

Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches  
Anglican - United Reformed - Methodist - Est. 1969

## PARTNERSHIP MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021

80 PENCE



*The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.*

One in Christ - Together in Mission

**THE FRIENDS OF CHRIST CHURCH**  
Cards available to purchase, details on page 13.



Angel Gabriel



Nativity



Parrot in North Transept window



GWR Train in South Porch window

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# Partnership Letter

The Manse  
152 Drove Road

To each of you and all of you, greetings

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.” (*Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities*)

This is one of famous quotes that has stuck in my mind for a very long time. I had to read ‘A Tale of Two Cities’ for a Cambridge exam over 50 years ago, it’s a quote I come back to every so often because it seems to describe so many different realities. I wonder if Dickens realized how popular it would become. Go back to it, read it again, slowly. Those times he is describing seem to also describe our times and so many other times we have known. It can describe our reality here in the UK as well as the times in so many different parts of the world. No doubt that is what makes it such a wonderful quote: **“The age of wisdom, the age of foolishness, the season of light, the season of darkness, the spring of hope, the winter of despair”.**

I’m writing this in the first few days of the second lockdown, but I do not want COVID to be the centre of this letter. I am thinking of the birth of Jesus and what followed. Of all the times recorded in the Bible, there could have been others where the birth of the long-awaited Messiah would have fitted the picture better. But that’s not the case. Israel was an occupied country, a small speck of the vast Roman Empire, recognised as an area of constant troubles.

The summons to a census means a lot of travel for a lot of people. That census marks the beginning of a life journey for Mary and Joseph and the child to be born. And why did the Romans need a census? A simple answer was that it provided information for taxation and drafting into the military so Rome could continue its expansion. It could quite easily fit into the description of the worst of times, the epoch of incredulity, of darkness, of despair. ►

And look at our times today, here in the UK, and in the USA, with the story of the recent election process; look at what continues to happen in Yemen, or Brazil... take your pick, choose your own places. Couldn't they be described as the "worst of times" as well? Times of environmental collapse, of economic injustice, of racial inequality, of hunger, of exploitation....

And Christmas tells us that it was in times such as those: of foolishness, of darkness, of despair that God chose to take the human form, to set the tent among us, to become one of us - a human being - and begin that journey of life, that would change history in such a way that we use the initials BCE: ("Before the Christian Era") to describe such a change. God didn't choose the so called "best of times" where God's vision for Creation could quite easily be overlooked because all was going well. God chose the "hard/difficult times" to remind us that God didn't forget the promise, that God cared.

The birth of Jesus which happened far away from home, and from where they would have to flee for their lives and become refugees, illegal immigrants, back in the Egypt from which Moses had led the people centuries earlier. The recognition by God that he has "heard the cry of the people and has come down to rescue them" (Exodus 3) reminds us that God makes choices for life, especially when life is under threat. That liberation from slavery so often speaks to me of the coming of the Messiah: God comes down again, to be with us, in the human form, the form of a child: Immanuel = God with us!

God doesn't choose the bright lights, the palaces of life, the centre stage. God chooses a cave; God calls shepherds caring at night for the flock that belongs to other people; God chooses a simple couple – a Mary, a Joseph; God chooses a small light that shall never be put out, not even by the cross! God chooses not to run away.

So this is what I want to affirm at this time. The birth of Jesus - the Christ - didn't take place during the best of times, it happened in the darkest times because light was needed then and now. And the beautiful painting at the foot of this letter sheds a light into the building of the new reality God is opening for us.

These last few months have been tough in many different ways for so many people, in our country and in nearly all countries of the world. So this might be the time to think of the choices God has made and be inspired; to recognize that these times are times to re-affirm God's choices: choices for light, for hope, for solidarity, for liberation, for wisdom; a time to share this as God's gift to the world, running through us, spreading through us, beginning with us. ➤

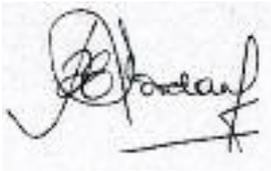
This is my Christmas wish for each and all of you for these times, that may not be the best of times, but they are times in God's hands. And may the new year, which will soon be with us, be a time for us all to be part of the newness we will always find in God's presence as the new-born child. This way times will be better times. I'm sure!

God bless you.

God keep you.

God be with you, your loved ones and  
with all God's people everywhere,  
now and always. Amen

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all on whom God's favour rests"

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Brain", with a horizontal line underneath.

**Our cover photo** was taken by Stephen Brain at the Old Town Partnership of Churches celebration "The Journey" in December 2018.

## FAMILY EVENTS

### DEATHS

*We extend our sympathy to the loved ones*

#### BATH ROAD

Nov 4 Raymond Gladman, 81 years

#### CHRIST CHURCH

Oct 24 Dorothy Perham, 88 years  
Oct 24 Sydney Charles Fisher, 90 years  
Oct 31 David Limpus, 85 years  
Nov 1 Dieter Pollard, 47 years  
Nov 9 Gerald Thomas Hugh Martin, 95 years  
Nov 9 Dorothy Montague, 95 years  
Nov 11 Maureen Williams, 84 years

### FLOODLIGHTING

Nov 5 In loving memory of Helen Robinson on the 3rd anniversary  
of her death. Love and miss you. Forever in our hearts.  
2021 Love from the Robinson family.  
Jan 30 Remembering, with love, my dear Mum and Dad,  
Phyl and Harry Dyer, on their wedding anniversary.

If you would like to sponsor the floodlighting of Christ Church in celebration of a birthday, wedding anniversary, special occasion, to advertise your Company, or in memory of a loved one, the minimum gift per evening is **£30.00**. Cheques to be made payable to 'Christ Church PCC'. Please email: [parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk](mailto:parishoffice@christchurchswindon.co.uk) or phone 01793 522832 at least a week before the date of the floodlighting. GIFT AID: If you are a UK taxpayer and wish Christ Church to reclaim the tax, you may Gift Aid your donation by providing your name, the first line of your address and your postcode.

## **Advent and Christmas worship outreach plans for our Old Town Partnership of Churches**



Thank you for all your practical support and prayers in enabling us to reopen our churches earlier this year. It was disappointing, but understandable with the second spike in Covid 19, to be in lockdown again in November. Please be assured of our prayers and support for each of you and all those across our town facing challenging times.

As you will appreciate, it is not easy making definite plans for Advent and Christmas, We are very much hoping and praying that we will be allowed by the Government and our denominations to have Bath Road, Christ Church and St Mary's and Immanuel open as soon as possible.

