

FREE

# Church Magazine

## Steyning and Ashurst

### DECEMBER 2021





**Steyning Parish Church,  
1 Vicarage Lane, Steyning BN44 3YL**

**Vicar:** The Revd Mark Heather LLB BA 879877  
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**CHURCH SERVICES**

**St Andrew's & St Cuthman's**

Every Sunday

8:00am 1662 Holy Communion Service

9:30am Sung Eucharist

6:00pm Evening Service

**St James's**

10:30am Second Sunday Family Service

Fourth Sunday 1662 Holy Communion

**Wednesdays at St Andrew's & St Cuthman's**

11:30am Midweek Eucharist

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

Special Advent and Christmas Services are listed on the next page, and some extra details are found within the magazine.

Please check on the church web site (address below) to see if there are restrictions for any December services..

**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)

Parish Administrator: Pat McMullan.

## SPECIAL SERVICES FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

**Sunday 5 Reflections Service** at 6pm at Steyning Parish Church. See page 9 for full details of this quiet, thought-provoking service to allow time to be with God and to wait upon his loving kindness. (No need to book for this service)



**Sunday 12 Christingle Service** at 4pm at Steyning Parish Church. See page 9 for more details of this 45 minute service aimed at families with primary aged children, and all those young at heart. See note below.

**Sunday 19 Village Carol Service at Ashurst St James at 4pm.** A friendly service of traditional lessons and carols for all the family. (No need to book)



**Sunday 19 Service of Lessons and Carols** at 6pm at Steyning Parish Church. A beautiful candle lit service telling the story from creation through to the birth of Jesus in words and music. See note below.

**Christmas Eve Friday 24 Crib Service** We hope to offer this informal crib service at Steyning Parish Church. Advance booking on Eventbrite will be essential. See note below.



**Christmas Eve Friday 24 Midnight Mass** at 11pm at Steyning Parish Church. The traditional start to Christmas. Festal Choral Eucharist with carols led by the choir. Advance booking on Eventbrite will be essential. See note below.

### **Christmas Day Saturday 25**

Sung Eucharist of Christmas morning at 9:30am at Steyning Parish Church.  
Parish Communion and Carols at 10.30am at Ashurst St James.

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ANY OF THE CHRISTMAS SERVICES**  
Numbers may be restricted due to pandemic precautions. This is the link on the church web site for you to book your place at any service:  
<http://www.steyningparishchurch.org/christmas>

## PASTORAL LETTER



Dear Friends,

Christmas seems to start earlier every year. The new concept of 'Black Friday' – the day after the American Thanksgiving, that makes so little sense here – has brought forward the switching-on of many High Street Christmas lights to early November. Apparently some big shops put their decorations up during October to encourage early shopping. With so much to be done, Christmas can easily become a matter of stress instead of joy.

Some of the older Christmas customs are not so ancient as we might think. Christmas Cards, first sent in the nineteenth century, are slightly older than that other Victorian innovation, the exchanging of seasonal presents. Festive lights, which can make us feel cheerful but which do so unnecessarily increase the world's carbon footprint, are an even more modern invention. Scrooge, if he had lived in a different time and a different place, might have written something like this. He hated sentimentality and forced Christmas cheer, much of it driven by commercial forces. Victor Meldrew might be muttering similar things today.

Christmas is not mainly for children, since grown-ups are hardly exempt from the proclamation first announced by the shepherds; Victor Meldrew and Scrooge are fictional characters but their pessimistic cynicism can be part of any adult. Nor is it even about trying to strip away the secular and cultural accretions from the original festival. We would have no more success with that than peeling away the layers of an onion in the hope of finding a real onion inside.

No: the mystery at the heart of Christmas - secret and hidden, but decreed by God for our glory before the ages began (see 1 Corinthians 2:7) is that described in the beginning of the Fourth Gospel. When the true light began to dawn upon the world it was often unrecognised; and when that light, all the glory of God, finally appeared it had the form of a human baby. That light can penetrate and redeem even the most superficial and cynical layers of the human festival. May that Grace and Peace be with you all in the run up to the season, and in all the days that follow.

*Fr Mark*

Almighty God,  
give us grace to cast away the works of  
darkness  
and to put on the armour of light,  
now in the time of this mortal life,  
in which your Son Jesus Christ  
came to us in great humility;

that on the last day,  
when he shall come again in his glorious  
majesty  
to judge the living and the dead,  
we may rise to the life immortal;  
through the same Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## FROM THE EDITOR:

As I put this magazine together I keep on thinking - where has this year gone? Has it gone quickly for you too, or do you feel as though it has crawled along? I love that I can spend time each day being quiet and I do try to meditate each day normally using the daily readings and then some other writings. The story of the shepherds wonderful and inspiring part in the birth of Jesus is one of the readings for the Christmas period, and my thoughts on this have centered around the angels, and their first exciting message of good tidings for you and for me.

Thank you to those who have contributed to this end of year magazine, and I look forward to some new photos or writings next year.

Here is a reminder of where to send your contributions: [steyningchurchmag@gmail.com](mailto:steyningchurchmag@gmail.com)

*Thank you .*

*Wishing you a happy and peace-filled Christmas.*

## PARISH REGISTERS

### FUNERALS

9 November 2021

Joyce Townsend (died 21 October)

22 November 2021

Ian William Johnstone (died 26 October)

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and may light perpetual shine upon them.

Our love and prayers for all their families during this time.

### HOLY BAPTISM

7 November 2021

Carolanne Bloxham



## SUNDAY BULLETIN

The weekly Sunday bulletin sent from the Parish Office gives all the information about services, news and local support etc, and how to access these.

