

# ALL SAINTS *MALDON*

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winter

# ALL SAINTS *MALDON* PARISH NEWS

Cover picture by Mike O

December 2022

£1

# Church info



ALL SAINTS with  
ST PETER MALDON

## Saturday December 11

3.00pm Christingle Service  
Rev Jordan Palmer

## Saturday December 17

10.00am - Messy Church  
Elaine Brown

3.30pm - A Festival of  
Nine Lessons and Carols  
Rev Noelle Taylor

## Saturday December 24 Christmas Eve

3.00pm - Crib Service  
Worship for All Team

5.00pm - Service of Light  
Worship for All Team

11.00pm - Midnight Mass  
Fr John Dickens

## Saturday December 25 Christmas Day

8.00am - No Service  
10.00am - Holy Communion  
Rev Noelle Taylor

# PARISH DIRECTORY

## VICAR

In Vacancy

## AUTHORISED LOCAL PREACHERS

Mrs Adrienne Knight  
Tel 01621 841329

Alan Marjoram  
Tel 01245 243868

## CHURCHWARDENS

Dennis Johnson  
Tel: 01621 842410

Colin Brown  
01621 850484

## DEPUTY CHURCHWARDENS

Mrs Vicky Tropman  
Tel: 01621 857291

Mrs Jenny Clinch  
Tel: 01621 840057

## HON TREASURER

Eddie Sewell  
Tel: 01621 851961

## PCC SECRETARY

Mrs Julie Ovenden  
Tel: 01621 858803

## OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

Mrs Barbara Gale  
Tel 01621 928538

## ORGANIST and CHOIRMASTER

Dr Stuart Pegler  
Tel: 01621 850530

## RECORDER OF THE CHURCH

Mike Gibson  
Tel 01621 784354

## PARISH NEWS EDITOR

Peter Clark  
Tel: 01621 869667  
email: [pjandvclark@gmail.com](mailto:pjandvclark@gmail.com)

## SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Mrs Elizabeth Blyth  
Tel 01621 854068  
Email: [elisabeth.blyth@gmail.com](mailto:elisabeth.blyth@gmail.com)

## WEB SITE MANAGER

Mike Kneller  
Email: [biggglesworth@btinternet.com](mailto:biggglesworth@btinternet.com)

Website [www.allsaintsmaldon.com](http://www.allsaintsmaldon.com)

# ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	CONTACT	TELEPHONE
Choir Prac/Thu (7:30pm)	Dr. Stuart Pegler	01621 850530
Choir Prac/Sat (11.30am)		
Junior Church	Elaine Brown	01621 850484
Sunshiners (Pre School Group Thursdays 9:15 am)	Gill Nelson	01621 852119
Tower Bell Ringers	Peter Chignell	01376 571170
	Dennis Johnson	01621 842410
Handbell Ringers	Derek Hall	01621 741690
Flower Group	Betty Smith	01621 854143
Bible Society	Joan Downham	01621854655
Childrens Society	Elaine Brown	01621 850484
Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and	Zoe Franklin	Email
Explorer Scouts (14-18yrs)	1stmaldonallsaintsscoutgroup@gmail.com	
Meeting Point	Barbara Gale	01621 928538
Maldon Pioneers	Mike Frederick	01621 840951
Ramblers Club		
Prayer Group		
Messy Church	Elaine Brown	01621 850484

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## From the Registers

### Funerals

1st November Elisabeth Stephens of Cromwell Lane aged 74 years  
16th November Sandra Cottam of Southminster aged 79 years

### Thanksgiving

22nd November Jackie Barnes of Granger Avenue aged 82 years



ST GILES LANGFORD

### Sunday December 18

3.00pm - Carol Service  
at St Giles, Langford  
Gerald Matthews

### Saturday December 25 Christmas Day

TBA - Holy Communion  
St Giles, Langford



ST ANDREWS HEYBRIDGE

### Saturday December 24 Christmas Eve

4.00pm - Crib Service  
at St Andrews, Heybridge  
Lynne Wood

### Saturday December 25 Christmas Day

TBA - Holy Communion  
at St Andrews, Heybridge  
Time to be confirmed  
Fr John Dickens



## My Last Editorial

Well; after 22 years editing the parish magazine I have decided that it is time to hang up my quill. In the main I have enjoyed the task and must express my thanks to the many people who over the years have contributed news and articles to me for publication. I would also like to say that membership of 'Parish Pump' has been a great help providing me with interesting articles. Over the years I have received many kind comments regarding the publication from people both near and far who read the magazine.

But the time has come for a fresh approach to the magazine and I am pleased that Mike Kneller has agreed to take on this role. You will already have seen that he has changed the magazine, stamping it with his own style and I am sure that this new look will be a great success and that those who sent contributions to me will continue giving contributions to Mike.

Finally, I should like to thank those who have distributed the magazine over the years, in particular Brenda Wainwright and Jean Russell. There are of course many others who have assisted me over the years but I'm afraid there is not room in this magazine to name them all.

Once again, thank you to Mike Kneller for taking on this role in which I wish him every success.

Cover photo, taken by Mike O the last time we had snow in Maldon

all contributions sent to the editor will be most welcome.

## FOR YOUR DIARY

DECEMBER

	All Saints 08.00	All Saints 09.30	All Saints 18.00	St Giles 09.30	St Andrews 11.15	St Georges 09.30
<b>Second Sunday 4th</b>	Holy Communion Fr John Dickens	Worship for All Mary & Hannah		Holy Communion Rev J Willmott	MP&P Rev J Willmott & Rev J Palmer	
<b>Monday 5th</b>						Holy Communion Rev J Willmott & Rev J Palmer
<b>Third Sunday 11th</b>	Morning Prayer (BCP) Adrienne Knight	Holy Communion Fr John Dickens	3pm Christingle Rev Jordan Palmer	MP&P Gerald Matthews & Irene Allen	Holy Communion Fr John Dickens	
<b>Monday 12th</b>						MP&P Joy Norman
<b>Saturday 17th</b>			3.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols Rev Noelle Taylor			
<b>Fourth Sunday 18th</b>	Holy Communion Fr John Dickens	Holy Communion Rev K Dunstan		3pm Carol Service Gerald Matthews	MP&P Julia McGreggor & Lynne Wood	
<b>Monday 19th</b>						Holy Communion Fr John Dickens
<b>Saturday 24th Christmas Eve</b>	3pm Crib Service WfA Team	5pm Service of Light WfA Team	11pm Midnight Mass Fr John Dickens		4pm Crib Service Lynne Wood	
<b>Sunday 25th Christmas Day</b>	NO SERVICE	10am Holy Communion Rev Noelle Taylor		Holy Communion TBA	Holy Communion Time to be confirmed Fr John Dickens	
<b>Monday 26th</b>						MP&P NO SERVICE

