some studies suggest that as many as half of all mammals and birds will be extinct within the next 200 – 300 years<sup>1</sup>. And more shocking estimates place 30% of all species extinct by 2050<sup>2</sup>, within a generation.

Amongst other things a loss of biodiversity can impact our food security; if the variety of our food stock decreases what is left will become more vulnerable to disease, drought and climate change<sup>3</sup> putting our food sources at risk. It can also impact our access to fresh water supplies<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, our medicine and health are at risk without biodiversity, it is estimated that we harvest between 50,000 – 70,000 different plants for traditional and modern medicines worldwide<sup>4</sup>.

So what is causing a loss in bio diversity? The key threats are human activities such as exploitation, over fishing/ farming etc, plus deforestation, climate change, invasion of foreign species, poaching and wildlife trade, changes in marine environment caused by pollution.

In order to turn around this situation it is going to take a big shift, we all need to be good stewards of our Earth to look after it for future generations.

#### References:

1. <http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/biodiversity/6-main-threats-to-biodiversity-explained/39445>
2. <https://www.treehugger.com/natural-sciences/6-problems-caused-shrinking-biodiversity.html>
3. <https://www.treehugger.com/natural-sciences/6-problems-caused-shrinking-biodiversity.html>
4. [https://wwf.panda.org/our\\_work/biodiversity/biodiversity\\_and\\_you/](https://wwf.panda.org/our_work/biodiversity/biodiversity_and_you/)

## REGULAR SERVICES AND EVENTS AT ST MARK'S

### SUNDAYS

8.00am	Each Sunday	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10.00am	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Sung Eucharist (with Story Telling)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Parish Eucharist (with Story Telling)
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Sung Eucharist (with Story Telling)
	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Sung Eucharist (with Story Telling)
	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Sung Eucharist (with Story Telling)
1.00pm	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Community Lunch
4.00pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Family Service
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Messy Church
6.00pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Evening Prayer (said)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday	Taizé Prayer
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	Evening Prayer (said)
	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Evening Prayer (said)

### MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY

8.30am Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel (20 minutes)

### MONDAY

9.30am St Mark's Toddler Group in the hall (term-time only)

### TUESDAY

10.00am 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday St Mark's Buffers (in the church)

### WEDNESDAY

3.25pm 'T' Time Tales (term time only)

### THURSDAY

9.15am Informal Morning Prayer in the Lady Chapel

12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) followed by tea or coffee

2.00pm 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday SMART

### SATURDAY

8.00pm 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday St Mark's Social Dance

## CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 2019

<b>Sunday 1 December</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 4.00pm Family Service 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Wednesday 4 December	3.25pm T Time Tales (last of term)
Thursday 5 December	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) 2.00pm SMART 5.00pm Choral Evensong
<b>Sunday 8 December</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 1.00pm Community Lunch 5.00pm ROOTS Youth Club (Lower Kingswood Hall) 6.00pm Taizé Prayer
Thursday 12 December	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)
Saturday 14 December	7.30pm Buckland & Betchworth Choral Concert
<b>Sunday 15 December</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 4.00pm Messy Church 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Monday 16 December	9.30am Parent and Toddler Group (last of term)
Tuesday 17 December	10.00am St Mark's Buffers
Thursday 19 December	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)
<b>Sunday 22 December</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 10.00am Junior Church Nativity and Eucharist 6.00pm Carol Service by candlelight
<b>Tuesday 24 December</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b> 4.00pm Christingle and Crib Service 11.30pm Midnight Eucharist
<b>Wednesday 25 December</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b> 8.00am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) 10.00am Family Eucharist
<b>Thursday 26 December</b>	<b>St Stephen, Deacon, First Martyr</b> No Service of Holy Communion
Saturday 28 December	8.00pm St Mark's Social Dance
<b>Sunday 29 December</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas</b> No Evening Prayer

## CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 2020

Thursday 2 January	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona) 2.00pm SMART
<b>Sunday 5 January</b>	<b>Epiphany of our Lord</b> 4.00pm Family Service 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Monday 5 January	9.30am Parent and Toddler Group (resumes)
Thursday 9 January	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)
<b>Sunday 12 January</b>	<b>Baptism of Christ</b> 1.00pm Community Lunch 5.00pm ROOTS Church (Lower Kingswood Hall) 6.00pm Taizé Prayer
Wednesday 15 January	3.25pm T Time Tales (resumes)
Thursday 16 January	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)
<b>Sunday 19 January</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany</b> 3.00pm First Communion Class 4.00pm Messy Church 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Tuesday 21 January	10.00am St Mark's Buffers
Thursday 23 January	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)
<b>Saturday 25 January</b>	<b>Conversion of St Paul</b> 8.00pm St Mark's Social Dance
<b>Sunday 26 January</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany</b> 5.00pm ROOTS Youth Club (Lower Kingswood Hall) 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Thursday 30 January	12.45pm Holy Communion (Iona)

## **PARISH ACTIVITIES, EVENTS, GROUPS & CONTACTS**

CHURCH FLOWER ROTA  
*Contact: Mrs Valerie Jones*

CHOIR PRACTICE  
*Each Thursday in church - all parts at 7.00pm - other practices as notified*

DATA REQUESTS  
*Contact: Parish Office – 01737 210785*

HOME GROUP  
*Contact: Mrs Susannah Dyde*

IONA COMMUNION – LUNCHTIME SERVICE  
*Every Thursday 12.45pm to 1.15pm followed by Coffee/Tea*

PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP  
*Contact: Mrs Louise Wallis*

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER  
*Mrs Rosemary Absalom*

SMART - St Mark's Afternoon Retirement Team  
*Meetings on the first Thursday of the month*  
*Contacts: Mrs Sarah Cousins*

ST MARK'S BUFFERS  
*Meeting in church on the third Tuesday of the month from 10am - 12noon*

ST MARK'S COMMUNITY LUNCH  
*Contacts: Paul Selvadurai & Mrs Alison Stagg*

ST MARK'S CHURCH HALL  
*Regular Lettings Secretary: Mrs Jean Hatton*  
*Party Bookings & Church Bookings via Parish Office 01737 210785*

ST MARK'S OVERSEAS AID TRUST - SMOAT  
*Chairman: Mrs Barbara Perkins*

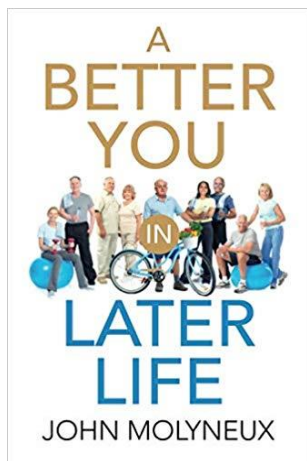
ST MARK'S SINGERS  
*Rehearsals Monday 7.30pm in the church – all welcome*  
*Contact: Toby Garrod*

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK  
*Contact: Ben Read*

YOUTH WORK  
*Junior Church: Mrs Leonora Corden*

## Book Review

This month we review *A better you in later life*



Available in Kindle and paper back format, published May 2019.

The author, John Molyneux is an experienced sports therapist who has a particular interest in helping people with age-related barriers. This book really is an easy to use guide for anyone, especially the over 50s, who wants to improve overall fitness. We live in an age where we realise how important it is to take responsibility for our own health and well-being. Well, this book is a valuable aid to doing just that.

The book is easy to follow and includes helpful photos of real people carrying out exercises. It starts with the fundamentals, by dealing firstly with posture because over the years poor posture leads to the development of many other physical problems. A better you in later life enables the reader to re-educate him/herself and break the habits which have developed over time.

This is not a book to dip into on occasions; rather it is an exercise programme to be carried out one step at a time and mastered before moving on to further exercises. As the book progresses, the author includes strengthening exercises and different routines of various lengths. They enable you to become stronger, and more flexible, which will in turn lead to a better quality of life.

Near the end of the book there are strengthening and compound exercises, and also some routine programmes which vary in length, however enable you in as little as 5 minutes a day to keep supple and have a better quality of life.

A little book full of sound advice – highly recommended!

Thank you to Anne Starmer for this month's book review. If you would like to write a review or recommend a book, please email [magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk](mailto:magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk).