Following the encouraging feedback to Mark's virtual Remembrance meditation on behalf of our Partnership, we will also be offering an Advent and Christmas virtual meditation that Robert and Simon are working on respectively. Do look out for these.

In addition, we are continuing to plan, with our churches, possible Advent and Christmas worship and outreach, recognising that things are going to be different this year with the new greatly advanced priority of keeping people safe in our buildings and grounds.

We will let you know how things are going to work as early as possible in December. Please look out for our various up-to-date communications on our church websites and help us in passing the word around throughout our community. ➤

As you will appreciate, numbers have to be limited, so please join us in praying that we will get our welcome and hospitality right, along with knowing God's guidance on how we can share the wonderful message of Jesus's birth in the most effective contemporary way with appropriate comfort and joy, creating, in the process, unforgettable memories!

In addition, all being well, we hope to have services in our churches and we are also investigating having activities and socially distanced gatherings outside. If you have any ideas about this, please don't hesitate to pass them on, we would love to hear from you. For example, we are delighted that Gervin Senior is working on building an eco-stable for the green area outside Christ Church, following on from his widely appreciated Easter installations 'Crucifixion Recycled' and 'Resurrection Retreaded'. Do come and look at this from the beginning of December.

Thank you for all your partnership in the Gospel. May Jesus's light and hope brighten up our town, our country and God's world this Advent and Christmas.

God bless you all,

*Mark, Robert, Simon*

## **The Partnership Magazine - Monies collection 2021**

Dear Magazine readers

Thanks are due to all who contribute to the excellent Partnership magazine, to Diana Swann and Margaret Williams for editing and producing it, to the printers who have continued operating albeit in difficult circumstances, and finally to the delivery teams. We have had to adapt under lockdown circumstances, but the magazine has continued without interruption throughout 2020.

It is hoped that circumstances will begin to ease in 2021, and the magazine team is pleased that the price will stay the same for 2021, i.e. 80p. per issue and there will be 10 issues throughout the year. This remains very good value.

Arrangements are being made to collect the money for 2021. We do not think we can ask distributors to knock on doors and collect money in these difficult times, though some, with appropriate precautions, may choose to continue to do this, as before. ►

The best approach would be for those who receive the magazine to send a cheque payable to the Partnership of Churches for £8 to George Kennedy, 31 Vasterne Close Purton, Wilts, SN5 4EZ. Please put your address on the back of the cheque.

If this is not convenient for you, please contact Daniel or Caroline Pitt on 01793 521732, who will be pleased to find the best alternative.

We will review the progress of the collection of monies in the New Year when things may be simpler.

**The magazine is an important visible sign of our Partnership of Churches, so please feel part of it and send us your contributions of articles and photographs. We do so want to make the magazine an interesting read for you every month and this is difficult to achieve without your support in sending us items, so please THINK MAGAZINE!**

Thank you to Rose Earle who sells copies of the magazine for us each month by displaying them on the counter of her shop in Newport Street, and also to our advertisers for their support.

With best wishes and thanks, *The magazine team*

## **OUR PARTNERSHIP PROJECT 2020 Desai Memorial Primary School, Nairobi.**

Sadly, due to Coronavirus, it wasn't possible to hold any fundraising events this year but we hope to be able to start our fundraising in 2021. Meanwhile, we have received this update from Mike Welsh, Headteacher Goddard Park Academy, Swindon...

### **The Desai School Nairobi Kenya and the pandemic**

Despite Desai serving Kawangware, one of the toughest and poorest slum communities in the world, Covid 19 has not ravaged Kenya. There have been some 896 deaths in total. Doctors, scientists and virologists predicted that if the pandemic got hold of local communities where there is only very rudimentary health care (very few hospitals in Nairobi) then there would be a catastrophic death rate. Why has this not been the case? Studies are taking place to understand this. ►

Firstly, the Kenyan Government took early and quite drastic action. There was an evening curfew from 9pm-5am unless you were an accredited worker. Everyone had to wear a mask in public, with almost no exceptions and immediate fines (which couldn't be afforded in the slum communities). Finally, ALL schools, including Desai, were immediately closed.

With the very low death rate, schools are now being gradually reopened. We still need to raise money to pay Desai teachers so that their landlords will not evict them and their families. Standard 8, the oldest children in primary schools, have returned and each year group will gradually follow.

The children have missed not just several crucial months of education, they have all missed vital school dinners which for many is their only meal of the day. We are expecting the condition of Desai pupils to have seriously deteriorated due to the lack of funds to provide food. We know there is relative poverty in the UK as can be witnessed in the greatly increased use of food banks. In Kawangware (the same size as Swindon) it is ABSOLUTE poverty. There is no safety net. You have to buy water and no money means no food.

So why the low pandemic death rate? There is one dominating theory that, due to the intense poverty and prevalence of many critical diseases, some communities are resistant to the virus due to what the body has been already subjected to. The virologists are investigating, but just like the rest of the world, people are hoping for an early vaccine that can protect young and old alike.

In the meantime, the teachers are looking forward to providing that most basic of needs: an education again to some of the poorest children in the world - and the children are desperate to get back to school - it is their only chance of making a better life for themselves and their families. Desai is vital for them.■

## **Swindon Hardship Fund Update for Old Town Churches 19.10.20**

I spoke to you a year ago about an initiative to start a new charity in Swindon to alleviate hardship. We have named ourselves Swindon Hardship Fund (SHF), which we feel does not stigmatise those who apply, neither does it soft-pedal the suffering of some people within Swindon Borough. The basic idea for the charity has been copied from an effective established Oxford organisation OXFAM. It entails working with trusted partners in Swindon such as Citizens Advice and the Salvation Army who would apply to SHF for small grants on behalf of individuals facing hardship. ►

**Need:**

I don't have latest data, but all the evidence is that Covid19 has exacerbated an already serious need to alleviate poverty in Swindon; we are expecting to face a period of increased unemployment over the next few years. In Swindon 12,000 people each year use food banks; 21% of children in Swindon are living in poverty. Most striking, it appears that 64% of children in lone parent families in Swindon are living in poverty. Grants for items such as school uniform, school holiday activities, and more basic stuff which for various reasons the state will not help with, are needed.

**Progress:**

We meet (now online) every 6-8 weeks. All 4 trustees have found it much harder to work on SHF due to Covid19 constraints. Our main focus has been on setting up the charity with good sustainable governance.

**Registration:**

We achieved registration with the Charity Commission in August (No 1190979) using a standard Charity Incorporated constitution. Our official objective is now "The relief of poverty of persons living in the borough of Swindon by the making of small grants to individuals". The word 'poverty' was a requirement to meet the 2011 definitions of a UK charity; we accepted this as it will not be visible to applicants for grants.

