

**Christ Church Walmersley  
and  
St John with St Mark Bury**

**in the United Benefice of Walmersley Road**



**Comfort  
and Joy**

**December 2020 and**

**January 2021**

**50P**

## **REGULAR SERVICES**

As we go to press the Government has made the announcement on page 11 and we await guidance from the Church of England. Hopefully from December 6<sup>th</sup> we shall be able to hold our planned services. Please be aware of current restrictions as you read this edition.

We continue to observe guidance from the Government, the Church of England and the Diocese of Manchester. There will be no singing, or contact when Sharing of the Peace. Communion will be received in one kind only.

Social distancing guidelines and hygiene protocols are in place and a suitable face covering should be worn unless you are exempt.

<b>Sunday</b>			
10.30 a.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup> 4 <sup>th</sup> 5 <sup>th</sup>	Holy Communion Family Service Holy Communion Service of the Word Holy Communion	Christ Church
10.30 a.m.	All	Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
7.00 p.m.	Final, Sunday @ Seven		Currently by Zoom
<b>Wednesday</b>			
10.00 a.m.		Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
<b>Thursday</b>			
12.30 p.m.		The Gathering	Zoom
2.00 p.m.	1 <sup>st</sup>	Holy Communion	Christ Church
7.30 p.m.		Holy Communion	St John w St Mark
Other services as announced Morning Prayer is said each day at 9.30 a.m. Evening Prayer is said each day at 5.00 p.m.			

If you need transport to church please contact the wardens.  
Both churches have Fairtrade status



## ***We will be celebrating Christmas!***

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Dear Friends

For lots of reasons 2020 is not a year that will be looked back on with great fondness. The ongoing effects of the coronavirus pandemic have taken their toll on all aspects of society and even the fundamental right to worship has been affected this year. Despite the encouraging news of successful vaccine trials no one knows how far the impact of Covid-19 will extend into 2021.

As I write, we are in the midst of the second lockdown, with no guarantee that the situation will be eased by the beginning of December. By the time this magazine is available, I hope we will have some positive news.

However, whatever happens for the rest of the year – and despite the warnings in the media – one thing is clear. **WE WILL BE CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS!**

The days will be different; social distancing and the other such measures will doubtless mean many changes. Yet fundamentally Christmas is at heart the festival of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ – the divine Son of God. Nothing, not even a world-wide pandemic can stop that.

Christmas is not about turkey or tinsel. It is not about presents or parties. It is not even about families, festivities and fun. All these may contribute towards a merry Christmas but despite widespread assumptions these are not essential for a proper celebration.

It is about remembering that God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

This eternal truth remains at the centre of the Christian portrayal of the birth of God's Son. The consequences of the pandemic may mean that this year the true meaning of December 25 will be more prominent.



As the old saying goes, "Jesus is the reason for the season"

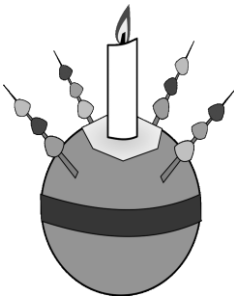
As we enter Advent and prepare for the season of Christmas and then view the consequences of the Son of God's arrival during the four weeks of Epiphany we give thanks for the light shining in the darkness.

In these metaphorical and literal dark days, the birth of a special baby 2000 years ago, offers hope of better times.

May the peace of the Christ-child bring you joy this Christmas time and may I wish you all a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

With every blessing,

Dave



## ***CHRISTINGLE WITH A DIFFERENCE***

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Now, more than ever, we must shine the light for those living in the darkest situations.

Together, we can rekindle the hope for children and young people across the country.

*childrenssociety.org.uk*

This year we are holding our annual Christingle Service via **Zoom**

**on MONDAY 7 DECEMBER**

**at 6.30pm**

Please contact the Vicar if you wish to join this service

Donations can be made directly to the Children's Society at <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/how-you-can-help/fundraise-and-events/christingle>

# ***A QUARTERMILLENNIAL CELEBRATION***

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## **CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF ST JOHN'S PARISH**

**1770 – 2020**

**SUNDAY 6 DECEMBER**

**10.30am**

**St. John with St. Mark**



when we will be delighted to welcome  
**David, Bishop of Manchester**

This will be a joint service with the congregation of Christ Church assuming that current lockdown restrictions are lifted.

It is also the intention to display the items of memorabilia we had gathered prior to the original event in June. The aim is to have this at the back of Church for early December, and to remain in place until early New Year, to give people ample opportunity to take a look. This will be done in a safe way and we must adhere to the social distancing guidelines. Margaret and David will discuss during week commencing 30th November, by which time we should know the current situation, and look at putting this together.