## Letter to the editor

### The real cost of living

Economists (don't switch off) have a very simple little principle on the question of the true cost of buying something. Put simply, the real cost of an ice cream is the pleasure you might have got from spending the same amount on, say, lollipops. Or again, the real cost of building a church hall is what might have been achieved by spending the same amount on houses for the poor or, say, bringing clean water to a part of Africa.

Actually Economists rarely refer to this principle and its moral implications, preferring to deal only with self-interest and the market. However, ignoring real costs has landed us in a mess big time.

Some years ago driving in North America we came upon an abandoned town. The wooden shops and houses were in various stages of decay now unused. It struck me that those who had built and used this town had never picked up the costs of abandoning it. The same applies to abandoned mines, oil wells, factories and shops. In time it may be that the land regains some value such that someone will meet the costs of clearance and start over again. But evidently not in the American example.

By ingenuity, enterprise and effort people have undertaken risk in agriculture, mining, manufacture or business in order to better themselves and thereby benefitted society. This principle has served our predecessors well. But they have never been called upon to meet the costs of what they have left behind.

In agriculture apparent progress has been through the use of economies of scale, and chemicals. First of all we had some soil erosion (a real cost not funded) and now the exhaustion of the soil through the use of fertilisers and pesticides, and whilst in some countries this is now being addressed mainly through government, in others farmers still have the freedom to pursue short term policies. We now know these practices have reduced the nutritious value of the food we give our children. We drain marshes to gain more land to grow food only, when the rains come, to flood areas lower down towards the sea.

In mining we are exhausting the metals required baring only the costs of production and not the hidden costs of using things up, and leaving behind land spoilt for other uses.

In consumption we now recognise the real cost of using plastics.

In housing we build on flood plains trying to take care that they are not flooded only to send water away at a fast rate to flood old towns below, which the marshes would



have prevented (another unfunded real cost). In manufacture and transport we have the supreme example that the real cost of making and moving is the releasing carbon into the atmosphere.

The point here is that these costs do not enter into the economic equation of the market. If they did we could not afford to do them.

Now, it is just possible that if we had reacted thirty years ago when scientists first warned us we might have changed some practices, introduced carbon capture and so on. It is truly wonderful what the human mind can do when properly directed. However, the threat to our way of life was such that denial was easier. Even today it is far easier to prosecute people who break some minor laws to bring this state of affairs to our attention, than to change our ways.

And yet in most enterprises we are going on day by day as before as if we did not have the knowledge now of what the true cost is. At the local level I find, for those who have accepted the message, a certain stolid acceptance of the inevitable. At governmental level it has managed to acknowledge that destruction of the environment is an emergency without thus far coming out with measured concrete proposals of what they intend to do about it.

All too slowly we are becoming aware that only action of at least a similar dimension to Marshal Aid after World War Two can reverse the trend in time. It requires the much wider use of green methods of obtaining power. It requires fundamental changes in the way we eat and do agriculture and even wrap our food.

It also requires much more urgent attention to carbon capture whereas at present forests are being destroyed in The Amazon, North America, Australia, Indonesia, Siberia and other places. As average temperatures rise fires occur more easily. It requires international action to stop this.

World Wars demonstrate what can be done when the will is there. Furthermore, whilst some industries will be affected by necessary change, other new ones will arise. All need not be negative. Those who say this is all unrealistic need to recognise that, faced with the alternatives from climate change, it is the current way of doing things which is truly unrealistic.

For mankind today the real cost of living is giving up those acts quickly.

**Harry Ingram**

## Reader's Recipes

### Carey's Christmas Cranberry Chutney

Ingredients for 2 Jars:

400g	Cranberries
325g	Soft Brown Sugar
75g	Currants
165ml	Cider Vinegar
1	Sharp Apple
1tsp	Yellow Mustard Seeds
½ tsp	Salt
½ tsp	Ground Ginger
½ tsp	Ground Cinnamon
¼ tsp	Ground Cloves
¼ - ½ tsp	Dried Red Pepper flakes (to taste)



Steps:

1. Put everything in a large saucepan, stir and add a lid
2. Bring to boil and then reduce to a simmer (Be careful the Cranberries will POP!)
3. Stir often and after 25/35mins the mixture will have thickened
4. Cool slightly before jarring with care.

Storage:

Once open....

Will keep for 3months in fridge

Can be frozen for a year

Thank you to Shona Prosser for sharing this American recipe, which was gifted to her by Carey Knight.