**Financial:**

We have a 'Treasurers' bank account, and so can accept donations now. We are currently finalising arrangements for donations through the website. We are keen that this should not carry any costs; our plan is to be a small local charity run by volunteers so that our running costs remain close to zero and donations can go 100% to those suffering hardship. We have applied to register with HMRC for Gift aid so that we can reclaim tax on donations.

**Website:**

Please have a look at <https://swindonhardshipfund.org.uk/>. It is intentionally quite brief, but serves as a front window for the charity.

**Next steps:**

We are working towards launch. The main issues are now:

- Finding some good-sized grants, and some regular givers, so that when we launch we can offer useful support without running out of money. ➤

- Developing the detail of how we work with partners, so that the grant application process is not onerous, and so that trustees with full-time jobs and our treasurer are not overloaded by SHF grant decisions.
- We are still looking for a treasurer.

Please would you consider making a start on donations? We were encouraged by your positive response last year. We now need you and others to place some confidence in us to begin. Swindon has a great many people facing hardship, and we all expect this to increase in the coming few years.

Steve Russell (Chair)

07548 394580, [swindonhardshipfund@gmail.com](mailto:swindonhardshipfund@gmail.com)

## IS CHRISTMAS CANCELLED THIS YEAR?

Earlier in the year, with the prospect of the Christmas period being in lockdown or with restrictions, there was a lot of media speculation about “cancelling Christmas.” An interesting idea?

How often over recent years has it been discussed whether Christmas has become over commercialised? Could this be a good opportunity to reassess where and what we spend our money on? How often have you heard of someone saying, “I can’t remember the office party, was it good?” Possibly it’s not a real issue, missing something you can’t remember straight afterwards. Could it be replaced by a cup of tea and a mince pie with a neighbour over the fence? And there’s always that sense of rush and stress, that we could all do without, of ‘having everything done’ ready for the big day.

So yes, some of Christmas could be different. However:

When did I see you hungry, but too scared to go out to the shops, Lord?

When were you lonely Lord, with no internet and the phone not ringing?

When were you afraid of losing your job and being made homeless, Lord?

When did I see you a prisoner, shut in your own home with nowhere to go and no one to see, Lord?

When did you experience COVID, Lord?

“Now my child, now, this is my life, too” would be the loud, clear reply.

Is Christmas cancelled? I hope and pray that, far from being cancelled, the love, peace, joy and, yes, hope that was born over 2000 years ago in

Bethlehem lives and shines even brighter this year. These are needed in all homes and communities more than ever. Together we can all help to make Christmas definitely NOT cancelled, but a time of hope, love and friendship.

And Christ is in the centre, for this is his birthday, with the shining lights of Christmas singing "He has come today!"

*Noel Hunt*

## **LIVING WITH COVID 19 - SWINDON COMMERCIAL CHAPLAINCY**



Dear friends,

I do not have to tell you how challenging the past year has been. Many of you have been separated from loved ones and friends. We have witnessed tragedy and survival, and humanity at its best. The love shown towards each other, helping and supporting without question at this difficult time, has been inspirational. We pray this wonderful outpouring of love remains in the hearts of all our Lord's children.

As with so many charities, we are struggling and we depend on kindness and support, and any offer of help is so gratefully appreciated. The retail sector was already suffering, and the pandemic has been the last nail for some shops in our town, (Debenhams, Sainsburys, Laura Ashley, Mothercare and more.) Many are on the brink of closure. We hold them in our prayers.

During lockdown we are working tirelessly to maintain our service to all with faith, little faith, or no faith. I continue to work from home and the office, and I am available to offer support to anybody who may be experiencing difficulties.

We are looking for new Chaplains. Could you spare an hour or so once a week or fortnight? If you joined us I am sure you would find it rewarding.

Blessings to you all,

Sheila (Wright), Operations Director Swindon Commercial Chaplaincy

Tel: 07715 667019 email: [scchaplaincy@gmail.com](mailto:scchaplaincy@gmail.com)

*Photo by Janet French*

# Christ Church with St. Mary's

## **Appreciation and Thanks from two members of our congregation**

*(Written before the enforced closure of churches).*

Those of us who are now attending Christ Church every week would like to extend our thanks to the people who, week by week, take note of our names before the service and then give up their time to sanitising the pews and chairs we have used, also to those who prepare for the service by arranging chairs and getting everything onto the power point for display on the screen and the person who puts it onto the website. We do appreciate it all...

## **...and from a sermon given by Margaret Williams:**

There have been countless acts of kindness shown during these past few months from people of the Christian Church, people of other faiths and from people of no faith.

There will be a time when we will look back on 2020 and we will remember it as the year the pandemic struck the world, God's world, and claimed the lives of many people, but we will also remember the kindness of so many people and the friendliness of neighbours. We will also remember that although our church buildings were closed it was the year that the church met the people where they were.■

## **Beautiful cards from Christ Church stained glass windows**

Angel head or Nativity scene Greetings cards, with envelopes.

Blank inside for your own message: 50p each or 6 for £2.50.

GWR Train in the South Porch. cards with envelopes.

Blank inside for your own message: 50p each or 6 for £2.50.

Post cards of train in South Porch, 30p each or 4 for £1.00

Post cards of green parrot in North Transept, 30p each or 4 for £1.00

Cash or cheque, or BACS transfer.

For delivery, contact Caroline 01793 521732

**Sold in aid of The Friends of Christ Church**

# IT'S AN EDUCATION!



I want to reveal to you a hidden treasure in the middle of Old Town - a gleaming little precious gem of great value, carefully and lovingly handed down through the generations, and shining towards a bright future...King William Street School.

It's a small school, the oldest in Swindon, built of local stone in 1871, when 'The Old Lady on the Hill' was just a young woman (20 years after the consecration of Christ Church)! When the school was built, rising above the height of the surrounding houses, the bell tower was clearly visible from the fields below, so there is a long history to the building, with many changes over the decades and constantly evolving education within.

In 2019, the staff and governors decided to take a look at the school 'Vision', so that we were clear in our aims. This vision would then inform everyone of what makes our school distinctive as a Christian school serving the Old Town community. We recognised how we were rooted in the past but, with our vision set forward, looking to the future.

We decided on: "Listening to the past, guiding towards the future", based on Jeremiah 29, v.11: 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope about future.' ►

We collaborated on updating our school logo too, which now is in the trefoil shape, reflecting the Trinity windows at both Christ Church and also the school stonework (if you look upwards from the street). In the sections of the trefoil there are three more symbols: a candle (light of Christ, light shining in the darkness, light of education); a cross (as a Christian school); and a bell (which still hangs up high), reflecting the long history of our school.