## **FROM THE REGISTERS**

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### **CONFIRMATION:**

Oct 25      Mollie Gore

*"In the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit....."*

### **FUNERAL SERVICES HELD AT THE CREMATORIUM:**

Nov 12      Marisa Dale

### **FUNERAL SERVICES IN CHURCH:**

Oct 27      Ingrid Hitchon

Nov 6      Bert Mather

Nov 11      Margaret Watson

*"I am the resurrection and the life....."*



## **Flowers in church**

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### **At Christ Church**

Dec 6      In memory of Jennifer Melling and Mary Illsley

Dec 13      Mr & Mrs R. Nicholls, in memory of their parents

Dec 20      The Congregation

Jan 3      Vacant

Jan 10      In memory of Clifford Hawkins

Jan 17      Mr & Mrs J McDermott in memory of their daughter Carol

Jan 24      In memory of Jim Melling

Jan 31      In memory of Jack Grindrod

## REMEMBRANCE

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Thank you to the Vicar for letting us have a small ceremony on Remembrance Sunday at Christ Church.

Under the circumstances it was good to see 26 people attending.

I would like to thank

- Barbara Taylor & Alan Haslam for reading the names of the fallen from World Wars 1 & 2.
- Margaret and David Peters for laying the wreath.
- Jason Edwards for playing the Last Post, and Geoff Stokes for his recording.
- Jennifer Wood for reading the words for the fallen.

Thanks to all and God Bless You.

Barry Evans

*We thank Barry for his willingness to lead this short act of Remembrance.*



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Please share this free phone line with anyone who may find it helpful. It is especially beneficial for those who do not have access to the multitude of resources available on the internet.



A free phone line of hymns,  
reflections and prayers



## ***BIBLE READINGS FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY***

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Dec 6	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> of Advent</b> Isaiah 40: 1-11	2 Peter 3: 8-15a	Mark 1: 1-8
Dec 13	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent</b> Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11	1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24	John 1: 6-8, 19-28
Dec 20	<b>4<sup>th</sup> of Advent</b> 2 Samuel 7: 1-11, 16	Romans 16: 25-27	Luke 1: 26-38
Dec 27	<b>St John the Evangelist</b> Exodus 33: 7-11a	1 John 1	John 21: 19b-25
Jan 3	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> of Christmas</b> Jeremiah 31: 7-14	Ephesians 1: 3-14	John 1: 10-18
Jan 10	<b>Baptism of Christ</b> Genesis 1: 1-5	Acts 19: 1-7	Mark 1: 4-11
Jan 17	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> of Epiphany</b> 1 Samuel 3: 1-10	Revelation 5: 1-10	John 1: 43-51
Jan 24	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> of Epiphany</b> Genesis 14: 17-20	Revelation 19: 6-10	John 2: 1-11
Jan 31	<b>Candlemas</b> Malachi 3: 1-5	Hebrews 2: 14-18	Luke 2: 22-40
Feb 7	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> before Lent</b> Proverbs 8: 1, 22-31	Colossians 1: 15-20	John 1: 1-14

Please note that at present we are only using one reading before the Gospel. The reader will be informed in advance which passage is being used.





## ***IN MEMORIAM: Bert Mather***

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Herbert Mather was born in Edgworth in 1927, the youngest of four children to Herbert and Eliza Mather. The family moved to Walmersley in 1935 when Herbert senior began work at Know Mill on the Old Road.

Bert joined the Christ Church choir that same year and remained a member until 2014 – a total of almost 80 years. He supported choirmaster Arthur Smith not only as bass soloist but also for his ability to physically pump air into the organ before it became electrically powered. Bert and Arthur remained lifelong friends – playing golf together for many years.

On leaving school, Bert worked at Spurriers next to the church, learning the trade of motor mechanic and HGV driver before enlisting in the Royal Marines in 1945. He worked as a mechanic on all kinds of military vehicles from tank transporters to motor bikes. Whilst in London he met a Lancashire lass, Elizabeth who was then training as an infant teacher in Putney.

On returning north and into civvy street, Bert and Elizabeth were married at Christ Church in 1949. Philip was born in 1951 and Kathryn a year later. Bert and Elizabeth were heavily involved in church life, including the tennis club and also took part in many church concerts and social activities.

Bert served as a member of Walmersley PCC and as a town councillor for the Moorside Ward for some twenty years from 1968.