There is also the list of those needing our prayers.

If you would like to receive the bulletin please contact:

[office@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:office@steyningparishchurch.org) or ring 01903 813276

To add any new prayer requests please contact:

[prayers@steyningparishchurch.org](mailto:prayers@steyningparishchurch.org) or ring 01903 813276

## PAUSE AND PRAY

Father, we lift to you all those who can't feed their families and ask you to sustain them. In a world that produces enough food to feed everyone, we pray for greater commitment to tackle the issues that create hunger, especially conflict and climate change.

Lord, thank you for our daily bread: help us to be generous with it.

Merciful God, teach us to be faithful in change and uncertainty, that trusting in your word and obeying your will we may enter the unfailing joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.

God our shepherd, you led us and saved us in times of old; do not forget your people in their troubles, but raise up your power to sustain the poor and helpless; for the honour of Jesus Christ.

Wait on God alone in stillness, O my soul.

O God, teach us to seek security, not in money or theft, not in human ambition or malice, not in our own ability or power, but in you, the only God, our rock and our salvation.

Alleluia.

Gracious God, we praise you for your faithfulness and pray that every nation may find your blessing in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord.

"The faithfulness of the Lord endures for ever" Ps 117

## PSALM 150

*Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.*

Alleluia.

O praise God in his holiness; praise him in the firmament of his power.

Praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness.

Praise him with the blast of the trumpet; praise him upon the harp and the lyre.

Praise him with timbrel and dances; praise him upon the strings and pipe.

Praise him with ringing cymbals; praise him upon the clashing cymbals.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

Alleluia



Picture thanks to Pinterest



## PRAYER DIARY FOR DECEMBER

**Sunday 5** Second Sunday of Advent

**Thursday 9** Ember Day

**Saturday 11** Ember Day

**Sunday 12** Third Sunday of Advent

**Sunday 19** Fourth Sunday of Advent

**Friday 24** Christmas Eve

Almighty God, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your Son Jesus Christ: grant that as we joyfully receive him as our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Saturday 25** Christmas Day

Almight God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Sunday 26** The First Sunday of Christmas

**Tuesday 28** The Holy Innocents

Heavenly Father, whose children suffered at the hands of Herod, though they had done no wrong: by the suffering of your Son and by the innocence of our lives frustrate all evil designs and establish your reign of justice and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Wednesday 29** John, Apostle and Evangelist

Merciful Lord, cast your bright beams of light upon the Church: that, being enlightened by the teaching of your blessed apostle and evangelist Saint John, we may so walk in the light of your truth that we may at last attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ your incarnate Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The Vicar and Churchwardens  
wish you a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

## THE SHEPHERDS STORY

The angel said "Don't be afraid". What a beautiful start to this account of the shepherds visit to baby Jesus.

Angels are found in the Bible in both the Old and the New Testaments, and the word itself means "Messengers of God". I am sure you have thought about angels, and I wonder what comes to mind when we talk about them?

There are angels built into the fabric of Steyning Parish Church...how many can you

find? Throughout the ages angels have been seen to be important in Judaism, Christianity, and other faiths, and people have taken note of their messages.

Many times in the Bible when the angel appears, those who see them are afraid, and so their first words are "Do not be afraid, I bring you good news from God".

The visit to the shepherds is the third time in the opening chapters of Luke that we encounter the angel of the Lord.

Firstly, the Archangel Gabriel speaks to Zachariah and gives him the promise of a son. This promise was fulfilled. Then, Gabriel spoke with Mary and promised her a son and she was to name him Jesus. A promise also fulfilled. On the same night that Mary gave birth to Jesus, the messenger appears the third time, and comes with a host of angels - the Lord's glory - shining around the shepherds - no wonder their response is awe-inspired fear to such bright lights.



William Brassy Hole, 'The Angel of the Lord Announces the Arrival of Jesus to the Shepherds' (1906)

The shepherds were watching over the sheep just outside Bethlehem and theirs was a very important job. Because the fields were not way out in the hills it is most likely both sheep and shepherds belonged to the temple, and therefore they were guarded prior to being sacrificed for the Passover..The lambs had to be completely unharmed and without blemish for sacrifice.

I love that there was no doubt in the shepherds minds that they would get up immediately and go

and find this new baby.

Before departing, the host of angels excitedly joined together saying:

***"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those  
whom he favours"***

God is offering us peace through his Son. I think that this is the peace we offer each other in church, a shalom. Shalom is a Jewish word meaning to be whole.

Jane Williams' beautiful book "Angels" says about this visit of the angels to the shepherds: "The angels understand that God is working to bring the human world and the angelic world back together, and they are excited to be part of it. They understand that Jesus is going to be God's way of living in the world of human beings, and so making a permanent connection again between humans and God."

**Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the new born King.**



# CHRISTINGLE, CRIB AND REFLECTIONS SERVICES

## CHRISTINGLE SERVICE

This year the service will be held at Steyning Parish Church  
on Sunday 12 December at 4 pm.

**What is a Christingle Service?** It is a joyful celebration of Jesus as The Light of the World especially for families and children and all young at heart, so together we can share the message of Hope that Christmas brings.

Each element of a Christingle has a special meaning and helps to tell the Christian story:

- The orange represents the world
- The red ribbon symbolises the love and blood of Christ
- The sweets and dried fruit represent God's creations
- The lit candle represents Jesus's light in the world, bringing hope to people living in darkness.