Recently, we were one of the first schools to be inspected (October 2019) under Ofsted's new inspection framework, which judged the school to be



good, based mainly on the quality of education and ambition for the children to achieve.

They found the children's behaviour to be very positive and their relationships with each other both positive and respectful. Their spiritual and moral values are

lived out, both by the staff and the children. It's a wholly inclusive school.

The Covid 19 crisis of 2020 has been a huge challenge to the school's staff, families and children. However, I believe the response has revealed how deep and strong are the core Christian values underpinning the ethos of the school. The care for each individual, their emotional health, ➤



resilience, well-being and hope, has been inspirational. The new school rules include: be ready, be respectful, be safe.

During the months when the majority of children stayed at home, teachers and teaching assistants provided alternative ways of learning. Key worker children still attended each day. Meals were cooked on the premises and delivered to some children at home. Some staff accompanied children to school, or delivered work packs to their homes. Children communicated with people confined indoors at a nearby Nursing Home.

The crisis, I believe, has shown the best of the school. Our independent adviser said that the school had ‘hit the ground running’ on the children’s return. Education is in full swing again! Our school is special too for its spirituality, worship, community, stillness, calmness and meditation. It has a small spiritual garden, a quiet place away from the hubbub of the playground.



Support staff are continuing to work with children on their emotional health. King William Street is a faith school, where Christian values are woven into the fabric of daily life and learning. Collaborative, shared working is the ‘norm’: children become working partners.

It’s a privilege to be involved with King William Street School, where each and every child is known by name and valued as an individual, and where they feel safe to face the challenges in their learning and their lives and to feel ambitious for the future. ►



I believe we have a lot to learn from the children - resilience, hope, ambition, openness to new ideas and learning, and more. I pray that we, as members of our Old Town Partnership of churches, will take every opportunity to welcome the children into our churches, to help them celebrate our festivals of Christmas, Easter and Harvest, to share our stories of faith, of the Bible, and to pray for all the staff, the families and the children. May they know the comfort and joy of Christmas, particularly this year.

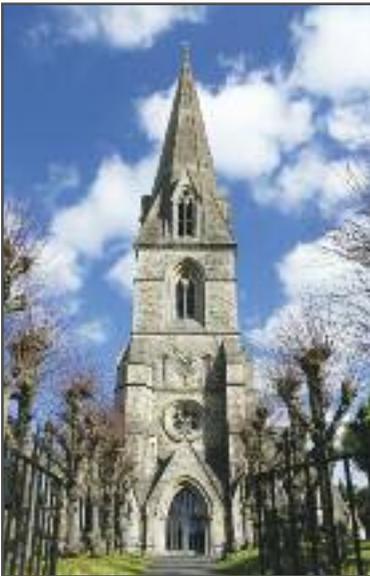
*Helen Hartnell* (Foundation Governor)

To know more about becoming a School Governor, please contact

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Simon Stevenette: [simon@christchurchswindon.co.uk](mailto:simon@christchurchswindon.co.uk) Tel. 01793 529166 or the Head Teacher, Mrs M. Clarke: [head@kingwilliamstreet.co.uk](mailto:head@kingwilliamstreet.co.uk) Tel. 01793 522346.

## CHRIST CHURCH CLOCK SWITCHES AUTOMATICALLY TO GMT



I walked into the churchyard at 9.20 am on Sunday 25 October and thought "Wow, the clock is right!". It had switched automatically to GMT for the first time ever. I hope you all noticed.

The clock was reinstalled in the Christ Church tower in July 2020 after several months absence for a complete overhaul. This overhaul repaired the worn clock mechanism so that it could cope with the new auto-regulator which had been installed in September 2018. The auto-regulator is computer driven and enables the clock to switch automatically from Greenwich Mean Time to British Summer Time.

The overhaul and installation were organised by Mike Palmer, carried out by the Cumbria Clock Company, and paid for by a bequest from John Plaister, an expert horologist, a member of the Christ Church congregation and a Trustee of the Friends of Christ Church.

*Caroline Pitt*, Chair, Friends of Christ Church.

*Photo by Janet French*

# LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF BRISTOL

Dear Friends,

## **Transforming Church Discovering how to be a better church for everyone**

I wanted to be in touch with you about a positive development in the life of the Diocese next year as we seek together what Christ is calling us to be and to do in the coming years.

I recognise that this good news lands at a moment when once again we are moving into lockdown because of the rapidly increasing rate of infection and hospital admissions. Having been in touch with Directors of Public Health in both Bristol and South Gloucestershire last week, I was not surprised at the announcement by our government of a change of policy and guidance. I am very well aware that the implications for you and your families will be hard to bear and the impact on your churches and communities will be considerable. I also know that you will be amongst the first to support those in need: those who are afraid, those who cannot cope, those who have lost jobs, those who are hungry. Thank you for your persistent faithfulness and the deep generosity of your service.

During this lockdown churches can stay open for prayer and for filming broadcast worship. That is good, and I know you will take advantage of this to continue to enable your church, by your prayer and your service, to be a sign of hope. Covid-19 is a ghastly virus which kills the most vulnerable and wearies us all. It has challenged the church and it has roused us to respond in new ways. Your adaptability over the last eight months has been extraordinary and wonderful. I thank God for each of you.

I also recognise that we will all be under pressure through the coming weeks, and we will have to continue to learn to live with Covid-19 for some time. Advent and Christmas will be very different this year as we seek to reveal the light of Christ in these particularly dark times.

In the midst of all of this, it is clear that we must make time to reach towards the future God in Christ desires for us all. We are now beginning a process to seek together what Christ is calling us to be and to do in the coming years. In January we will begin a conversation to help shape a new vision, listening to and talking with lots of different people, both within the church and outside - ➤

with communities, congregations, clergy, lay ministers and church leaders. There will be opportunities for everyone to get involved. Good conversations need great listening and I am committed to listening to voices that I don't often hear and opinions that challenge me and the status quo.

This work begins in a complex world that is experiencing seismic changes. Covid-19, Brexit, racism, growing inequalities, climate crisis, ongoing digital revolution, approaching recession and debates over human identity are disrupting and changing society and communities. At the same time, we know that numbers of regular worshipers are declining and the role of the Church of England in wider society is contested more now than it has been in recent history. The process of shaping our vision and priorities for the coming years will allow us to celebrate the best of what is, imagine what could be and co-create what should be in all the surrounding complexity.

