

# trio

A silhouette of a person playing a trumpet is centered in the upper half of the image. The background is a soft, golden-brown color with a subtle pattern of falling snow or light particles, creating a festive and wintry atmosphere.

Abbeydale and Millhouses Parish Magazine

**Christmas & Winter 2023/24**

Christmas messages & other celebration stories

The war in the Holy Land Christmas & winter crafts.

The story of Good King Wenceslas & St. Valentine

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**Usual SUNDAY Services** (Maybe occasional changes!)

**10.00 am Parish Communion**  
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**1st & 3rd Sundays at Holy Trinity,**

**2nd & 4th at St. John's**

**5th Sundays alternate SO....**

**SEE PAGE 15** (centre right page) and website for dates and venues of all services

**This service can be followed on 'Zoom' or phone** for details check the website

**[amchurchsheffield.co.uk](http://amchurchsheffield.co.uk)**

**Other church events & activities on p.14 & 27**

**For Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals, plus bookings for church buildings, halls and the Parish centre, please contact the church office**

**[htmillhousesoffice@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:htmillhousesoffice@yahoo.co.uk)**

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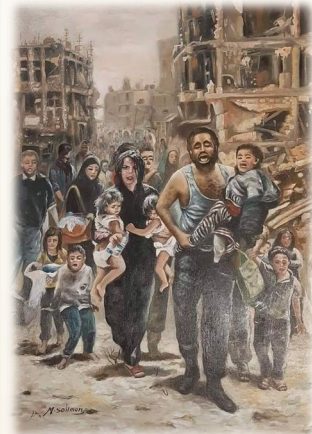
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## From the clergy.....

Dear Friends; old and new,

I write to you at a time of great upheaval, of hopeful, and fearful anticipation. Right now, the ground floor of our house in Norway is a junkyard of packed bags, toolboxes and furniture sitting in unusual configurations as I try to navigate being my own removals company, after the “man with the van” had to change his plan. Life feels a little chaotic as we speak, daily, with the decorator at the vicarage on WhatsApp, approving work and answering questions, whilst negotiating vehicle import registrations and trying to keep our children fed, dry and entertained.

We wonder how our children will adjust to life in a new country, in a new language. I think about the culture, and friends they will leave behind, and what awaits them in Sheffield. I see Stanage Edge, Crumb Bakery, “Granny” and Millhouses Park. I feel the weight of the decision, and the responsibility to keep my family happy and safe.



I try not to look at the news.

I can't look away though.

I can't shut out the images of children and families in rubble, blood, terror, and despair. I remember the rage and hatred in the men's eyes

as they commit atrocities. I can't forget their faces and I don't know how to begin speaking about it. I'm worried for *my family*. *What on earth are those people living through?*

The concepts of danger and uncertainty take on new meaning when an infant is placed in your lap. It was only when seeing my wife in childbirth that I, a fairly privileged man, truly understood what it felt like to have no power. Kjersti was in a fight I couldn't take on, and a situation I couldn't manage. I had to simply trust that she could do it, and she did it, twice! The babies in those situations were vulnerable, and I couldn't change that fact either, but thank God, they too were fine.

The ecstatic joy of parenthood comes with the horrific agony of seeing half of your own life force and heart teetering around in a body which doesn't yet know how to cross a road safely, or what a flame is. It is knowing that their heartache is inevitable and will hurt you more than your own.

This is perhaps the most extraordinary thing for me about the incarnation; the God who created the universe, took on the form of the most vulnerable human creature we can conceive. The hope and trust God put in humanity, and in particular, a young teenage mother is truly wonderful. Mary was in a state of nomadic homelessness and her child was politically dangerous and threatened. He would be raised in an occupied territory and people would conspire to kill him.



God is not a distant and dispassionate force watching the chaos unfold from a safe distance. In the Christmas story we see God as an infant, surrounded by danger. We see the Christ Child, trusting us, depending on us for his very life.

I have no insight worth writing here, into the geopolitical, cultural or climate crisis realities we face.

I do know, though, that despite what our fears and doubts might have us think, no matter the crisis or the darkness, that even in the heights of success and joy, and in the depths of loneliness and despair, if the Christmas story tells us anything, it is this;

God is not NOWHERE to be seen.

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# Footmarks in the Snow

Most people will be familiar with the popular Victorian carol 'Good King Wenceslas' which tells a heart-warming tale of Christian charity and fortitude.

But who exactly was the hero of this story, and why is he still remembered?

Surprisingly, Wenceslas wasn't a king at all. (Well, not really – read on!) He was actually a duke of Bohemia, born in Prague around 907 CE into turbulent times when there were great tensions between Christians and followers of the old pagan religion. Wenceslas succeeded to the dukedom whilst still a boy. His paternal grandmother Ludmila of Bohemia initially ruled the duchy as regent for him. She was a devout Christian who apparently had great influence on Wenceslas. But his pagan mother Drahomira, consumed with jealousy, arranged for Ludmila to be murdered: according to legend she was strangled with her own veil. Drahomira continued the role of regent and immediately took repressive measures against Christians, closing churches and banning the teaching of the Gospel. However, when Wenceslas came of age the remaining Christian nobles successfully rebelled against Drahomira and Wenceslas sent her into exile.

Wenceslas's rule was said to be characterised by his great piety and a strengthening of Christianity. It was, however, of short duration. His younger brother 'Boleslaus the Cruel', who was close to his mother Drahomira, conspired with some companions to murder Wenceslas on his way to Mass. As someone immortalised for 'looking out' it is not known whether poor Wenceslas saw them coming. In any event he came to a sad and violent end whilst still in his twenties.

In his short life though, Wenceslas had made quite an impression. He was promptly recognised as a martyr and a saint and within a few decades of his death no fewer than four biographies of him were in circulation. The Holy Roman Emperor Otto I posthumously conferred on him regal status, giving the world 'Good King Wenceslas'.