**Come, and make your Christingle at this short service, booking through Eventbrite to reserve your place.**

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

**Christingle Service**  
**Sunday 12 December**  
**4pm**

**at**  
**Steyning Parish Church**



The Parish Church of St Andrew  
& St Cuthman, Steyning,  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December, 6pm

# Reflections

*Watching and  
Waiting*

A time for prayer and space with God

*All are welcome to attend this short,  
informal time of watching and  
listening to our Lord.*

*"Watch therefore; for you know not what hour  
your Lord does come." (Matthew 24:42)*

## Christmas Eve Crib service

Please book your place through Eventbrite for this popular, short family friendly service. It will tell the story of the angel telling Mary she is to expect a baby, through to the birth of Jesus, the visit of the shepherds, and then the wise men bringing their gifts.

Christmas carols you all will know.



## HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING

*Hark! the herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled:  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies,  
With the angelic host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem:*

*Hark! the herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King.*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of a virgin's womb!  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,  
Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel:*

*Hark! the herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King.*

*Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Risen with healing in his wings;  
Mild, he lays his glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth:*

*Hark! the herald angels sing  
Glory to the newborn King.*

*Written by  
Charles Wesley*

One of the things that makes Christmas such a memorable time of year is the music.

The same carols and songs that we sing year after year get memorised so we can often recite the words without even thinking about it. Hark the Herald Angels Sing is just one of those carols. If we can stop for a moment and read the words of this carol carefully we will see how it is rooted in scripture.

It was written by Charles Wesley, who was an English Methodist leader and hymn writer. Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns. His brother, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, is believed to have said that Charles' hymnal was the best theological book in existence! Methodism was, and still is, known for its singing and worship through song, and Charles was the chief songwriter. We sing many of his hymns in both Steyning and Ashurst churches.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing started life as a poem inspired by London church bells as Charles Wesley was walking to church one Christmas Day, and was first published in 1739 in Hymns and Sacred Poems. The opening line read "Hark, how the welkin (heaven) rings." In 1753 George Whitefield, a colleague of Charles Wesley, adapted the poem into the carol we now sing today. It was Whitefield who created the phrase "newborn King".

**Come and join in the Open Air Carol Singing at the Farmers' Market  
4 December at 10am (no need to book)**



## SHADOWS IN THE LIGHT

### Shadows in the Light

Shadows on Church walls carved in candlelight  
As monks move in procession singing their  
ancient song  
The shadows linger in dark places to live again  
When gaslight comes and flickers by  
Shadows still are cast when light illumines  
freshly  
And new songs the ancient building fill

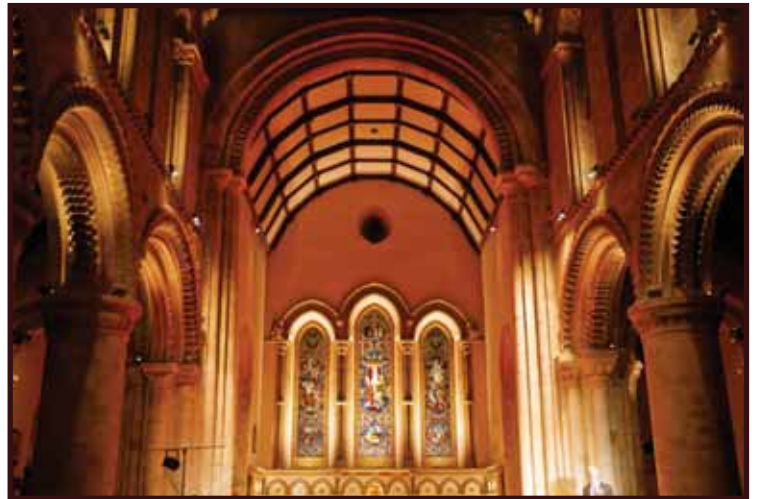
In every generation, young and old,  
The shadows of the heart are brought to God  
As they have been since first Christ died  
And the shadow of the cross cast long  
Upon the human soul  
And this Church stood

New light searches out dark corners  
And allows our wounded sight to see  
Christ in all his glory  
Crucified to take away our shadow self  
So that we might rise with him  
And so the light pours in

*Nigel Hartley  
17<sup>th</sup> August 2021*



*This poem was written especially for the concert  
Let There Be Light to showcase the wonderful  
new lighting together with beautiful music and  
words.*



The Vicar and Churchwardens are grateful to the Friends for their magnificent contribution to the cost of the lighting. The retiring collection at the concert amounted to over £600.

Photos taken at the concert.  
More on page 12.  
All with thanks to Bill Thomson

## CHURCH FLOWERS FOR DECEMBER

There are of course no flowers in the Church during Advent.  
However, we will be preparing for the Christmas celebrations on  
**Saturday 18 December from 10am - 1pm**

Anyone is welcome to join us who feels inclined to create a  
Christmas floral arrangement.

*Carol*





## “LET THERE BE LIGHT” CONCERT



These pictures give a taste of the scope of the new lighting, and the final picture shows the musicians and readers who entertained us so beautifully for the concert. The event was the first at which the Church's theatrical lighting (ably operated by Canon Nigel) was able to supplement and enhance the fixed lights.

## GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS

What are the qualities we appreciate most in our friends? Is it the same sense of humour, or a willingness to share life's adventures? Yes, and more. We value their company and the way that they stay with us through the good times and bad, A true friend is faithful.

They understand what makes us tick; they know what we need sometimes before we know ourselves and they keep us going.

Faithfulness is one of the qualities of God. As we come to know Him as a friend He becomes everything to us.

