

St Peter's Parish Magazine



December 2024
&
January 2025

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From Fr Jonathan



Dear friends

I love Advent which begins as this magazine goes to print and with it begins the new liturgical year. At the heart of Advent is the central Christian character of waiting with patient hope. During Advent we stand alongside the great Matriarchs and Patriarchs of old, with the wise and discerning prophets culminating in the last and greatest of them in John the Baptist and all those who awaited the Lord's eagerly anticipated Messiah with such pregnant anticipation and hope.

During Advent we await both the first coming of Christ in the baby born in obscurity in Bethlehem as well as his great promise that he will come again to bring all things to perfection at the end of time when all things will be gathered to God's ever generous heart of love. And above all we wait for his coming into our own hearts and for his will to be done in our lives, both as individuals and as community bound together through our love for him and one another. The abbreviation we often use for St Peter's is SPES, which as a Latin word means literally "hope". May this be our watchword this Advent, Christmas and always.

The year of Luke

Advent Sunday begins Year C of the Lectionary of Sunday readings which we shall follow for the next twelve months and which is focused on the Gospel according to St Luke. My love for Luke's Gospel began over forty years ago when it was a set text for A level religious studies and it has been a guide and inspiration to my life ever since. Luke's Gospel, dating from about the year 85 AD, is the first part of a larger work by the same author as the Acts of the Apostles, the account of the early life of the Church from Ascension and Pentecost onwards. It is the most inclusive of all the Gospels and gives pride of place in God's loving purposes to those whom polite society of the time chose so frequently to denigrate. It is where we find Mary's

radical Magnificat, Simeon's Nunc Dimittis, the Parable of the Good Samaritan and the resurrection walk to Emmaus where the risen Jesus is revealed to his disciples in the breaking of bread and in so many other familiar and well-loved texts.

Christmas Services 2025

You will find full details of our Christmas services here at St Peter's later in this magazine, on the website and on the large banners on the church railings. We will also be delivering Christmas fliers around the streets and homes of the parish on Sunday 15th December after both the Family and Choral Eucharists. We would be most grateful if you could do a street or two each and your reward will not only be eternal.... but there will be lovely sweet refreshments available to all who kindly volunteer. Many hands make light work. Thank you.

Christmas Charities 2025

You will find further details of our Christmas Charities for this year further on in this magazine. It is our custom here at St Peter's to support an international, a national and a local charity each Christmas and with a particular focus on work with children and young people. This year the charities will be Kids for Kids, working with children in Darfur, Sudan, the Rainbow Trust, working with children with life-limiting and terminal illness and their families throughout the UK and the Caxton Youth Project with whom we have had close links for many years.

Liturgical renewal

We have been gradually renewing our liturgical books and texts over the past year. Many of the texts which we use in the Church of today owe their origins and roots to beautiful historic texts used by earlier generations of Christians, but which are used anew in the life of the Church today. With Advent we will return to using a text borrowed from our brothers and sisters in the wider Western Church which Fr Desmond introduced to St Peter's alongside the new Common Worship Liturgy in 2000. It is historically known as the *Orate fratres* and comes just before the Prayer over the Gifts and the great Eucharistic Prayer. The

people respond to an invitation to prayer from the Principal Celebrant as follows:

Pray, my brothers and sisters that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God the almighty Father

**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands,
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and for the good of all his holy Church**

In it we are invited to join in that great paean of praise with angels and archangels and with the whole Church down the ages and throughout the world whose light and hope is focused in our joyful participation in the once and for all sacrifice of Christ and to rejoice in our membership of Christ's diverse and mystical body, the Church.

The word of the Lord

We have become accustomed to the scripture readings in the Church ending with "this is the word of the Lord", which is particularly challenging when there has been a somewhat gruesome, even violent, reading from the Old Testament or one of the less edifying parts of Paul's epistles. The Latin original from which this is translated is "*Verbum Domini*" – literally "the word of the Lord". In many churches of our tradition and also in a number of Cathedrals there has been a move to ending the first two readings simply with a more faithful translation of the Latin original "The word of the Lord". This is how the readings end in the Episcopal Church in the United States and has a growing consensus across the majority of Western Churches. During the Advent and Christmas seasons we shall experiment using this simpler form of ending our readings, knowing that we do so alongside very large numbers of fellow Christians throughout the world.

Nicaea 2025

During 2025 the whole Church celebrates the 1700th anniversary of the great Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, the fruit of whose work is focused in the Nicene Creed through which we celebrate our faith Sunday by Sunday. It is a marvel to contemplate how the great ecumenical councils of the Church were organised and

facilitated, bringing together Christians from far flung places in an age before the internet, email and all other forms of modern communication. We shall be reflecting a lot more about the Council of Nicaea throughout the year and I hope that we shall have a Lent study course around all that it did and achieved in embedding and enshrining the orthodox faith of the Church.

Consultation on Sunday service times

As you know we have been carrying out a consultation on our Sunday service times which concludes on Advent Sunday. The consultation concerned whether we might move all our Sunday service times 15 minutes earlier to 8am, 9.30am and 11am. This would maintain the same space between the service times that we currently have so that as your clergy we can spend time with you socially after each service. It also means that each of them finish slightly earlier so that you have time to go out to lunch or for the day after you have been to Church. 98% of the responses I have received have been in favour of such a change. It is important that we have a good run-in to these new service times to give you time to get used to them and so I propose to introduce them from Candlemas Sunday (the great Festival of Light which concludes the Christmas and Epiphany seasons on Sunday 2nd February).

New Assistant Priest

At the time of this magazine going to press we have had a number of interesting enquiries about the post of Assistant Priest, although the deadline for applications is not until Friday 29th November. From these we will draw up a short-list and the interview day will be Friday 6th December when Mother Katherine Hedderly, Archdeacon of Charing Cross will join the panel to represent the wider diocese. Please pray for the gifts of wisdom and discernment that the right person will feel called and appointed to the role. We have now been fourteen months without someone in this role and it will be very good to have a colleague in place in due course.

Safeguarding at St Peter's

Along with churches throughout the country we observed national Safeguarding Sunday on 17th November. This annual Sunday coincided a few days earlier with the announcement of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury over the way in which a number of historic disclosures had been handled concerning John Smyth in the Iwerne Camps in the UK and in Zimbabwe and South Africa. During his archiepiscopate safeguarding across the whole Church of England has been transformed with regard to current practice, especially in the dioceses and at a local level in the parishes. The issue has been over the way in which historic disclosures were responded to and where referrals were not properly followed up to ensure that appropriate action was taken to prevent others from the most awful abuse.