# Prayer Diary

DECEMBER

- 1 An end to the conflict in Ukraine  
2 Those who will struggle financially this Christmas  
3 All Postal Workers
- 4 2nd Sunday of Advent**  
4 The Dean, Chapter and Staff of Chelmsford Cathedral  
5 Those who are terminally ill  
6 The Salvation Army  
7 All charities planning care for those less fortunate than ourselves  
8 Those who have lost their faith  
9 All Infant and Junior school teachers  
10 Workers in the hospitality industry
- 11 3rd Sunday of Advent**  
11 The work of The Children's Society  
12 All who live in our Parish  
13 Those addicted to alcohol  
14 The work of Chelmsford CHES  
15 Places of conflict throughout the world  
16 All who are unable attend Church during the Christmas season through ill health  
17 All street pastors
- 18 4th Sunday of Advent**  
18 Our preparation for Christmas  
19 The housebound and elderly  
20 Distant friends and relatives  
21 Volunteers working with Crisis at Christmas  
22 Children estranged from their parents  
23 Those who will be alone this Christmas  
24 Christmas Eve Christians in the Holy Land  
25 Christmas Day Our family  
26 St Stephen The homeless and the deprived  
27 St John All shop workers  
28 The Holy Innocents Religious broadcasters  
29 All who are in residential care  
30 All who work on public transport  
31 For peace in the world in 2023

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## Let's hear it for THE EDITOR

This month is the last time that our Editor, Peter Clark, is responsible for this magazine. He has been getting our Parish Magazine out for about twenty two years and has now decided that both he and Vivien need a little more time for themselves, so it is time for him to pass over the printing and publishing to somebody else.

Peter has consistently turned out a glossy and classy magazine and like National magazines he always has it ready before the start of the month for which it is due, and I think it must be a matter of honour for Peter that this is so. I know that for the time I have been writing articles for publication, Peter has been a great help and support to me. For example, I am not brilliant at IT and often say to Peter "can you find a suitable picture to compliment my writing" and without further ado he does just that and never fails to brighten up my words by including such illustrations. I know also from past experience that fitting articles and pictures into the space available is a difficult and time consuming task but again, Peter always seems to make it look good. The monthly magazine is, I believe, a 'shop window' for our church and is an important link between us all who care for and support the church. Peter makes sure that a first class publication helps to do just that.

For all your hard work over the last twenty two years Peter, and for all of us you have helped during this time, a heartfelt 'Thank You' and best wishes for the future.

Ken Downham

## Thanks For The Memories

I would just like to record my thanks at the next PCC meeting for the WONDERFUL work Peter Clark did as Editor of the Parish News magazine. Month in, month out, over I can't even remember how many years, Peter dedicated himself to that difficult and onerous task, and in a professional yet friendly and accepting manner that always encouraged me to contribute so regularly.

Change inevitably moves us on and perhaps there is no longer such an important place for such a monthly magazine, but for years immemorial it held an important place in the Church's life. Indeed, it was a lifeline to some who could not get to church or who had moved away, and it always not only informed but it educated, it provoked thought and it even entertained. And at the heart of it all was steadfast Editor, Peter, dedicating many personal hours to perform this valuable service. I know we do not serve in church for personal recognition, but I do hope the PCC does something

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

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special to thank and mark Peter's retirement.

Finally, I understand that past copies of the Magazine have been kept in storage for many years somewhere in the Church, so I do hope this practice will be continued, as past magazines could be an important research record of the activities of All Saints to anyone wishing to delve into the past.

Finally, I consider myself honoured to have been allowed to contribute for so many years, and I am extremely sad that the Magazine is ending.

Sincerely,

Derek Trueman

*Thank you Derek, for your timely and accurate summary of Peter's dedication to All Saints Parish News. Your letter was read out at our last PCC meeting and has been passed to me for inclusion in the December edition of Parish News*

*I've worked with Peter on a couple of magazines in the past, whilst he has been on holiday and I hoped he might continue as editor, but he said he wanted to retire now, so I thought I might take over and save the magazine from finishing. I think it still has a valuable part to play in the life of All Saints and has the potential to reach people in our parish who might not speak to a priest or come to church.*

Mike K



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# The Parish Letter

## PRESENT AND PRESENT

**It will soon be here! We have begun the planning. We're ticking off the things we need to do. Ordered the turkey; 'stirred-up' the Christmas pudding; written and posted the Christmas cards; invited the relations; decorated the house; bought and wrapped the presents. The list goes on, and the four weeks of Advent are taken up with so many tasks that we sometimes forget what Christmas is about.**

For many, not only children, Christmas is all about presents. The word 'present', of course, has several meanings. Let's think about two that relate to Christmas:

- a present (as in a 'gift');
- the present (as in 'now').

At Christmas, we celebrate Jesus being born among us. His birth is a present (*gift*), and for the present (*now*).

Let's explore the first meaning – the '*gift*' kind of present. The present is Jesus. The birth of Jesus is the best gift ever! This child, wrapped up in a manger with people gathered around him, is God's Christmas present for the world. And Jesus is God – right up close and personal – in human form, no less. Jesus gives himself! When we see Jesus, we see, just as the shepherds saw, and we know, just as the angels knew, a most wonderful gift had arrived.

Who is the present for? You! Me! Everyone! Christmas is of course a Christian festival, but it's really for everyone. That's why the angel says to the shepherds that the coming of Jesus is 'good news for all the people'. Jesus came so that *all* might see and know the goodness of God.

