

# Steyning and Ashurst



# Church Magazine

# JANUARY 2021

**ISSUED FREE**



# Steyning Parish Church,

1 Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YL

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Our pattern of services in January will continue on the reduced pattern introduced last year as a response to the pandemic.

Steyning Sunday 9:30am Parish Eucharist

Ashurst 10:30am Service on the Second and Fourth Sundays

The midweek Eucharist in St Andrew's & St Cuthman's will be suspended from 13 January whilst the church is closed for the lighting installation. See page 8 for details.

Please contact the Parish Office if you would like to receive our Sunday bulletin (issued each week by email and fortnightly by post) which will contain further updates about services.

*Fr Mark, Vicar of Steyning and Rector of Ashurst*

## Parish Office Address:

Penfold Hall, Church Street,

Steyning BN44 3YB

Tel: 813276

[office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org)

[www.steyningparishchurch.org](http://www.steyningparishchurch.org)

**THE OFFICE REMAINS CLOSED BUT IS STAFFED REMOTELY**

Post is being picked up and the telephone diverted to the

Parish Administrator: Pat McMullan.

## PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Friends,

*One day an old man was walking along the beach when he noticed a girl picking something up, and gently throwing it into the sea. 'What are you doing?' – he asked. 'Throwing starfish back into the sea,' the girl replied. 'The tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die.' 'But how can you hope to make a difference?' the man asked. 'Don't you realise there are miles and miles of beach, and hundreds, perhaps thousands, of starfish?' After listening politely, the girl bent down, picked up another starfish, and cast it carefully into the surf. Smiling at the man, she said 'I made a difference for that one.' And she walked on along the beach to find another.*



We've all got used to recycling nowadays, and most of us will be concerned about the wasteful practices that are slowly destroying our planet. David Attenborough's wonderful but devastating second Blue Planet documentary series revealed the damage caused to all kinds of beautiful ocean life by waste plastics; and we heard in the news last year about the surprising amount of micro-plastic polluting even the most remote places on earth, such as the top of Mount Everest.

Because these true stories can easily make us feel depressed or helpless, it's worth retelling the above fable about the child on the beach. A sensible person might have walked away but, because she cared, the girl did something that made an impact – a small one considering the scale of the problem, but a crucial one for every star fish she carefully returned to the water.

During 2021 Steyning Parochial Church Council will be reviewing how effective we are as a parish church in demonstrating our concern for the future of our planet, and seeking to safeguard its future in the way we use our resources, from gas and electricity supplies to disposable coffee cups. As each of us does in our own homes, we will assess how small actions can make a big difference in the way we show our concern for our planet, and encourage others to do so. Throughout the year you will find articles on these themes, and, in future issues, you will read more about our aspiration to achieve an 'Eco-Church Award' (see page 14). If you have ideas about these important issues feel free to speak to me or to Christine Aubrey who leads on Eco-Church for the Church Council.

*Fr Mark*

## FROM THE EDITOR:

I wish you all a hope - filled 2021.

Welcome to this first edition of the year of the Church magazine.

Last year the Parochial Church Council (PCC) announced that the Church will be working towards achieving an Eco Church award. I had a guess at what that meant, but after talking to Christine Aubrey we realised that a larger involvement of Green issues would be most appropriate for the magazine. This has the blessing of the PCC, and so this year we hope to bring you articles that concern local as well as global issues, and there are two major articles in this issue - one from Christine and the other from Paul Hannam.

I am absolutely serious when I ask for your articles/thoughts/photos. There are many who read this magazine who cannot go out and they appreciate your stimulation.

Send to: [steyningchurchmag@gmail.com](mailto:steyningchurchmag@gmail.com)

*Thank you .*

## SUNDAYS IN JANUARY

3 January	Feast of the Epiphany (transferred)
10 January	Baptism of Christ (Epiphany 1)
17 January	Epiphany 2
24 January	Epiphany 3
31 January	Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) (transferred)

*Because of the pandemic we will not be holding a service to mark New Year's Day nor will there be a united service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity this year. Please see page 6 for prayer resources that may be used from home.*

**MAGAZINE DEADLINE for**

**February 2021**

**MONDAY 4 JANUARY 2021**

*Email address:* [steyningchurchmag@gmail.com](mailto:steyningchurchmag@gmail.com)

## PARISH REGISTERS

### BURIALS OF ASHES

7 December 2020 Margaret Rosamund ('Peggy') Croucher *died 20 October 2018*  
8 December 2020 Josephine Anne ('Jo') Thornton *died 25 August 2020*

### PAUSE AND PRAY

Loving God  
May your grace shine on us  
give us a new revelation of your love  
and help us to be a light into the world

Almighty and all-loving God,  
Help us, when hope seems lost,  
to look to you again  
to supply all our needs.

Jesus Christ, you seek us, you wish to offer us your friendship  
and lead us to a life that is ever more complete.  
Grant us the confidence to answer your call,  
So that we may be transformed and become witnesses of your tenderness for the world.

God of all races, nations, and religions,  
You know that we cannot change others,  
Nor can we change the past.  
But we can change ourselves.  
We can join You in changing our life only  
And find a common future where Love "reigns"  
The same over all.  
Help us not to say, "Lord, Lord" to any nationalist gods.

*The Vicar and Churchwardens wish you  
a Happy New Year*

If you would like to receive the church weekly bulletin, please contact the Church Office at:  
[office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org) or to ring 01903 813276.