Here in the parish our safeguarding is now headed up by our new Parish Safeguarding Officer, Raana Khatabakhsh and further details of the parish safeguarding team may be found on the directory page further on in this magazine, on the porch notices in church and on the website. Earlier this year I invited the Two Cities Safeguarding Adviser Claire Meaney to undertake a safeguarding review here at St Peter's and with her support we are ensuring that everything is fully functional and fit for purpose in our parish. For all safeguarding concerns or issues please use our dedicated email address:

safeguarding@stpetereatonsquare.co.uk

Building Development Project – Doors Wide Open

I share with you a sense of disappointment that we have not made further obvious progress with the portico and tower project together with the wider building and grounds vision. Following the congregational audit this time last year we have now clarified our wider vision of what we would like to do and this has been rooted and grounded in our new Mission Action Plan 2025-30 which is now available in hard copy at the back of church. The next step, with the help of the diocesan property and fundraising team, is to draw up a shortlist of architects who could oversee the whole project, which we shall be doing shortly. For

fundraising purposes and to fulfil the requirements of the charity commission it is important that a proper and objective tendering process has been carried out

The main reason for the delay in progress is that we have had to undertake a number of urgent matters within the building, which are binding, statutory requirements. The whole fire alarm system throughout the building, emergency lighting and compartmentation of 60+ doors is to be carried to make our building fully compliant with current regulations. The four residential units on the roof of the church make this is an absolute priority. As a result of the Quinquennial Inspection and the EICR (five yearly electrical inspection) we have had to undertake a number of urgent electrical issues throughout the building. All the electrical issues are now resolved, 90% of the emergency lighting in place and the doors all fitted with statutory intumescent strips. The complicated nature of our multi-purpose building with differing areas cover by diocesan Faculty jurisdiction under the ecclesiastical exemption and other parts under Local Authority Listed Building Consent has made this a bit of a challenge to navigate, but we are now making hopeful progress.

We are currently also in the process of negotiating the renewal of the leases with both our crypt tenants (the Knightsbridge Kindergarten and Body Doctor Gym) as we have reached that time in the cycle of renewals. Once this and the above is done and a new Assistant Priest is in place we shall have a clearer run to undertake the building project going forwards.

And finally...

A somewhat longer Vicar's letter than usual, but I did want to bring you up to date with a number of things at St Peter's. Above all, Herbert and I would like to wish you all, your families and all those you love a very happy and blessed Christmas and every blessing for 2025 as together we reach out into the future in faith, hope and love.

With my love, prayers and warmest good wishes,
as always

R Jonathan

From the Parish Magazine December 1934

On Sunday morning December 16th the Rev.F.T.Chandler is coming to speak to us on Church Schools and the need for their maintenance and, where possible, their increase. We are sometimes forgetful that the Church has been the educator of the people of this country, that before the time of State education it was the Church which erected and endowed schools in town and village, and the State has learned from the Church its duty to educate the children, yet it is acknowledged by all who know the facts that the Church School supplies by its religious teaching an element in the education of the children which is at once valuable and, I believe, peculiar to this country. We do not go so far as to attribute as some do the loss in character of some of the people today to the loss of many Church Schools, or what they regard as the defective and indefinite religious teaching in the Council Schools. That I believe to be untrue to the gallant and high-minded teachers in many Council Schools... Still for the Church the command "Feed My Lambs" is one that we can never surrender... We in the parish have so good a reason to be thankful for the influence of our Schools and all that the teachers do that we ought to be ready to extend to others the same good influence... and it is not altogether inappropriate that we should do this in the month of the Festival of the Holy Child.

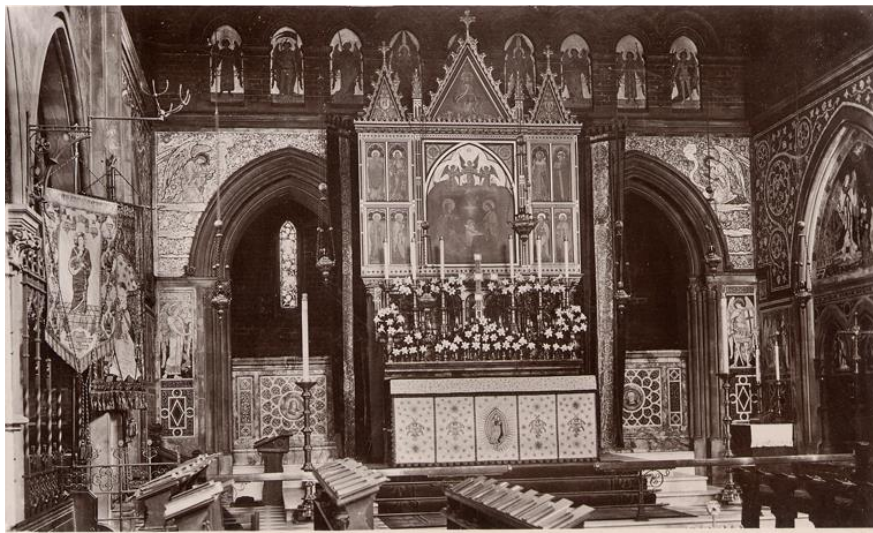
COMMENT: The first Vicar of St Peter's, the Revd Thomas Fuller, already showed concern for the education of younger children in the 1830s and 1840s. The school did not have purpose- built premises at that time but used rooms in private houses, originally near St Barnabas church and at various other locations in the area. A number of other church schools were also being set up in the area, St Barnabas School in 1847 and Burdett-Coutts in 1849 for instance. With the passing of the 1870 Education Act, a purpose- built school St Peter's was set up on the present site opening in 1872. From 1870 onwards Board Schools, without direct church connections were also set up. The School and the Church at St Peter's have very close links but also has something to offer the wider community. Its vision stated on its website is: "At St Peter's Eaton Square C of E Primary School, our Christian Vision is inspired by the story of the Good Samaritan. This story, told by Jesus in response to a lawyer's question, defines how his disciples should relate to their neighbours. It emphasises love, compassion, and respect for everyone, regardless of who they are."

Valerie Smith



From the Parish Magazine for January 1935

Victoria Station Mission in St John's Wilton Rd: January 21st to March 2nd



No one can pass Victoria at almost any time of day without realising that among the hurrying crowds who pass hurriedly to and from their homes and their

work there may be some to whom we in this parish may be able to show that we are both alive and eager, if we can, to help them. St John's Church is set in the centre of this crowd of men and women and young girls, and I have always felt that occupying this position it might serve a larger and wider purpose than only to minister to those who come in. So when it was suggested to me by the Church Union that they should make the venture of a Mission to the passers-by, and offer to them the opportunity of instruction in the Christian Faith, I very gladly welcomed it: each night a priest will preach a sermon in St John's Wilton Rd. The sermon will in no case be longer than half-an-hour. At the West and North doors of the Church, there will be a large box for questions which will be answered and the paper will have an address to which correspondence may be sent; an appeal is made to all Church people in the Deanery to do something for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom...; every parish priest is asked to arrange some form of regular intercession during the six

weeks for the conversion of England to the Christian Faith and Practice; any offers of help will be welcomed from young people who would be prepared to sell the paper at Victoria Station; finally an appeal is made for a donation to the fund being raised to meet the expenses of this project.