And, the second meaning – the '*now*' kind of present. When is Christmas for? The present; *now!*

Christmas traditions vary from family to family. Some exchange gifts on the evening of Christmas Eve; some may exchange gifts first thing on Christmas morning after the stockings have been opened; others wait until later on Christmas day after lunch is cleared away.

But Christmas is for *now*. It is for the present. Why? Because Jesus, God's Son, has entered earth's time zone. God is said to be outside of time, but in Jesus, God has come inside time. Jesus has come for this very moment, for every moment.

I recall seeing stickers in the rear windows of cars which said, 'a dog is for life, not just for Christmas'. I'd like to suggest that, as Christians, we adopt a similar statement: 'Jesus is for life, not just for Christmas.'

How true that is! The Christian message is that Jesus has not only come to be with us on 25 December, but every day. Christmas is as much for the heat of July as it is for the frost and cold of December.

Jesus is the reason for the season and He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. So let us live in the present, accepting the present given to us at Christmas, the present that will last for life!

May joy be your gift at Christmas, and may Faith, Hope and Love be your treasures in the New Year.

Alan Marjoram



# Jackie Barnes

Older members of the Link parishes will remember Paul and Jackie Barnes. Paul was rector from c. 1986 – 2002 until he and Jackie retired and moved to Maldon in Essex. Sadly I have to report that Jackie died in a car accident at the end of October.

She and I were very good friends and since we have always managed to meet at least once a year, I feel qualified to write something about her.

Jackie was small in stature – especially compared with her tall husband – but she was upstanding, and outstanding in every other way. She worked devotedly as Paul's secretary, dealing with The Link, visiting and doing everything with love and a light heart. She kept careful details of the significant dates of people's lives, of their joyous and their sad days, visiting, if she could, or sending cards. Those of you who knew her will be saddened that she has died, but will remember her charm, wit, compassion deep kindness and colourful clothes.

Jackie was an only child whose parents were often unwell and so that she grew up with a worry and concern about illness. She has had illnesses to contend with in her family over the years and cared for them with unflinching love and concern. Lately she had lost something of her capacity to follow all her pursuits, to keep in touch as she always had. Nonetheless, whenever I phoned her she was always cheerful, enquiring about my activities, mentioning her own. The last time we spoke she was looking forward to a family weekend to celebrate their diamond wedding. This they did and she would have gloried in having all of them around her.

Our love goes out to Paul and the family, for she will be so greatly missed.

May she rest in a well-deserved peace.

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# Church Warden's Waffle

Well so much has happened here since I last Warden Waffled !! For a start I sent my Waffle to our new Parish magazine Editor, one Mike Kneller, we all seem to like very much the new mag produced last month by Mike. But I must mention Peter Clark who steered the sometimes rocky ship of 'Editor' so well for so long. All thanks to you Peter.

We are entering very exciting times, I think before long we will be able to advertise for a new vicar to come amongst us, and share their skills and talents with all of us, at St Andrews, St Giles and St George. There is a way to go yet, but after a long vacancy things are starting to move forward. We are now ably supported by Rev Noelle who will this weekend offer us a healing service, which comes at a very good time, as we all



have been through so much, some special spiritual calm, for those who wish to take the offer up is most welcome.

Jordan is now able to assist us all more and will be around throughout our Christmas



generosity of the technicians. There is another person who we should thank—the bloke who climbs up ladders and does all this “first fit” work, negotiates the deals and saves our church, and the Church, thousands of pounds; Dennis.

Mike K

## the bells

## the bells

# TOWER BELL RINGERS

## wanted

**Have you ever thought about ringing one of our tower bells? It may look difficult but it is quite easy.**

We are intending to have a Saturday morning of trying to ring the bells, with skilled bell-ringers standing beside you.

We are trying to double the number of ringers we have before Geog III's Coronation, which is similar to the time when most of us started ringing when there was a big push for new ringers in the country to celebrate the turn of the 20th century.

Many ringers improved greatly and are now ringing very advanced methods. I am not one of them but still enjoy ringing in many different towers.

We at All Saints, Maldon, ring for weddings and services as well as on the practice night which is every Monday at 7.00pm.

So ... if you would like to give ringing a go, then come to our practice morning and afternoon on **Saturday January 21st. At 10.00am and see if bell ringing is for you !**

# why is All Saints closed



It wasn't until Yvonne wanted to change the flowers that we realised she couldn't get in. The main door was closed. Strange because we have a policy of keeping the church open for folks during the hours of daylight. Fortunately I have a key so we were able to get in through the back door.

The reason the church was locked—we'd been vandalised. Yes, someone or someones' had messed up the flower dis-



plays, pinched the biscuits, and left the building in a mess. It was the police that recommended locking the front door, at least for the time being until things quietened down a bit.

We have closed circuit TV around the inside and outside of the church but unfortunately it is so old and the pictures are so poor that it's not possible to use them. So for the past few weeks All Saints estate's committee (or some of them) under Dennis's direction, have been climbing up ladders and going up

on "cherry pickers" pulling through hundreds of metres of new cables to replace the old ones so that we can change the old cameras. The cables have to be high enough up the walls so that they can't themselves be interfered with. And they have to pass through walls, which means drilling holes. Have you ever tried drilling holes through 700 year old walls! Luckily the holes were already made but pulling cables through them meant they had to be enlarged a little.

When they made walls 700 years ago, they made them very thick and filled them with "rubble". So if you were to drill a hole as soon as you remove the drill the hole fills up again with the loose rubble. That is why it took over three hours to pull the cable through one particular bit and another hour or so to pull it through another obstinate bit.

But, finally, the cables have all been done, we're just waiting for the camera technician to bring the cameras and connect them up.

Now these cameras are not cheap. They have to be good clear pictures to be of any use so you won't be surprised to learn that some of them can cost over £500.00 each and we need quite a lot. At this point enter the camera technicians and fitters of our new system. Now you can see why I mentioned the cost. We at All Saints are getting all this equipment, cameras, cabling, monitors, control modules the lot at a very good, greatly reduced price, and all thanks to the

services dressed as a reindeer, nooo not really! although I would not be at all surprised if a certain Fr Graham makes an appearance as someone or something festive during the Crib Service. We ask that all young at heart come dressed up as an angel or king or shepherd etc.