As Elizabeth's health deteriorated, Bert became her full time carer and she sadly died in 2017. Since then he has been an independent man living on his own and still driving his car until this August. He too battled with ill health in his later years. After a diagnosis of an in-operable brain tumour, he was admitted to hospital in late August and was transferred to Cameron House Nursing Home where he died on 27th October aged 93.

His funeral service took place at Christ Church on Friday 6 November and was transmitted via Skype to Australia where Kathryn and his grandchildren live.

We give thanks to God for Bert and for his contribution to Christ Church and the community of Walmersley.

**May He Rest In Peace and Rise in Glory.**

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## From the Vicarage

- \* No sooner had we moved back to 10.30am services than Lockdown Two began! It is hoped that this will be lifted from the beginning of December and that we will then be able to resume services. (*See the end of this article for the announcement*)
- \* The first Sunday after lockdown will be our celebration for the 250th anniversary of St. John's Church with the Bishop of Manchester. This will obviously be held at St. John with St. Mark but with both congregations in attendance.
- \* For obvious reasons this year, our celebrations for Christmas will be very different. Hopefully our Christmas services will be able to go ahead as normal (*see centre page*). In addition there is the opportunity to take part in the online Christingle and Carol Services. Details can be found elsewhere in the magazine.
- \* It is possible to administer Holy Communion during a pastoral visit following a local risk assessment and subject to the necessary protocols. If you would like to receive Holy Communion (in wafer form) at home during the Christmas period, please have a word with me to arrange this.
- \* We are determined that our church buildings remain Covid secure and that we are always complying with the necessary health, hygiene and social distancing guidelines. If you have any concerns whatsoever, please have a word with me or one of the church wardens.
- \* I continue to say Morning Prayer at 9.30am and Evening Prayer at 5.00pm on a daily basis. It is good to know that others are saying prayers at the same time as we join together in prayer.
- \* Enquiries about baptisms or weddings / marriage banns etc or any other matter, should be made at the Parish Office held at St. John with St. Mark Church Hall any Wednesday evening between 6.30-7.00pm.

\* The Ministry Team consisting of all the Clergy, Licensed Readers and Authorised Lay Ministers meet every month – usually on the second Monday evening. If you have an issue that you would like us to discuss, please contact one of the team.

This month sees the return of Elizabeth Binns to our Ministry Team. Elizabeth retired last month from her NSM Team Vicar role in Radcliffe. We welcome her back home!

\* Porch Boxes are always in need of food and toiletries especially in this current situation. A box is available at the back of both churches. We are also supporting the Attic Project – a local charitable foundation located in the heart of Bury, dedicated to helping those in need. They strive to improve the lives of everyone who needs help within the community and are based within the Spiritualist Church building on Russell Street. They can be contacted on 0161 258 6145.

\* Regular attenders to church are encouraged to join our planned giving scheme. If you would like to do so or would like some further information, please speak to one of the Treasurers.

\* If you would like to donate towards the cost of the flowers in church, perhaps in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event, please speak to Hazel Bamford (Christ Church) or Rosemarie Ashworth (St. John with St. Mark). If you wish to join the flower arranging rota, please also get in touch.

\* Material for the parish magazine should be given in by the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the previous month. Articles may be sent via email to [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)

**“The government also recognises the significant sacrifices that people of all faiths have made this year;** restrictions have been in place over a number of religious celebrations and observances, and it is thanks to these sacrifices that it has been possible to control the virus. Communal worship will now be possible for all faiths in all three tiers and faith leaders will continue to play a key role, consulting on how to make religious practice as safe as possible.” *gov.uk 23 November*

The season of Advent marks the beginning of the Church's year and is part of its preparation for Christmas. The name Advent originates from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "arrival" or "coming".

It is used as a time of expectancy, waiting and preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas and the return of Jesus at the Second Coming.

The four Sundays of the season act as a countdown to the great celebration of our Lord's birth and is an important time in our spiritual lives.

The colour of the season is purple which reflects the solemnity of this time in the Church Year.



Traditionally churches use an Advent wreath to symbolize the passage of the season. A candle is lit each week as the liturgy reflects the coming of Jesus as a child and in time as Lord and Judge. On Christmas Day, the central candle – coloured white – is lit to signal the fulfillment of Advent and the arrival of the Son of God.

This year Advent Sunday is 29 November.

### **Advent Prayer**

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful  
as we await the coming of your Son our Lord;  
that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin  
but active in his service and joyful in his praise;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Archbishops of York and Canterbury have launched this year's Church of England Advent & Christmas campaign. Titled **Comfort and Joy**, there is a booklet with a series of "Nine Lessons and Carols" between Christmas Day – 2 January.