COMMENT

St John's Wilton Rd was a daughter church of St Peter's built in 1874 in Victorian Gothic style to minister to the needs of what was the poorer part of the parish. Destroyed WWII, the site at Wilton Rd is now occupied by unremarkable modern offices. In its heyday, as considerably more high church than St Peter's of the time, it became much sought after by a wider public for its worship and instruction. For this 1935 initiative it was recognised by the whole Deanery as being in a prime position for such outreach. Had it survived it would have been in a wonderful location for outreach to the parish today, in a busy area with people from all over passing by. Tucked away as we are, we need to use all our ingenuity to make people aware of our presence and the invitation we offer, something to consider as we proceed soon with our repair and renovation project.

Valerie Smith



Searching for St Peter

Fitzrovia Chapel



The Open House events in London in September once again offered the chance to see inside some of our city's best kept secrets. Looking through the list of buildings that had opened their doors specially, I was intrigued by what is now rather extravagantly called the Fitzrovia Chapel.

It used to be the hospital chapel for the Middlesex Hospital on Mortimer Street, W1. The huge hospital building has been pulled down in the past twenty years but the little chapel was kept. It now stands rather forlornly, hemmed in by redevelopment consisting mainly of (unoccupied) yuppie flats. But it is what you see within its red-brick walls that is so special. As part of the redevelopment, presumably to salve guilty consciences, £3m was spent by the developers to restore the chapel to its former glory. I don't want to oversell it for fear of raising expectations too high. But if you like Victorian mosaics and decoration, it is pretty special. Rather like the mosaics at the altar-end of our Church, they are late Victorian and from Italy. The vaulted ceiling is aglow with them. They include images of saints including our own St Peter. He also features in a stained-glass window alongside St Paul.

I found being in the chapel surprisingly moving, almost in spite of its beauty. As a hospital chapel during a time when medicine was less sophisticated than it is now some desperate prayers must have been said in there – and joyous thanks too no doubt. Anyway, I had some sort of emotional response to that as, I have to confess, I sometimes do inside Victorian railways stations which have been places of parting and reunion for so long. Can buildings hold an emotional charge?

Sadly, the chapel is no longer used for services, though it is a venue for weddings and also exhibitions, talks and fashion shows. It is open to visitors, as the website says Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 11am and 4pm and one Sunday a month (12 noon to 5pm) but check the website for changes. It is small so it might be best to visit when already nearby. Mortimer Street is two blocks north of Oxford Street, so Christmas shopping could offer a good opportunity.

David Stanley



Saint for December



Thomas Beckett, Archbishop, martyred in Canterbury Cathedral
in 1170

Saint for January



William Laud, Archbishop, martyred during the English Civil War in 1645

St Melania the Younger

Recent events on the other side of the Atlantic have, among other things, recalled to attention the name of the new First Lady of the United States, so it seems apposite to explore the history of one of the saints after whom she is named.

St Melania the Younger (c. 383 – 31 December 439) was a Desert Mother and ascetic who lived during the reign of Emperor Honorius, son of Theodosius I. She is the granddaughter of Melania the Elder.

Melania was the only child of the rich and powerful Valerius Publicola (son of St Melania the Elder) and his wife Caeionia Albina, both Christians, of the senatorial Valeria *gens* (family) a prominent Roman line from the earliest times. Her paternal and maternal relatives had held the highest offices of state with great distinction during the whole of the century, and Melania could even boast of a long line of imperial blood, most recently through Valerius Romulus (r. 308-309). She was married to her paternal cousin, Valerius Pinianus, at the age of fourteen, despite her reluctance to live a married life. The 5th-century *Melaniae Junioris Vita* ("Life of Melania the Younger") says:

"It was settled that the young couple, scarcely more than children, should reside with Publicola in his palace on the Coelian Hill. This was the cause of much suffering to Melania. Her fervour daily increased, and with it her horror of a life of luxury and sensual ease. Living constantly under her father's watchful eye, she was obliged to comply with his wishes, and to sustain the honour of the family by conforming to all the usages of Roman society. She had to dress with all the splendour befitting a matron of exalted rank, and to make her appearance in public surrounded with much state. All this was so repugnant to the young wife that it caused her real torture. She sought by the most ingenious devices to find an outlet for her spirit of penance and expiation."

Melania often pleaded for Pinianus to conform to asceticism so she could maintain her purity for the Lord, but Pinianus wanted – indeed, would have been expected - to continue the family line. Melania's husband wanted two children, but neither of them survived. These deaths took a toll on the married couple and encouraged their choice of asceticism. This was especially difficult due to Roman social standards and the familial patrimony present in Melania and Pinianus's life. As the sole heiress to her father and paternal grandfather, she inherited their wealth and enormous estates on the death of Publicola after seven years of marriage. Once her father had died, she and her husband embraced Christian asceticism and maintained a celibate life thereafter.

Melania decided to leave the palace for one of her villas in Spring 404. She was encouraged by her grandmother, Melania the Elder, who had also travelled from Jerusalem and held strong ascetic beliefs. Ascetics and early Christian leaders believed that denying oneself worldly pleasures and desires was essential for spiritual growth and closeness to God. Her dislike of rich apparel had caused her suffering during her father's life, yet now led her to give away her silken robes as church altarcloths, including her gold ornaments, and everything that was rich and costly in her wardrobe. She demonstrated her rejection of worldly possessions by wearing a garment of cheap, coarse wool, and fashioned rather to hide and disfigure her womanly form. She took a great number of poor families and slaves with her to her villa, whom she treated as brothers and sisters.

The villa of the Valerii must clearly have been of great size, as it was large enough to lodge the immense number of people whom Melania took with her from Rome. This, according to biographers, consisted of fifteen eunuchs, sixty young girls who were vowed to virginity, other free-born women, slaves, and more than thirty families who had followed Pinianus in his new mode of life. In addition to these regular guests, Melania's

country house afforded hospitality to the pilgrims to Rome, including numerous deputations of bishops and priests, at the end of 404 and the beginning of 405, to plead the cause of John Chrysostom with Pope Innocent I. She dispensed lavish hospitality and spared no expense in the entertainment of her guests. One of these bishops, Palladius, speaks thankfully of the respectful welcome with which he was given during his sojourn, and of the large sum of money presented to him on his departure in February 406.

Melania decided to dispose of her vast estates and give the proceeds to ecclesiastical institutions and to the poor. This caused surprise and contempt amongst the Roman aristocracy, who regarded her and her husband as lunatics. Some of their relatives considered that they now had an opportunity to enrich themselves extravagantly by taking advantage of the simplicity and inexperience of the couple. Melania appealed to Emperor Honorius, who ordered that their possessions should be sold at the responsibility of the governors and public administrators of every province where they had holdings, and that the officials should take responsibility for the remittance of the full price to the couple.