I look forward to working with you throughout the coming year as we seek our calling as God's people in this place and in this time. I will lead this process with the support and guidance of the Bishop's staff team, a project board and delivery team which will be accountable to Bishop's Council. The Diocese has been awarded some additional finance to support us in this task. That will release the Archdeacons to spend more time in conversation, thinking, praying, and planning with as many people as possible. They will work with others in a structured review of our mission. Together with you, we will seek to interpret what we are hearing in Christ's call.

As Bishop of Bristol I am called to be the Bishop for everyone. As Anglicans, as the Church of England, we are called to be a church for everyone. This remains at the core of all that we do and means we must be relentlessly inclusive in our approach, reaching out to everyone in our diocese.

Christ is ahead of us in this task and challenge. Our faithfulness calls us to respond with hope and support each other with joyful anticipation, ■

#### **Answers to 'How well do you know your Carols?' Quiz on page 34**

1. Deck the Halls;
2. Joy to the world;
3. Silent Night;
4. Little Donkey;
5. I saw three ships come sailing in;
6. The Holly and the Ivy;
7. Hark! The herald angels sing;
8. We Three Kings;
9. The first Nowell;
10. While shepherds watched their flocks by night;
11. Ding dong merrily on high;
12. O little town of Bethlehem;
13. See, amid the winter's snow;
14. It came upon the midnight clear;
15. Away in a manger;
16. O come, all ye faithful;
17. Once in royal David's city;
18. Angels, from the realms of glory.

## Icon: The first bible was creation (Black Jesus)

*Sue Mansfield explains, in this shortened version, how she created this icon. See photo on inside back cover.*

In my original description, I focussed on the wildlife and the individual images in the icon. With this shorter description, I am just focussing on the whole icon and the ecologically challenging questions it was asking me.

This icon is based on the original icon Pantocrator in St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai Egypt. In this later version, I have changed the face to a Black Cosmic Christ which I found actually more powerful. I chose to intentionally not adhere to the geometry of the Byzantine tradition of the face in order to honour the variety of face shape.

I have removed the usual 'icon' Bible and put in its place the first 'Bible' - Creation in all its glory. The first Bible was creation. Jesus is cloaked in creation. The Saints - more or less - seemed to find spiritual experiences outside, rarely in our buildings.

**Cosmic Christ:** As I was writing the detail above him, I could feel his eyes boring into me, what would it be like to be this close to the Cosmic Christ? Who are you? (I know and yet don't know). Who were you? Who will you be?

Neutrons, protons electrons live in community. So do we. Connectedness with creation, perhaps a more gracious way to be in the world we are given is to allow nature to speak to us rather than dominate it, really realising that it isn't there for my/our consumption/money-making/intelligence. St Claire says that nature is a mirror and mirrors back to us.

We are Interdependent with creation whether we like it or not. When we think of nature as 'other' - separate from ourselves - it allows us wars, destruction of forests, ownership, property, slavery, scientific explorations, technical development, hyper-individualism, voracious consumptions and industrial growth. Relationality between us and creation is being found by science. Dignity is for everything.

This causes me to ask, 'What is my true identity? What is my way of being in the world? And 'how can I walk on the earth so lightly that my/our actions are good for the next 6 generations?' which, in my humble opinion, will need us to rediscover 'Lament' - a deeper and more inclusive and demanding act than 'forgiveness' (I mean that in the greatest respect). As I begin to understand that the Cosmic Christ is in everything, it changes my perspective that everything has value, a soul and a voice - this changes my interaction with them,

everything is an equal rather than an object. Therefore I start to treat everything with subjectivity rather than objectivity, the planet as the Body of Christ.

The halo is symbolic in many faiths, a luminous energy field, in Yoga the 8th Chakra. You see it symbolised in the Buddha, in Saints, etc. all over the world. We don't believe in 'energy fields' as such, and yet we certainly know when we are in a negative one!

**Our response?** What does health spirituality look like in the time of an Eco-crisis? - How do you convince people of what is obvious? Reduce, reuse, recycle; is NOT enough. During the Covid crisis how quickly water cleared, air pollution cleared; in just 3 weeks and more birds were singing. Mother Nature is ready and willing if we are, but she won't fight us. Governments came together in the Covid 19 crisis, so they can do the same with the Eco-Crisis too.

The 'enlightenment' was a critical analysis, not a conscious communion like the deep wisdom of the Ancients. The oldest Christian wisdom we have here in the UK is only back to the Celtic. Where now do we find the deep wisdom of what is good for 7 generations? We need this now more than ever.

**Relationship and lament:** What does it mean to live in relationship with the wild? Without relationship we just consume, use and abuse - our current ability to abuse the earth is so much greater with all our machines now. Earth takes care of you if you take care of her - a reciprocity.

In church we haven't been taught to lament, so in an Eco-crisis we are either in denial and then angry and defensive if anyone points it out, or we are rendered paralysed by the enormity of what we are facing, neither of which is helpful. Grief gets stuck in us as a type of anger, which is unhelpful too, It needs 'ritual'. Religion is good at ceremony but that just keeps the status quo - ritual allows for an alternative form of emotion, more freeing and engaging.

This is where lament is helpful. We need to regain the age-old ability to lament, perhaps by ritual in song, poem, art, etc., without weaponising our values - which can be sometimes seen in how we "use" food. Lament allows us to move on from anger, not 'sweeping the situation under the carpet', but actually looking at it full on and then moving lightly forward. Since the age of the printing press, we have been "teaching" Christianity. We need to catch the spirit of it, not teach it. Richard Rohr sums it up nicely to close: "Our Capitalist culture of money, productivity seems to be more important to us than nature. If you put the Gospel in the hands of self-referential people, they will distort it on every count, sacraments, bible, priests, ministry, buildings, not worship God anymore. Nature is a Natural cathedral." ■

## Celebration in a time of fear



It was a great privilege to welcome back Martin Palmer to Christ Church on Friday 23rd October to give the annual Friends of Christ Church lecture entitled 'Celebration in a time of fear'.

Martin is the son of Derek Palmer, a previous vicar of Christ Church and one of the initiators of the Old Town Partnership of Churches. Martin has followed a varied

and international career linking various organisations - secular and faith based - in the field of environmental awareness.

He is presently CEO FaithInvest (and previously Secretary General of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation). Its website says, "FaithInvest is an international nonprofit organisation that assists faith groups to invest in line with their beliefs and values. Our aim is to support the rapidly developing movement of faiths actively using their investments to create a better world – for people and planet."