Wenceslas's commitment to doing good deeds for the needy was legendary. One twelfth century commentator wrote, "... no one doubts that, rising every night from his noble bed, with bare feet and only one chamberlain, he went around to God's churches and gave alms generously to widows, orphans, those in prison and afflicted by every difficulty, so much so that he was considered, not a prince, but the father of all the wretched."

It is this aspect of Wenceslas's life that is remembered in the famous Christmas carol which first appeared in 1853. In this, Good King Wenceslas looks out on the Feast of Stephen, i.e. 26<sup>th</sup> December, the second day of Christmas. It is a freezing cold night. In the moonlight he sees a poor man gathering firewood in the deep snow and is deeply moved by his desperate plight. He immediately consults a young servant (a page) who tells him the man lives around three miles ('a good league') away. Despite the atrocious weather conditions Wenceslas is determined to assist the man personally. He collects meat, wine and pine logs and sets out on foot into a howling blizzard with his unfortunate servant in tow, committed to seeing the poor man enjoy a hearty meal. After a while though the storm worsens and the servant, lacking his master's enthusiasm, fears he can go no further. Wenceslas's response is to urge the servant to tread in his own footsteps. When he does so he discovers that miraculously the ground where the king has trodden has become warm.

The carol does not go on to say whether our intrepid duo actually achieve their objective, but the implication is that they do. It does end though with a bit of moral instruction by noting that Christian people who 'bless' those less fortunate than themselves will themselves 'find blessing'.



The words of the carol are based on legend. They are not, and shouldn't be interpreted as, holy scripture. But I wonder whether they might have a deeper meaning than the simple tale they recount.

From previous page

Wenceslas is portrayed as a protector of the poor and needy who exhorts his servant to follow him, not on an easy path, but on a difficult journey. When the servant falters, Wenceslas is there to help him through the storm. This reminds me of the Christian view of Jesus who calls on us to follow Him as our guide and friend through both good times and life's difficulties. Wenceslas endures great hardship to bring a potentially life-saving gift of 'flesh' and wine to one of the lowliest of his subjects. Is this an echo of the Christian Eucharist where bread and wine represent the body and blood of Jesus which He sacrificed for the whole of humanity on the cross, freeing us from death in the process?



Whilst thinking of King Wencelas as a possible analogy for Christ I recalled some words of the famous hymn 'O Jesus I Have Promised':-

*O let me see Thy footmarks, and in them plant mine own;*

*My hope to follow duly is in Thy strength alone.*

*O guide me, call me, draw me, uphold me to the end;*

*And then in heaven receive me, my Saviour and my Friend.*

Perhaps encouraging us to follow Jesus, planting our own feet in His footmarks as we journey through life, is the real meaning of *Good King Wenceslas*.

Andrew Bullock

Whilst on holiday in Cornwall, Ann Smedley and Nikki McDonald Bell found this beautiful ebony statue of the Madonna and the infant Jesus in Truro Cathedral.

Although, according to Wikipedia, there are hundreds of black Madonnas in churches around the world, this one is not listed! They do, however, list two in the United Kingdom. These are:

[St. Mary Willesden \(Our Lady of Willesden\)](#): The original [Shrine of Our Lady of Willesden](#).

[Our Lady of Czestochowa \(Church of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Nottingham\)](#)



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We are currently reviewing the governance of Transport 17. Part of this is the plan to move from a Co-operative and Community Benefit Society structure to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation structure, thereby changing its legal status. A formal meeting to agree and implement this change will be held in March next year. The management committee are anxious to trace as many original shareholders as is possible, particularly those who may have lost contact with T17 over the years. Perhaps you know of friends, colleagues, or elderly relatives who may have been an original shareholder in the 1980's. If so, please can you ask them to contact T17 either by email or telephone [details below] so we can update our records and obtain their views on our proposals. If you know of an original shareholder who is unable to contact us for whatever reason, please help us to update our records by contacting us yourself. You can call the office on 0114 236 2962, or email us at [admin@transport17.co.uk](mailto:admin@transport17.co.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.



# Celebrating Christmas on a Yacht

## Introduction

Angie and Peter Lauener's daughter Lucy and her family, husband Chris and children Bibi, Rocket and LoLo, spent a very different Christmas a year ago. They'd taken a year out to sail a catamaran across the Atlantic and onto the Caribbean. The 2022 Christmas season found them in Gibraltar and then Las Palmas in the Canaries.

**Lucy writes** - "Because we were in Gibraltar in the time leading up to Christmas, it felt like a British Christmas, also because it was raining! On 1<sup>st</sup> December, there were lots of celebrations with seasonal songs and Christmas tree lights in the local café and family gatherings after school. We were able to experience and enjoy all the elements that I really like about Christmas because of Gibraltar's British culture, and also it seemed to be slightly from the past - so, besides the commercial shopping hype around Christmas, we were fortunate to become part of the community at Holy Trinity Cathedral for most of December.

We went on the first Sunday of Advent and they welcomed us with open arms and were very interested in the children. And because it is next to southern Spain, they also had the tradition of the 'Belen' - a ginormous nativity scene which stretched more than 10 meters long. It was very ornate and intricate with all the usual nativity figures plus street scenes.

But most of all we felt the warmth of the people in the church, which I have experienced in other countries, and the familiarity of services in a Church of England church. We attended a Christmas concert there, which was performed by a local choir with some carols and some Christmas songs.

We also saw the work, energy, care, time and creativity that members of the church had put into the church - it is something we could feel ... children enjoyed buying little Christmas gifts from stalls at the back of church which sold jewellery and small gifts and cakes, and raised money for the church - but the warmth of people's energy just radiated out.

There were also Christmas trees everywhere and it was really good to have a mix of familiar and culturally specific aspects of Christmas. We also felt a very strong connection with the seafaring chaplain.

So the time in Gibraltar was the lead up to Christmas and then we arrived in Las Palmas in Gran Canaria the day before Christmas eve. That didn't feel so Christmassy because it was bright sunshine and on Christmas eve I went shopping for some fruit and veg - so we could have a nice Christmas morning breakfast, which was the last day with our crew member Mikael, who had been sailing with us for two months.