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

The theme this year for the week (18 - 25 January) is "Abiding in God's Love". In past years Churches Together have invited us to join together each day to meditate on the theme. The full booklet for this year, with the prayers, meditations and readings can be downloaded free from <https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/> All material has been written by the sisters of the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. Today the community has fifty sisters, all women from different generations, traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion and remain faithful to a life of prayer, life in community and the welcoming of guests. You may find the following thoughts, taken from the booklet helpful.

"Though we, as Christians, abide in the love of Christ, we also live in a creation that groans as it waits to be set free. In the world we witness the evils of suffering and conflict. Through solidarity with those who suffer we allow the love of Christ to flow through us. The paschal mystery bears fruit in us when we offer love to our brothers and sisters and nurture hope in the world".

"Being fully human, like us, Jesus grew and matured. He lived a simple life, rooted in the practices of his Jewish faith. In this hidden life in Nazareth, where apparently nothing extraordinary happened, the presence of the Father nourished him. Mary contemplated the actions of God in her life and in that of her son. She treasured all these things in her heart. Thus, little by little, she embraced the mystery of Jesus. We too need a long period of maturation, an entire lifetime, in order to plumb the depths of Christ's love, to let him abide in us and for us to abide in him. Without our knowing how, the Spirit makes Christ dwell in our hearts. And it is through prayer, by listening to the word, in sharing with others, by putting into practice what we have understood, that the inner being is strengthened".

"Spirituality and solidarity are inseparably linked. Prayer and action belong together. When we abide in Christ, we receive the Spirit of courage and wisdom to act against all injustice and oppression".



"In Christ we are invited to be clothed in compassion, through countless new beginnings. The recognition that we are loved by God moves us to welcome each other with our strengths and weaknesses. It is then that Christ is in our midst... In Christ, God came to meet us. Jesus lived in prayer, intimately united to his Father, while creating friendships with his disciples and all those he met. He introduced them to that which was most precious to him: the relationship of love with his Father, who is our Father".

"Prayer can be solitary or shared with others. It can express wonder, complaint, intercession, thanksgiving or simple silence. Sometimes the desire to pray is there, but one has the feeling of not being able to do so. Turning to Jesus and saying to him, "teach me", can pave the way. Our desire itself is already prayer".

## SUNDAY BULLETIN

The weekly Sunday bulletin sent from the Parish Office gives all the information about what is happening with services, local support etc, and how to access these. There is also the list of those needing our prayers. Any new prayer requests should be sent to:

[office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org)

## PRAYER DIARY FOR JANUARY

### **Friday 1 January New Year's Day The Naming and Circumcision of Jesus.**

Let us pray for all victims of anti-Semitism and an end to all forms of religious, ethnic, social and gender-based discrimination.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose years never fail and whose mercies are new each returning day: let the radiance of your Spirit renew our lives, warming our hearts and giving light to our minds; that we may pass the coming year in joyful obedience and firm faith; through him who is the beginning and the end, your Son, Christ our Lord.

### **Wednesday 6 January Epiphany (transferred to Sunday, 3 January)**

Let us pray for those who have recently made important decisions in their lives and for strength to help each other especially within our community. We pray for all people facing this year without some of the basics of life that we take so much for granted.

Heavenly Father, you have called us in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ to continue his work of reconciliation and reveal you to the world. Forgive us the sins which tear us apart; give us the courage to overcome our fears and to seek that unity which is your gift and your will; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

### **Monday 18 January Start of the week of prayer for Christian Unity**

Let us pray for God's spirit to move us all towards closer communion, in unity with each other.

'Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit' John 15.9

Jesus Christ, you seek us, you wish to offer us your friendship and lead us to a life that is ever more complete. Grant us the confidence to answer your call so that we may be transformed and become witnesses of your tenderness for the world.

### **Monday 25 January Conversion of Paul**

Almighty God, who caused the light of the gospel to shine throughout the world through the preaching of your servant Saint Paul: grant that we who celebrate his wonderful conversion may follow him in bearing witness to your truth; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

## LIGHTING INSTALLATION



### ***Important notice:***

*It is confirmed that the installation of the lighting will start on Monday 11th January until 28th March. Throughout this period the church will be closed Monday to Friday. Open each Saturday for cleaning and preparing for the Sunday Eucharist service.*

*Jim Lang. Project Co-ordinator.*

## WE THREE KINGS

We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.

*Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of night,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign.

*Refrain.*

Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worshiping God on high.

*Refrain.*

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

*Refrain.*

Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
sounds through the earth and skies.

*Refrain.*

As you read the words to this carol I am sure you were singing them—maybe to yourself, or maybe aloud, but its lilting rhythm and solemn minor key has ensured 'We Three Kings' a place as a distinctive and popular carol. Who wrote it?

It was composed by American clergyman and hymnodist, John Henry Hopkins Jr. an Anglican (US Episcopal) clergyman '(1792 -1868)' and appeared in his *Carols, Hymns and Songs* collection in 1872. Its original use was for an elaborate Nativity drama Hopkins was staging.

It is intended as an Epiphany carol, meaning it is meant to be sung towards the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas as Epiphany is celebrated on 6 January. But, so often the Christmas Day story that is heard in churches throughout the world includes the visit of the Magi, that this great tune and message of hope is included both before and during the Christmas season.

Originally published with the title, 'Three Kings of Orient', it tells the story of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection – and the melody alternates between regal, minor-sounding verses, in which the Three Wise Men announce what gifts they are presenting to the Son of God, and a major chorus joyfully proclaiming the beauty of the star guiding their way to the manger.





A big thank you to all who bought Children's Society Christmas Cards this year. Despite the unusual circumstances we sold cards with a total value of £262, which is more than the previous year. Thank you too to those who added a donation.

## IMAGINE A WORLD

Imagine a world where there are no viruses or violence,  
Where the cries of the vulnerable aren't met with our silence.

