



*We can't bring you GRAPEVINE but we  
can bring you an Offshoot*

**Welcome**

December 2021/January 2022



*Poynton Parish Church*



I wonder what the sound track to Christmas is in your house, or at least usually is?

Is there a song, an album, the sound of children or the sound of a relative's bad jokes that means it is definitely Christmas? Do you know it is Christmas when you've attempted the high notes in the descant for Hark the Herald?

In our house there is one glorious piece of contemporary choral Christmas music which heralds the season – Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium*. A setting of ancient words which speak of the wonder of the birth of Jesus, but in its contemporary setting holds a moment of dissonance, perhaps so the piece hints at the suffering to come.

The English translation of the text is:

O great mystery,  
and wonderful sacrament,  
that animals should see the newborn Lord,  
lying in a manger!  
Blessed is the virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear  
the Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Alleluia!



At Christmas we celebrate the wonder of the Christ child, Immanuel, God with us, in the ordinary scene of everyday family life 2000 years ago. The scene celebrated in many carols and Christmas cards is unique, one of a kind – the baby is not just a baby.

We are able to celebrate that God is not a distant, unfeeling, disconnected god – but rather is so full of love for the world that Jesus is sent to live amongst us. He came down!

What is our response to be? The last two lines of the motet speak clearly – there is a title of honour and cry of praise. It is the “Lord, Jesus Christ” who is placed in a feeding trough and it is “Alleluia” which means ‘Praise the Lord’ that speaks of the thanksgiving and rejoicing of the first Christmas, and every Christmas since.

I pray that your Christmas will be filled with songs and sounds that help you to recognise the Lordship and the goodness of Jesus, and join in with the praises of heaven.

Wishing you a hope-filled Advent, a joyful Christmas and a New Year full of expectation for what God will do as we celebrate and serve him together,

Matthew

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

***These who have recently received Baptism or  
Thanksgiving***

28<sup>th</sup> November      Oliver James Pilbrow

28<sup>th</sup> November      Amelie Sophie Reid



***The family and friends of those who have recently died:***

4<sup>th</sup> November      Gail Lesley Hague      aged 71

4<sup>th</sup> November      Jeanne Sutherland      aged 91

9<sup>th</sup> November      Alice Joyce Grindey      aged 92

12<sup>th</sup> November      Geoffrey Bennett      aged 82

6<sup>th</sup> December      Elizabeth Mary Powell      aged 70

9<sup>th</sup> December      Mary Dignan      aged 83

**From 'Unmasked Mental Health'**

If Christmas is hard,  
If you've lost someone dear,  
Just look in your heart  
and you'll know they're still here.

The star in the sky,  
The light falling snow,  
The robin outside  
it seems like they know.

If this is a time  
when you're struggling through  
Just do what you can  
For what matters is you.

There's no need to be merry.  
There's no need to be bright.  
Just do what you can  
It will be alright.

*Sent in by Rosanne Alcraft*

As we celebrate Christmas

let us not forget Jesus.

Born to a virgin and laid in a stable.

Mary and Joseph did what they were able  
and received the wise men to look in the cradle,  
with gifts of great worth.

The shepherds in fields followed the star,  
after hearing of Jesus with news from afar.

So as we plan the food and drink, let us all  
really stop to think, about Jesus and the  
disciples who were sent to spread the word,  
Without which we'd never had heard, of God  
in his greatness and Jesus his son.

So Happy Christmas everyone.

*Janet Jones*

# Christmas at...

## St George's

### Christingle

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 4pm**

Celebrate the "Light of the world" with us as we sing carols and songs. Particularly suitable for primary-aged children.

### Quiet Carols

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December 4pm**

A more reflective service for those who might find Christmas difficult or would simply enjoy a quieter space.

### Candlelight Carols

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> December 4pm & 6pm**

Traditional festive choir-led services of carols and Bible readings.

### Christmas Eve:

**Family Carols 2pm**

A half hour service exploring the Christmas story! Particularly suitable for toddlers, children in school years R & 1 and their families. Come dressed up as a character from the nativity!

**Family Carols 3pm and 4pm**

A half hour service exploring the Christmas story through drama and carols! Particularly suitable for children and their families.

Come dressed up as a character from the nativity!

### 9pm Christmas Communion

Celebrate the good news of Christmas with a service of Holy Communion and carols.

### Christmas Day:

**8.30am Communion and Carols  
10am All-Age Christmas Celebration**



## St Martin's

### Holy Communion & Carols

**Sunday 19 December, 10am**

### Christmas Eve Carols (& cake)

**Friday 24 December, 4pm**

### Christmas Day Holy Communion

**10.30 am**





## Christmas Greetings from The Friends of St George's



Life with Covid having denied us having much we could do this last year or so, we felt this Christmas would be a good time to catch up and move ahead with some of our plans. The Friends aim and purpose is to improve or provide for the fabric of the Church and Churchyard. At the beginning of our existence we financed several small requests from the Bell Ringers and the Choir, and eventually slightly more expensive items such as water butts and planters for the lychgate entrance to the Churchyard. Later we were able to make more substantial donations to the buggy shelter and to the restoration of the lychgate.