We have our (now annual) Tree Festival to look forward to and I think there might be a special visitor----no not me dressed up as an angel!!!

On October 30<sup>th</sup> we were able to hold the very moving and very important Memorial Service, it is always an honour to share tea and a chat with the bereaved. We were all invited to light a candle for a loved one, and the church became, quiet and moving, as the tiny flames burned brightly.

Also in October there was a very joyful event as Jordan and Hannah bought Jessie, Jude, and Mable to be baptized, they were so well behaved, even their parents! It was a special family occasion, and our lovely old church was and indeed is so glad to have them all amongst us, be it, Sunshiners, Messy church, and for worship.

For All Saints Day we were invited up to All

Saints School, for a really enjoyable service, led by Jordan and Adrienne, during which Jordan asked for volunteers to play this game, thank goodness 6 eager children were up for it, as if he had asked for adults, I should have hid under my chair, I could not grasp what to do---no comment!! And afterwards we were given refreshments laid on by the staff – the homemade cakes were to die for!!!

Christmas is fast approaching, please don't tell me if you have written your cards, wrapped up your presents, I have not. As I write I can tell you that tomorrow is Stir up Sunday, so things are going on apace.

I cannot close my Waffle without mention of our own dear Jackie. So much has been said about Jackie over the last week or so, we all feel her loss very deeply and our continual thoughts and prayers are with Paul and all their family. Of all the lovely and heartfelt things said about Jackie there is one comment which describes her perfectly "She was a friend to so many of us—to us all" Rest in Peace dear friend

My love to you all—Vicky



## New Fellowship Group

Starting on the 9<sup>th</sup> January we will be hosting a Fellowship Group at Elnido, 14, Tenterfield Road CM9 5EW. We will meet at 7pm until 9pm fortnightly on a Monday Evening. You will need to bring your own Bible (it is doesn't matter if we have different versions) and we will start by looking at the book of Ruth.

There is room on our drive for a couple of extra cars, although it is not the easiest thing in the world to park there! Elnido is the last of the 4

semidetached houses on the right as you come up Tenterfield Road just before the converted Telephone Exchange. It would be useful to have some idea of who plans to come along to the group so we can organise seating, my phone number is 07779491723 or collar me in church.

Noelle & Paul Taylor

## Sunday November 13th Act of Remembrance



### At the War Memorial We Remember

The Somme, Dunkirk and Passchendaele  
Cause us to think of times of war,  
When men and boys went bravely out  
They fought, some died and returned no  
more.

They gave their all that we should live,  
We never should forget such cost,  
Remembering with thankful hearts  
Our freedom gained as lives were lost.

Another Man gave up His life,  
Another war, another fight,  
With all mankind held fast in chains  
As darkness fell as black as night.

The cost was high, a sinless life  
To break the chains and set us free,  
The Lamb of God on Calvary's cross  
Paid that price for you, for me.

By Megan Carter  
PARISH PUMP



O God of truth and justice, we hold  
before you those people who have  
been injured or died in active ser-  
vice.

As we honour their courage and  
cherish their memory, may we put  
our faith in your future, for you are  
the source of life, peace and hope,  
now and forever.

Amen.

In Europe Santa Claus is the figure associated with the bringing of gifts. Santa Claus is a shortening of the name of Saint Nicholas, who was a Christian bishop in the fourth century in present-day Turkey. He was particularly noted for his care for children and for his generosity to the poor. By the Middle Ages his appearance, in red bishop's robes and a mitre, was adored in the Netherlands and familiar across Europe.

Father Christmas dates from 17th century England, where he was a secular figure of good cheer (more associated with drunkenness than gifts). The transformation of Santa Claus into today's Father Christmas started in New York in the 1880s, where his red robes and white beard became potent advertising symbols. In some countries (such as Latin America and Eastern Europe) the tradition attempts to combine the secular and religious elements by holding that Santa Claus makes children's presents and then gives them to the baby Jesus to distribute.

From: <https://christianity.org.uk/the-history-of-christmas/#.W9LmchNKhsM>

# Paul J King

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Horse-drawn funerals  
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[www.pauljking.com](http://www.pauljking.com)

The Bible does not give a date for the birth of Jesus. In the third century it was suggested that Jesus was conceived at the Spring equinox, 25<sup>th</sup> March, popularising the belief that He was born nine months later on 25<sup>th</sup> December. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, encouraged Christians worldwide to make Christmas a holy day in about 400.

PP Holy Days

## The history of Christmas

In the early Middle Ages, Christians celebrated a series of midwinter holy days. Epiphany (which recalls the visit to the infant Jesus of the wise men bearing gifts) was the climax of 12 days of Christmas, beginning on 25<sup>th</sup> December. The Emperor Charlemagne chose 25<sup>th</sup> December for his coronation in 800, and the prominence of Christmas Day rose. In England, William the Conqueror also chose 25<sup>th</sup> December for his coronation in 1066, and the date became a fixture both for religious observance and feasting.

Cooking a boar was a common feature of mediaeval Christmas feasts, and singing carols accompanied it. Writers of the time lament the fact that the true significance of Christmas was being lost because of partying. They condemn the rise of 'misrule' – drunken dancing and promiscuity. The day was a public holiday, and traditions of bringing evergreen foliage into the house and the exchange of gifts (usually on Epiphany) date from this time.

In the 17th century the rise of new Protestant denominations led to a rejection of many celebrations that were associated with Catholic Christianity. Christmas was one of them. After the execution of Charles I, England's Puritan rulers made the celebration of Christmas illegal for 14 years. The restoration of Charles II ended the ban, but religious leaders continued to discourage excess, especially in Scotland. In Western Europe (but not worldwide) the day for exchanging gifts changed from Epiphany (6<sup>th</sup> January) to Christmas Day.