Few Roman patricians were wealthy enough to buy Melania's properties. The eventual purchasers were unable to pay the full price at once, so the owners were obliged to accept promissory notes. Melania's palace on the Caelian Hill, which she was the most anxious to dispose of, remained unsold, and in 410, after being pillaged by Alaric the Goth's barbarian hordes and partly destroyed by fire, it was given away for nothing.

Melania and Pinianus left Rome in 408 with her mother Albina and Rufinus of Aquileia, an old friend of the family, to live a monastic life near Messina in Sicily for two years. They resided in the magnificent villa that they owned on the western shore of the straits, opposite Reggio di Calabria. Meanwhile Melania was occupied in disposing of her remaining property, the proceeds of

which she distributed in alms and other donations. After the taking of Rome by Alaric, the invaders marched upon Southern Italy, and destroyed Reggio. Melania witnessed the fires from across the straits.

Fear of the invaders drove Melania to seek a safer refuge. Africa was regarded as a safe haven by many Roman families who had already emigrated to Carthage. Having sold many of her possessions in Italy and Sicily and after the death of Rufinus in 410, they decided to travel to Africa. Before their departure, they attempted to visit Paulinus of Nola, but according to Gerontius of Jerusalem, a storm forced the ship to an unnamed island (probably Lipari) that had been ravaged by pirates who held the inhabitants for ransom. Melania ransomed the islanders with her own money. Finally, they continued directly to Africa, where they befriended St Augustine of Hippo and devoted themselves to a life of piety and charitable works.

Rather than in a city, they chose to live in relative calm at their estate, near Thagaste (Souk Ahras in modern Algeria), coincidentally the birthplace of St Augustine. The estate was of such extent and importance as to include two episcopal sees, one belonging to the Catholic Church, the other to the Donatists. Some of the rooms of the villa were "filled with gold". Alypius was the bishop there with whom they became friends. Alypius had helped establish Augustine's first monastery in Africa. The church in Thagaste had been very poor but Melania furnished it with gold and silver cups, and with altar-cloths richly embroidered in gold and thickly sewn with pearls. She endowed this church with extensive property including a large part of the town itself. On the advice of the principal bishops Augustine, Alypius, and Aurelius of Carthage, she was also generous to the other churches and monasteries in Africa. She assigned a regular income to make them independent of precarious almsgiving.

Melania and her husband stayed for seven years and founded a convent for the consecrated virgins who were once her slaves, but were now treated as her sisters. Melania became Mother Superior, and also founded a cloister of which Pinianus took charge.

In 417, they travelled to Palestine by way of Alexandria. In Palestine, they lived in a hermitage near the Mount of Olives, where Melania founded a second convent. After the death of Pinianus c. 420, Melania built a cloister for men, and a church, where she spent the remainder of her life, dying in 31 December 439.

The Feast of Melania the Younger is marked on 31 December (although in fact the Julian calendar's 31 December falls on 13 January on the Gregorian calendar).

Richard Carter

Readings December & January

01 December 2024 Advent 1 Jeremiah 33:14-16 1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13 Luke 21:25-36	25 December 2024 Christmas Day Choral Eucharist Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-4 John 1:1-14
08 December 2024 Advent 2 Baruch 5: 1-9 Philippians 1: 3-11 Luke 3: 1-6	29 December 2024 1st after Christmas The Holy Family 1 Samuel 2:18-20,26 Colossians 3:12-17 Luke 2:41-end
15 December 2024 Advent 3 Zephaniah 3:14-20 Philippians 4: 4-7 Luke 3: 7-18	5 January 2025 Epiphany Isaiah 60: 1-6 Ephesians 3: 1-12 Matthew 2: 1-12
22 December 2024 Advent 4 Micah 5:2-5a Hebrews 10: 5-10 Luke 1: 39-55	12 January 2025 Baptism of Christ Isaiah 43: 1-7 Acts of the Apostles 8:14-17 Luke 3: 15-17 & 21-22
24 December 2024 Christmas Eve Midnight Mass Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20	19 January 2025 Epiphany 2 Isaiah 62: 1-5 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 John 2: 1-11
25 December 2024 Christmas Day Family Eucharist Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:8-20	26 January 2025 Epiphany 3 Nehemiah 8:1-3 & 5-6 & 8-10 1 Corinthians 12:12-13a Luke 4:14-21

Christmas charities 2024

The collections from our Christmas services will be split between these three children's charities, one local, one national and one international.



Kids for Kids :This charity operates in Darfur in the Sudan, a war-torn region suffering with drought, famine and little infrastructure. They “adopt” villages (currently 110) discussing with them what they need most and assist with livestock, provision of water, farm equipment, trees to stop desertification, medical care and education. They also train the villagers so that the work can continue sustainably



Rainbow Trust:The charity operates from nine centres over England and online to give support to families with a seriously ill child, pairing each family with a dedicated Family Support Worker to help them face and make the most of each new day. Help given is both practical and emotional and needs of all family members are considered.



Caxton Youth Club: This is a local specialist youth club for those in Westminster with autism and learning disabilities between the ages of 11-25. Their centre is on the Abbot's Manor Estate where there are regular meetings and programmes focused on health, employment support and a range of other topics. In the summer holidays when the club is closed they have numerous local trips. Locations. They also have outdoor activities; they have access to Midge Island on the River Wey, although until their clubhouse there can be repaired they are using a variety of other centres. This year they had a residential trip to Avon Tyrrel New Forest Activity Centre

Please contribute what you can either through the plate at Christmas services, or by a donation.

ST PETER'S EATON SQUARE



‘Follow the star — calm and bright’

*A beautiful and inclusive church, renowned for our music, choir and all-age welcome,
at the corner of Eaton Square and Hobart Place.*

We can be found just a few minutes’ walk from Victoria Station.

We warmly invite you to join us to celebrate

CHRISTMAS 2024

119 Eaton Square, London, SW1W 9AL
www.stpetereatonsquare.co.uk 020 7235 4482
Registered Charity No. 1133033

ST PETER'S, EATON SQUARE

We wish you the joy and peace of the Christmas season

Sunday 22 December – Advent 4

Morning services at the usual times

6 pm Parish Carol Service

*With traditional Christmas carols, readings and music,
followed by mulled wine and mince pies*