*Methodist Church, Newport IOW*

### CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR OUR FAMILIES

This year, as last, we are appealing for gifts in a different way. We should be most grateful if you could give the money you might have spent on a toy for FSW. Our Deanery Family Practitioner, Sara, will then be able to buy something suitable for each child she looks after.

**If you would like to give a monetary gift**, please could you put it in an envelope marked FSW and post through the letterbox at the Penfold Hall by 10 December. This can either be cash or a cheque made out to Steyning PCC with FSW written on the back.

**Thank You** for your kind generosity this year in so many wonderful ways. We have appreciated how, week by week, you fill the food basket.

Sue and I wish you a most Happy Christmastime and a peaceful 2022.

With our love,

*Sue and Wendy*



## THE STEYNING SOCIETY



**The Steyning Society and The Steyning Museum  
are holding a Joint Christmas Supper on Friday 17th December  
at The Steyning Centre**

There is a short reception at **7:00pm** for drinks and a raffle in The Saxon Room before a sit down three course supper (including wine and coffee) at **7:45pm** in The Cuthman Room. Musical entertainment is being provided by The Cheer up Molly's.

**Tickets £24 for members and £26 guests** are available to purchase from **The Steyning Bookshop** (in cash or by cheque payable to The Steyning Society). Please state dietary requirements at the time of booking.

To help keep us Covid safe numbers will be limited to 80.

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

Registered Charity No. 269859

## SAINT OF THE MONTH

### CHRISTINA OF MARKYATE (c1097-1161)

Christina was born about 1097 in Huntingdon the daughter of a rich and influential Anglo Saxon guild merchant. On a pilgrimage to St Albans Abbey in 1112 she made a vow to be celibate. However, this was not acceptable to her parents who appealed to Bishop Robert Bloet of Lincoln. Bishop Robert at first agreed that Christina should not marry the man chosen by her parents but, later, having been bribed he gave judgement against her.

For more than a year she was virtually imprisoned during which she was both betrothed and married against her will even though she refused to consummate the marriage. She was helped to escape by the hermit, Eadwin, after he had consulted Ralph, Archbishop of Canterbury, about her plight. Christina took refuge at Flamstead with an anchoress named Alfwen. In 1122 her marriage was annulled by the Archbishop of York in view of her earlier vow of celibacy and because the marriage had been solemnised under duress by her parents.

She was able to come out of hiding and lived in a small hut at Markyate close to the cell of Roger, a hermit and sub-deacon of St Albans Abbey, who instructed her in the Faith. Christina spent her time there in prayer, sewing to support herself. She was a skilled needlewoman and embroidered mitres and sandals for Pope Adrian IV, the only Englishman to be elected Pope who had been born in St Albans.

When Roger died, Christina took over the hermitage where she reportedly experienced visions of Jesus, the Virgin Mary and St Margaret. She took her vows at St Albans in 1131. She remained in Markyate for the rest of her life where she attracted disciples as word of her holiness and learning spread. By 1145 her house had become a regular priory of nuns and, although invitations came from various quarters for her to be an abbess elsewhere, she remained at Markyate.

Christina is said to have been an able person who worked closely over many years with Geoffrey, Abbot of St Albans, to deepen the people's spirituality and alleviate poverty in the area. She died on 5th December 1161 much revered and the Church designated that date as her Feast Day. The nunnery at Markyate continued until it was disbanded as a result of the Henrician persecution in 1537.





## AN ADVENT JOURNEY

Chichester Diocese are to provide video reflections for Advent that we can all take part in if we have access to the internet. The poster below gives the details and dates, so go to: <http://www.chichester.anglican.org/>

### Advent Journey 2021

Join with us this year on a journey through advent, with a series of video reflections from Scripture. These have been produced by our three Bishops and new deacons. They will be available twice weekly on the diocesan website.

29 <sup>th</sup> November	Genesis 3: 8-19	Rev Simon Earnshaw
1 <sup>st</sup> December	Isaiah 9: 2,6-7	Rev Anna Bouch
6 <sup>th</sup> December	Matt 1: 18-23	Rev Jan Butter
8 <sup>th</sup> December	Luke 2: 1-7	Rev Tobias Lancaster
13 <sup>th</sup> December	Luke 2: 8-20	Rev Joe Padfield
15 <sup>th</sup> December	Matt 2: 1-12	Rev Patrick Donovan
20 <sup>th</sup> December	John 1: 1-14	Rev Laura Darrall
23 <sup>rd</sup> December	To Bethlehem	Bishop Will
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Journey's end	Bishop Ruth
25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christ child arrival	Bishop Martin

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,*

## DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The October meeting of Deanery Synod, held on this occasion at St Mary's Church, Pulborough, was the most lively and interesting of the many I have attended.

There were two significant items on the agenda which are worth bringing to your attention. The first concerns GS2222 - 'Mission in Revision: A review of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011' Members of Deanery Synod were asked to look at a summary of this document as a useful analysis of the mission and pastoral issues that the National Church has to face. It was a challenging read. If you go onto the Church of England website you can find the document and read it if you wish.