Imagine a world where everyone has a safe home,  
Where the elderly and vulnerable aren't left on their own.

This world, where a pavement is no longer a pillow,

Where rough sleepers aren't spat at from the back of the limo.

And I'm not Marcus Rashford but I love what he said, about kids not going hungry before they get into bed.

Imagine a world where everyone has enough to eat,

And changes in policy happen without the need for an athlete.

This new world where foodbanks aren't necessary,

And everyone everywhere having enough to eat isn't revolutionary.

So, we won't stand still and wait for injustice to see itself out,

We'll be the ones who take the knee, stand up to poverty, and raise a shout.

Imagine a world where we look back and say

"We ended homelessness, poverty and injustice in my day".

Racism snarls and poverty bares its teeth,

But we are the ones who are hope on the streets.

*William Lee. Church Army*

## AND THEY NAMED HIM JESUS

**FRIDAY 1 JANUARY** is New Year's Day, but also in the Church Calendar it is the time we remember when Mary and Joseph officially named their new baby and he was also circumcised as was the Jewish custom, both then and now for Orthodox Jews. Jesus was given his name before he was born when the angel told Mary that she would give birth to a son:

Matthew 1:21, KJV: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

We all carry our names around with us and they are an important part of who we are, and our names have special meanings too. Our first name, our Christian name, and any other names we may have, are important at baptism - it is a very special time when the priest says "I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Baptism can happen at any age, and is an important stage of membership to the Christian family. Would you like to know more? Please phone Fr Mark, Fr Stephen or Caroline for a chat.

### “ THANK YOU EVERYONE “

Your most generous responses to our appeals in the challenging year of 2020 have sustained our families and given them joy. The families have told us how much they have enjoyed the Christmas gifts and festive food. The Sussex turkey farmer donated a turkey for each family across the diocese. His and your help is invaluable. Thank you.

With our love and wishes for your happiness in 2021,

*Sue, Wendy, Elaine and Becca*

## A THOUGHT FOR THIS NEW YEAR

A New Year has begun. In very different circumstances from a year ago, and at this time we embark on a time of looking back and looking forward, and reflecting on Christ's first coming in great humility and his second coming in glorious majesty. But here we are between the two.

In the midst of the Christmas celebrations we join with the shepherds in the call - We wish to see Jesus, and what better call is there for us to take forward into this New Year. What would this child in a manger, and this ruler of all say to us in our day, in our month and in this year to come?

Last year we were called to lay aside comfortable, old ways of doing things. What if we are being called to open up afresh to some of our understandings of Jesus and receive him in new ways that are deeper and more personal? Each day our prayer could be "We want to see you Jesus".


## A POEM

At Painswick

Rococo Gardens.

Carved onto a wooden boat.

Sent in by Jackie Flowers Leek



You can never  
**CROSS THE OCEAN**  
until you have the  
**COURAGE**  
to lose sight  
of the shore

## THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

This lovely detail of the story of the early days of Jesus' life is told to us in Matthew's Gospel, but in very sparse detail, so we do not know for sure who the Magi were or how many, but social history can give us some possible clues.



Magi were a class from the East who performed public religious rites, and were a source of authority for the people as well as for Eastern royalty.

Astronomy and the interpretations of dreams were a speciality. No angel to lead them to Jesus as the shepherds had, but the brightest star they had ever seen, and this meant that this indicated the birth of a King, and then the star moved as no other, so telling them to travel to find this King.

This star is an epiphany – it brought a sudden realisation that the life of the Magi was to change significantly, and it is so in the whole story of Jesus' birth today as it reveals absolutely that this new child is indeed a King of Kings whose coming among us cannot be ignored. The Magi knew that the star was not to be worshipped, but the King and this new King required adoration. Above Jerusalem could be seen the star, and the Magi must have made the assumption that the best place for a King to be born had to be the Palace of Herod. Herod didn't understand what was going on, and he was full of suspicions and fear that the prophecies were to come true in his lifetime, and then Jerusalem would have been fearful of his wrath at a contender to his throne. Just to get rid of them Herod told the Magi to go to Bethlehem, but their visit there cost the lives of many children. All that glitters is not gold...God was working in mysterious ways.

I love the next part of the story. Whatever the Magi thought they would do when they found this King – say hello and bow and present their gifts perhaps as they would to any royal family member, they didn't, they bowed down in adoration and worshipped Him. Not a planned response, an epiphany for them. When we come before Jesus at the altar we kneel and worship Him, just as they did all those years ago.

Lastly we are told of the gifts – those three gifts that signify our Lord as our King, (gold) our Priest (incense) and our Saviour (myrrh).

“What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb,  
If I were a wise man  
I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give Him,  
Give my heart.”

*In the Bleak Midwinter (Christina Rossetti)*

*Chris Fitton*

## THOMAS MERTON'S LOVE OF NATURE

*"I love the woods, particularly around the hermitage. Know every tree, every animal, every bird."  
(March 23, 1967)*

## CHRISTMAS BELLS



The belfry at Steyning remains a very quiet place due to the fact that we entered Tier Two at the beginning of December.

Reading last month's Parish magazine it was interesting to see the words of *Frere Jacques* reprinted, especially the words Ding Dang Dong; I hope that Steyning bells sound a little more musical than that!

Last July when formal worship was allowed we did ring the bells each Sunday although perhaps not the most musical combination could be sounded due to the requirements for social distancing. At the start of November just prior to the second lockdown there had been some further relaxation of the social distancing rules which meant we could ring six of our eight bells. For Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day one bell was rung half muffled prior to and following the two minute silence.