We would really like to hear from you with your favourite recipes. It really can be anything. Please email them to [magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk](mailto:magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk) or leave them with the Parish Office.

## The symbolism of the advent candles

As we enter the period of Advent, we see the Advent candles in the church; the candles are lit over the course of December, one each Sunday and the final on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. There are many theories about the candles, so here we share the most common meaning and significance of the number and colour of the candles.

The use of candles during Advent are a longstanding tradition that was originally adopted by Christians in the Middle Ages as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas. The light of the candles represents the light of God coming into the world through the birth of his son Jesus Christ.



The candles each have their own special significance. The four outer candles represent the four weeks of Advent, and one candle is lit each Sunday. Three of the candles are purple because the colour violet is a liturgical colour that signifies a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice. It is also a royal colour (the most expensive dye in the ancient world) so also reminds us that we are preparing for the coming of a King.

The first candle, which is purple, symbolises **hope**. The theme for the first Sunday of Advent is the role of the Patriarchs and God's people in preparing for the Messiah.

The second candle, also purple, represents **peace**. The theme for the second Sunday of Advent is the role of the Prophets in preparing for the Messiah.

The third candle is pink and symbolises **joy**. Rose is a liturgical colour for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday (from the Latin for 'Rejoice') and reminds us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus. The theme for the third Sunday of Advent is the role of John the Baptist in preparing for the Messiah, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

On the fourth week of Advent, we light the final purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Saviour. This final candle

symbolises **love**. The theme for the fourth Sunday of Advent is the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary in preparing for the Messiah.

The white candle is placed in the middle and lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The colour white is for purity – because Christ is our sinless, pure Saviour.

References:

<https://www.mercyhome.org/blog/sunday-mass/advent-wreath/#.Xdr9HpP7R0w>

<http://projectbritain.com/adventwreath.html>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons/advent#mmm18>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advent\\_wreath](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advent_wreath)

Thank you to Father Martin for contributing to this article.



## ***Graham Williams Decorating***

**20+ YEARS EXPERIENCE / NVQ QUALIFIED / INSURED**

**Tel: 01737 646028**

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**grahamw777@hotmail.co.uk**

**Interior and Exterior work**

**\*Free estimates\***

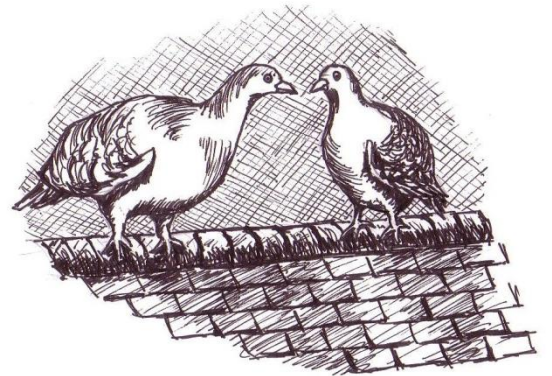


## ***Candlemouse Returns***

*Another Tale about a Church Mouse for younger readers  
Written by Sarah Cousins and illustrated by Roger Lloyd*

### **A baby brother for Christmas**

*Hello, my name is Candlemouse and I live in St. Mark's church near the railway station in Reigate. I'm as small and as quiet as a mouse can be, so most people don't notice me, which gives me plenty of time to see them and the things that they do!*



*"Christmas is coming the church is glad to sing and let the advent candles brightly burn in a ring." The children at St. Mark's church are getting excited and singing this song every week in church as it gets closer to Christmas. Each week a child comes to the front of the church and lights a tall candle which is part of an Advent Candle Ring. Advent is when we get all excited and think about whether we are ready for Jesus' birthday.*

*It makes me think of when my baby brothers Alfie, Alan, Angus, and Archie were born at this time of year. Mum and Dad and all my older brothers and sisters had been getting ready for weeks and weeks, shredding paper towels from the caretaker's cupboard for a nest and waiting eagerly for them to arrive. Being the youngest was something that I had enjoyed because all my aunts and uncles had always made a great fuss of me whenever they came to visit. I was old enough to understand that when the new babies came, they would be the youngest and have everyone fussing over them instead of me so I was fed up.*