I have taken the liberty of quoting the following opening statements from the website:-

*"The Church of England's calling is and always has been to **proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ afresh in each generation** to the people of England.*

*The work to develop the new Vision and Strategy is underway but the foundations are already clear: The Church of England must adapt and put its trust in God to become a **simpler, humbler, bolder Church that is Jesus Christ centered and Jesus Christ shaped.***

- *A **simpler** Church, both in governance and structure and in the way we live and share the gospel.*
- *A **humbler** Church, recognising our failings and working with others to serve the common good.*
- *A **bolder** Church energised and enthused by the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ and sharing that with everyone".*

Brian Hanson explained that most of the strategies in 'Mission in Revision' would move the church forward. However, he was concerned that some measures outlined would reduce consultation making it easier to close churches. Brian's draft motion reads as follows:

*"Storrington Deanery Synod considers that the consultation document " Church of England - Mission in Revision" (GS2222) -*

*a) includes a significant set of options that shift power and resources within the Dioceses away from PCCs, clergy, patrons and others;*

*b) contains many options which would make the closing of churches easier and reduce the rights of consultation;*

*therefore this synod calls upon the General Synod to reassure the Church and the Nation that the widely perceived dismantling of the parish system will not happen and that the rights of consultation and appeal as defined in the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 will be retained".*

Following energetic discussion the members of Diocesan Synod voted, and the motion was passed by a large majority.

We then moved on to the second interesting thing for members of Deanery Synod to consider, and then ensure that their parish congregation learn about.

Fr Mark and the Revd James di Castiglione, of the Chanctonbury churches, gave a short presentation about Living in Love and Faith. Once again you can access information on the CofE website

introduced by the Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell in which he says "I hope that Christians will be open and courageous."

Living in Love and Faith addresses questions such as:

- How do we understand and discern God's will?
- Should the Church of England change its' understanding of marriage to same-sex relationships?
- How can the Church of England engage with the LGBTIQ+ community as it is?

These are significant questions which we should all learn about and consider. I am looking forward to how we do this in Steyning and Ashurst.

Your Deanery Synod members are, Elizabeth Brown, Brian Hanson, John Edwards and Penny Warner

*Elizabeth Brown*

## **A MEDITATION BEFORE CHRISTMAS**

*'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'.  
St John's gospel, chapter 1, verse 1.*

What does this verse mean? How can mere mortals explain the depth, beauty and promise of these words? "Word" is the translation of the Greek "logos".

Christopher Page, 'In a Spacious Place' writes:

*The "logos" is the invisible, generative, sustaining, intelligent energy that resides at the core of all existence. It is the power that brought all things into being and sustains all life.*

That's a pretty good start to thinking about the immensity of God and the coming celebration of the tiny Christ's birth, isn't it?

*PHG*

*"In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe"* Hebrews 1:1-2 NIV.



## THE START OF THE NEW YEAR

### START THE YEAR ... WITH A SERVICE AND A SHERRY!

New Year's Day always falls on the same day of the week as Christmas Day! That's a good way of remembering that our service called **Start the Year** will be on:

**Saturday 1 January at 10.30 am.**

We missed out last year because of the pandemic but we intend to start with double the enthusiasm on our return! Start the Year has gained a growing following since it began a few years ago and is a lovely way to say farewell to the past year and hello to the new one. That may be something to do with the sherry which follows it!

This short service combines reflection and joy and is very relaxed. It provides just the opportunity to begin the new year in a way that is spiritual and sustaining, and at the same time draws us together in worship in the Celtic tradition.

So, remember – Saturday 1 January 2022 at 10.30 am. Hope to see you there.

### TIP OF THE MONTH

Christmas wrapping paper can be more eco friendly and free!! There is brown paper packaging inside online parcels and newspapers or magazines you could re-use and accessorise or get the children to decorate rolls of plain brown or white paper. If buying commercial wrapping avoid foil and glitter and tie with natural fibres rather than using sellotape. Don't forget to use those tags you made from last year's old Christmas cards.



**Have you twinned your toilet yet? We chose to twin ours with a latrine in South Sudan, just because we have had a connection with Sudan in the past.**

**Toilet Twinning have now launched Fridge Twinning to raise funds for global hunger caused by Covid. Twin your fridge at [appeals.toilettwinning.org](https://appeals.toilettwinning.org)**

### REPAIR CAFÉ

Beeding and Bramber Village Hall

Volunteer repairers will help you try to fix your broken item - from small electricals and computers, to zips and bikes.

Tea and cake and an opportunity to chat about all things green.

Can you help? email [repaircafe@greeningsteyning.org](mailto:repaircafe@greeningsteyning.org)  
or find them on Facebook for further details



## STEYNING COP26 MARCH



Thank you, Catherine, for these pictures.



Starting from the Cuthman Field, many people marched together to Bramber joining with many parts of the UK urging governments to urgently do something about climate change. It is thought that about 500 eventually gathered at Bramber, Lovely to see Churches Together represented.



## COMMUNITY COFFEE



There is a new time and a change of location for Wednesday Coffee. It has been great fun moving forward post pandemic, however we have out-grown the cottage.

Please join us for a delicious cup of real coffee, or a cup of tea, and a chat at **the Penfold Hall**. The doors are open from **9am until 11.30am every Wednesday morning**.