The Nativity scene in the picture was made from wood and felt and we used a shell collected from the beach in Gibraltar as the manger. We moved Mary and Joseph and the donkey around the boat and closer to the stable each day. We made some stars to make a path. And we also had an advent calendar from a previous year and each Sunday of Advent the kids opened a little present.

A really important part of Advent was reading the book '*The Christmas Mystery*' by Jostein Gaarder. We had read it in England before so it connected us with home and it is always a delight.



**What Bibi, Rocket and LoLo remembered is on the next page.**

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## The Best Christmas Ever?

I have always enjoyed Christmas but when I was a child my love of the Festive Season was 'off the scale'. So much so that I frequently made myself ill with excitement in the run-up to the great day: my mother used to let me open one small present on Christmas Eve as a sort of safety valve to prevent me from exploding with pent-up anticipation. I was of course a very fortunate child.

I have many happy Christmas memories but one year always comes to mind: 1973. I recall hearing someone on the radio saying they thought 1973 was the greatest Christmas of all time. I knew what he meant. But could this really be true? Fifty years on the echoes of that time still resonate – literally.

No Christmas would be complete without numerous renditions (from about October in some shops!) of surely the two greatest Christmas songs (not carols) of all time: Slade's 'Merry Xmas Everybody' and Wizzard's 'I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday'. Both of these came out in 1973, with Slade beating Wizzard to the coveted number one slot. When Noddy Holder screamed "It's Christmas!" there was no doubting the fact!

In 1973 we only had three television channels (which is only three more than they had in the Stone Age). There was no way of recording shows and certainly no streaming services. Programmes were watched at the time of broadcasting. Given the lack of choice, audience numbers could reach the tens of millions. With so many people watching the same thing at the same time, television truly brought the nation together.

With no 'Eastenders' we were all spared having to endure the now customary festive trauma in Albert Square. Back in the 70's the highlight of many a Christmas Day was the Morecambe and Wise Christmas Special and 1973 was no exception. Airing at the primetime slot of 7.35 p.m. on BBC1, it boasted the usual plethora of special guests including Vanessa Redgrave, Hannah Gordon, The New Seekers, Yehudi Menuhin, Rudolf Nureyev, Laurence Olivier and Andre Previn. The audience lapped it up, no doubt suitably 'warmed up' by the preceding programmes: Bruce Forsyth's Generation Game and the Mike Yarwood Christmas Show. With such a



cornucopia of family entertainment the Two Ronnies didn't get a look-in until Boxing Day! Amazingly, it is safe to assume that, fifty years on, reruns of both Morecambe and Wise and the Two Ronnies will feature somewhere in the 2023 Christmas schedules.



Television seems to have formed an important part of my childhood Christmases but 1973 was particularly exciting: it was the first time we had a colour TV and the first time we could watch ITV. Ah, all those wonderful adverts! My sister and I could soon recite (or sing) them all from memory. I still remember an oft repeated jingle, "Christmas means ITV". Even as a not very religious ten-year-old I thought that was pretty outrageous!

1973 was the year my presents included two very exciting action figures: Cowboy Kid and Chief Cherokee. Standing 12 inches tall they came with lots of accessories conducive to life on the frontier. (Cowboy Kid even had a frying pan!). They were both armed to the teeth and were no doubt intended to be sworn enemies but in the Bullock household they were the best of buddies as they heroically paddled their canoe across the living room carpet.



So was 1973 truly the best Christmas of all time? Probably not, but it certainly made a lasting impression on me.

**Happy Christmas!**

**Andrew Bullock**

*From page 7..*

### What decorations did you have?

Paper chains, tropical flowers which we found on a walk because we couldn't find any usual Christmas plants such as holly and ivy

We had a felt nativity set that we made ourselves.

Christmas lights and a little plastic Christmas tree that had flashing lights

### What did you miss about Christmas at home in the UK?

Snow, snowmen, having a TV!

Snuggling up in front of a fire

Christmas cake

### How else was Christmas different?

It was much hotter than England

### What friends did you see?

Our friends on the next boat called Seaplicity

### What presents did you have?

Rocket 5 - Books about animals and fish, car, pencils and a pencil case, swimming shorts

Bibi 9 Juggling silks and things in our stockings, felt tips, swimming costume

LoLo 3 – bag and colouring book, clothes, swimming costume

### What was the weather like?

Very hot and sunny.

*Many angel images appear at this time –reminding us of their importance in the Christmas story. Here Brian Cranwell shares his experiences of angels....*

## **I Believe in Angels**

Although I have never experienced seeing an angel myself, (although I possibly have met one without knowing it), I have known several people who have. And one of the most common comments I have heard from such people is that while they have felt comfortable about sharing this information with me, it is not something they would normally relate to others.



This reluctance to share this often stems from worrying that people will think they are losing their marbles or hallucinating.

This is understandable. We live in an age when technology has advanced to a degree unimaginable even within my lifetime, let alone to our ancestors, and continues to develop, and leads many to think there is a logical scientific explanation for everything.

In addition, the increase in atheistic thought has meant the increasing secularisation of many events or ideas which are of Christian origin. So Mothering Sunday becomes Mothers' Day, Christian Ethics become Humanism, and Advent calendars are for selling chocolates.

But there is often also a deeper reason for some folk not to relate their experience of angels to others, as the experience was so sacred and precious that they fear that receiving a response of doubt or scepticism would diminish something they have felt to be a divine gift.

The Bible, especially at Christmas, has many stories of angels carrying out God's purposes, including some stories that are shared with some other religions. These can be an encouragement to us when we have such an experience, to share these stories to reassure the world that God is still very much at work.

One of the most moving stories I feel comfortable about repeating, (as the person told it to an audience herself, admitting she had never done so before), also had an amusing aspect. It came about when I was at Durham University training for Ministry.

All ordinands at college are required to spend a week or two during their summer vacation resident in a parish community. About twenty of us went with a tutor to a parish in Sunderland. We were hosted by members of the congregation and attended various functions and services.