On Advent Sunday the Vicar dedicated a new altar frontal, which replaces a worn one and was given to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> year of our Church as an independent parish.

Now we are beginning to make progress with our plan to commemorate St. George within the Church. We are hoping to install a backlit stained glass window and the design has been approved by the Vicar and the Friends Committee; the application to the DAC will slow things down again but now we feel we might achieve our aim sometime in 2022! Watch this space!

### Happy New Year too .....

We managed to arrange a coach trip to Trentham Gardens in September and although the Gardens were slightly past their best we enjoyed the extensive grounds and /or the shops! For next year a trip to Liverpool has been mentioned and other ideas for desirable destinations are welcome.

On 16<sup>th</sup> January we are holding an Afternoon Tea in the Hall to which members of the Friends and of the congregation will be most welcome. Tickets £7 will be available from the Church Hall or members of the Committee.

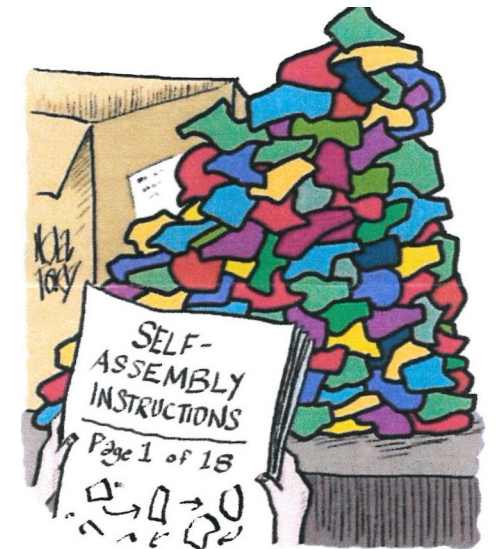
In February we hope to welcome Mr Tom Maxwell from Maxwells Auctioneers; 2<sup>nd</sup> February is likely but confirmation as to the price and programme details are still in discussion. All will be most welcome to join us and enjoy a glass of wine and nibbles.

### Altar Frontals

The custom of dressing the altar with decorated cloths goes back centuries and a full set covers each liturgical season and has its own distinctive colour...

<b>Advent</b>	<b>Purple</b>	<b>Christmas</b>	White and Gold	<b>Epiphany</b>	White
<b>Lent</b>	<b>Purple</b>	<b>Easter</b>	White and Gold	<b>Whitsuntide</b>	<b>Red</b>
				<b>Trinity</b>	<b>Green</b>

**Saints and Holy Days** have their own particular colour and changes may be made for specific local reasons.



The vicar was already regretting ordering the new stained-glass window from IKEA

***"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are suffering as if you yourselves were suffering"***

### **Hebrews 13:2-3**

Dear Friends and Volunteers at St George's Church,

My name is Lee and I'm the newly appointed Manager of Just Ice in Poynton. I would like to begin by thanking you for all your prayers, practical and financial support since we opened the cafe at the end of October. I first heard about the opportunity to apply for the role at Just Ice through our Vicar's wife, Jean McLaren who many of you will know. Although I can say hand on heart that I was not actively looking for the role of Manager in an Ice Cream shop, once I read the advert and the amazing vision behind the enterprise, I felt compelled to respond and apply. I have not looked back and am thoroughly enjoying working in the cafe and serving alongside the Trustees and our great group of volunteers.

It has truly been overwhelming to witness the support which continues to flood into the cafe from our volunteers. Aside from our customer facing volunteers, we also have an amazing set of volunteers who are working behind the scenes baking with Deborah and washing our aprons and tea towels. We really could not function without you so again a BIG thank you!

We have had a great number of customers coming through the front door and a good number of people returning for an ice cream or a cuppa. This has been really encouraging and as a team, we are beginning to build a rapport with these lovely people.

It is an honour to serve at Just Ice and we are very much looking forward to the next stage in our journey as we welcome some new colleagues in the new year who have been through a traumatic time in their lives to date. Please pray for us as we recruit and work alongside these people.

As we are now in our sixth week of trading and our presence on Park Lane, please continue to give thanks for

- More great trading days - Poynton seems to love our ice cream, even in the winter!
- Many more conversations with people who are vulnerable or lonely who come into our café
- Our fantastic volunteers!
- Our laundry ladies!