By the 1820s, there was a sense that the significance of Christmas was declining. Charles Dickens was one of several writers who sought to restore it. His novel *A Christmas Carol* was significant in reviving merriment during the festival. He emphasised charity and family reunions, alongside religious observance. Christmas trees, paper chains, cards and many well-known carols date from this time. So did the tradition of Boxing Day, on 26<sup>th</sup> December, when tradesmen who had given reliable service during the year would collect 'boxes' of money or gifts from their customers.

# THE MAGIC OF CHRISTMAS

The other day I saw an advertising slogan from the world's biggest soft drinks manufacturer – "*Believing is Magic!*" – and I thought how apt it might be for the FIFA World Cup but just how un-apt this would be for the approaching Yuletide [unless you interpret this as "believing in the Christmas Story (not the soft drink) is fantastic!"]. Certainly, we always talk about the Magic of Christmas -- the *magic* that glistens in children's eyes, the *signs* to the shepherds and the magi, and the *wonder* of the Holy Birth. We even talk about the *miracle* of Christmas, and all the miraculous events that befell. But this is a supposed "happy" meaning of "magic".

**Clearly then, there is absolutely no room for any form of magic in Christianity,**

Indeed, although the very word itself, magic, is derived from "*magi*", such as the Three Wise Men from Persia, India and Arabia, this is not the happy magic we are referring to regarding Christmas; it is not even the magic of the conjuring trick so loved by us all, this is a much darker, more sinister act conjured by demons and spirits. So as we approach yet again another "happily magical" Christmas period it got me thinking about the possibility of the very existence of magic in Religion in general.

And then I remembered Simon Magus in the Bible, better known as Simon the Sorcerer, who wished to receive baptism and salvation after witnessing Peter perform miracles. He did not really understand the gospel – he just desired, and wanted to purchase, what he thought were magical powers greater than his own.

So what then is the difference between real magic and the signs, wonders and miracles from God? And, also, can we even accept magic in Christianity at all?

To most of us magic is just a magician performing varying levels of tricks to create

varying levels of wonder, but in all seriousness real magic is far more than this. It is essentially a dabbling in the occult, and authors suggest this occurs in three ways – white magic, supposedly harmless but not, black magic, full of frightening possibilities and outcomes, and red magic designed to ensnare through sexual means. Because there is no such thing as beneficial magic, which at a stretch could be defined as "helping people", all magic has been banned from Christianity since the earliest days, because all three require some form of collaboration with the forces of darkness and thus create disturbing outcomes.

The Christian's directive comes from Deuteronomy 18: 9-14 and is perfectly clear: "...no-one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practises divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells, or consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead. For whoever does these things is abhorrent to the Lord."

On the other hand, the signs, wonders and miracles that accompany God's ministry are the visible outworking of God's Grace, as the Church obediently fulfils the mission God has entrusted to her. They cannot be activated at will by either the Church or her ministers, they are the instruments of God's grace solely, and they cannot be engineered by His servants or switched on at will like wizards skilled in the magical arts. Simon Magus failed to understand this and thought he could purchase the requisite skills. Unfortunately, still today some Christians think they can do likewise when it comes to divine healing and deliverance, and they believe that by praying in a certain way or saying certain words they can activate the healing power of God themselves to cure people. Therefore, in doing this they

have transformed the legitimate Christian practice of praying for the sick into a form of magic. Hence the rise of the American-style TV “pastors” and the travelling faith healers, with their hordes of followers and their showman’s tricks. And disturbingly too the modern rise of movements such as NAR (New Apostolic Reformation) who flirt with those pagan and occult practices quoted in Deuteronomy 18 earlier, and they believe that they were originally God’s gifts to his people. It is now time, in these last days, to reclaim them for use in their ministry, they say, and this is leading gullible Christians into danger-

ous dallying with perceived dark forces. To them perhaps the soft drink slogan is reversed? – Magic is Believing!

Clearly then, there is absolutely no room for any form of magic in Christianity, and so at this coming Yuletide it is our Christian duty to play down the *happy magic* – the false path of consumer revelling – and instead to revel in the *sign* of the Star of Bethlehem, the *miracle* of the virgin birth and the *wonder* which has propelled millions of worshippers ever since.

D Trueman

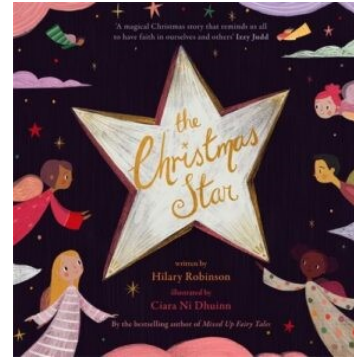


## Gaia at Chelmsford Cathedral

On 22 October our family – all nine of us – visited Chelmsford Cathedral to view the Gaia exhibition. One of our grandsons, Milo, has an eye for a photograph, and took this one.

Alan Marjoram

## Parish Pump BOOK REVIEWS

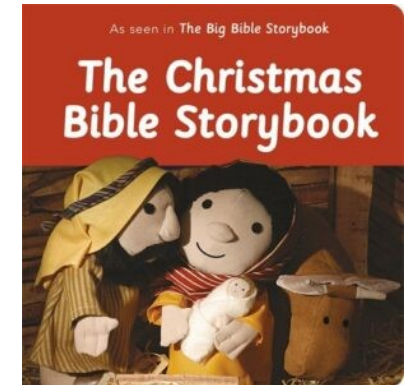


### The Christmas Star By Hilary Robinson, SPCK, £7.99

This is a fresh, heart-warming retelling of the story of Christmas for 3-5-year-olds. Children will love the story of the small, plucky star that becomes the Christmas star, and will learn that everyone can play a part in God’s story, no matter how small they are, and that everyone should be given a chance to shine. The clear, simple text is perfect for children just starting to read, and for adults to read aloud to them.

### The Christmas Bible Storybook (board book) By Maggie Barfield, SPCK, £5.99

Get your young children off to a good start in learning the Christmas story. Your under-5s will enjoy this full-coloured board book which opens to show them Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, wise men and, most of all, Jesus!