We met each day for a sandwich lunch in the parish hall and shared thoughts and experiences. On the Wednesday that we met, the tutor apologised for his oversight in not arranging in advance for anyone to attend that afternoon's bingo club, but suggested that as this club was all elderly people that I might be best suited for going. I agreed, expecting to be bored, and was accompanied by a much younger man who was a Canadian, and former Naval officer.

After we were introduced at the club, I was asked to say something. I read the story of Mary and Joseph taking the infant Christ to the Temple and meeting Simeon and Hannah as they were leaving. I made the point that here were two old people who had been given gifts of vision and suggested many more people had such gifts but were reluctant to share them. I said I had found many old people had experienced some sort of spiritual vision and asked if there was anyone present who would like to share it with us now?

There was a minute or two of silence then a woman stood up and related an extraordinary story. She told how when she had woken up one morning her husband had said to her "I don't know what you were dreaming about last night but if you said the word '*beautiful*' once you must have said it 20 times" She went on to say she could not account for it and got out of bed.

When she stood up she suddenly saw a large white feather on the carpet, and her dream came back.



She recalled walking along the base of a huge valley with her father and sister, and seeing angels going up and down the hills on each side. When they reached the end of the valley her sister was no longer with her. Her husband who had listened intently pointed out there was nothing in the house that contained white feathers, so the one on the carpet must have been symbolic. An hour later she had a phone call to say her sister had died in the night.

*Concluded at the end of the next page*

## Israel, Hamas, Jesus, and God

I am writing this on 18<sup>th</sup> October. Before this Hamas had murdered people in Israel, including children. The United States and Britain are supporting Israel in their right to defend their country whilst urgently advising Israel to show restraint and to remember that all people need happiness.

Israel is now killing all Hamas and 500 people were killed in a hospital in Palestine. Britain and the U.S. think Hamas is wrong BUT there is a real worry that Israel may over-react and others will get killed, not just Hamas.

By 5th November it is reported that 10,000 have been killed in Gaza — 4,000 of them children. The question is what should we, as people of God, do? Yes, we are praying for God's help but we also need to work hard and show our love.

We shall soon be celebrating the coming of Jesus at Christmas, and later through his death on the cross showing God's love, which we celebrate through the Eucharist. In the Eucharist God invites us to His table as a foretaste of the heavenly banquet for people of all nations and cultures.

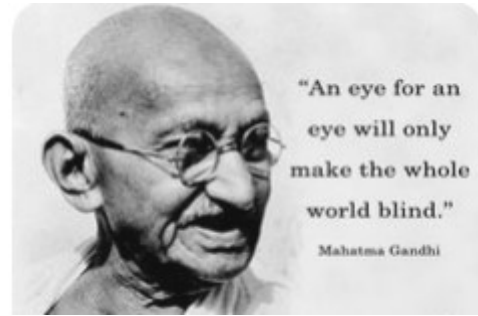
So why don't Jesus and God stop this awful war? Should Christ tell us to attack those who are not showing God's love? One of the prayers I love is by Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh\*, a Russian Orthodox priest. (His prayers are wonderful - check them on Google).

Anthony tells us what to do in war, for example. We cannot simply leave it to God to sort out. Anthony reminds us that Jesus told his disciples that he had shown them how to live. It was now their time to show others how to live and help the world. In chapter 17 of John's Gospel Jesus, as he prepares for his death, prays that his disciples will continue to show people how God wants them and us to live:

*"Just as you are in me, so I am in you."*

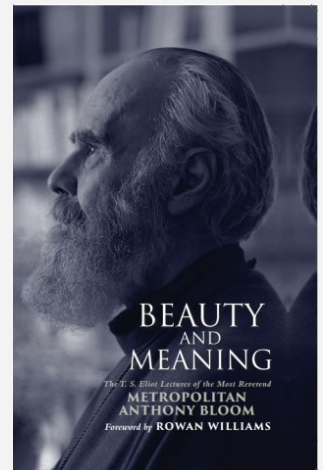
*"I sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world." "I made you known to them, and I will continue to do so, in order that the love you have for me may be in them, and that I also may be in them."*

Rev Canon Professor Ian  
Draffan



*\*Metropolitan Anthony Of Sourozh, (1914–2003), was born in Switzerland and as a child lived in Russia and Iran. He qualified as a doctor in Paris and served as a surgeon in the French Army during World War II and took part in the French Resistance. During this time he secretly professed monastic vows and was ordained in 1948 and sent to Britain as an Orthodox chaplain to foster understanding and friendship between the Russian Orthodox and Anglican churches. In 1950 he was appointed vicar of the Russian Patriarchal Parish in London. In 1957 he was consecrated Bishop of the Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sourozh; 1962 Archbishop, and in 1966 Metropolitan Bishop. He retired as Metropolitan Bishop in 1974 and devoted himself to the pastoral care of his growing flock in London. He also wrote six books on prayer.*

*MASF (Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh Foundation) book launch took place on 30th September 2023. 'Beauty and Meaning' by Metropolitan Anthony Bloom contains four lectures he gave in 1982. Introduced by Rowan Williams.*



*From previous page*

A few months later she had the same dream, walking with her father, but at the end of the valley she found herself alone. When she woke up she made a phone call and heard that he had died in the night.

We all listened with fascination and many were in tears as she told the story so beautifully. Then we were all brought down to earth when an old lady stood up and in broad Tyneside dialect shouted "I came 'ere to play b.....y bingo, not to be made miserable!" so normal service was resumed immediately.

*Revd. Brian Cranwell*



# 'Special Events'

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In St. John's Church, Abbeydale  
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beydale Sports Club)  
7.30pm Tuesday, 19th Dec 23

There will be audience carols, car-  
ols from the augmented choir,  
(St. John's & Holy Trinity choirs plus  
friends), and Christmas readings

Admission free

## Sterndale Christmas Singers Concert

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>  
December  
7.30pm

Tickets £12  
Students £6  
U16 Free

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Including Benjamin Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*  
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Seasonal Refreshments will be available.