As the Archbishops write in the introduction:

*"Christmas this year will feel different. The family gatherings may well be smaller. For at least some of us, we may be joining in the familiar carols online rather than in church. But it will still be – as always – a time to care for one another and to be together. It will be a time to look back on a year when so much has changed. To remember those who have died, to support those who have lost jobs, to be thankful for all who have cared for the sick and the vulnerable.*

*What has not changed is the story and the meaning of Jesus' birth. God is with us. With us in the mess as in the good, in the disappointment and the difficulty, in sorrow and in celebration.*

*This booklet, like a traditional carol service, offers you nine lessons and carols and, with the help of a variety of contributors, an opportunity to hear again the story and reflect on its meaning in this time of challenge. We pray that as you journey with this booklet through the Christmas season you will know that Jesus journeys with you. May you know God's comfort and, in whatever your circumstances, be surprised by God's joy.*

The booklet will be distributed at church during December. Make sure you obtain your copy.

More resources are available from the website:  
[www.churchofengland.org/ComfortAndJoy](http://www.churchofengland.org/ComfortAndJoy)

## *Quiet Moments in December*

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### **16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence**

*ends 10 December*

Open our eyes to what we need to see  
Open our minds to what we need to know  
Open our hearts to what we need to bear  
Open our hands to what we need to give  
Open our eyes to justice and love.

*Ruth Burgess*



### **Advent**

Advent God, we journey with you,  
to Bethlehem's stable and a new-born King,  
ears attuned to the song of angels,  
eyes alert for Bethlehem's star.

Forgive us  
if on our journey we are distracted  
by the tempting offers of this world.

Keep our hearts aflame  
with the hope of Christmas,  
and the promise of a Saviour.

Amen.

*John Birch*

## Christmas

This Christmas, as we remember that there was no room at the inn,  
we pray for all who are homeless, and those who work to shelter them.  
Wherever the world is in darkness Lord, let there be light.

This Christmas, as we remember the birth of Jesus in a stable,  
we pray for all who are living in poverty,  
and those who work to provide for them.  
Wherever the world is in darkness Lord, let there be light.

This Christmas, as we remember the violence  
of the search for the Christ child,  
we pray for all who are in danger, and those who work to protect them.  
Wherever the world is in darkness Lord, let there be light.

This Christmas, as we remember those who journeyed to the stable,  
we pray for all who are seeking you & those who are leading the way.  
Wherever the world is in darkness Lord, let there be light.  
Amen.



## St John the Evangelist

*27 December and the Patronal Festival of our church*

*The Collect for the day:*

MERCIFUL Lord, we beseech thee to cast thy bright beams of light upon thy Church, that it being enlightened by the doctrine of thy blessed Apostle and Evangelist Saint John may so walk in the light of thy truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## ***We've mucked out the stable***

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*Some thoughts for Christmas Eve:*

We've mucked out the stable  
and put down the plush carpet;

still, you will come:  
tracking in mud from the Jordan  
and shaking sin's dust off your clothes.

The animals have been dropped off at the SPCA.  
and the room deodorized;

still, you will come:  
leading the lost, the least, the little  
into our midst.

We've turned over the manger and covered it with Irish lace,  
setting the table with the finest silver and china;

still, you will come:  
tearing the linen into strips for binding our wounds,  
selling the silver to feed the hungry.

We've tamed and made marketable  
this most holy of nights,  
shaping it by our own desires and dilemmas;

still, you will come:  
slipping between the cracks in our despair  
to fill our emptiness with grace  
and the carols of angels;  
to transform our acquisitiveness into generosity.

*Thom M Shuman*





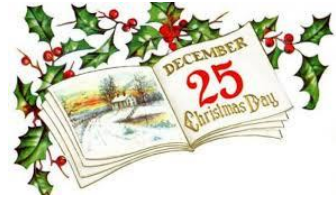
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May God's Love, Joy and Peace be yours this Christmas, and for 2021

Margaret, John, Esme & Emmy



We have hope this Christmas because  
Jesus was born.  
Have a peaceful Christmas.  
From the Christian Aid team



The Choir and organist at St. John with St. Mark wish everybody across the Benefice a very Happy & Peaceful Christmas and all the best for the New Year

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary,  
the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels,  
the eagerness of the shepherds,  
the determination of the magi,  
and the peace of the Christ child.