In the present circumstances of climate emergency and COVID, Martin has recently been the only Anglican on Pope Francis's Covid 19 commission. Their research over the last 6 months led to the publication of Fratelli Tutti on St. Francis Day, October 4th, at the end of Creationtide.

It was a delight to have with us as a guest Canon John Cunningham, the Parish Priest of Holy Rood Catholic Church, who wrote afterwards, "*It was a really good evening. An inspiring speaker. Thank you for your hospitality. John*"

It was a particular joy that, through the generous sponsorship of the Friends of Christ Church, the webinar was professionally live streamed which means it was much appreciated by many people who were shielding in Swindon and friends across the country. Do have a look yourself as it is well worth listening to. Martin is a wonderful storyteller and inspirational speaker. The link is here to the webinar on the Christ Church website:

<https://www.christchurchswindon.co.uk/blog/2020/10/friends-of-christ-church-lecture-with-martin-palmer-on-friday-23rd-october-7-30pm-in-christ-church/>

Martin spoke from the foundation of a North Korean nun who had said to him that the purpose of our life on earth is developing and growing four key relationships: with God, with our neighbour, with creation and with ourselves.

Martin spoke from insights he had gained over the years from people from different faith communities, reminding us that God has a big plan for the whole of his creation. He spoke of his ecumenical passion, that we should always look to learn from our fellow human beings from different faiths with openness, grace and generosity of spirit. Above all, Martin left us with renewed hope and the importance of working together in these challenging times as eco-congregations across our Partnership. Thank you for all your continuing support

*Simon*



## **Comfort and Joy is the Church of England's Christmas campaign for 2020.**

Comfort and Joy holds together the hope that Christmas will bring joy and celebration after a uniquely difficult year with an acknowledgement that – for those who have lost loved ones or livelihoods, or who are potentially still not able to be together with loved ones – it may be the Church's role, both nationally and locally, to provide

consolation, rather than assume everyone will be ready to join in jubilation. We also have to anticipate there may be further spikes.

This Christmas the Church will need, in the words of St Paul in Romans 12.15, to 'Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep'. We will aim to celebrate where we can together in one place – but also embrace a wider community that wants to join in the celebration but may not be physically able – or emotionally ready – to do so. We hope that 'Comfort and Joy' will enable us to build a campaign that both enables us to reconnect with the rich and joyous traditions of the past and to offer God's consoling love in the present.

## **Reflections**

There will be weekly reflections published on social media and available by email and app for each Sunday of Advent. We have partnered with a number of public figures to produce short reflections exploring the theme. 'Comfort and Joy': Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas', mirrors the structure of a traditional carol service, exploring both biblical texts and the words of much-loved Christmas carols. ➤

The reflections for each day, from Christmas Day to 2nd January, feature contributions from the Rev'd. Kate Bottley, Jonathan Bryan, Bob Chilcott, Martha Collison, Stephen Cottrell, Guli Francis-Dehqani, Chine McDonald, Sally Phillips and Archbishop Justin Welby. The booklet is introduced by the Archbishops and has been edited by the Ven. John Kiddle, Archdeacon of Wandsworth, author of the best-selling 'God With Us: Your Christmas Journey'.

They will also be made available freely via audio, smart speaker, as well as via app and email formats with accompanying prayer activities for children and families.

Working with the Archbishop of York's Youth Trust and the Evangelism & Discipleship team, we will also produce a series of youth reflections in December.

### **Online services and events**

In collaboration with a range of Christian charities and organisations, we will produce nine online services throughout Advent and Christmas. This will include an online service for each Sunday of Advent, a Christingle with the Children's Society, nine lessons and carols and midnight services. Charities involved include Christian Aid, Church Army, Embrace and Marie Curie. The online weekly services have been very well received on social media and continue to attract a diverse audience, including regular churchgoers, people exploring faith and a wide age demographic. ■



# Bath Road

## State control of education.

Soon after the last magazine was published with my musings on Government diktats about what was NOT to be taught in school, the following arose. The Government's Women and Equalities Minister, Kemi Badenoch, said that schools that teach pupils that "white privilege" is an uncontested fact are breaking the law.

Addressing MPs during a Commons debate on Black History Month, she said, "The government does not want white children being taught about white privilege and their inherited racial guilt. Any school which teaches these elements of political race theory as fact, or which promotes partisan political views such as defunding the police without offering a balanced treatment of opposing views, is breaking the law." She added that schools have a statutory duty to remain politically impartial and should not openly support "the anti-capitalist Black Lives Matter group".

Badenoch was speaking in response to Labour MP Dawn Butler, who had told the Commons that black children are made to feel inferior by what they are taught in school and history "needs to be decolonised".

White privilege is the societal privilege that benefits white people over non-white people in some societies, particularly if they are otherwise under the same social, political, or economic circumstances. Peggy McIntosh describes the advantages that whites in Western societies enjoy and non-whites do not experience, as "an invisible package of unearned assets". These include cultural affirmations of one's own worth; presumed greater social status; and freedom to move, buy, work, play, and speak freely.

Academics having studied white privilege, undisturbed for decades, have been surprised by the seemingly sudden hostility from right-wing critics since approximately 2014.

Within a week three interesting articles appeared in the papers.

**The Guardian 28th October 2020:** A public inquiry into undercover policing is poised to reveal details of how police repeatedly spied on black justice groups, including several run by grieving families whose relatives were killed by police

or died in custody. The judge-led inquiry was launched six years ago by Theresa May, the Home Secretary at the time, after The Guardian revealed police covertly monitored the campaign for justice over the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence.

The inquiry is due to scrutinise how the police spied on at least 17 other, mainly black, grieving families between 1970 and 2005. Many are high-profile cases that have been the source of tension between the Metropolitan police and minority communities for many years.

Among those spied on were the campaigns for justice over the death of Jean Charles de Menezes, the Brazilian electrician shot repeatedly in the head in 2005 by police after being mistaken for a suicide bomber, and Cherry Groce, whose shooting by police two decades earlier, in 1985, sparked the Brixton riots.

**This story from January 2019 resurfaced in response:** Research carried out by academics based at Oxford University suggests her concerns may be right. British citizens from ethnic minority backgrounds have to send, on average, 60% more job applications to get a positive response from employers compared to their white counterparts, according to researchers at Nuffield College's Centre for Social Investigation (CSI).

They sent around 3,200 fake job applications for both manual and non-manual jobs - including chefs, shop assistants, accountants and software engineers - in response to adverts on a popular recruitment site between November 2016 and December 2017.