For more details and tickets visit  
[www.sterndalesingers.org](http://www.sterndalesingers.org)



Find us on Facebook:  
SterndaleSingers

## Important information!

**A defibrillator has been fitted on the wall of St. John's church Hall. Holy Trinity and the Parish Centre on Dobcroft Road will have them in the very near future.**



## Welcome to Nicholas !

Nicholas will be licenced and installed as the Priest in Charge of the Parish of Abbeydale and Millhouses on **Sunday 17th December, 6.0pm in Holy Trinity Church.**

The service will be led by Bishop Pete and followed by refreshments.

All welcome!

**Christmas Celebrations** in our churches will follow a familiar pattern, but please note the Nativity service in H.T. is Sat 23rd, NOT Christmas Eve!



Holy Trinity: **Nativity**  
**3pm Sat. 23rd December**

St. John's: **Christingle**  
**5pm Sun 24th Dec**

Both churches: **Midnight**  
**Mass Sun 24th 11.30pm**

Looking ahead to 2024....

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Thurs 18th January to Thurs 25th January 2024

Theme: **Go and do likewise – based on the parable of the Good Samaritan**

Events planned in our local churches:

- Thu 18th 11 am Opening Service at Millhouses Methodist Church
- Sun 21st 7 pm Service at St Oswald's Church
- Wed 24th 10 am Service at Holy Trinity Church - followed by Tea & Coffee in Hall
- Thu 25th 12 noon Service at Mother of God - followed by Soup Lunch in Parish Hall
- Mon 22nd to Thu 25th 10am –4pm St John the Evangelist. Exhibition with prayer stations and reflections.

Fri 1st Mar **World Day of Prayer**  
venue to be decided





# Worship at Holy Trinity and St. John's

Both churches are open during the week for private prayer:

Holy Trinity 10am-4.30pm Mon—Sat

St. John's 10am - 4pm Mon—Thurs

Still no 8am Communion Services on Sundays for the time being but check on the website .

## December

Holy Trinity St. John's



Sun 10th Advent 3  
10am Parish Communion

Sun 17th Advent 4  
10am Parish Communion  
6pm Licencing of Revd. Nicholas Noble as Priest-in-charge of the Parish of Abbeydale & Millhouses.

Sat 23rd  
3pm Nativity Service



Sun 24th Christmas Eve  
10am Parish Communion  
5pm Christingle  
11.30pm Midnight Mass

Mon 25th Christmas Day  
9.30am Parish Communion  
10am Parish Communion



Sun 31st  
10am Parish Communion  
St. John's Patronal Festival

## February

Holy Trinity St. John's

Sun 4th Candlemas  
10am All-age Communion

Sun 11th  
10am Parish Communion  
6.30pm Wholeness & Healing Service

Sun 18th  
Parish Communion



Wed 22nd Ash Wednesday  
10am Communion  
7.30pm

Communion

Sun 25th  
10am Parish Communion

## March



Holy Trinity St. John's

Sun 3rd  
10am All-age Communion

Sun 10th  
10am Parish Communion

Sun 17th  
10am Parish Communion  
6.30pm Passiontide Service

## January

Holy Trinity St. John's

Sun 7th Epiphany  
10am All-age Communion

Sun 14th  
10am Parish Communion  
6.30pm Taize Service

Sun 21st  
10am Parish Communion

Wed 24th  
10am Holy Communion  
Week of prayer for Christian unity.

Sun 28th  
10am Parish Communion



### Wednesday Morning Communion

Services will be held at 10am in Holy Trinity, EXCEPT on the first Wed (M.U.) in each month, which will be at St. John's.



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## A celebration of light in the Shetland Isles

*Rev'd Dr. Angie Lauener*

When I planned a retreat for a week on the Shetland island of Fetlar, I daren't hope for good weather ... so I was pleasantly surprised when sunlight was a major feature! But this was not the only form of light that made it such a memorable experience ...

I woke up one night and saw that the sky was clear ... so a great opportunity to see the stars in this 'dark-sky' remote, sparsely-populated island.



I pulled on a jumper and headed outside. There seemed to be grey fan-like rays filling the whole sky and that in itself was awesome. I then remembered that the Northern Lights - the 'Mirrie Dancers' as Shetlanders call them - show their colours best when viewed through a camera lens, so I held up my phone – and this is what I saw ...

I stood for about 45 minutes, watching the display slowly move to a different part of the sky, then eventually begin to fade like rainbows do when the light changes. This leads on to my second experience ...

On a showery day, I was treated to a magnificent rainbow over Papil water near Tresta beach. It was late afternoon and the sun was low in the sky, gilding the landscape with rich colours and casting long shadows. I stood at the edge of the lake, mesmerised by the blueness of the water reflecting the sky, the yellow vegetation lit up by the sun, enjoying the beauty and timelessness of it all, this scenery unchanged for centuries and hopefully, unchanging for centuries to come.



When coming on this retreat, I brought with me the phrase 'standing at the edge of glory', which I had heard from someone speaking about 'thin places' such as the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, and Iona. I didn't realise that this would be literally what it felt like on the day I walked around the headland of Lamb Hoga. I set off dressed for all weathers with a walking pole sticking up from my rucsac. This was the advice for diverting potential dive-bombing Bonxies (giant skuas) who like to defend their territory, thus protecting my head! Thankfully, it was not needed but I did see them circling high in the sky. I headed up the old peat track, where in former times, Shetland ponies would haul the peat from where it was cut high on the headland. For the remainder of the walk, I followed the edge of the headland in glorious sun, looking over the sea to the distant islands, and not many miles from the coast of Norway.



The sea was calm and blue. As I looked down at the rocky shoreline, it looked like the sea was full of bright flashing diamonds as the sun reflected on the waves. I walked on, now with a vast expanse of grassy headland and calm blue sea merging into blue sky. I felt like I was in between heaven and earth ... standing at the edge of glory.