By the time that you read this in early January 2021, West Sussex may have been moved to Tier One meaning that we can return to ringing at Steyning for Services on Sundays. We as ringers do not want to have too many more Silent Nights!

*David Kirkaldy Tower Captain*

## ASTROLOGY

God may have arranged for certain signs to attend the birth of his Son, but this is the opposite of what astrology involves. Pope Benedict explains:

The Fathers have emphasized a further aspect. Gregory Nazianzen says that at the very moment when the Magi adored Jesus, astrology came to an end, as the stars from then on traced the orbit determined by Christ. In the ancient world, the heavenly bodies were regarded as divine powers, determining men's fate. The planets bear the names of deities. According to the concept prevailing at the time, they somehow ruled over the world, and man had to try to appease these powers.

Biblical monotheism brought about a clear demythologization: the creation account describes the sun and the moon—the great divinities of the pagan world—as lights that God placed in the sky alongside the entire firmament of stars.

## SAINT OF THE MONTH

### ST ADRIAN (OR HADRIAN) OF CANTERBURY

(c630/637-709)



Adrian (called Hadrian by Bede in his Ecclesiastical History) was born sometime between 630 and 637 in North Africa and is described as a Berber - an ethnic group from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. It is likely that the Arab invasion of North Africa in 644/45 forced Adrian to flee to Italy as a refugee. He became abbot of a monastery near Naples and, it is thought, he became a trusted counsellor of Pope Vitalian.

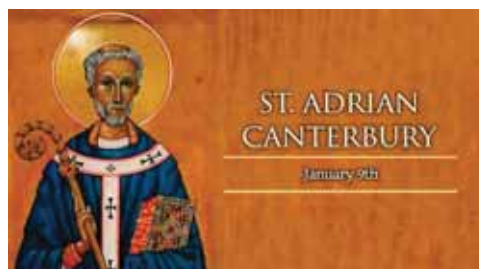
When Deusdedit, Archbishop of Canterbury died in 664 followed a year later by the death of his successor, Wighard, the Pope offered the archbishopric to Adrian. He considered himself unworthy of the office and suggested Andrew a monk from a neighbouring monastery. When he too refused, the Pope again asked Adrian to accept office; but Adrian again said he wasn't the right person and suggested his friend, Theodore of Tarsus who accepted the archbishopric.

Vitalian stipulated that Adrian should accompany the new Archbishop to England and they set out from Rome on 27th May 668. They wintered in Northern France and Theodore arrived in Kent in May 669, followed some months later by Adrian. When he arrived, he was immediately appointed Abbot of the Monastery of Ss Peter and Paul at Canterbury.

Both Theodore and Adrian were described by Bede as learned in the Bible, as well as in Greek and Latin and also in several branches of science and literature. They travelled throughout southern England gathering scholars around them whenever they appeared. Aldhelm of Malmesbury considered that the education at Canterbury was better than that offered in Ireland.

Under Adrian's direction the Canterbury monastery came to have substantial influence both on Anglo-Saxon liturgy and the spreading of the use of music in church services. From here seventy years earlier Augustine had spearheaded the conversion of Anglo-Saxon England.


Adrian died in 709 and was buried in the monastery. He became acknowledged as a saint and, when his relics had to be moved because of alterations to the monastery in 1091, his body was found to be incorrupt. Bede describes Adrian as the man who had played an important role in turning the Anglo-Saxon Church into an intellectual powerhouse of the medieval world. His feast day is celebrated on 9th January.



## WHAT IS ECO CHURCH?

Those with long memories may remember that in January 2016 I wrote an article in this magazine about how we needed to consider ways in which we could integrate environmental issues into parish life. I reflected on how, in many ways, the environment had been experienced as a Cinderella issue, which involved a lot of banging of heads against church walls but with a gradual awakening to the problem, we were being urged to regard care of the environment as important as that of community. This is what the Gospel of Jesus Christ is all about. If we were part of a church not involved in the community, we would think we were deficient in some way. The same should be true of the environment.

Five years later, and I think we are all even more aware of the crisis facing our planet and the role that we all need to play if we are to prevent climate breakdown and ecological collapse. The Church of England has set a target to cut its carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030 and has listed several issues that churches need to address:

- 
- **Installing LED lighting** – *we are doing this with our Let There Be Light project so that is a brilliant (!) start.*
  - **Improving insulation and draught-proofing buildings.**
  - **Moving heating from gas to green electricity** – focussing more on heating people rather than heating spaces.
  - **Travel and transport of staff and volunteers** to move away from petrol/diesel powered vehicles to green transport.
  - **Better recycling**
  - **Reduce use of single use plastics**
  - **Protect and enhance biodiversity** in churchyard and other church-owned land.
  - **Help our congregation to develop** environmental stewardship as part of their personal witness
  - **Develop our missional role** within the community. Act as a catalyst in the community for carbon reduction initiatives and climate resilience strategies.
  - **Prepare to provide sanctuary** in extreme weather events and for climate refugees from within and outside of the UK.

Some of these we have already made progress on; some will be much harder to achieve than others (draught-proofing our ancient building is a significant challenge!); some involve practical changes others are much more a change of culture; some can be achieved relatively quickly, others will take longer, but we have less than ten years to get them all sorted.

One way which will help us in this endeavour is to register to become an Eco Church and at a recent Deanery Synod meeting, Bishop Ruth challenged all the churches in our deanery to achieve at least a Bronze Award by October 2021.