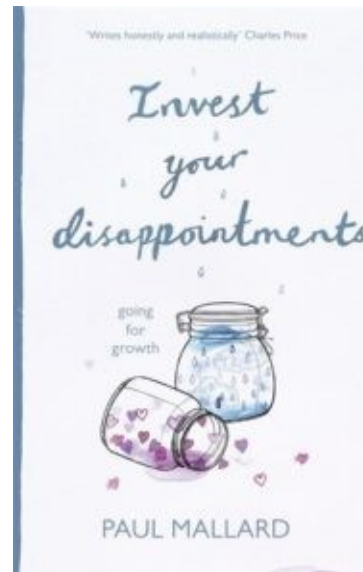


### Invest Your Disappointments – going for growth By Paul Mallard, IVP, £7.03

This is an invitation to openly and honestly acknowledge our difficult life experiences, and to turn them into opportunities for deep spiritual growth and rich personal development

Everyone lives with disappointments, but many of us “carry the tears inside”. We’re frequently disappointed. With family, friends, leaders, work, ourselves, church – sometimes, dare we say it, even with God.

Disappointment can be devastating. It can be sudden. And it’s certainly universal. But what if we were to use disappointment as an opportunity to check whether our motivation and priorities were in line with God’s will? Could it provide a chance for us to grow?



The Revd Dr Gary Bowness continues his tongue-in-cheek letters from 'Uncle Eustace'...

## On giving the after-dinner speech

The Rectory  
St James the Least

My dear Nephew Darren

I have been slightly surprised that in your ministry so far, you have never been asked to give an after-dinner speech. Now you have delivered your first one, I can understand why. Speeches after any dinner come at the point where stomachs are dealing with a little too much food and brains with about the same quantity of wine. They should be short and witty; yours was neither.

An hour-long speech on the Herodians and Second Temple Judaism at the time of the birth of Christ was not quite what we had expected. I applauded your enthusiasm, but I was the only one; the rest of them were asleep. Long after you had left, the catering staff gently vacuumed the carpets around the audience, and it was only when the night security guard arrived that the last diners were woken and politely

sent home. I suspect you will have put many marriages under strain as husbands, returning home in the early hours of the morning, had to explain to wives why they were so late. Their truthful answers would have been unbelievable.

When the head waiter appeared in a dressing gown and started placing chairs on tables, even you must have suspected that hints were being dropped and I have never heard of a hotel manager interrupting a



speech to place his keys on the top table and asking if the last person to leave would kindly lock the main door.

I know that your clerical attire is more usually T-shirt and jeans, but borrowing the curate's dinner suit from your next-door parish was also not a good idea. He is a foot taller and several stones heavier than you. The result was quite worrying – several people wondered if you had just recovered from some dreadful disease that had made you shrink.

**I applauded your enthusiasm, but I was the only one; the rest of them were asleep.**

In the light of your qualified success, thank you for offering to come to repeat your

speech after our annual Christmas dinner, but no thank you. The verger's son wants to share with us how many potholes he has counted in and around the town, and that should be most interesting.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace

### ANSWERS TO THE CROSSWORD (see page 23)

**ACROSS:** 1, Hide. 3, Disgrace. 9, Sonship. 10, Oaths. 11, Tutti. 12, Ignore. 14, Fore-knowledge. 17, Ashram. 19, Men or. 22, Aroma. 23, Nineveh. 24, Amethyst. 25, Trod.  
**DOWN:** 1, His staff. 2, Do not. 4, Imprisonments. 5, Groan. 6, Altered. 7, Easy. 8, Shrink. 13, Searched. 15, Restore. 16, Lament. 18, Reach. 20, Never. 21, Jada.



All Saints fourth

# Christmas Tree

## Festival 2022

DECEMBER

FRIDAY 9th 10.00am — 5.00pm  
SATURDAY 10th 10.00am — 5.00pm  
SUNDAY 11th 11.00am — 3.00pm

Shopper's Carols at 12.30pm  
and  
Father Christmas  
will be here from 3.00pm—5.00pm





CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH

## Churches Together

In Maldon

Just a reminder, last month I started writing about the school visitation during Covid or rather the lack of it, so making a video was suggested.

Making a video isn't such a big deal. All the video clips taken on the cameras were put into my computer first then all the sound clips. I use Vegas pro software so it's just a matter of synchronizing them and editing out the bits I don't want. Then comes the adding of the sound and video effects (*the fun bit*) and rendering the result. That takes the computer about 2 hours. Then bingo, job done.

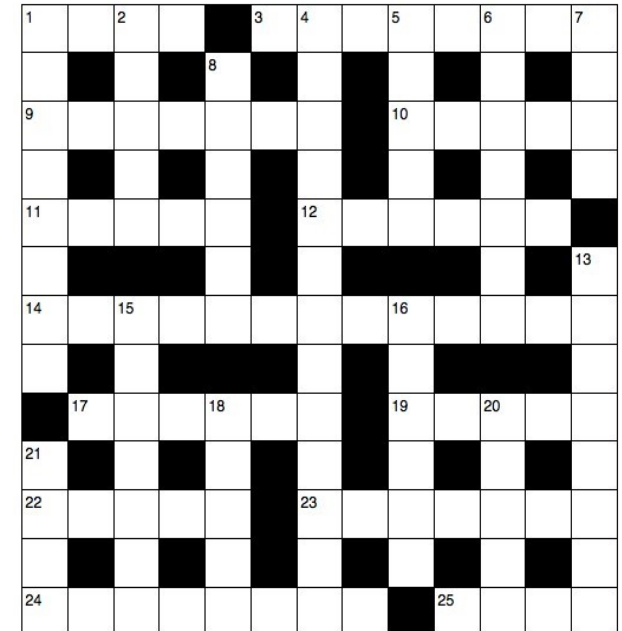
*... from what I've heard from the feedback it worked well. So well in fact that I got a call a few months after Christmas asking if we could do some more*

# CROSSWORD

How good are you at crossword puzzles? How good is your Bible knowledge? Give yourself a generous half-hour on this one to find out.  
(NB: The answers are on the bottom of page 14—but no cheating.)