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# NEWS FROM MILLHOUSES METHODIST CHURCH



We send Advent and Christmas Greetings to all readers and a warm invitation to our annual Christmas Tree Festival and services, details of which are set out below.

MILLHOUSES METHODIST CHURCH

## Christmas Tree Festival

“Away in a manger”

### Simply Christmas

Thursday 21st December  
7.00.pm to 9.00.pm

**A “DROP-IN” EVENING**

Come and spend some time in peace and quiet.

An opportunity to reflect and pray away from the busyness and fuss of typical Christmas celebrations

**Opening Times**

Sunday 3rd December.....Launch Event  
4pm - 5pm

Saturday 9th December.....2pm - 5pm

Sunday 10th December.....2pm - 5pm

Saturday 16th December.....2pm - 5pm

Sunday 17th December.....2pm - 5pm

Saturday 23rd December.....2pm - 5pm

Sunday 24th December.....2pm - 5pm

**Free Hot Fruit Punch and Mince Pies**

**Special Events**

Friday 15th December 7.30.pm  
Community Carol Service  
with the John Wade Singers

Thursday 21st December 7.00.pm - 9.00.pm  
Simply Christmas

Sunday 24th December 10.30am  
“Around the Manger” a short family friendly service

**CHRISTMAS DAY 10.00.am**  
Morning Worship

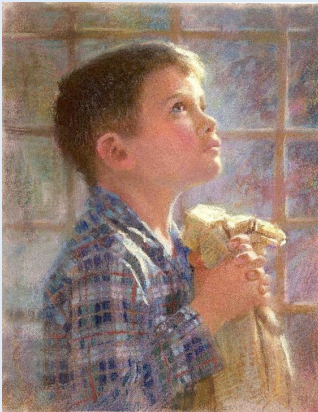
Admission to our festival is free of charge but any donations will be shared between church funds and St Wilfrid's Centre.

In the New Year we look forward to our Covenant Service on Sunday 21st January at 10.30 am to which all our friends at Holy Trinity are cordially invited. For information on other services and activities, including Tuesday Club, please visit our website [www.millhousesmethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.millhousesmethodistchurch.org.uk)

**APOLOGY from the editor!! In the last edition the following was accidentally missed from the article on MUSROOMS. Thankfully I've not heard of any poisonings as a result!!!**



A most attractive looking variety of mushroom/toadstool is the Fly Agaric, which is a lovely bright red colour with white spots. It is, however, very poisonous. On the other hand, the unspectacular white, edible mushrooms are very nutritious, rich in fibre, protein and antioxidants, helping to support healthy immune systems.



I recently read the following in a U.C.B., (United Christian Broadcasts), magazine and it brought a smile to my face – I hope it does the same for you!

**A little boy prayed:**

*'Lord bless Mummy and Daddy, baby and me - and Lord take care of yourself because if anything happens to you we're all sunk!'*

Pat Gregory.

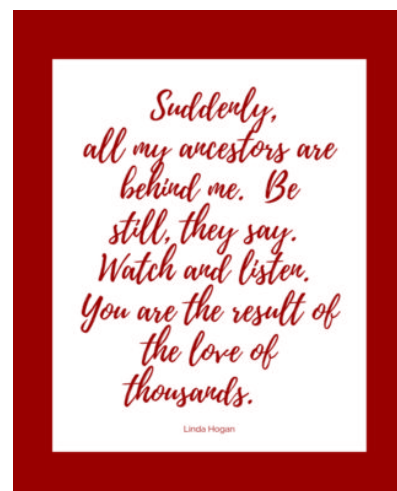
**Christmas... a time of family get-togethers and 'do you remember when.....?'** *This has started many folk on a search of their family history. Here Geoffrey White relates his fascinating Family Rambling....*

About sixty years ago, when I was literally still in short trousers, I began my exploration of family history. I still have the tree I drew, in coloured ball-point, showing all the relatives my grandmothers could remember, going back to at least some of my great-great-grandparents. How often do we hear people on *Who do you Think you are?* express their ignorance of anyone before their grandparents, and their regret for not quizzing them when they could? There were a few stories that went with these names, but nothing very exciting. Everyone seemed to have been born in or around Sheffield, except for my maternal grandmother's maternal grandmother, who was thrice married and thrice widowed, and kept the Peak Hotel in Castleton. My mother's mother also told me that her family the Dodworths had been cutlers for many generations, and that there were vague rumours that my grandfather's family, the Wynnes, had once been landowners in North Wales.

Over the years, I found a few more links through general reading, but generally that was how things stood, until, just before the Millennium, much more material – of varying accuracy - became available on the internet. Gradually I pushed back the limits of my knowledge. I found out that my Whites had not originated in Yorkshire or Derbyshire, but in various villages of Warwickshire. None of them seemed to be much more than agricultural labourers, but some of their wives' backgrounds were more diverse. My father's mother had originally been Ivy Green (!), and I could now follow some of that family's history in Totley, though there were so many of them over the last seven hundred years that nothing is very certain before the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While I was Rector of Norton, I found my churchwarden's wife was a fourth cousin, stumbling across this link because of a remark about her still dark hair, which seems to be a Green family trait.

On my father's side, I discovered that many of the founder members of the Quaker meetings of South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire were my direct ancestors. They were especially connected with the still functioning Friends' centres at Wooldale, near Holmfirth, and High Flatts, just north of Penistone, where other forebears are buried in the parish church. A great-great-grandfather on the maternal side was with the staff of Penistone's station when it opened in the 1840s, until he found a better job with the railways in Manchester, with hotel-keeping as a sideline. At his third marriage, in Manchester Cathedral, he became the first husband of my thrice-married ancestor, already mentioned, who was thirty-seven years his junior! His Monkhouse line led back through generations of Cumbrian farmers, and seems to point further to a knightly family who lived near Caldbeck.