With our love and prayers,  
Barbara and Bob Taylor



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reasons

## ***CHRISTMAS SERVICES***

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Services over the Christmas period will, of course, depend to a great extent on the Covid-19 guidelines in place at that time.

Hopefully we can meet but for those who cannot, there will be services available on radio and television and we will try to share details.

If you have internet access there will be a host of services streamed on facebook or available on YouTube – search and you will not have to look far.

Bury Churches Together are recording some carols (to use hopefully in place of singing in Bury Market) using our local church choirs and others. No details yet of when it will be available but keep your eyes open.

Here in the benefice:

### **Christmas Eve:**

7.30pm Parish Communion at St John with St Mark

### **Christmas Night:**

11.30pm Parish Communion at Christ Church

### **Christmas Day:**

10.00am Holy Communion Services  
in BOTH CHURCHES

*Images ©LindisfarneScriptorium*

The Diocese of Manchester is putting together a Carol Service for us to access online

## **DIOCESAN CAROL SERVICE**

A version of the traditional  
Nine Lessons & Carols  
will go out 'as live' on the diocesan  
Facebook and YouTube channels.  
Wednesday 23 December. 7.00pm

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WE HOPE TO TRANSMIT THIS  
IN THE CHURCH HALL  
AT ST.JOHN with ST.MARK **(by ticket only)**

Please contact the Vicar if you wish to attend.

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With best wishes  
for a blessed Christmas  
and a healthy, happy  
and peaceful 2021.  
God Bless you all

Dave & Linda

May the blessings of Jesus be with you all and  
your families as we join together to celebrate  
His birthday.

Barbara & Nigel

For  
Unto  
us a  
CHILD  
is born  
Unto us a Son  
is given, and the  
Government shall be  
Upon His shoulders,  
and His Name shall be called,  
Wonderful, Counselor,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace!  
Isaiah 9:6



May God's blessings of peace, joy, love and hope  
be with you and those you love at Christmas.

Alan and Margery



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year, and most of all  
good health in these very difficult times.  
Best wishes and God Bless,  
Mavis Bithell



SEASONS GREETINGS  
to all at Christ Church &  
St.John with St.Mark.  
Have a very Happy Christmas  
and wishing everyone a peaceful and healthy  
Covid-19 free New Year in 2021.  
Also, peace all over the world.  
Happy Birthday on 25 December Jesus.  
Love to all, Barry & Margaret Evans x x

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year  
from Sandra Evans



I wish everybody across the United Benefice of  
Walmersley Road a peaceful and relaxed Christmas  
and a hope filled New Year.  
Perhaps we can resume some of those things we  
miss and enjoy during 2021 (and maybe some of  
those we don't)!  
David Robinson xx



Jean & Frank Slater send love and best wishes for a very Happy Christmas to everyone.



We would like to wish all Clergy, Lay Ministers and congregation in our United Benefice a very warm and Happy Christmas. We pray for a better 2021 for all and look forward to celebrations in songs and praise together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Love and Prayers  
Tricia and Geoff Stokes

We wish you all the joys  
of this festive season  
and the very best for the New Year.  
With love,  
Ian & June



***Our thanks to all at Christ Church who have made contributions to a charity of their choice, to Porch Boxes and to church.***

***St. John with St. Mark PCC will communicate with each other in due course, regarding which charity we will support with Christmas greeting donations this year.***

## ***A Christmas Creed***

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I believe in Jesus Christ and in the beauty of the gospel begun in Bethlehem.

I believe in the one whose spirit glorified a little town; and whose spirit still brings music to persons all over the world, in towns both large and small.

I believe in the one for whom the crowded inn could find no room, and I confess that my heart still sometimes wants to exclude Christ from my life today.

I believe in the one who the rulers of the earth ignored and the proud could never understand; whose life was among common people, whose welcome came from persons of hungry hearts.

I believe in the one who proclaimed the love of God to be invincible:

I believe in the one who by love brought sinners back to purity, and lifted human weakness up to meet the strength of God.

I believe in God who gives us the best of himself. I believe in Jesus, the son of the living God, born in Bethlehem that night, for me and for the world.

*From [www.christmas-day.org](http://www.christmas-day.org)*

## *Three kings*

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*Epiphany falls on 6 January, when we remember Christ shown to all:*

Out of wintry shadows wind sped like an arrow,  
earth and water froze.

Albert wheeled his barrow, leaning on his load.  
"Christmas Day tomorrow."

"On the downs it snowed,"  
cried George, "it's coming soon."  
Frank looked up the road.

That dark afternoon a stranger walked ahead  
haloed by the moon.  
He half turned: "Peace", he said.