### Across

- 1 'How long will you — your face from me?' (Psalm 13:1) (4)
- 3 'Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the — he bore' (Hebrews 13:13) (8)
- 9 Posh sin (anag.) (Romans 8:15) (7)
- 10 Solemn pledges (Matthew 5:33) (5)
- 11 Italian term for full orchestra (5)
- 12 'For he who avenges blood remembers; he does not — the cry of the afflicted' (Psalm 9:12) (6)
- 14 Prescience (1 Peter 1:2) (13)
- 17 Where a Hindu holy man lives (6)
- 19 'If he found any... who belonged to the Way, whether — women, he might take them as prisoners' (Acts 9:3) (3,2)
- 22 Fragrance (2 Corinthians 2:15) (5)
- 23 Vine hen (anag.) (Jonah 1:2) (7)
- 24 Precious stone decorating the twelfth foundation of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:20) (8)
- 25 'Will you keep to the old path that evil men have — ?' (Job 22:15) (4)



### Down

- 1 'Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with — —' (Numbers 20:11) (3,5)
- 2 'You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, " — — murder"' (Matthew 5:21) (2,3)
- 4 One of Paul's many hardships endured as a servant of God (2 Corinthians 6:5) (13)
- 5 'We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, — inwardly' (Romans 8:23) (5)
- 6 Changed (Daniel 6:8) (7)
- 7 'My yoke is — and my burden is light' (Matthew 11:30) (4)
- 8 Recoil (Revelation 12:11) (6)
- 13 'O Lord, you have — me and you know me' (Psalm 139:1) (8)
- 15 ' — to me the joy of your salvation' (Psalm 51:12) (7)
- 16 Express sorrow (Isaiah 16:7) (6)
- 18 'Then he said to Thomas, " — out your hand and put it into my side"' (John 20:27) (5)
- 20 'God has said, " — will I leave you; — will I forsake you"' (Hebrews 13:5) (5)
- 21 Son of Onam and brother of Shammai (1 Chronicles 2:28) (4)



# my page (3) - my page - my page

## Bible Bite

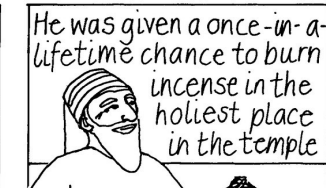
A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in Luke ch.1 verses 1-25 & 57-80

The Romans had invaded Israel and still ruled it. Zechariah and Elizabeth were an old childless couple living in the hill country.



It was Zechariah's turn for temple duty in Jerusalem.



He was given a once-in-a-lifetime chance to burn incense in the holiest place in the temple



As it burnt he prayed

Lord God, please rescue us, your people.



Then he saw the angel standing next to him



At our age that's not going to happen



you will be unable to speak until your son, John\*, is born

God has heard your prayer, and you will have a son.

To show you that God means what He says..

\*In Hebrew, 'John' is 'Yochanan' or 'God is gracious'



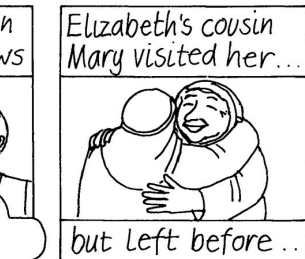
When Zechariah came out of the holy place..

What happened?



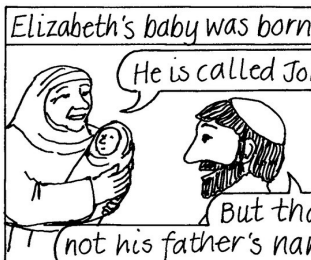
He went home and soon Elizabeth had good news

I'm pregnant!



Elizabeth's cousin Mary visited her...

but left before..



Elizabeth's baby was born.

He is called John

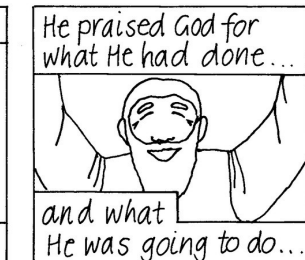
But that's not his father's name



Zechariah wrote...

His name is John

and could speak again.



He praised God for what He had done...

and what He was going to do...



The next step is to check it plays okay and there are no mistakes, if everything works, load it up to "Google Drive" (a Cloud storage system) and send invitations to the Open The Book teams to download it onto their PC's—and they take it from there.

The teams make contact with the schools that use the video's. They play them through their systems and the kids see and hear the result during their assemblies or classes. And, from what I've heard from the feedback it worked well. So well in fact that I got a call a few months after Christmas asking if we could do some more.

And so it was that I did, and we went on to make another 36 video's of Bible events and stories like Daniel and the Lions Den, David and Goliath—Moses in the Bullrushes and New Testament stories ranging from the birth of baby Jesus, some of His teaching, to His crucifixion.

Now that Covid is less of a risk to life and limb, the schools are back to normal and so are the Open The Book Teams—so I'm out of a job, but it was good while it lasted.

I say out of a job—not quite, I represent All Saints at the Churches Together in Maldon, as from last month, and there was a Covenant service for Churches Together held a couple of Sundays ago at the Salvation Army. I can therefore add to this article a footnote - that I signed the Covenant on behalf of All Saints.

What does this mean, what is this Covenant and how will it affect us? Well, once again I've run out of space—but all will be revealed—NEXT MONTH.

# Christingle Service

with Rev Jordan Palmer

**SUNDAY DECEMBER 11th at 3.00pm**

The service and collection of the Christingle candles is after the Tree Festival.

This is a lovely service and supports the work of the Children's Society, and there are still collecting boxes (or envelopes) available at the back of the church

1 of 2

## All about Christingles

We make Christingles at Christmas time as a reminder of who Jesus is and his love for the whole world.

The four sticks of sweets and fruit remind us of the four seasons and the good gifts that God gives us.

Which is your favourite season?

What is the best gift you have ever received?

Where in the world would you like to visit?

The orange represents the whole world.

Together @ Home

The candle or glowstick represents Jesus the light of the world.

Why do you think Jesus described himself as the light of the world?

How can we be a light in the world?

The red ribbon reminds us of God's love and the blood that Jesus shed for us.

How can we share God's love with others?

Why did Jesus need to die?