My maternal grandmother preserved the Monkhouse name as her middle name –always a good clue for tracing family history, and similarly her grandfather was called George Thompson Dodworth, after his grandfather and great-grandfather, both George Thompson, and both for a time schoolmasters in Mosborough. The younger of these two married Ann Curr, whose father and uncle had moved to Sheffield in the 1770s. John Curr, the uncle, was particularly talented, as a mining engineer, steam pioneer, and inventor – possibly he laid the first railway with rails completely of iron; his children included another engineer, an Australian politician, two nuns and a saintly Roman Catholic priest, the whole family being very devout. I hoped to foment some enthusiasm for marking the bicentenary of John's death earlier this year, but to no avail!



More to follow in the next TRIO!



## What is it about pop musicians and the Millhouses area?

I read in Trio magazine, (Harvest edition), that Nicholas, the new vicar for Abbeydale and Millhouses, sang in a band called, 'The Gentlemen'. But does he know that there is a tradition of popular music performers in the Holy Trinity area?

70 Grove Road was the home of the Spedding family, the son Chris is one of the UK's leading guitarists. The people he has worked with reads like a Who's Who of rock and pop music. His top twenty hit 'Motor biking' was featured on 'Top of the Pops' performed appropriately in black leather. In recent years he has been a mainstay of Bryan Ferry's bands and has written and recorded many solo albums. His work has included playing jazz, rock and pop and he even helped to establish punk, being the producer of 'The Sex Pistols' early demos.

Rich Smith lived in Sterndale Road. In the early sixties Rich was a member of Spedding's youthful group, 'The Vulcans' playing often at Dobcroft Road Church Hall, the home of a thriving youth club. The group disbanded after Chris left for London and Rich progressed through a number of groups and had considerable success as drummer with 'The Sheffields' including recording contracts and TV appearances. After 'The Sheffields' Rich studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and became percussionist with the

Jerry Dammers was born in India on 22 May 1955 and came to Millhouses at the age of two when his father, Horace Dammers, became vicar of Holy Trinity. So Jerry would have lived in the vicarage on Millhouses Lane, but I didn't know him. Dammers is best known for his work with 'The Specials', the revival of ska music, and his work for racial unity.

So how do I know this? As a 15 year old I was a member of 'The Vulcans' alongside Chris and Rich. I sang, but my real ambition was to play drums, an ambition that was realized some years after the group folded. As regards Dammers I relied on Wikipedia for the details.

So maybe we should suggest a *Supergroup* with the following line-up:

**The Reverend Nicholas: vocals**

**Chris Spedding: guitar**

**Jerry Dammers: keyboards**

**Rich Smith: drums**

I can't wait!

**John Frith**






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Even though the days are lengthening, after the excitement of Christmas, many folk find January and February dark and depressing. For many **Valentine's Day** brightens up the last dismal days of winter.

**Valentine's Day**, also called **Saint Valentine's Day** or the **Feast of Saint Valentine**, is celebrated annually on 14<sup>th</sup> February. It originated as a Christian feast day honouring a martyr named Valentine and through later folk traditions, it has also become a significant cultural, religious and commercial celebration of romance and love around the world.

There are a number of martyrdom stories associated with various Saint Valentines connected to 14<sup>th</sup> February, including an account of the imprisonment of Saint Valentine of Rome for ministering to Christians persecuted under the Roman Empire in the third century.

Tradition maintains that St. Valentine performed weddings for Christian soldiers who were forbidden to marry by the Roman emperor. He was persecuted as a Christian and interrogated by Roman Emperor Claudius II in person. Claudius was impressed by Valentine and had a discussion with him, attempting to get him to convert to Roman paganism in order to save his life. Valentine refused and tried to convert Claudius to Christianity instead. Because of this, he was executed.

Before his execution, St. Valentine is reported to have performed a miracle by restoring the sight of Julia, the blind daughter of his jailer Asterius. The jailer's daughter and his forty-six member household, family members and servants, came to believe in Jesus and were baptized. An 18th-century embellishment to

the legend claims he wrote the jailer's daughter a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell before his execution.



In Slovenia, St. Valentine or Zdravko was one of the saints of Spring, the saint of good health and the patron of beekeepers and pilgrims. A proverb says that "St. Valentine brings the keys of roots". Plants and flowers start to grow on this day. It has been celebrated as the day when the first work in the vineyards and in the fields commences.

St Valentine's day became associated with romantic love in the 14th and 15th centuries when notions of courtly love flourished, apparently by association with the "lovebirds" of early Spring.



**Aphrodite and Venus, the goddesses of love in Greek and Roman mythology, respectively, were often portrayed in the company of doves, which further affirms the bird's standing as an appropriate Valentine's Day motif.**

In 18th-century England, it grew into an occasion for couples to express their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards, (known as "valentines"). In the 19th century, handmade cards gave way to mass-produced greetings.

Valentine's Day symbols that are used today, include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid.

In Italy St. Valentine's keys are given to lovers "as a romantic symbol and an invitation to unlock the giver's heart", as well as to children to ward off epilepsy (called Saint Valentine's Malady).

St. Valentine's Day is not a public holiday in any country, although it is an official feast day in the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran Church.

**And finally.....**

**Andrew Horsfield**



"Valentine's Day is a very important holiday. It reminds you to take down the Christmas decorations."

# Easy Christmas & winter crafts for all ages!



For this **wreath** cut out the centre of a paper plate, (or any cardboard circle). Cut strips of green, (old magazines are a good source!), and wrap them round the circle. Fasten with glue or sellotape. Finally cut a strip of white card and zig-zag fold to make the candle. Add the flame.



To make these pretty **snowflakes** simply twist three pipe-cleaners together and space the spokes evenly. Then thread beads onto them!! Bend the ends over to keep the beads on.



The **angels** will gently 'fly' when hung on the Christmas tree. Easily created by simply cutting circles from any card, (even last year's Christmas cards!) and adding a smaller circle for the head. For the hair, (not necessarily blonde!), use a felt pen, wool or paper. Draw in the face. Use any white paper for the wings.



These paper chain decorations are self-explanatory!