*Then just when everybody else, especially my mum, had got very fed up waiting for them, Alfie and the others arrived suddenly in the night. When I woke up my big sister told me to go and see mum because she had something special to show me. It was Alfie. He was a tiny, screwed up bundle of trouble that made so much noise that I wanted to shut my ears and run away. Mum said, "Candlemouse, there is a present for you from*

*Alfie, aren't you going to open it?" I was shocked, a present for me on someone else's birthday?*

*I felt like saying "No thank you," but I didn't. I was so surprised when I opened the present and found a new toy that I had been longing to have for ages. Maybe this particular bundle of trouble would turn out to be a brother I could play with. And guess what? He did.*

*Jesus shares his birthday with us all because he wants us to know that we are special and greatly loved by God.*

*Story and prayer copyright of Sarah Cousins  
and illustrations copyright of Roger Lloyd.*

### Let's pray

Birth- day.

Tears of joy

Nurturing breast

Protecting arms.

Gifts to celebrate

Intent to stay with me

Parent me through life.

Remember each passing year

With awe and joy.

Shared with the world.

Given back to God.

Birth-day.

## Puzzles

### December Sudoku Challenge

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

### November Sudoku Solution

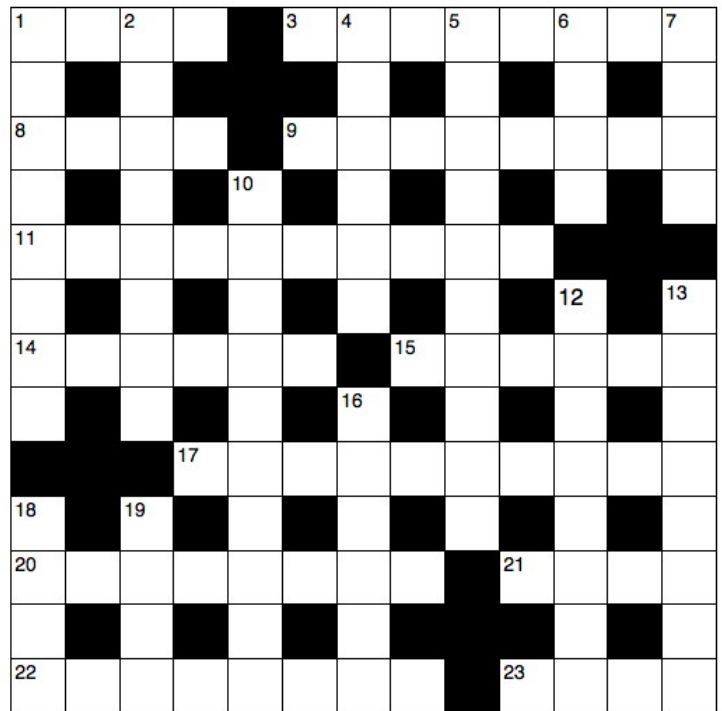
8	9	4	2	5	3	1	6	7
7	3	5	8	1	6	4	9	2
6	1	2	9	7	4	3	8	5
9	8	6	5	4	2	7	1	3
5	7	3	1	6	9	2	4	8
4	2	1	7	3	8	6	5	9
3	5	8	6	2	1	9	7	4
2	6	7	4	9	5	8	3	1
1	4	9	3	8	7	5	2	6

# December Crossword Challenge

Biblical clues are from the New International Version

## Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)  
 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)  
 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)  
 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)  
 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)  
 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)  
 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)  
 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)  
 20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)  
 21 Rite (anag.) (4)  
 22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)  
 23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)



## Down

- 1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)  
 2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)  
 4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)  
 5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)  
 6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)  
 7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)  
 10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)  
 12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)  
 13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)  
 16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)  
 18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)  
 19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)

**ACROSS:** 1 Jehoiachin 7 Endured 8 Eased 10 Rash 11 Startled 13 Easier 15 Rubric 17 Impurity 18 Feet 21 Eye at 22 Ready to 23 Holy Spirit

**DOWN:** 1 Judas 2 Harm 3 Is duty 4 Cheerful 5 Insular 6 Jezreelite 9 Dedication 12 Secretly 14 Supremo 16 Stir up 19 Egypt 20 Hair

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