### What is a Christingle?

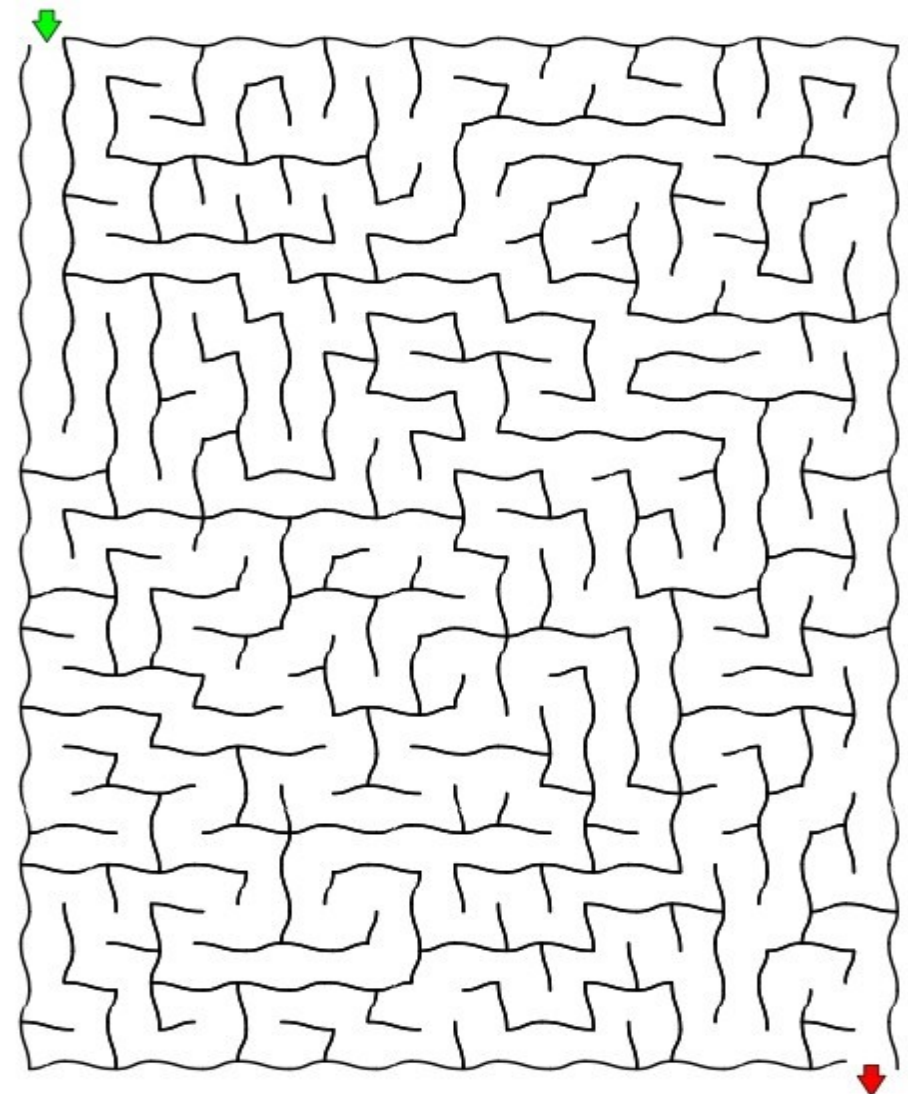
The history of the Christingle can be traced back to Moravian Bishop Johannes de Watteville, who started the tradition in Germany in 1747. At that time it was just a red ruff wrapped around a candle.

In the intervening years, the Moravian Church spread the tradition of Christingle through their early role in the Protestant missionary movement.

It was popularized in the United Kingdom by John Pensom in 1968. He was raising funds for the charity The Children's Society. In the 2000s, over 5,000 Christingle services were being held in the UK every year. In 2018, over 6,000 services were held for The Children's Society. Each year, Christingle raises over £1.2 million to help vulnerable young people.

In 2018, The Children's Society launched its #Christingle50 campaign, which in-

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Can you colour in the picture on the left?  
Then can you move from the green arrow at the top through the maze to the red arrow at the bottom without going into a dead end first?



Everyone is welcome whatever your age, come and see what we do, you will be amazed

Messy Church is a form of church for adults and children that involves creativity, celebration and hospitality. Our aim is to make coming into church more accessible, more relaxed and to introduce Jesus in a way that is fun, through craft, fellowship and informal learning.



Held on the 3rd Saturday every month each session starts at 2.00pm and includes a welcome, a long creativity time to explore the biblical theme through "getting messy" (hands on activities for children and adults)


and a short celebration time involving story, prayer and song. All elements are for people of all ages, adults and children (children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent or carer).

For further details and to offer help, please contact Elaine on 01621 853238


NB: COPY DEADLINE FOR JANUARY MAGAZINE  
DECEMBER 15th

# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Mike and Laura Gibson  
and family  
wish all their friends  
at All Saints'  
A Happy Christmas  
and  
Joyous New Year



Wishing all our  
friends at  
All Saints



a Happy Christmas  
and New Year  
Jean & Ken

Debbie & Jenny  
wish everybody at  
All Saints  
a very happy  
Christmas and New Year

Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year  
with love to all our  
friends at All Saints  
Merie and Helen



Peter & Vivien  
Send Christmas  
Greetings to you all  
and hope all past con-  
tributors will support  
Mike Kneller as he  
takes over editing this  
magazine.



Wishing all our lovely  
friends at All Saints'  
Peace and Joy at  
Christmas  
Richard, Adrienne and  
George Knight  
xxx



Jackie & Alan Marjoram  
Wish everyone  
Joy and Peace,  
Celebration and Wonder.  
As you welcome  
Christmas this year



Eddie & Gift  
Send their greetings  
and good wishes to  
you all, for a Happy

Yvonne & Mike  
wish all their friends  
at All Saints  
a very happy Christmas  
and a  
healthy New Year



Ken and Joan  
Wish everyone  
a peaceful,  
happy and healthy  
Christmas



Just Wishing Our  
All Saints' Family  
a Happy and Healthy  
Christmas  
and  
New Year  
Jill and Chris Nelson

# everyone