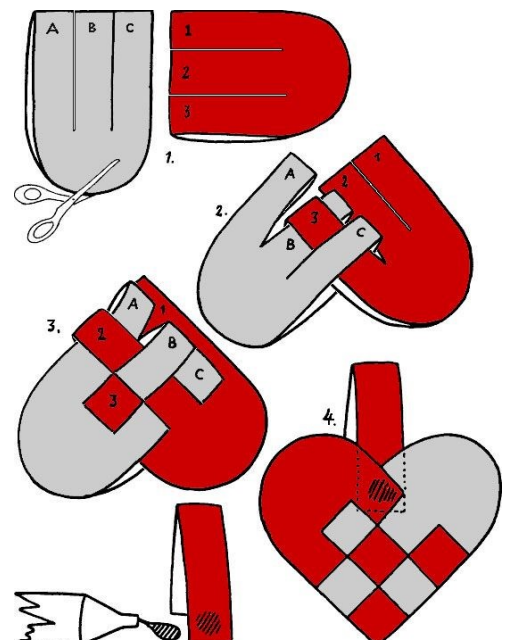
Complete with a loop of thread stuck on the back of the head with sellotape.



Who doesn't love penguins? Handprints cut out of black paper, with white circles and a yellow beak are all that is needed to create these charming birds.

In many Scandinavian countries heart baskets are made and filled with sweets, then hung on the Christmas tree. They can also be used for little gifts at other times of the year—especially on

Valentine's Day! Here are two ways of making – the very simple one on the left, and more difficult on the right.





# Regular Parish Activities – for special events see p.14



**Holy Trinity & St. John's**  
are Fair Trade Churches  
A stall is held regularly after the 10 am  
service in both churches

## Carers and Toddlers

Thurs 10.00am H.T. Tots  
**Contact:** Pat Kirbyshaw - 236 2643  
Frid 9.00am—12 noon  
Children and Carers  
Music Group at  
St. John's  
**Contact:** Amber Forsyth



## Thursday Lunch Club - at St. John's for the elderly and lonely

*Always needs volunteers and  
cooks.*

**Contact:** Jane Blockeel  
0114 236 6861

## Mothers' UNION

3rd

Wed in each month at 2.15pm  
94 Room St. John's  
Contact 0114 274 7372

## Fortnightly (alternate Mon/Tues) COFFEE MORNINGS

See website calendar for each venue  
contact: Val Wiley 236 0726



Mon 4.30pm **Rainbows** — St. John's 249 4113  
Mon 6.00pm **Brownies** — St. John's 07713254723



Tues 5.30pm **Rainbows** — H.T. Church Hall 235 0370



## Trefoil Guild

Meets on the third Monday each month  
in the 94 Room at St. John's at 7.45pm

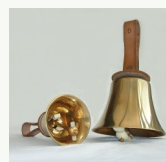
**Contact:** Pat Jackson 281 7557



## Parish Centre, Dobcroft Road

Monday 6.30 pm Cubs  
8.00 pm Explorers  
Thursday 7.00 pm Scouts  
Friday 6.10 pm Beavers

**Contacts:** Jeremy Holmes (Scouts & Explorers)  
jeremypiglet@gmail.com 07703 441 613  
Andrew Bullock (Beavers & Cubs)  
ajbullock@blueyonder.co.uk



## Handbells

Mondays 1.30 pm 94 Room St. John's  
Contact Margaret Ibbetson 236 4184  
New ringers warmly welcomed

## CHURCH CHOIR & MUSIC GROUP

**Choir:** Practices Fri 7.30—8.45pm at St. John's  
Sun 9.30am before the 10am service—see  
calendar p13 for venue!.

**Music Group:** Leads worship 10am H.T. first  
Sunday of each month. Practice  
9.15am before the service



*New members welcome for both!*

**Contacts:** Mary Cobbold MA FRCO (chm) 07721 594095  
Alan East MA ARCO 07535 595044



*Come and have a go..*

## INDOOR Carpet BOWLS

**Where?** St John's Church Hall  
**When?** Thursday afternoon 2—4pm  
*Beginners welcome!*

**Contact:** Audrey Cutts 236 0613

## St. John's Snooker Club

welcomes new members,  
male or female, beginners or  
experienced, any age or religion



The club meets at back of the church hall  
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**on Mondays at 6.30pm**

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**Easter Edition** of **TRIO**

**DEADLINE** for articles

**Friday 2nd February 2024**

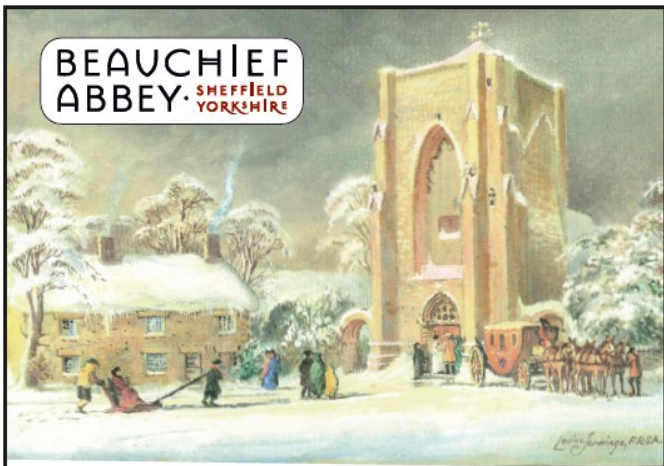
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**Evensong on the 3rd Sunday at 3pm**  
**All Welcome**

**Special Events**  
**December**

**24th 7pm Christmas Carol Service**  
 Ticket only event see our website for details  
**25th 10.30am Christmas Day Service**

[www.beauchiefabbey.org.uk](http://www.beauchiefabbey.org.uk)



**Sometime...**

You will probably have the responsibility of making funeral arrangements. No one looks forward to this responsibility, but the death of a family member or a friend brings with it an obligation that must be met. These are people who can help you meet this responsibility. We have been helping people combine the different aspects of a funeral service for over one hundred and twenty-five years.

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