Wind dropped.  
Like a sign a star rose up  
and led that moment out of time,  
as if his gentle call made earth and heaven rhyme.

Like a miracle  
George, Frank and Albert felt drawn into his will.

Lamplight seemed to melt,  
with a wild grace  
stars circled down  
to pelt wheelbarrow and cars.

The three men hid their eyes  
as love shook off its bars and earth met paradise.

He left them in the falling snow,  
with memories too strange for reckoning,  
like his star that rose  
and made each one a king.

*©Susan Skinner*

## *Quiet Moments in January*

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### **Epiphany**

*6 January*



O God, who by the leading of a star brought the wise men to Bethlehem, guide us through each day and night on our journey of faith.

Lord, give us the courage to persevere that we are not discouraged in our search for you.

May we witness to your gospel and rejoice in your glory.

May we seek to do your will until we enter the fullness of your kingdom.

We ask this in the name of him who came and lived among us, Jesus Christ our Lord.        Amen

*©2009 David Adam*

### **Baptism of Christ**

Praise and thanks to you Lord our God  
for you have created all things from the beginning.

Praise and thanks to you Lord Jesus Christ;  
you lived among us and were baptized of John.

Blessed are you, Holy Spirit of power and might,  
you descend as the dove filling us with life.

Blessed are you, holy and blessed three,  
in you we live and move and have our being.

*©2009 David Adam*



*At the start of a new year*

### **The Methodist Covenant Prayer**

I am no longer my own but yours.  
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;  
put me to doing, put me to suffering;  
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,  
exalted for you, or brought low for you;  
let me be full, let me be empty,  
let me have all things, let me have nothing:  
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things  
to your pleasure and disposal.  
And now, glorious and blessed God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.  
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

### **The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

*18-25 January*

In faith let us pray to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

For the Church of God throughout the world,  
For the leaders of the nations,  
that they may establish and defend justice and peace,  
and protect those who suffer oppression or violence,

That the churches may discover again their visible unity  
in the one baptism which incorporates them in Christ;  
that they may attain communion in the Eucharist around one table.

That the churches may recognise each other's ministries  
in the service of their one Lord;  
and together know the strength, love, and peace of Christ. Amen

## ***AN OPEN, WALKING, MOB***

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You may have missed the regular write ups from the various groups I report on each month for this magazine. It may be possible that you also haven't missed them, in which case, advanced apologies but I am going to the cover the next two pages with them.

We have not been able to meet very much at all this year, except for the first few weeks, and in fact the first and only Open Group meeting of 2020 was appropriately titled 'Memories'. Vicar Dave led the group to discuss what memories people had of the various events in their life and I was wondering just how much people could remember from that meeting on 11th March?

For example, can you remember what Dave's first musical memory was?

What were some of the examples of the earliest film and TV shows that people could recall?

Which news events were chosen by people as the ones they could remember the most?

There was also a supplementary discussion about an everyday item we use so often, and when did we get our first one. How many members can remember what this item was we discussed? You may also recall that we had our trainee ordinand Gary with us for the meeting and he told us of the time he had met a famous person. Does anyone recall who this person was?

Finally, can anybody remember what gift was given to Dave at the end for leading the meeting?

If any members are curious to know the answers to any of these, then I have still got the notes from the meeting, so please ask.

The walking group did manage to meet a couple times over the course of the year, both before and during the current situation. Once restrictions were relaxed, outdoor events were slightly more easy to organize.



The walks were mainly local and included areas such as Kirklees, Elton Reservoir and also the 3 Reservoirs. We did manage to cover a few miles each time. I have been on a couple of walks with John Brennan following the guidelines, also on my own several times during the good spell of weather we had in the Spring and regular Saturday outings delivering Church bulletins and magazines, assisted by my Dad as chief sheet folder and box carrier.



The Men of the Benefice managed one meeting in January and it was an entertaining evening hosted by Barry Evans on his recent trip to Australia to visit his son, which also coincided with the bush fires you may remember hearing about. I also recall this was quite a late night for a Monday! Gary was also in attendance for this evening. Apart from that the MOB have had little contact, other than via Zoom services for some, the odd phone call and maybe a quick wave in the street. Coincidentally, I do happen to be writing this on 19th November, which happens to be International Men's Day.

We obviously are currently unsure what the plans for these groups are next year and how soon any arrangements for meetings can be made. However whatever may occur in 2021, on behalf of all these groups, I wish everybody across the United Benefice of Walmersley Road a Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

A Christmas charitable donation has been given from the Open Group funds.