Tuesday 24 December – Christmas Eve

4pm Christmas Crib Service for all ages

11 pm Midnight Mass

Music: Missa Brevis in G, K.140 - Mozart

Consurge, filia Sion (Oratorio de Noël, op.12) – Saint Saëns

Wednesday 25 December - Christmas Day

8:15 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

9:45 am Family Eucharist

11:15 am Choral Eucharist

Music: Missa Puer natus est nobis - Tallis

Verbum caro factum est - Sheppard

Sunday 29 December – First Sunday of Christmas

8:15 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

10:30 am Parish Eucharist with carols

Sunday 5 January 2025 – Epiphany of Our Lord

8:15 am Holy Communion – Book of Common Prayer

9:45 am Family Eucharist

11:15 am Choral Eucharist

Music: Missa Quaeramus cum pastoribus - Morales

Magi viderunt stellam - Victoria



Calendar of Intentions December 2024

Date	Day	Mass intention
Su 1	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish and People of God World AIDS Day
Mo 2	<i>Advent Weekday</i>	The Goring Hotel
Tu 3	<i>Francis Xavier, Missionary, 1552</i>	The London Jesuit Centre
We 4	<i>John of Damascus, monk, teacher of the faith, c. 749</i>	The College and Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield
Th 5	<i>Advent weekday</i>	The Children's Society
Fr 6	<i>Nicholas of Myra, bishop, c. 326</i>	The gift of discernment in interviews for our new Assistant Priest
Sa 7	<i>Ambrose, bishop, teacher of the faith, 397</i>	Bishop Sarah
Su 8	THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	The Parish and People of God
Mo 9	<i>Advent weekday</i>	The Reubens at the Palace Hotel
Tu 10	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Tophams Hotel
We 11	<i>Advent weekday – Ember Day</i>	All ordinands
Th 12	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Housing Justice
Fr 13	<i>Lucy, martyr, 304</i>	Caxton Youth Project
Sa 14	<i>John of the Cross, poet, teacher of the faith, 1591</i>	Spiritual Directors
Su 15	THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT Gaudete!	The Parish and People of God

Calendar of Intentions December 2024 (cont.)

Date	Day	Mass Intention
Mo 16	<i>Advent weekday</i>	Eaton House School
Tu 17	<i>O Sapientia</i>	All Universities
We 18	<i>O Adonai</i>	Peace in the Holy Land
Th 19	<i>O Radix Jesse</i>	Westminster City School
Fr 20	<i>O Clavis David</i>	The House of Commons
Sa 21	<i>O Oriens</i>	The House of Lords
Su 22	THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT <i>O Rex Gentium</i>	The Parish and People of God
Mo 23	<i>O Emmanuel</i>	Embrace the Middle East
Tu 24	CHRISTMAS EVE	The Rainbow Trust
We 25	CHRISTMAS DAY	Praise for the incarnation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
Th 26	<i>St Stephen, Protomartyr</i>	St Stephen's, Rochester Row and St Stephen's, Gloucester Road
Fr 27	<i>John, Apostle and Evangelist</i>	Gospel translators and commentators
Sa 28	<i>The Holy Innocents</i>	Kids for Kids
Su 29	THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS THE HOLY FAMILY	The Parish and People of God
Mo 30	<i>Christmastide weekday</i>	Chelsea and Westminster Hospital
Tu 31	<i>John Wyclif, reformer, 1384</i>	Wycliffe Hall Theological College

Calendar of Intentions January 2025

Date	Day	Mass Intention
We 1	Mary, Mother of God The naming and circumcision of Jesus	Dedication to God at the beginning of a new year
Th 2	<i>Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus, bishops, teachers of the faith, 379, 389</i>	University of Durham Department of Theology
Fr 3	<i>Christmastide weekday</i>	Pimlico St Peter Trust
Sa 4	<i>Christmastide weekday</i>	Cardinal Hume Centre
Su 5	THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD trans	The Parish and People of God
Mo 6	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Westminster Foodbank
Tu 7	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Housing Justice
We 8	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Church Urban Fund
Th 9	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Centre Point
Fr 10	<i>William Laud, Archbishop, 1645</i>	Diocese of London
Sa 11	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Metropolitan Police
Su 12	THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	The Parish and People of God
Mo 13	<i>Hilary, bishop, teacher of the faith, 367</i>	Sion College
Th 14	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Cleveland Clinic Hospital
Fr 15	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Grosvenor Estate

Calendar of Intentions January 2025 (cont.)

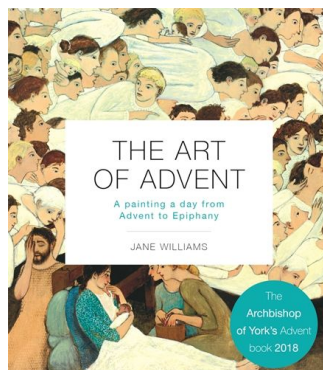
Date	Day	Mass Intention
Th 16	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Victoria Neighbourhood Forum
Fr 17	<i>Anthony of Egypt, hermit, abbot, 356</i>	Vocations to the religious life
Sa 18	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins (18 to 25 January)</i>	The visible unity of Christians
Su 19	SECOND SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	The Parish and People of God
Mo 20	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Roman Catholic Church
Tu 21	<i>St Agnes, virgin, martyr, 304</i>	The Orthodox Churches
We 22	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Methodist Church
Th 23	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	The Baptist Church
Fr 24	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Pentecostal and all other Free Churches
Sa 25	Conversion of St Paul	St Paul's Cathedral and St Paul's, Knightsbridge
Su 26	THIRD SUNDAY OF EPIPHANY	The Parish and People of God
Mo 27	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum
Tu 28	<i>Thomas Aquinas, priest, philosopher, teacher of the faith. 1274</i>	All students of theology
We 29	<i>Epiphany-tide weekday</i>	Victoria Station
Sa 30	<i>Charles, King and Martyr, 1649</i>	His Majesty King Charles III

Book Reviews

The Art of Advent by Jane Williams

Jane Williams is known for several books linking faith and paintings. This one gives us a picture a day from Advent to Epiphany, focusing on Christ who came, the Christ who comes now, and the Christ who will come as judge at the end of time. The range is wide and picks up on key features of the liturgy and scripture readings for this period, offering ways of preparing ourselves for the great revelations of Christmas. After inviting us to the journey, the book looks at the traditional Advent themes of death, judgment, hell and heaven, goes on to look at the meaning of the Advent wreath, the persons involved in the story of the birth of Christ, the great refrains, or Antiphons of Advent, saluting the child to be born under his many titles, then to the birth itself and moving on to Epiphany, not just the visit of the Magi, but also to the Baptism by John and the transformation of water to wine at Cana in Galilee. It brings in themes of joy but also of pain and sadness, of outreach and of the Church. The pictures are well chosen, some familiar and some that will be new to many of us. But as well as that we have the author's insightful commentary, and a short list each day of points to reflect on, useful in linking our own experiences with the season. This is a book to be looked at each day, for as short or long a time as seems appropriate to us, and I recommend it highly.