Eco Church is an award scheme for churches, co-ordinated by the charity A Rocha UK who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth. Taking part in the scheme helps us to identify existing, and initiate new, ways of caring for our environment in our worship and teaching, around our buildings and grounds, in our community engagement at local and global level and in the personal lifestyles of our members. In doing so, we gain access to a whole new suite of resources to help us undertake the actions recommended by the scheme and to meet the challenges listed above. As we complete these actions, we qualify for an Eco Church Award at Bronze, Silver or Gold level. Apart from the environmental benefits of the scheme, it is a wonderful opportunity to work together with our local community as well as for growing in our own faith and understanding.

Many of you will have heard the superb Cuthman Lecture given recently by Paul Hannam of Greening Steyning (it is still available through the News page of website if you haven't heard it) and Paul has written an inspiring article for this edition of the magazine. In 'greening' our church, we will be playing our part in the 2030 project which Paul refers to in his article below.

A small group of us are starting to work on this. **Will you join us as we create a new vision for ourselves, our church, our community and our planet?**

*Christine Aubrey*

## STEWARDS OF THE EARTH

*The nature of changes in climate and environment that we are living with threaten not only the wellbeing but also the being of our species on this planet in the long term – and in the middle term they threaten some of the most vulnerable populations on Earth.*

*Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury*

Christianity, like all the great religions, is dedicated to our moral and spiritual growth as individuals, communities and nations. Scripture calls on us to become the best versions of ourselves, and to devote ourselves to helping the poor and vulnerable. During this most challenging of years, our need for compassion, care and contribution has never been greater as churches and their communities have come together to protect their residents from the deadly pandemic.



Yet there is an even bigger and far more complex threat to humanity that we cannot ignore. It is the onset of climate breakdown and ecological collapse, and it is happening now and at a faster rate than at any time for millions of years.

We have until 2030 to keep temperatures below a 1.5 degree rise or we face catastrophe, and if we do not prevent the continuing loss of biodiversity, we face the sixth great extinction. Whether it be the world's leading scientists or influential spokespeople such as David Attenborough, Greta Thunberg, Prince Charles and Prince William, there is a universal chorus imploring us to take action.

One of the clearest messages is from his Holiness, Pope Francis, who has spoken and written extensively about our duty. In his words

*“As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling,”*

It is time for us to think and act as stewards of the Earth. We need to appreciate, respect and protect the miracle of our precious planet, and the abundant nature and life-giving climate it bestows upon us.

As Pope Francis and many religious leaders have emphasized, the ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis. It is our moral duty to change our lifestyles. We have to care for the countless species we share our planet with, the poor and vulnerable who are most at risk from extreme weather and the climate emergency, and future generations who will reap the devastating whirlwind of our selfishness and short sightedness if we fail to change.

The good news is that we have the knowledge and the means to change. Indeed, our lives could be even better if we learn to live in harmony with nature. What is good for the environment is good for us. Clean air and water, more stable weather, healthier diets and exercise, a more vibrant local economy and community are the promise of a greener vision.

We have to transform our way of life, and the great transition ahead could be one of the most positive experiences of our lives. There are many of us who believe this, and the 2030 Project is a campaign in Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding to make our community one of the greenest, healthiest and happiest in Britain.



Our local churches are taking the lead too. Steyning Parish Church is about to start working towards becoming an Eco Church. (See page 14) This is following in the footsteps of St Peter's and the Hub in Upper Beeding and is part of a national movement lead by A Rocha UK.

You can join the 2030 Project and be part of one of our four action groups. These are Transport, Biodiversity, Green Consumer and Energy/Housing. We already have over 70 volunteers and are actively looking for more. You can read about the project and contact us on our website:

<https://greeningsteyning.org/the-2030-project/> or at our stall at the monthly Farmer's Market.

Churches will play a vital role as stewards of the Earth and it all starts here in our neighbourhoods. So let's make Covid-19 the turning point, the moment when we begin to act as global citizens to serve and even save humanity from environmental disaster. If there is one definitive lesson from the pandemic, it is that we have an astonishing capacity to come together and unite under a common purpose. If we can maintain this resolve, we have the capacity to prevent climate breakdown and ecological collapse. We are an extraordinary species living in extraordinary times. We are stewards of our beautiful, majestic planet.

*Paul Hannam Co-Chair Greening Steyning*



## LIVING IN LOVE AND FAITH



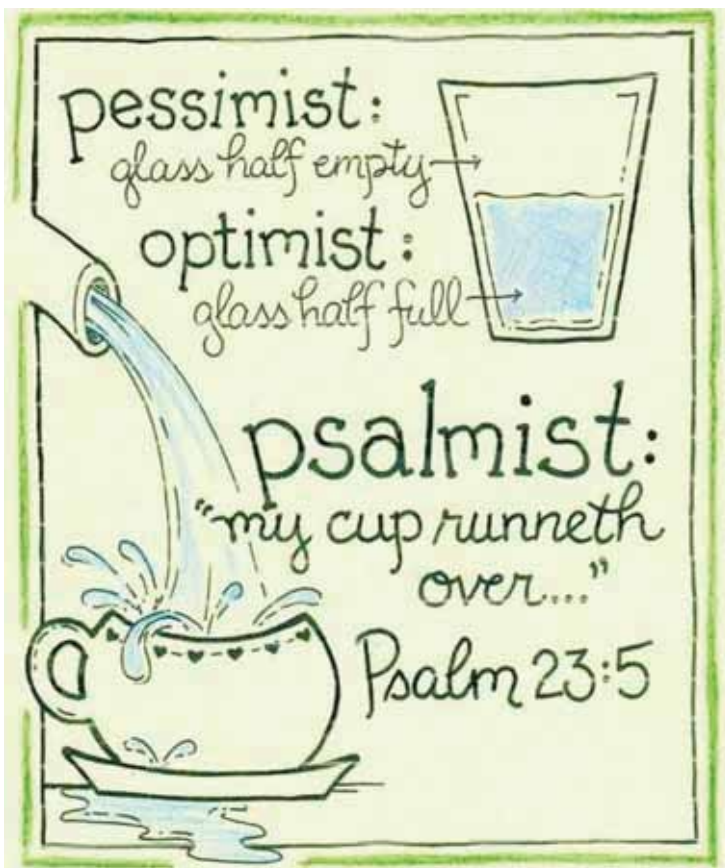
God's creation is a dazzling explosion of diversity which speaks of the unutterable beauty, unfathomable grandeur, and infinite creativity of the Creator. And so when God made human beings, they too reflected this dazzling diversity..... God uses the Bible as a school of righteousness, of justice, and of love.....Our reading shapes our desires, our