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## ***IT'S GOOD TO TALK***

On a footnote, Thursday evening Communion was obviously suspended at St. John with St. Mark during Spring. Myself and Pam Cowie did instead make the decision to have a regular telephone chat at the same time each week. We have continued this again in November. As the saying goes, 'Its good to talk'!



David Robinson

December is never a quiet month!



This year Mothers' Union is taking part in this challenge.

**One donation – double the impact**

All donations given online between midday 1<sup>st</sup> December and midday 8<sup>th</sup> December will be doubled, making a significant difference to our support of literacy and skills education in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Find out more at [mothersunion.org/Christmas](https://mothersunion.org/Christmas) or visit <https://bit.ly/3iVTYNb> between these dates.

On December 5<sup>th</sup> we are invited to be part of our first ever Global Day, with its focus on advocacy against all types of gender-based violence. Sadly there are strong indications of a significant increase in domestic abuse as a result of the measures necessary to control the current pandemic. When people have to stay at home abuse increases (mainly towards women) and children suffer – physically but also emotionally and psychologically.



While you may feel this is an issue 'elsewhere' or 'for others' please bear in mind that statistics show One in Three people will suffer. There will be a reflection online at 11.30 am on the 5<sup>th</sup> when the focus will be **"No More 1 in 3"**. At 8.30pm the same day there will be an online service.

On December 10<sup>th</sup> from noon, you will be able to watch on YouTube the latest Thursday Prayer from Manchester, with the theme of Advent. We will post the link on social media and share it by email to members. If anyone would like a hard copy please let me know.

Members will shortly receive, with their Christmas card, a subscription request and a copy of the 2021 Prayer Diary, newly designed. Our subscription will include two copies per year of a brand new membership publication. It does not yet have a name (suggestions welcome to [publications@mothersunion.org](mailto:publications@mothersunion.org)) but we have been given a sneak peak of ideas around content. We do know, from our past history, that it will be a professional, well produced magazine which we can be proud to share.

The final copy of Families First tells us that the new magazine will contain:

- \* features on members and their work both in Britain and Ireland and worldwide, based on our global themes: peace and safety, self-reliance and gender justice
- \* reflective articles, prayerful pieces – from members, leaders and partners of Mothers' Union
- \* updates on policy and advocacy work, maps and graphics to help bring to life the huge impact members make around the world
- \* information on upcoming events
- \* ideas for meetings, and ways to encourage others to join.

My thanks to those knitting hearts and rainbows, much requested by our hospitals. If anyone would like patterns please get in touch.

In the current situation we are missing many opportunities to gather, to worship and to share fellowship, but I am aware that members are keeping in touch with each other, which is so important for us all at this time. My thanks to you all.

On behalf of all our members I wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas

Bob Taylor  
Branch Leader

Seen on Facebook

**No Nativity this year**

because the three wise men faced a travel ban.

**The census has been indefinitely postponed**

because it's been outsourced to the people  
responsible for track and trace.

**Joseph and Mary ended up in Bethlehem**

because it was the nearest COVID testing centre  
they could find to Nazareth.

**The shepherds have been furloughed.**

**Why did the angels appear in the sky to the shepherds?**

They were socially distancing.

**The innkeeper has shut up under Tier 3 regulations**

and a further slump in bookings

**Santa won't be working**

because there is a curfew and he'd break the rule of six  
with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner, Blitzen

**Another reason is that Finland just closed its borders.**

Santa can't cross the Finish line.

**As for Rudolph, with that red nose**

he should be isolating and taking a test.

**Why was 2020 a great year for the good news about Jesus?**

It went viral.

***We isolate now  
so when we gather again  
no-one is missing***

### ***3rd Thursday Light Lunch... continued***

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In reply to the Thursday Light Lunch article in last month's edition of the magazine.

Not only do the Choir at St. John with St. Mark miss the singing, but yes, along with other things taken from us due to the Covid-19 Pandemic we also do miss the Thursday lunches at Christ Church Walmersley.

The time spent together, meeting new friends, the fun & laughter (usually at Nigel's expense) and of course the lovely lunches provided by the team who work so hard to prepare them. From salads & sandwiches to hot meals on cold days, if anyone has not yet tried the lunches, they can be recommended.

Until we can all meet again we wish all at Christ Church, especially the lunch team, a Merry Christmas and a very healthy and Happy New Year.

Take care, and God Bless, from all at St. John with St. Mark.