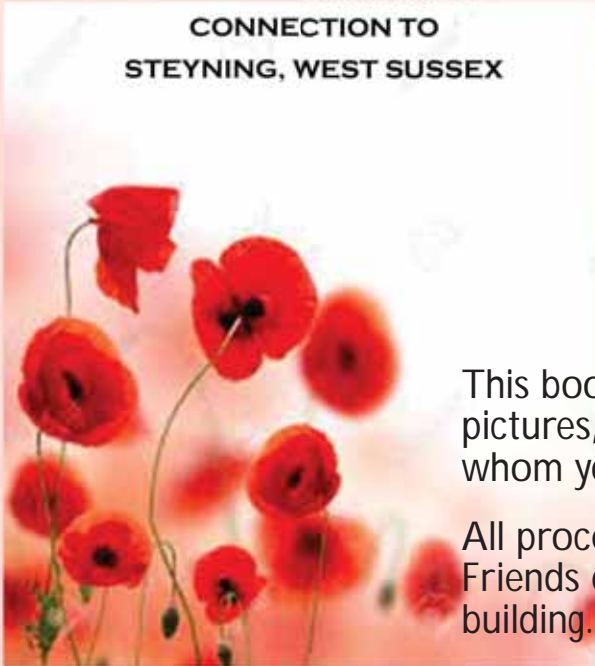
*Elizabeth Brown and the Coffee Team*

## WARTIME MEMORIES

### Book Launch Invitation

#### I REMEMBER

WARTIME MEMORIES  
FROM THOSE WITH A  
CONNECTION TO  
STEYNING, WEST SUSSEX



YOU ARE INVITED TO  
THE LAUNCH OF A NEW BOOK  
**I REMEMBER**  
ON SATURDAY 11 DECEMBER  
FROM 11AM – 1PM  
MULLED WINE AND NIBBLES  
PENFOLD HALL

BOOK PRICE £4

This book is full of wartime memories told in word and pictures, from people connected with Steyning, some whom you will know as you look at the contents.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will go to The Friends of Steyning Parish Church for the upkeep of the building.

Social distancing etc in the hall.

If you are unable to come to the launch, you may purchase the book from David and Chris Fitton 01903 816946

[fittonchris13@gmail.com](mailto:fittonchris13@gmail.com) or from Ian Ivatt 01273 491374

[ianivatt.tax@btinternet.com](mailto:ianivatt.tax@btinternet.com)



## CHURCH LIGHTING

### AND NOW THERE IS LIGHT!

The interior lighting in the church is complete now apart from a few snagging jobs. Many of the congregation and Friends of the Church have had the opportunity to see the wonderful effects of the new lighting, and that at the touch of a button a pre-programmed service or event can be selected giving the lighting needed to create the required ambiance. We now have a system that places us in a good position to meet the demands of today. For example, an 80% saving on energy; ultra-long life on LED lamps; working towards lowering our carbon footprint.



Exterior lighting along the long churchyard public path was planned to be completed this year, however, due to the amount of detail required from the overloaded Horsham District Council planning department we missed the application deadline pushing us back to early 2022. Assuming our application is approved the plan is to install four Victorian style lampposts fitted with LED lamps, together with lanterns over the main church door and the south-east corner of the building. The PCC will also need to apply for a faculty from the diocese once planning permission has been granted.

The existing floodlighting will be updated with LED lamps. All this lighting will be controlled by a single timeclock and light sensor programmed to switch on at dusk and off at midnight. The finance for this work is in place.

Thank you all for your support and patience throughout this lighting project.

*The Lighting Project Team*

## THE CHURCH COTTAGE

### HELP IMPROVE OUR CHURCH COTTAGE

Last year, the Co-op Community Fund helped us to raise over £4,400 towards new churchyard lighting. This is due to be installed along the church footpath once we have obtained the necessary planning and diocesan permissions.

Buoyed by that success, we applied to the following round of Co-op Community Funding, and are pleased to say that our scheme for partial refurbishment of Church Cottage has been accepted. This funding will allow it to be brought up to current standards, enabling it to be used to benefit the wider community.

All you need to do is become a member of the Co-op. You can either do this within the store or online. Once you've registered your card you choose us as 'your local cause'. If you're already a member of the Co-op and have not logged-on recently, you may need to reset your password (a simple operation if you have the same email address). Then, every time you purchase selected Co-op branded products and services, our fund will benefit.

You will find our cause at the Co-op under the **Steining Community Cottage** name.

Thank you all very much.

*Bill Thomson*

## TANZANIA

USPG (United Society Partners in the Gospel) work around the world, but this month I have chosen an article about their work in Tanzania to honour and remember Joyce Townsend as she was so proud of her nursing and mission work there.

### “BRINGING HOPE TO DISABLED YOUTH IN TANZANIA

Donations from USPG are bringing hope for a better future to young people at a centre for the disabled in Tanzania. The Kwamkono Disabled Children's Centre at Hadeni supports 58 boys and girls with physical disabilities. Funds from USPG have improved the studying environment inside and outside the classroom. Money has been provided for stationery and school uniforms. There were also funds for the center's garden - paying for seeds and manures and for labourers who helped clear the land. The garden is used to help train the children in growing vegetables.

On a bigger scale, funds from USPG were used to prepare nine hectares on the Centre's farms for cultivation. This paid for bush clearance, buying seeds and paying labourers. Crops grown on the land are all used to feed the children.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the Centre has taken measures to protect the children. Under the direction of the government, and using a donation from USPG, it bought buckets and soap to make sure the children were able to take extra hygiene measures to remain safe.”

*Formerly known as the Kwamkono Polio Hostel, the Kwamkono Disabled Children's Centre provides a home for children with physical disabilities, and funds their education and rehabilitation. The centre was established 1962 and is based in the Tanga Diocese of the Anglican Church of Tanzania (ACT).*



## MEDICINES FOR MUHEZA

Joyce Townsend, who sadly died at the end of October, was a mission midwife alongside the charity Medicines for Muheza, a UK registered charity which helps transform the work at St.

Augustine's Hospital in Muheza, Tanzania. The charity fundraises to supply many things that the hospital needs, including: Top-ups to staff salaries to ensure well-qualified staff stay; Some specialised drugs; Ward renovation and building projects; New vehicles; Child feeding programmes.