emotions, our habits, our ideas, our relationships, our institutions, the structures of our society and our cultures. It shapes all the physical stuff of the lives we live ..... together in the world. All of life is caught up in the curriculum of this school..... Turning to science does not mean turning away from the God who speaks in the Bible or through the Christian tradition.....

All you need is love.

*Synod Report*

## PSALM 23



The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures.  
He leads me beside still waters.  
He restores my soul.  
He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
forever.

ESV

## WHAT PEOPLE WRITE

**Augustin Tanner MA Theology student, Durham University.** "Often when we pray like the psalmist: How long O Lord? And we ask God, "How long are we going to experience pain and suffering?" I think when Black and Brown people pray, How long O Lord? We are asking God, through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, how long will our white siblings continue to ignore us or cause us pain? How long will we have to question our very existence and battle in the public square for our value? This question of the problem of racist evil is not one that can be addressed by questioning God, but by questioning ourselves."

**The Revd Sheila Bridge, Rugby.** "Given the enormous process that we have all been through learning how to keep our churches cleansed from contamination, and the huge awareness we all now have about how transmission can occur from each and every surface that we touch, this phrase stopped me in my tracks: "whatever touches them will become holy." Imagine that! Here is reverse contagion. Instead of being made sick by touching a surface on which an unseen virus lies in wait...imagine being made whole (holiness = wholeness) by simple contact with something that is in itself holy, and transmits that holiness with a straightforward generosity, and without judgement, for the worthiness of the recipient. This is a vivid picture of God's grace."

**Robin Ferris. CEO Bankuet.** " My favourite Bible verse is Philippians 3 12 - 14 which talks about pressing on towards a goal. This last year we all have had to grow and show resilience, to forget our past failures and successes, to focus on what is important and keeping on. I'd choose to be locked in a church with Paul, whose teaching greatly influenced my faith. I especially love reading his letters. There are so many leadership lessons to be learned from him. We have all been in lockdown, but Paul faced so many huge challenges, including being imprisoned, and he kept going."

**Pat Ashworth. Church Times.** Church communities and people of faith must challenge the systems and structures that have allowed modern slavery to become the fastest - growing crime around the world....It had to be about more than raising awareness of something in which services and products used every day were implicated: manufacturing supply chains, casual labour, and sexual and criminal exploitation; statutory systems were fragmented....Potentially there are 136,000 victims in the UK alone.

**Cheryl Bridges Johns, Author.** I pray through some of the hopeful passages of Isaiah: for the Spirit to be poured out from on high: for the earth to flourish. I pray for the healing of creation. I have hope in the younger generation of women who are more vocal in terms of justice.

## JOURNEY'S END

Over the Armistice Day weekend in 2020, an array of documentaries, films and programmes were, naturally enough, focussed upon the First World War, and in particular, the aftermath.

The film, *Journey's End*, was shown on television on the evening of 14 November, and covered a platoon of soldiers, almost entombed in their trenches on the Somme, specifically waiting for an enemy attack. For a historian, like me, I was pleased that the film was mostly about the relationship between the officers, some quite junior, and the so-called "other ranks". The social differences were covered well enough showing how the officers lived, slept and dined in their front line dug outs, as compared to the non-commissioned men simply existing in the trench fortifications. The distinctions between bottled wine, meat and fruit enjoyed by the (largely) former public school educated officers, as compared to the basic rations of the ordinary privates, corporals and sergeants was demonstrated. Yet this was how the army ranking system operated. Just think that in the aftermath of the 1914-1918 conflict how these such differences were being eroded away to when the Second World War began in 1939 when the start of the bringing together of the social face of Britain was becoming apparent. Women won the vote, trade unions moved forward and medical advances were made, just to identify a few such areas. Yet still, socially, there was a long way to go but in my view in World War One hostilities speeded this process forward.

Conditions in the 1920s were a real "roller coaster" for some but in many circumstances the differences were being narrowed – not quickly enough in many opinions. An excellent account of this inter-war period can be found in the publication, *We danced all night*, by Martin Pugh and for further insight into this period the well-known book by Robert Graves, entitled *Goodbye to all that*.

*Ian Ivatt, Steyning History Society.*

## COLIN - A TAXI DRIVER'S LIFE

I FELL INTO Taxi driving following six years of looking after my ill father...In many ways the Dad became the son and the son became the Dad, but I gained so much...The best thing about it is the people...there are some extraordinary human beings living among us and my passengers are a great blessing to me....The worst thing is the people. I've seen some dreadful things - violence, abuse of all kinds...In the main I take people safely to airports, cruise terminals, festivals, pubs and schools, but they are all closed....It's been devastating economically, the worst stress of my life....I have only survived because of the generosity of my customers, friends and church family....Writing is cathartic and I have written over 30,000 words for the local paper as *The Rank Outsider*...The most significant thing to happen to me in recent years was rolling up to an Ash Wednesday service at St Clement's, where they have shown me over recent years the actual meaning of "by this everyone will know that you are my disciples". They're extraordinary people...God's been nagging at me for years, but discernment is the hardest thing about attempting to live the Christian life...I spend my life trying not to get angry as there is so much to be angry about...it's best to remain calm at all times...My hope is in God who provides in wholly unexpected ways, especially this past year...I carry a battered old Bible in my taxi, and sometimes a rosary hangs on the rear view mirror...I pray most often for peace.