Valerie Smith

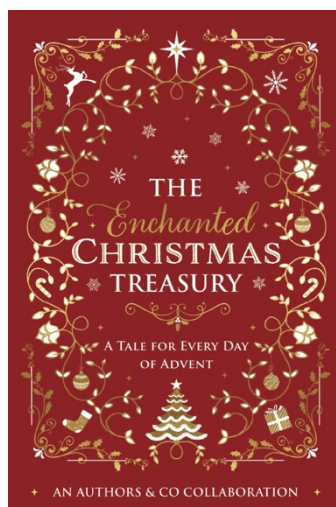


The Enchanted Christmas Treasury by Abigail Horne

My favourite thing about this book was the high level of inclusivity that was used in the stories. I also liked the easiness and enjoyment the book gave throughout the twenty-four tales. I learnt that Christmas is a time for happiness and accepting who people are from the story: Keno's hair, because it was saying someone was being mean to Keno just because she had Afro hair. My two favourite characters are Angel (from the story Angel's attic adventure) and Krish (from the story A super Krish-mas) because they both show true bravery and leadership. An example for Krish would be when he saved a cat from a tree. An example for Angel would be when she helped her two friends get back to their rightful spot on the Christmas tree.

I think something that interested me was how the tales are not linked so you can read them in any order though they are laid out so well you don't really need to read them in a different way. I would definitely recommend this book! It is (in my opinion) suitable for all ages above four as parents can read it to younger children and people who are able to read to themselves will find it nice and easy flowing. You will find it is a good book for adults as well. I would give it 5/5 stars because it is a friendly and fun book for all ages with no mad morals.

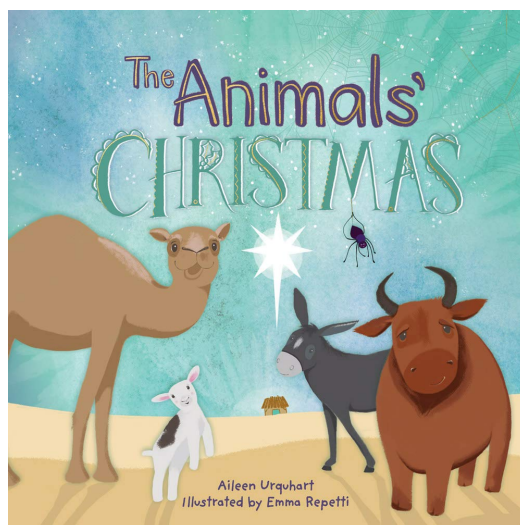
Rose (Age 9)



The Animal's Christmas **by Aileen Urquhart**

I like this book because I can learn about the advent/Christmas story and I can tell others about advent I also will get the chance to spread my own opinion of the story to others too. I learnt that Mary lived with her parents and did the washing up, sweeping and cooking. I also learnt that Mary and Joseph asked lots of inns for somewhere to sleep for the night but most innkeepers had no room. My favourite character was Lilah the lamb because she has the same name as me and when she was telling her part of the story she was being quite funny at some points in the story! What I enjoyed the most in the story was that the animals: Sarah, Daniel, Obadiah, Lilah and Khalid were telling it! I thought it was very funny. I would recommend this story because it helps you learn but it is also quite playful because the animals are telling the story. I would recommend this book to children 5+ and children under that age I would recommend the book to be read to them.

Lilah (Age 7)



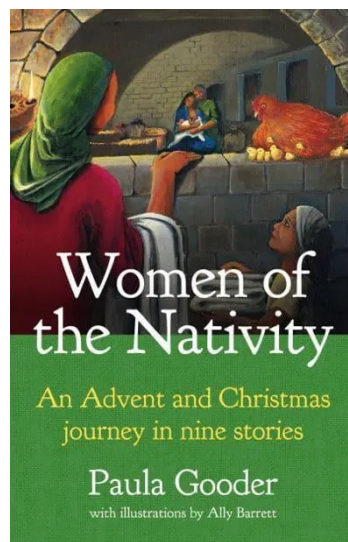
Women of the Nativity **by Paula Gooder**

Paula Gooder is a Licensed Lay Minister and Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral. Her new book "Women of the Nativity" was launched at St Mary-le-Strand on Sunday 22 November this year. Following on from her bestselling *Women of Holy Week*, Paula Gooder uses her extensive biblical expertise and storytelling skills to recreate the events of the nativity, from the promise of a future people to Sarah, to the presentation in the temple and the encounter with Anna, the prophet.

The story is told from the perspective of nine women in all including Mary, Elizabeth, Rachel, and others whom scripture records or tradition has imagined, such as the innkeeper's wife. As we hear the familiar stories afresh through their words, the wonder of the incarnation and its consequences for good and for ill, come to vivid life in a new way.

Each story is accompanied by a painting by the priest-artist, Ally Barrett. This will be widely welcomed by all who love Paula's writing and respect her biblical expertise as well as those looking for fresh inspiration for seasonal services from Advent to Candlemas.

Fr Jonathan



Musings from Ann Bawtree

If it is true that “We are what we eat” could it also be said “We appear to be what we wear”? In this season of putting away of the shorts and T shirts and getting out the thermal underwear, clothes are especially on the mind.

We are told consider the Lilies of the Field and to give no thought to what we should wear but is this an overstatement? Our clothing can go quite a way towards demonstrating who we are, or at least who we would like to be. Some clothes are a clear means of identification. Uniforms are a case in point be they school, military or clerical and have their uses. From Archbishops to Lollipop Ladies, we get a good idea of the wearer’s contribution to society. But what of personal choice?

At least comfort comes into it nowadays. A wearer of formal breeches was heard to complain that keys, loose change and his penknife frequently wore holes in his pockets and came to rest around his knees. Retrieval necessitated privacy. Fortunately, the wearing of stays except for physical support are passed. This brings in the concept of what is “suitable”. Suitable for what. Age for example? “Mutton dressed as lamb” is not heard so much these days of universal denim and hefty footwear. No longer would the wearing of brown boots to a funeral be the theme of a comic song.



Tickets and invitations often carry dress instruction but instead of the intended clarity can cause confusion. “Smart casual” seems to be a favourite although how smart and how casual is not specified. “Business attire” is a recent arrival. What if your business involved underground drainage or the need for high visibility? The legal profession seems to be hot on formality and of course a dog collar or a jacket emblazoned “Nurse” is a welcome sight in emergency situations.

While personal choice is an important factor it can also be a sign of appreciation of an occasion. This was demonstrated at the baptism of her new baby brother by his five-year-old sister.

Dressed in her best blue velvet frock with its lace collar she added an oversized bejewelled plastic tiara, her best one. It was her sign of acknowledgement that this was an important family occasion so only her best was good enough. Was it William Morris who said we should never own anything that we did not find to be useful or that we considered to be beautiful? Well, she considered it beautiful, and we must respect that.

In the early 60's the traditional nuns' habit began to disappear. It was explained that when strict rules for its make-up had been formulated in the Middle Ages it was to help Sisters to blend into the background. The cut of the habit was in the style of the current everyday wear of any woman of any age. By the twentieth century it involved seven metres of best black worsted cloth at immense cost and the finished garment made the wearer immediately identifiable.