Joyce spoke very warmly of all Tanzanian people, and "Karibu" (You are welcome) is heard repeatedly and it is genuine.

For many years Steyning Parish Church supported Medicines for Muheza financially, and helped Joyce keep in contact with their work during her retirement here in Steyning.

## THE VOICE OF CHRISTMAS

*The Agnes Collective are thrilled to be able to share some beautiful and magical Christmas Music with you all again this December.*



***The Voice of  
Christmas***



*Two limited numbered and exclusive concerts brought to you by*  
**The Agnes Collective**  
with John Tolpelt

**Tuesday 21st December 2021**  
**@ 5pm & 7.30pm** (each concert approx 45min)

**St Andrew's & St Cuthman's Church, Steyning.**  
Adult £13 - Child £6 (4's and under free)

Tickets available from THE STEYNING BOOKSHOP or Alexandra Gibson Tel: 07973469113  
alexandra.gibson@tmc.com

The Agnes Collective are back with

**The Voice of Christmas**

on

**Tuesday 21 December**

at 5pm and at 7:30pm

**Steyning Parish Church**

Tickets: Adult £13 Child £6

from The Steyning Bookshop

Come and enjoy beautiful Christmas music.

## PONDER THESE THINGS.....

Humility is acknowledging that I am not separate from creation; I am a part of a web of life. I have been taught that this mutual dependence is a gift.

Life is a gift.

*Sarah Augustine*

If love is your purpose . . . it was and still is the time to double down on prayer. Because prayer, real prayer, is both contemplative and active. . . . Part of that is working for a good, just, humane, and loving society. That means getting on our knees [to pray] . . . and it *also* means standing on our feet and marching in the streets.

*Michael Curry with Sara Grace, "Love Is the Way"*



## IT MADE ME SMILE.....

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Children were asked questions about the Old and the New Testaments. The following are the statements they wrote, and have not been corrected. Incorrect spellings have been left in.

1. In the first book of the Bible, Guinness, god got tired of creating the world so he took the sabbath off.
2. Adam and eve were created from an apple tree, Noah's wife was Joan of ark. Noah built and ark and the animals came on in pears.
3. Lots wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. The jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic genitals.
5. Sampson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Samson slayed the philistines with the axe of the apostles.
7. When Mary hear she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the magna carta.
8. When the three wise guys from the east side arrived they found Jesus in the manager.
9. Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.
10. St John the blacksmith dumped water on his head.

## THE ANNUNCIATION

*The Annunciation*, by John William Waterhouse (a Pre-Raphaelite artist) in 1914.

This painting depicts the Virgin Mary and another woman figure assumed to be Angel Gabriel. Waterhouse's portrayal of Angel Gabriel is against all other similar images that have portrayed the angel as male.



## RECIPE FOR DECEMBER

### STORE CUPBOARD MEATBALLS

#### Ingredients

- 1 pack of pre made meatballs
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 brown onion, chopped
- 1-3 garlic clove, finely chopped, depending on your garlic tolerance
- 1 tsp dried mixed herbs
- 400g tin tomatoes
- 500ml/18fl oz vegetable or beef stock (use 2 cubes)
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tbsp of garlic paste (only use if you like an extra garlic hit)
- 1 tsp chilli flakes if you like an extra bit of heat.
- 200g/7oz dried spaghetti
- salt and pepper
- 1 pack of mozzarella



#### Method

1. Heat a large saucepan over a medium heat and add the olive oil. Once hot, add the onion and cook gently without browning for 4–5 minutes, or until softened and translucent. Add the garlic, continue to cook for 2 minutes until aromatic, then add the dried herbs, tomatoes and stock. Bring the sauce to a simmer, reduce the heat and simmer gently. I usually make this in the morning and pop it in the fridge once cooled until needed later in the day.
2. Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and add the olive oil. Once hot, fry the meatballs on all sides until nicely coloured, being careful not to burn them. You may need to do this in batches. Transfer to the saucepan containing the sauce.
3. Now add the tomato puree, garlic paste and chilli flakes, if using, to the tomato sauce.
4. Continue to simmer the sauce for 10 minutes while you cook the spaghetti. Longer if cooking the sauce from cold.
5. Bring a large saucepan water to the boil, add a pinch of salt and cook the spaghetti according to the packet instructions. Once cooked, drain and tip into the saucepan with the meatball sauce. Mix well and serve hot.
6. Tear the mozzarella over the meatballs. Add cracked black pepper if desired.

#### Grace at Christmastime

God of Christmas, and of every day, giver of all good gifts, we thank you for the many ways you have blessed us. We remember those without food, family or friendships today.

## CHRISTMAS CHOICES

### WOULD YOU RATHER?

Real Christmas Tree	OR	Fake Christmas Tree
Gingerbread Man	OR	Sugar Mouse
Walk in the snow	OR	Drive in the snow
Christmas Dinner	OR	Christmas Supper
Santa's Red Suit	OR	Elf's green suit
Ride in Santa's Sleigh	OR	Ride the Polar Express
"A Christmas Story"	OR	"It's a Wonderful Life"
Have a snowball fight	OR	Make a Gingerbread House
Be a child	OR	Be a Grandparent
Cranberry Sauce	OR	Gravy
Be Santa's Reindeer	OR	Be Santa's Elf
Christmas With Family	OR	Christmas with a Celebrity

## CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Can you name the gifts given on each day of Christmas in order, as sung in 'The Twelve Days of Christmas'?

On the first day of Christmas..

On the seventh...

On the second...

On the eighth...

On the third...

On the ninth...