Please could you also remember the following points from Jo Rodman our founder in your prayers

- that we will fill the vacancy of Ice Cream Cafe Assistant Manager with someone who is suitably gifted and shares our vision.
- that we will excel at showing hospitality to strangers (Heb 13:2)
- for good relations with our neighbours including the occupants of the two flats above.
- for meetings planned in December & January with Hope for Justice, City Hearts and other anti-trafficking organisations to begin identifying and recruiting our first survivors.
- for a continued sense of community and belonging amongst all who are involved in the project in whatever capacity.



*Cont. on page 7*

- for continued financial provision whether from trading, personal giving or grants so we can ensure the smooth running of the cafe and employ the maximum number of survivors who have been so ill-treated.

Thank you again to you all and if you have not been in the cafe as yet, please do come in and have an ice cream, a delicious cake or a cuppa!

God Bless.





## Christmas Sonnet

Mary, you were so astonished, amazed,  
By Gabriel's words of expectation.  
Disbelief as at the angel you gazed.  
Reluctance, then trusting proclamation.

Mary, chosen handmaiden of the Lord.  
Human mother of the 'Light of the World'.  
Your tears of wonder silently outpoured.  
Had this visitation really occurred?

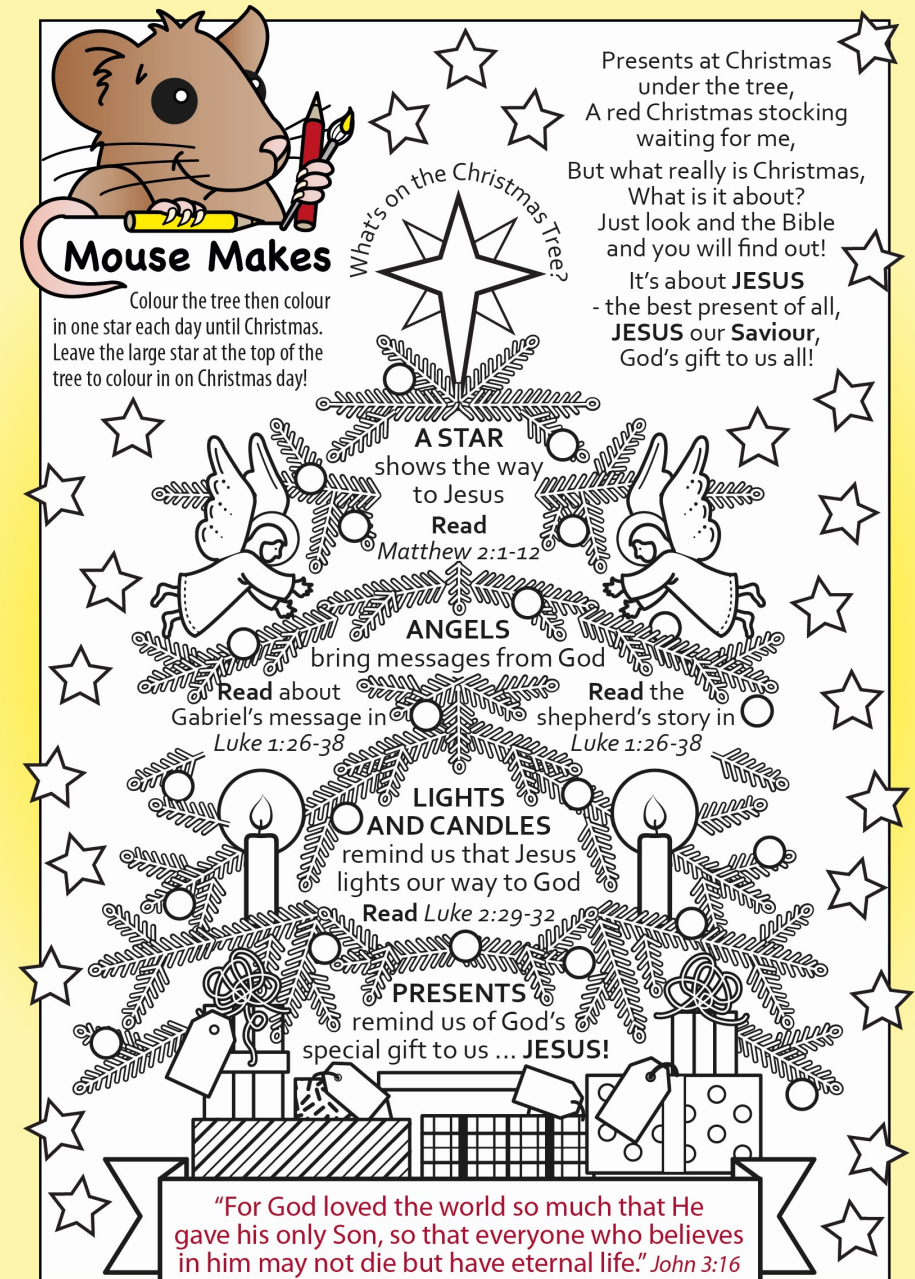
Mary, this Holy Precious Child, God's Son,  
Jesus, Baby of humble stable birth.  
Born to be King, Servant, redeeming one.  
Shepherd, advocate; infant smiles of mirth.