All of the fictitious candidates were British citizens, or had moved to the UK by the age of six, and had identical CVs, covering letters and years of experience. The only thing that they changed was the applicant's name, which they based on their ethnic background. While 24% of white British applicants received a call back from UK employers, only 15% of ethnic minority applicants did.

Compared to White British applicants, people of Pakistani heritage had to make 70% more applications; Nigerian and South Asian heritage 80% more applications; Middle Eastern and North African heritage 90% more applications.

Dr Valentina Di Stasio, co-author, says the "shocking" results show that the level of discrimination in the job market has not changed since the late 1960s.►

## **This response came on 30th October 2020:**

Over 100 Black writers are calling on the government to rein in its ministers following Olukemi Badenoch's implication that author Reni Eddo-Lodge's work, 'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race', supports racial segregation.

The collective – known as the Black Writers' Guild – is urging Whitehall to ensure that ministers are responsible with their language and “avoid spreading misinformation”. The open letter, which includes signatures from Afua Hirsch, Nels Abbey and Malorie Blackman, states: “The allegation here is not only clearly false but dangerous. It risks endangering the personal safety of anti-racist writers. In recent years progressive writers, politicians and activists across Europe and the United Kingdom have been physically attacked and killed by far-right extremists. It is in this climate that we ask the government to ensure ministers are responsible with their language, avoid spreading misinformation and apply better judgement in order to protect the lives and freedom of minorities,”

I am asking why can't young people be taught how capitalists, the rich, the mega rich and companies make and keep their money and why can't they be taught how white people took and keep wealth and power?

It is almost as if privileged white capitalists are a protected species, more protected than our environment.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Barrett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

## **Thoughts and Prayers**

Our thoughts and prayers go to Sheila Gladman, her family and friends, following the death of Sheila's husband, Ray, after a long illness. We remember him coming and helping at Open House and also Lunch Club when he always cheered us along with his smile and 'leg pulling'. It was Ray, when undertaking decorating for the church, painted all the doors a different colour in the corridor downstairs, certainly making it more colourful and easier to direct people to the correct one rather than rely on just a number!

*Gwen Knight*

## **Pam Little and Margaret Gardiner's holiday to Looe, Cornwall.**

Our holiday was booked through Barnes in January 2020 for May 2020 but due to Covid was postponed to July and then to September. We spent ages worrying if it would be cancelled altogether and didn't pack until the day before.

We were both picked up by taxis at 9:30am on the Monday for the coach at Greenbridge. There were only 20 of us on a 44 seater coach and we could use the onboard toilet which was useful during a traffic hold up around Taunton and we couldn't get to the services until Exeter!!

We arrived at our very nice hotel in Looe at 5pm. It was a lovely fair day and we admired the view from the restaurant overlooking the river. Our room was at the back, so we had no view, but we didn't mind at all. It was a very good twin room with a large shower room.

Tuesday was a fine day and we went to Mevagissey. The coach park was about a quarter of a mile from the front so we set off, me pushing my walker and Pam following. There was a long queue down the road for the toilet! There was no café to sit in but lots of seats along the harbour to admire the view. After queuing for coffee we were told the coach was waiting for us. We were not late but to become famous in such a short time is a bit off putting!!

Wednesday was the driver's day off and as it was raining 'cats and dogs' we sat in the small lounge all morning, Pam reading and myself painting the view. We then had fish and chips in our own restaurant. Then we thought the rain was easing and set off.

On Thursday we went to Falmouth and had a lovely ride; there were gorgeous views across to Plymouth. We were back on the bus for 1pm then on to Fowey. If you don't know Fowey it's on a steep hill, so the bus had to pull into a field on top of a hill and we took a mini bus down to the town, which is usually packed with tourists but was much quieter due to Covid. We longed for fish and chips, but found none, so we sat on a wall by the river as there were no seats.

We found a café with outdoor seating for a cup of tea, to then find the mini bus driver, who said, "Where have you two been?" We had to leave to get the bus so no lunch! We then went to Truro and to the Pannier Market but, alas, no time to visit the Cathedral. ➤

Friday was coming home day and the weather was gearing up for a deluge. The beaches were so rough no-one was surfing. It was so bad in Padstow, that the birds were blowing backwards, and one of our coach party was blown backwards and had a bump on her head and a bruised arm. The driver called for an ambulance which had to come from Truro! 3 and a half hours later it turned up!

The driver had a most horrendous drive home and we arrived back in Swindon at 7:30pm. A very big change to life at home but we enjoyed it tremendously and wonder if we'll ever go on holiday again!

*Margaret Gardiner*

### **Eric Sparkes writes...**

We can all do with some good news during this pandemic and mine was hearing from my elder son Tim that he has now qualified as an Accident and Emergency Consultant and he took up a post in this capacity at the Great Western Hospital on the 1st November.

If Gill was able, I know that she would be equally pleased for him as it has been almost 16 years of diligent training in switching from a successful Electronics engineering career to follow his dream.

*Eric Sparkes*

## **YouTube**

### **Bath Road Methodist Church now has a YouTube Channel!**

The first video posted is the Remembrance Reflection from Swindon Old Town Partnership of Churches which can also be seen on our website, <https://www.bathroadmethodistchurch.org.uk/welcome.htm>

If you have a YouTube account, (anyone with a Gmail account does), then go to our channel and subscribe. By doing this you will be notified when any other videos are uploaded. People will also be notified of any videos uploaded via Facebook, our website or by email.

You can find our YouTube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrCJO4VFGwd8fcf-zJWjr0g> Or search on YouTube for Bath Road Methodist Church.

## AUTOGRAPHIC ADDRESS



I was contacted by a gentleman called Howard, who said he had something interesting that was connected to Bath Road. It was given to him by a neighbour who is a collector of interesting paintings and goes to auctions etc.

The neighbour bought the manuscript about thirty years ago in Kingston-upon-Thames when he lived in Woking.

When he moved to Somerset he took it with him and stored it in his garage. After he realised that Howard's wife Hilary was a Swindonian he gave it to them and they hung it in their dining room in their cottage in East Huntspill, near to my home town of Bridgwater.

They have now moved back to Swindon and have nowhere to put it, hence they both thought it would be nice to return it 'home'. Howard's wife, Hilary (nee Summers) grew up in Gorse Hill where she attended the Methodist chapel there called the Russell Memorial Chapel.

The 'Autographic Address', as it is called, expresses gratitude to a Mr B. Amsden and his wife for their work at Bath Road, especially with the young people and the Sunday School. It is signed by a number of members of the time.

We shall be looking for somewhere to display it and perhaps further study may bring more information.