Now members of religious communities can take trips to charity shops and buy unremarkable but serviceable garments like the rest of us.

There is also the angle of “dressing to impress”. Going for a job as a bank clerk candidates are advised to appear clean and tidy to denote their sober and trustworthy traits. They must keep their carefully torn jeans for leisure wear. It may be that this is a throwback to Marie Antoinette and her Ladies dressing as milkmaids and shepherdesses. They had no more notion of agricultural work than our future financial advisors have of labouring on a building site. There is only one golden rule for dress. If you have to look at a garment to see if it is clean enough to wear, it isn't.

Ann Bawtree

“The accumulated memories of annual emotion”



“It’s really the children’s day”.

“It’s a time for the family to get together”.

“It’s all a fairy story”. “I’m not religious...” Frequent

disclaimers, yet, well before Advent, the shops are

decorated, Christmas lights of varying quality are

switched on, pubs have already taken bookings for Christmas

lunches, endless repetitions of White Christmas, Rudolph the

red-nosed reindeer, Jingle Bells, and carols now usually with

words edited out and with speed increased to avoid

embarrassment make shopping trips miserable. And Christmas

cards have appeared in the shops with plenty of snow (despite

the fact that snow on Christmas Day is a rarity in most parts of

the country), cute birds (especially robins) and animals

(especially baby deer); occasionally angels who seem to have

escaped the assault on religious symbolism appear as, among

the cultured, do old masters, on the strict understanding that the

interest is aesthetic rather than religious. At the same time,

Christmas can be a difficult period – cooking is stressful, there

are money worries, someone gets flu, children are fractious,

families fall out rather than rejoicing. For practising Christians

the reasons for its centrality are clear, but what about others?

It is perhaps because it is not just this year’s Christmas that is in

people’s minds? It is an event that calls to mind many

Christmases, a warp thread of our existence composed of many

memories, generally selective, that make up a composite

experience: the time it actually did snow on Christmas morning,

being wakened up on Christmas Eve to listen to the carol singers,

the amusing small presents, the mince pies, the time we played

party games all afternoon, lighting the candles on the Christmas

tree in the evening, prodding the wrapped Christmas presents in

an attempt to guess the contents before opening, the red and green and white of the Christmas decorations, the holly, laughing with friends at minor misadventures and so on and so on – you will have your own list from childhood onwards.

The importance of memories over the years is well recorded in literature. In Dickens's "A Christmas Carol", the point where Scrooge's heart begins to soften is when the Ghost of Christmas past reminds him of both celebrations and sadnesses at Christmas in his youth. In Alison Uttley's "Country Child" Susan remembers and records every detail of a childhood Christmas on a Derbyshire farm, church, food, presents, little fir tree brought into the farm kitchen. G.K. Chesterton, that great exponent of merry Christmases celebrates not only personal memories, but memories handed to us through the ages: "It is in the old Christmas carols, the carols which date from the Middle Ages, that we find not only what makes Christmas poetic and soothing and stately, but first and foremost what makes Christmas exciting. The exciting quality of Christmas rests, as do all the other examples I have mentioned, on an ancient and admitted paradox...They, at least, never forgot that the main business of the story they had to tell was that the absolute once ruled the universe from a cattle stall."

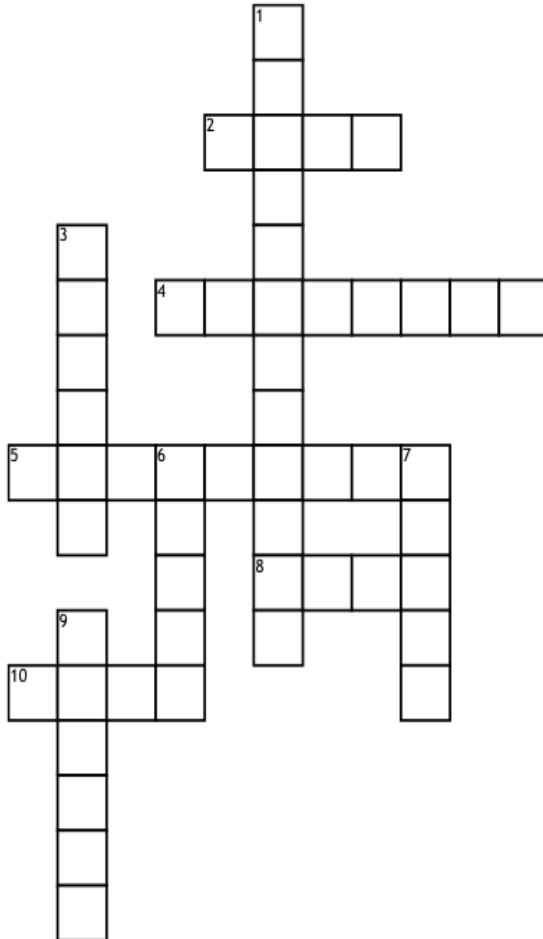
Finally, T.S. Eliot encapsulates this with his own list in his poem "The Cultivation of Christmas Trees": the child's wonder at the first remembered Christmas tree, the angel, the surprises, the special smells of the Christmas meal, the special amazement and awe. "So that before the end, the eightieth Christmas/(By "eightieth" meaning whichever is the last /The accumulated memories of annual emotion/ May be concentrated into a great joy/ Which shall also be a great fear, as on the occasion/ when fear came upon every soul; /Because the beginning shall remind us of the end/ And the first coming of the second coming"

Valerie Smith

Children's Pages

Name: _____ Date: _____

Epiphany



Across

2. The gift of the
4. The 12th day of Christmas celebrating the visit of the 3 kings to the Holy Family.
5. What little town was baby Jesus born?
8. What was in the sky that led the wise men and shepherds to where baby Jesus was?
10. The shiniest gift of the 3 from the wise men given to Jesus.

Down

1. Aromatic gum resin. (One of the 3 gifts of the wise men.)
3. Because there was no room in the Inn, where did Mary and Joseph go to give birth to Jesus?
6. The jealous king who ordered all first born sons to be killed when Jesus was born.
7. Oil from a small spiny tree used for incense and perfume. (One of the gifts from the wise men)
9. Wise men came to baby to Jesus to pay him

Colour in this Christmas nativity scene.
Halleluiah! Jesus is born!



Can you find our Advent words?