*Colin Dobson was talking to Terence Handley MacMath in the Church Times*

## RECIPE FOR JANUARY

### BOOZY CREAM

125g chopped dried fruit  
125ml Grand Marnier  
568ml double cream  
100ml Brandy  
Pinch of nutmeg  
1tbsp golden icing sugar



1 Put the fruit in a bowl, add the Grand Marnier and soak for 10 mins

2 Lightly whip the cream in a large bowl until thickened. Fold in the brandy, fruit, all juices and nutmeg. Add a little icing sugar to taste.

Transfer to a serving bowl, or individual bowls, chill until ready to serve.

MY MOUTH IS WATERING AS I WRITE THIS!

YUMMY!!

## FRAGILITY IS NOT NEW TO EVERYONE

COVID-19 has taken many lives and challenged our affluence, with a reminder of our fragility. It has shocked the rich capitalist mindset which tells us, through coaching and right thinking, that we are unstoppable. Well, the lie has been exposed and the weakness of our global model revealed.

But in all honesty, only the people whose lives were good before the pandemic feel everything has changed. Despair, fear, loss and uncertainty have always been the reality for those at the bottom of our cruel human food chain. And to them the gospel has always been good news in that it offers radical hope. Perhaps now we just relate more to their sense of loss and invisibility. From behind our own masks and closed doors, isolation and social distancing are not new to those who have always been invisible.

Through the incarnation, God in Jesus relates to us by experiencing life from our perspective. His relating to our experience of life meant he could redeem us. Maybe this pandemic is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to walk in someone else's shoes. To see and experience and then, from the vantage point of the cross, share God's love from a place of true humility.

*Debora and Levi Santana working with CMS*

## 'RAVAGED'

A word to associate  
With elderly faces  
Following a dissolute life.  
  
Link it too  
To a tired earth  
After decades of wanton destruction  
By selfish, ignorant people.  
Wicked dictators, crime bosses, drug barons,  
Bush, Blair and associates,  
Donald Trump and President Xi,  
Vladimir Putin,  
You...And me.  
  
The old die out, perish,  
(For comfort we say 'pass away'),  
Replaced by youth, fresh-faced,

While our blue planet endures,  
Patiently reversing the many transgressions  
Of human folly,  
Intent on regaining her pristine, bountiful self.  
  
Surely...  
... Eventually...  
... Necessarily,  
This tender world will simply  
Slough us off.  
  
As, no doubt,  
Heedless of her majesty,  
Wisdom and mercy..  
...We shall justly deserve.

*Larry Culliford*

## GREENING OUR DISCIPLESHIP

*" We must begin the work of renewing creation by being renewed in our own hearts and minds"*

Anglicans are Green! This call to a renewal of spirituality and a "greening" of our discipleship is that of Bishop Johnson Japheth Chinyong'ole reflecting on the droughts that have devastated Tanzania over recent decades. This call echoes the worldwide Anglican pursuit of ecological justice in the face of environmental challenges, which include plastic pollution, deforestation, water shortages, habitat loss and flooding. It is also a call to prayer, to creativity and above all - to hope.

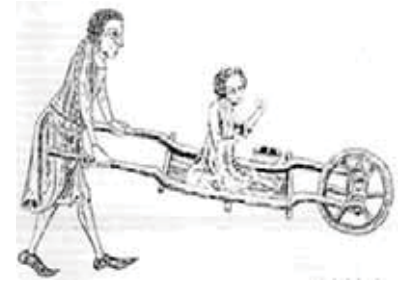
Renewal takes many forms, Anglicans are engaged with both science and sacrament. In the commitment of science in Melanesia churches have installed monitoring equipment and created an archipelago of observatories, sending readings measuring shoreline change, rainfall, storm intensity and duration to their scientific partners. In Malawi Anglicans are renewing the deep sense of connection between our pilgrimage on earth and the God who creates us all. Listen to our passionate and articulate young people as they challenge the church to be the social conscience and the voice of the environment, and to take action.

*Extracts from article by the General Secretary USPG The Revd Duncan Dormer*

# THE STEYNING SOCIETY

We would like to wish you all a Healthy New Year.

**Talks** are available to all (during Covid-19 restrictions) and can be viewed via YouTube. A link is available from our website [www.steyningsociety.org.uk/talks](http://www.steyningsociety.org.uk/talks)



2021 begins with two special **Talks**:

## "Brighton before the Pavilion - a different aspect of the city's history"

by **Geoff Mead** (a well known University of Sussex lecturer)  
from **Monday 11th January** until **Sunday 14th February**

## "Why gardening matters"

by **Juliet Sargeant** Award winning garden designer and experienced plants woman  
from **Monday 15th February** until **Sunday 14th March**

**Juliet** says "This will be a reflection on 30 years of work as a garden designer, outlining some projects that have been important to me in transforming people's lives and the way they relate to their gardens and the wider landscape. I will speak about the changes that I have witnessed in people's understanding of the importance of landscape to our health and well-being; the burgeoning body of scientific evidence and the slow, but important change in the attitudes of policy-makers.