*Mark Barrett*

## **“The Son of God” by Jeffrey Archer**

He was born in a barn, his father a carpenter, and his mother a decent woman, but they were of no significance and certainly couldn't have afforded to give the boy a private education. And yet, as a teenager, he was arguing the toss with his elders and betters in the council chambers. He never got a proper job, just roamed around the countryside, unshaven, and living off bread and water and the occasional fish, while offering his opinions to those who cared to listen.

He became the manager of a football team known as The Disciples, not one of them a star, in fact the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition. The authorities eventually arrested him as a rabble-rouser, but couldn't decide what to charge him with, other than the fact he claimed he was the Son of God.

They strung him up with a couple of criminals, and when he finally gave up the ghost, rather assumed that would be the last they'd hear of him. The Disciples were relegated at the end of the season, in fact the captain denied on more than one occasion that he'd ever been a member of His team.

When He died at the age of thirty-three, there were no obituaries in the local press reporting his achievements, no glossy supplements highlighting his colourful career, no radio programmes to discuss his legacy, and no box sets recording any of his miracles.

But then, He'd never relied on focus groups to advise him on current trends, or advertising gurus to spend millions promoting his brand, or spin doctors to sharpen his image, and he didn't require social media to keep his followers up to date, so you could be forgiven for assuming he'd be forgotten in a few days.

**So how can one explain that over two thousand years later, Jesus Christ is still the best-known celebrity on earth? Could it just be that He was the Son of God?**

*This was on a Christmas Card produced for Cancer Research UK and sent in by a reader from Bath Road Church.*

# Immanuel

## **Lockdown:**

Given the new government announcements, and initially until December 2nd, church services have been included in the list of activities that cannot take place. This indeed is a sad information, but one we must comply with. We will keep you informed as the situation develops. Meanwhile, the Elders are in agreement that the church should be open once a week for private prayer.

## **Armistice Day**

We had a special moment on 11th November where, between 10:30–11:30am, the church was open for private prayer and the 2 minutes silence at 11:00am. This was a moving time for those who were present.

*See photo on inside back cover.*

## **Fresh from the Word:**

The daily Bible readings give global perspectives on carefully selected passages from the Bible. The writers include theologians and biblical scholars, church leaders and activists for peace from across the world, all of whom share a passion to bring the Bible into conversation with day-to-day concerns, helping one to grow in knowledge and appreciation of the Bible. £9.99 for the whole year. Please contact Di Swan if you are interested. It would be great if more people followed a pattern for daily Bible reading, and this is one resource available and worth it. I can highly recommend this. *Robert*

**The South Western Synod is delighted to announce that the Rev'd. Roy Lowes has been appointed as our Stepwise Advocate.**



Roy, who has been a Training Officer for our Synod, as well as taking up national posts as Secretary for Education and Learning and Moderator for the West Midlands Synod, has as much enthusiasm as he has experience for this role.

Roy says, “Stepwise is what we've been waiting for. We've known it for years. We are often shy about our faith, uncertain of our beliefs and worried that our

questions somehow disqualify us from being Christian! This programme is designed to help boost confidence, ground our faith and make us grateful for questions which are a means to dig deeper into it. And although it has been planned for some years, it is very timely. Covid-19 robs us of our identity as people who 'go to church'. Few of us are going to a building or, if we are, doing so is not quite church as we've known it.

Stepwise is a new course (I'm learning about it as I start out on this role) designed to strengthen our ability to be disciples. And it is peculiarly well fitted to help us to be Christian at a time when the usual markers and patterns of church life have been kicked from under us. It has many resources and is well set up for learning on line, enabling us to explore how to step wisely in the uncharted territory with which this Covid-19 world has presented Christian disciples.....and beyond.“

Roy will take a little while to get fully up to speed with the programme and set up a new group or groups. Enquiries: [roy.avril@btinternet.com](mailto:roy.avril@btinternet.com) or telephone 07712 654968. For information about the programme, see the United Reformed Church website at <https://urc.org.uk/introducing-stepwise.html>

### **The Foreign Office cat, Palmerston, in his**



resignation letter on Twitter, posted, “I have championed our work, built our relationships and celebrated the diversity of our staff... and will always be an ambassador for the UK and the new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office”. After a four year career in Downing Street, which had included scraps with a neighbour, he was going to spend more time with a family in the country.



# Quiz

## How well do you know your Carols?

1. Decorate the corridors.
2. Jubilation to the terrestrial globe.
3. No noise between 8.00 pm and 6.00 am.
4. Small equus africanus asinus.
5. One perceived with eyes a trio of vessels.
6. Miss Golightly together with hедера genus.
7. Listen to the celestial messenger vocalising.
8. Our small group of royal men.
9. Was the earlier Edmonds or Gallagher?
10. As ovine attendants looked over their charges in the hours of darkness.
11. The sound of bells ring from the top of the steeple.
12. Distorted hot helm beef follows small urban settlement.
13. Observe through seasonal precipitation.
14. Arriving at 12.00 on a transparent day.
15. Removed in an animal feeding trough.
16. Summon the entirety of non-believers.
17. A single time in the noble conurbation of Mr. Beckham.
18. Celestial beings originating in the kingdom of absolute happiness.

Answers on page 19

Sent in by a reader from Immanuel



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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily the views of  
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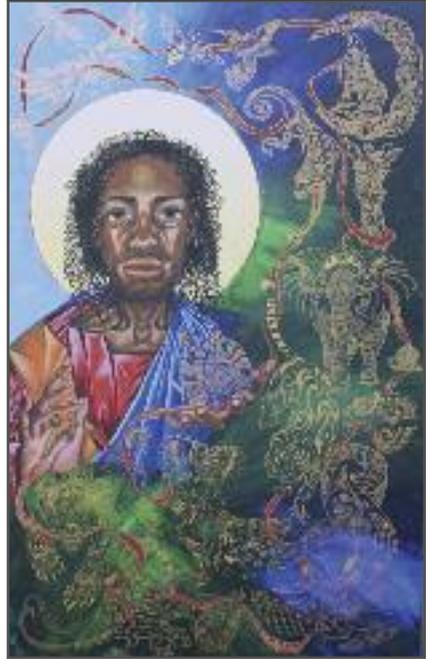
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## ICON:

The first bible was  
creation (Black Jesus)  
Created by Sue Mansfield  
*See her article on page*

### Armistice Day at Immanuel



Some of you may have spotted that the tree standing at the front of Immanuel is in its full autumn glory at the moment and helps remind us that even in these difficult days, there is still much to give thanks for in God's wonderful world. *Stephen Brain*



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