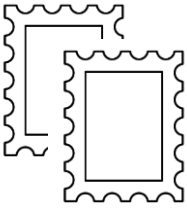
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### ***WELL DONE!***

Ruth Butcher was so inspired by older people who have taken on amazing challenges to raise money for charity during lockdown. She says that jumping out of planes is not for her so she decided to cycle 100 miles in two weeks. The challenge was to raise money for Bury Hospice who looked after her brother so well.

Her £300 target was soon surpassed and Ruth wishes to thank those (many being her friends in Mothers' Union) who have so generously made donations. Currently the total stands at **£860**.

**THANK YOU ALL**



## ***Little Voice***

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Our continued response to the appeal for used stamps, both old and new, British and foreign, has been magnificent!

After collecting and sorting all the stamps which have been kindly placed in the tin at the back of church, they are sent off to the organiser and chief sorter.

Little Voice aids and provides a home for street children in Ethiopia, by selling stamps to collectors.

Please keep collecting and removing any stamps from your post (leaving about one cm. or half an inch of envelope around them) especially at this Christmas time, and search out any old stamps you may have tucked away in a drawer or even old stamp albums.

Many thanks again,

David Peters

## ***JIGSAWS FOR SALE***

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**From the safe and secure garage where they are stored**



All proceeds go to Church as usual

Also I am hoping that anybody who can will pass on to me any jigsaws they have finished with, providing they are complete.

Thank You

Joan Pearson (St. John with St. Mark)



# Sunday @ Seven

**Our regular Sunday evening informal worship  
(song/reflection/prayer)**

**December 27<sup>th</sup>**

*“Heaven invites you to a party!”*

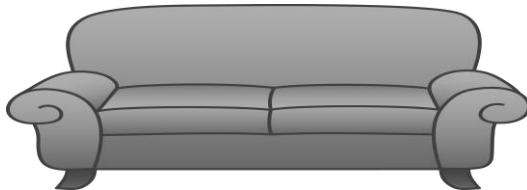
**January 31<sup>st</sup>**

*“Looking Forward”*

As things are at present we are unable to meet in person so we use Zoom to come together in video/audio. We are aware that this option is not available to everyone so we can always deliver you a service sheet to enable you to join with us in spirit!

Currently some fifty people come together with us, in one format or another, on the last Sunday of each month. If you would like to give it a go please contact Nigel Silvester or Ian Banks.

Then all you need to do is make yourself a tea/coffee – perhaps even treat yourself to cake or biscuits! And come and join with us at 7pm on the above dates – from the comfort of your own sofa!



**December**

Sun 6                    **2<sup>nd</sup> of Advent**  
10.30am            Celebration of 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
Joint service at St. John with St. Mark

Mon 7    6.30pm            Christingle Service (Zoom)

Sun 13                    **3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent**  
10.30am            Family Service (CC)  
10.30am            Holy Communion (SJM)

Sun 20                    **4<sup>th</sup> of Advent**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (both churches)

***See centre pages for details of Christmas services***

Sun 27                    **St John the Evangelist**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (SJM)  
10.30am            Morning Prayer (CC)  
7.00pm            Sunday @ Seven (Zoom)

**January**

Sun 3                    **2<sup>nd</sup> of Christmas**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (both churches)

Sun 10                    **Baptism of Christ**  
10.30am            Family Service (CC)  
10.30am            Holy Communion (SJM)

Sun 17                    **2<sup>nd</sup> of Epiphany**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (both churches)

Jan 24                    **3<sup>rd</sup> of Epiphany**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (SJM)  
10.30am            Morning Prayer (CC)

Jan 31                    **Candlemas**  
10.30am            Holy Communion (both churches)  
7.00pm            Sunday @ Seven (Zoom)

Personal details have been removed in our online edition for data protection purposes.

Please contact us through our websites or social media accounts and we will ensure your message reaches the correct person.

To book baptisms, weddings or just to talk, call in to Parish Office every Wednesday 6.30-7.00pm at St. John's Church Hall

Lots more info on our websites: [www.ccwalmersleybury.org.uk](http://www.ccwalmersleybury.org.uk)  
<https://stjohnstmarkchurchbury.com>

Please send your articles for the magazine by 14<sup>th</sup> of the previous month to [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)



2000

It is 20 years ago, but were you involved in the making of the millennium hanging at Christ Church?

Or maybe you know the story behind a panel embroidered by someone no longer with us.

It would be good to record these stories before they are lost, and to mark the 20 years since its completion by highlighting some of them.

If you can help please contact Barbara Taylor or Hazel Bamford or email [wrub@live.co.uk](mailto:wrub@live.co.uk)