On the fourth...

On the tenth...

On the fifth...

On the eleventh...

On the sixth...

On the twelfth...





# JUST FOR CHILDREN

## CHRISTMAS QUIZ



1. Whose birthday do Christians celebrate at Christmas?

2. Who gave birth to Jesus?

3. Who appeared to tell Mary that she was going to have a baby?



4. Which city did Mary and Joseph travel to for the census?

5. This city was full of people, so where did Joseph find for them to rest and for Mary to have her baby?



6. Where did Mary lay Jesus after he was born?

7. What is a manger?

8. How did the shepherds get to know about going to see baby Jesus?



9. Who was the one trying to kill baby Jesus?

10. What gifts did the Wise men bring for Jesus?

8 Angel told them  
5 A Stable  
1 Jesus  
9 King Herod  
6 In a Manger  
2 Mary  
7 A feeding trough  
3 Angel Gabriel  
4 Bethlehem  
10 Gold, Frankincense, Myrrh

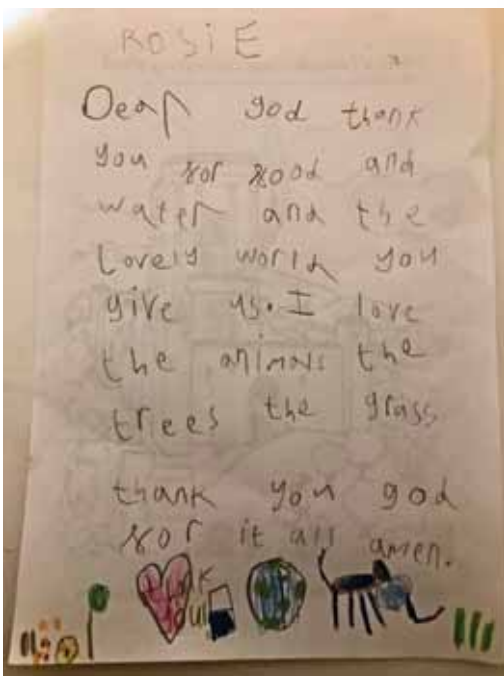
### Answers



**This prayer** was written by Rosie at the Harvest Festival service in Steyning Parish Church. It was then read out at the close of the service.

Just in case the photo is hard for you to read here it is typed out:

“Dear god thank you for food and water and the lovely world you give us. I love the animals the trees the grass  
Thank you god for it all amen.”



## ANAGRAM FOR DECEMBER

The anagram for December is: GOOD NEWS

REMEMBER:

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

NO capitalised words, and NO plurals.

I know we can have SNOW, but hope that is not in the forecast!



## STEYNING HISTORY SOCIETY



**Glorious Goodwood: England's greatest sporting estate, and the Dukes of Richmond**  
**By James Peill**

**Wednesday, 8 December 2021**

**STEYNING CENTRE, COOMBE COURT**

**7.30 p.m, for 7.45 p.m. start**

**Visitors welcome - £4.00**

“Who are these people?” You’ve hardly seen them all year yet here you are, full of turkey, squashed between them on the sofa, your paper hat askew. It’s Christmas and, like it or not, there’s no escaping your family. On a branch out in the cold darkness of the garden, also sandwiched between aunts, brothers, cousins and daughters, a tiny bird is asking a similar question (except he isn’t wearing a novelty hat).



Long-tailed Tits and humans. Two of Britain’s most social species. And just like a visit from your relatives the arrival of a Long-tailed Tit flock in your garden will turn tranquility into chaos. It’s like someone has emptied a box of feathered fireworks over the fence. They manically bicker on the bird feeder and swing acrobatically upside-down on the fat balls, all the while trilling, rattling and screaming ‘eee-heee-heee’ like a troupe of Michael Jackson impersonators. What you’re witnessing is a group of roving relatives, roaming the neighbourhood looking to pillage your peanuts. This posse of outlaws consists of in-laws, brothers, sons, daughters. It’s a family affair. With their gorgeous pink, black and white plumage and those ridiculously long tails these flying lollypops must qualify for Britain’s cutest bird. Then suddenly they’re gone and the pulse rate of the garden returns to normal.

By late-winter the Long-tailed Tit’s extended family will drift apart, find new partners and start new families. In March the foundations are laid for an epic construction. Moss building bricks are lashed together with ropes of sticky spider’s webs. The walls rise, a camouflage cladding of lichen is added to the roof and a cosy filling of a thousand feathers lines the interior. The end result looks a crocheted stomach and soon there will be plenty of rumbling from inside as eight hungry chicks demand to be fed. But raising a large family can take its toll. The constant hunt for insects can exhaust a parent almost to breaking point. And that’s when something unusual and wonderful happens. Their family arrives to save them. Aunties and uncles who have not been successful raising their own family that year will selflessly join the parents and help feed their nephews and nieces.

Even after the children have flown the nest the whole gang remains together and joins with other siblings to form your chaotic neighbourhood feeding flock. But the biggest challenge of the year still awaits: winter. Freezing night-time temperatures exact a heavy toll on our garden birds. And that’s why at Christmas, hidden deep in a hedge, you’ll find the extended family of Long-tailed Tits, huddled together, supporting each other on a frosty branch, their tiny hearts beating, sharing their warmth and surviving. So if you’re wondering why family is so important look out of the window and think of that Long-tailed Tit, because none of us can get through this on our own.

*Michael Blencowe Head of Community Action for Wildlife*



## THE SHEPHERDS AND THE ANGELS

Luke 2 verses 8 - 20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"*

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