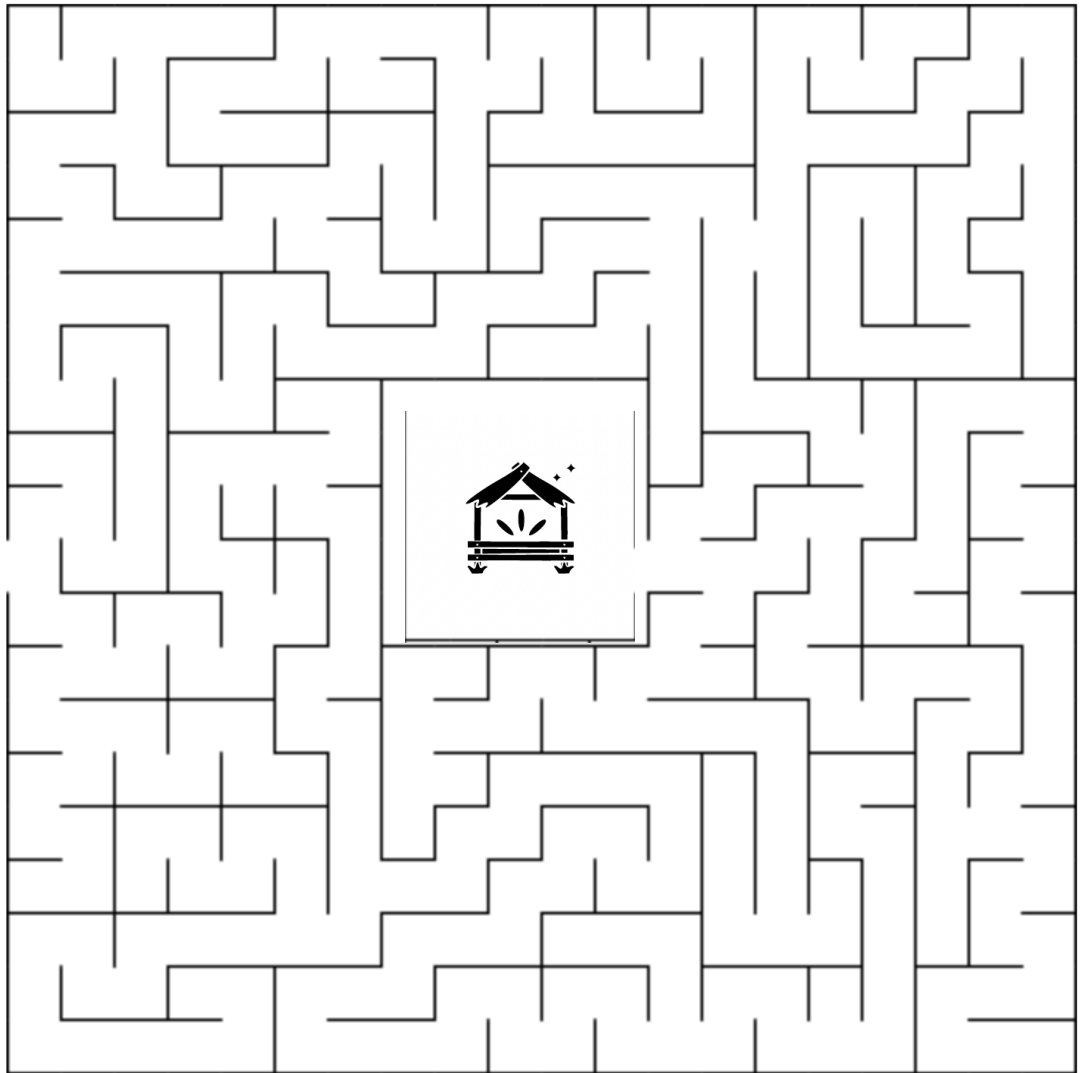
E D P Y O A W S T K N T A N S F Y V L Q
 F L N R D H L R E I H S B E S W V X S Q
 H V P V E O Z I T G D F L K T A C B Z B
 J T E R R P C A I S P A R K L I N G M C
 O N A A U L A L Q R W M X N X T N P P A
 T O C E S P E R A D N E L A C I G O N R
 M B U I R L B F A T C A F N B N A T S D
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 E L D N A C G L A V I L D I X I H I R N
 B J A M X L N B S O A N D O N K E Y W G
 M Y C K M Q I I N S A T I G G T Q G Q Z
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advent
 bethlehem
 candlelight
 christingle
 journey
 parcels
 ribbon
 stnicholas

angel
 calendar
 cards
 coming
 leading
 preparation
 sparkling
 waiting

anticipation
 candle
 carols
 donkey
 maryandjoseph
 purple
 star
 wreath

Can you help Mary and Joseph find the stable to rest in?



Recipe

Gingerbread

This is a nice easy recipe that children might like to make

Ingredients

175g dark muscovado sugar. 1tsp bicarbonate of soda
85g golden syrup. 1 tbsp ground ginger
100g 350g plain flour 1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 egg

To decorate

Ready made icing

Chocolate buttons

Method



1 Melt the sugar, golden syrup and butter in a saucepan, then bubble for 1-2 mins. Leave to cool for about 10 mins.

2 Tip the flour, bicarbonate of soda and spices into a large bowl, Add the warm syrup mixture and the egg, stir everything together, then gently knead in the bowl until smooth and streak-free. The dough will firm up once cooled. Wrap in cling film and chill for at least 30 mins.

3 Remove the dough from the fridge, leave at room temperature until softened. Heat the oven to 200c/180c fan/gas6 and line two baking trays with baking parchment.

4 Roll out the dough to the thickness of a £1 coin, then cut out gingerbread people with cutter. Re-roll the excess dough and keep cutting until its all used up.

5 Lift the biscuits onto the trays and bake for 10-12 mins, swapping the trays over halfway through cooking. Leave to cool on the trays for 5 mins, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Use the icing to decorate the biscuits as you wish, and stick on chocolate or sweets for button. Leave to dry 1-2 hrs. (will keep for up to 3 days in an airtight container).



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Bibi Heal & Stephen Barlow

The Choirs of Queen's Gate School

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I cannot attend but enclose £..... to feed a hungry child in Darfur

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I wish Kids for Kids to treat all donations I have made in the past 4 years
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Associate Priest The Rev'd Jacqui Miller Honorary Assistant Priest Fr Herbert Bennett	Bookkeeper Susan Redwin 020 7235 4482 finance@stpetereatonsquare.co.uk
Licensed Lay Minister Dr Judith Richardson 07907 459693	Choral Eucharist Director of Music Andrew John Smith 07545 009607 acjsmith45@hotmail.co.uk Assistant Director of Music (Choral Eucharist Organist) Dan Moulton
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Poppets Coordinator Sarah Armstrong poppetsatstpeters@gmail.com	Electoral Roll Officer Dr Judith Richardson richardson_judith@hotmail.com 07907 459693

Our Common Life

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Sunday Morning Services

BCP Holy Communion	08:15 am
Family Eucharist	09:45 am
Choral Eucharist with our world-class choir	11:15 am

Weekday Eucharist

Each day Monday to Friday	12.30 pm
<i>also</i> Wednesday	08.00 am

Morning Prayer: Monday - Friday at 08:00am
(Excluding Wednesday)

Evening Prayer:
Monday - Friday at 5.00pm

We are open for private prayer Monday – Friday
8.00am – 5.00pm