Mary, you trustingly bore the Christ Child,  
patiently enduring contempt and scorn.  
Obedient devotion, serene, smiled.  
Overwhelming love that first Christmas morn.

Mary, 'wondering shepherds' left their sleep  
to pay homage to Jesus, fast asleep.



Rosanne Alcraft



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## Women's Event



The first face to face women's event for two years in St George's hall, took place at the start of December. It was great to be together again!

35 of us gathered and the evening started with mulled wine, spiced apple juice and mince pies! We were then invited to choose a mini pot of Christmas flavoured ice cream before Jo Rodman recounted some inspirational and encouraging recent stories from the Just-Ice Poynton project. Jo based her talk around the four Just-Ice values of fun, fairness, friendship and freedom.

We then moved on to making Christmas decorations - thank you to Joyce Corlett for demonstrating these. A choice of Christmas trees, bells and stars were made - a lovely relaxing activity!

Great to see everyone and we look forward to more events in 2022. Please save the date of February 4th if you'd like to come to an evening meal at The Snap Tin - listen out for details in the New Year.

*Alison, Val and Kate*



## Men's Breakfast

Saturday 20th November saw the return of one of the staples of the St George's and St Martin's Men's Event calendar - the Men's Breakfast! It was the first in-person breakfast for more than 18 months, the last one being 7th March 2020 just before lockdown. The many attenders enjoyed fellowship with one another and a well-cooked breakfast. Lee Hardy - the manager at the recently opened Just Ice store on Park Lane - gave his testimony, as well as talking about the new venture.

*Geoff Smith*





At the beginning of a New Year we talk endlessly about making resolutions: to exercise more, diet or whatever. My resolutions last until about 4th January. They tend to be about self-improvement; I resolve to do better, to make the year different. Then I get depressed because I don't, and it isn't. It's just more of the same old me.

Perhaps a better way of thinking about New Year resolutions is to reflect on the way a musical score comes to a resolution. The resolution is not the beginning of the process but the end.

The peace that God desires to give us is more than an absence of stress. It is a deep desiring of God. And we become receptive of that gift not through a pull-yourself-up-by-your- bootstraps mentality of self-improvement, but by allowing the grace of God to permeate us ever more deeply, until the paradoxes and contradictions of our lives find resolutions.

Some things of course may not be capable of resolution this side of death. This too we need to learn. But we do so, not in resignation, but in the strong light of our belief of the resurrection, which marks death itself not simply as an end but as a new beginning.

*+ Robert, formerly Bishop of Stockport*

### Three Kings

Does Christmas seem long gone? Well, Christmas doesn't really end until Twelfth Night, 6th January. In the past all the 12 days of Christmas used to be celebrated with feasting and parties. January 6th is also the Feast of the Epiphany, which is the day on which the wise men, led by the star, arrived at Bethlehem. At Christmas we sing about Three Kings but we don't really know who they were, kings or wise men or where they came from - you can check the details in St Matthew's Gospel, chapter 2.

We do know that they brought very expensive symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for Jesus, not the usual things that you would give to a small baby. Traditionally the gifts have a special meaning: gold is for a king; frankincense (sweet smelling incense) is for God and myrrh (a spice used to prepare bodies for burial) for mortal man.





## New Sunday service times from January

- **Traditional service at 9.15am**, followed by tea and coffee in the hall until 11am.
- **Contemporary service at 11am** with children's groups and Pathfinders, followed by tea and coffee.

All-age services will usually take place on the first Sunday of the month at 11am. Baptisms will take place at the 11am service.

## 1st January: The naming of Jesus

Matthew and Luke tell how the angel instructed that Mary's baby was to be named Jesus - a common name meaning 'saviour'. The Church recalls the naming of Jesus on 1<sup>st</sup> January - eight days after 25<sup>th</sup> December (by the Jewish way of reckoning days). In Jewish tradition, the male babies were circumcised and named on their eighth day of life.

For early Christians, the *name* of Jesus held a special significance. In Jewish tradition, names expressed aspects of personality. Jesus' name permeated His ministry, and it does so today: we are baptised in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), we are justified through the name of Jesus (1 Cor 6:11); and God the Father has given Jesus a name above all others (Phil 2:9). All Christian prayer is through 'Jesus Christ our Lord', and it is 'at the name of Jesus' that one day every knee shall bow.

*Parish Pump*