And, I will celebrate the work of other garden-makers, scientists and health professionals in this field.

I will outline the importance of the home gardener as steward of a large total area of land and illustrate how a greater connectedness to Nature is changing the way that we garden. How we are eschewing some traditional methods and learning to garden more in harmony with Nature and with a greater responsibility to the Planet and its future inhabitants".

This is a special talk to remind all gardeners about their responsibility towards the Planet, to combat **Climate Change** and to join **Greening Steyning**

## A POEM

In these uncertain times  
we know you might feel unsure...  
But flowers still grow, birds still sing  
and waves still sweep the shore.

And with the rising  
and setting of the sun,  
Nature reminds us all  
that brighter days will come."

*The National Trust*



# JUST FOR FUN

## The E answers

All the answers start with the letter E.

1. January 6 is the start of which season?
2. Which of the seven deadly sins starts with E?
3. Name the NT book starting with E.
4. What shook the prison in Acts 16 v 26?
5. Baal threatened to put E\_\_\_\_\_ to death (1 Kings 19:1-13)
6. Name the second book of the OT.
7. Old Testament garden meaning Delight .
8. The queen of Ahasuerus, and heroine of the book that bears her name.
9. One of the great prophets, and the son of Buzi the priest, and also the name of a biblical book. (E\_\_\_ 1:3).
10. One of the Wisdom books of the Old Testament.

## WHERE ARE THESE WEST SUSSEX CHURCHES?



10. Ecclesiastes

5. Elijah

4. Earthquake

9. Ezekiel

3. Ephesians

8. Esther

2. Envy

7. Eden

1. Epiphany

6. Exodus

Answers

Churches  
A Tangmere  
B West Chiltington  
C Amberley  
D Bury

## ANAGRAM FOR JANUARY

Shall we have a hard one this month? I have struggled with this one, but I offer it to you as a challenge

How many words can you make from:

**EPIPHANY**

**REMEMBER:**

All words to have three or more letters, but only use each letter once

No capitalised words

*The longest word I found has just 6 letters.....*

## NEW YEAR'S POEM

The Christmas twigs crispen and needles rattle  
Along the window-ledge.

A solitary pearl

Shed from the necklace spilled at last week's  
party

Lies in the suety, snow-luminous plainness  
Of morning, on the window-ledge beside  
them.

And all the furniture that circled stately  
And hospitable when these rooms were  
brimmed

With perfumes, furs, and black-and-silver  
Crisscross of seasonal conversation, lapses  
Into its previous largeness.

I remember

Anne's rose-sweet gravity, and the stiff grave  
Where cold so little can contain;

I mark the queer delightful skull and cross-  
bones

Starlings and sparrows left, taking the crust,  
And the long loop of winter wind  
Smoothing its arc from dark Arcturus down  
To the bricked corner of the drifted courtyard,  
And the still window-ledge.

Gentle and just pleasure

It is, being human, to have won from space  
This unchill, habitable interior  
Which mirrors quietly the light  
Of the snow, and the new year.

*Margaret Avison*

*Always Now: The Collected Poems* (The Porcupine's Quill, 2003)



**Editor:** Thank you for the various writings and articles that have been sent in. I do enjoy reading each one and including them for all to read. - **keep sending them in.**





## *The complete herbal hero*

Just over 400 years ago, in 1616, a legend was born; a rebel who partnered up with Mother Nature to revolutionise British medicine. The herbal hero, the botanical bad boy, the father of alternative medicine - ladies and gentlemen, I give you Nicholas Culpeper.

Culpeper did his growing up upstream in Isfield, just north of Lewes. The country lanes and starry Sussex skies were his classroom and the hedges and the heavens taught him botany, astronomy and astrology. He learnt about love too. In 1634, Culpeper and his Sussex sweetheart planned a secret Lewes wedding and a speedy elopement to the Netherlands. But tragedy struck when his love-struck lady's carriage was struck by a lightning bolt en-route to the ceremony. She died instantly.

There's no cure for a broken heart and Culpeper left Sussex to start a new life in London. He threw himself into his work as a lowly apothecary's assistant, cataloguing medicinal herbs on Threadneedle Street. At this time, medicine was only practiced by elite physicians. They would charge exorbitant prices for their secret remedies and would not even demean themselves to talk to patients, instead requesting a sample of urine to make their diagnosis. Culpeper believed medical treatment should be available to all - not just the privileged.

Setting up his own practice in a poorer part of London, Culpeper started treating forty patients a day with herbal cures derived from English plants. Then he dropped his botanical bombshell. Culpeper published an incredible tome that instructed people how to pick their own remedies, free of charge, from the hedges and meadows. The book was 'The English Physitian' (1652, later enlarged as 'The Complete Herbal'). His book promoted and preserved folk remedies at a time when physicians and priests were discrediting village healers and preventing them from passing along their traditional knowledge. Enraged, the medical establishment accused Culpeper of witchcraft. But his Complete Herbal endured. It's been in continuous print longer than any other non-religious English language book, running rings around Tolkien and Rowling and their tales of hocus-pocus.

No doubt Culpeper's herbal remedies could have come in useful for some of you over the festive period; wild privet (for headaches), blackthorn (for indigestion), rosemary (for flatulence) and the juice of ivy berries 'snuffed up into the nose' (for hangovers). So, start 2021 by raising your Nutribullets and ginseng teas to the healing properties of Mother Nature, and to four centuries of Nicholas Culpeper.



*Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust*



### Adoration of the Magi

Oil on wood by Perugino, c. 1496–98; in the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen, France

## Matthew 2 verse 2 – 12 New International Version

### The Magi Visit the Messiah

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.