

A monthly round-up of  
news, views, events  
and services at  
St George's, Heaviley,  
SK2 6NU,  
and St Gabriel's, Adswold  
*in the*  
*Parish of St George, Stockport.*  
[www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk](http://www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk)



## Who's Who in the Parish of St George, Stockport

<b>Vicar</b>	Rev. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall <i>vicar@stgeorgestockport.org.uk</i> 456 9382	<b>Praise and Play</b>	Parish Office 480 2453 For 0-4s and their carers. Meet every Monday in term time, 9-11 in church. Story time at 10am.	<b>Choir</b>	James Hibbert 07365 519207 <i>actingdirectorofmusic@gmail.com</i> Practise Thursdays 7.30-9pm in the vestry. Sing on Sundays at 10.15am and 4pm services.
<b>Assistant Curate</b>	Rev. Dr Janine Arnott <i>rev.janinearnott@outlook.com</i> 612 1048	<b>St Gabriel's</b>		<b>Church Cleaners</b>	Meet on 1st Tuesday of every month 9.30-12 noon.
<b>Reader</b>	Peter Hall 456 9382	<b>Messy Church</b>	Rev. Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall 456 9382 For children and their parents. Meet occasionally, usually Saturday mornings.	<b>Church Flowers</b>	Marjorie Lees 483 3676 Jean Hayden ( <i>donations</i> ) 483 2367
<b>Churchwardens</b>	Andrew Regan 440 0408 Hazel Jenkins 483 4679	<b>Uniformed Groups</b>		<b>Church Gardeners</b>	Walter Stead 430 2449 Meet on Tuesdays 9.30-12.30.
<b>PCC Secretary</b>	Andrea Webb Reilly 07400 883938	<b>with connections to St George's</b>		<b>Coffee Mornings (Weds)</b>	Olwen Smith 483 6548 Wednesdays from 10.30am in the Parish Room.
<b>PCC Treasurer</b>	contact via: <i>treasurer@stgeorgestockport.org.uk</i>	<b>Rainbows</b>	Trisha Brown 07403 353 175 Sue Kirkland 07854 101 918 For girls aged 5-7. Meet Fridays 6.15-7.30pm in the Parish Room.	<b>Cursillo</b>	Usually meet on last Wednesday of the month. 7.30pm at different venues.
<b>Parish Office</b>	Marion McCall 480 2453	<b>Brownies</b>	Rachel Lockett 775 2755 Voni Walker 07956 674 241 For girls aged 7-10. Meet Thursdays 6.30-8pm in the Parish Room.	<b>Handbells</b>	Andy Clark 483 3703 Play for All-Age and Taizé services, plus other special events. Ringers of all ages (with or without experience) always welcome. Rehearsals in church arranged around the ringers' availability.
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Richard Parr 439 8644	<b>Guides</b>		<b>Linen Guild</b>	Pat Rigley 487 1999 Maintain the church's linen.
<b>Safeguarding co-ordinator</b>	Will Hesson 480 0630	<b>Beavers</b>	Bill Frith 439 3232 For boys and girls ages 6 and 7 Meet Fridays 6-7pm at rear of Trinity Methodist Church.	<b>Magazine Editorial Group</b>	Richard Parr 439 8644 Meet monthly to plan future issues.
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk">www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk</a>	<b>Cubs</b>	Bill Frith 439 3232 For boys and girls ages 8-10½. Meet Fridays 7.15-8.45pm at rear of Trinity Methodist Church.	<b>Mothers' Union</b>	Pat Durnall 483 4837 Meet on 2nd Monday of the month in church at 2.15pm.
<b>Webmaster</b>	Peter Hall 456 9382	<b>Scouts</b>	Elizabeth Goodred <i>Elizabeth.goodred@stockportscouts.org.uk</i> For boys and girls ages 10½-14. Meet Wednesdays 7-9pm at rear of Trinity Methodist Church.	<b>Singing Group</b>	James Hibbert 07365 519207 <i>actingdirectorofmusic@gmail.com</i> Sing about once a month at the All-Age Service, with one practice beforehand. All welcome.
<b>St George's Primary School</b>		<b>Other Groups and Activities</b>			
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deborah Grindrod 480 8657	<b>St George's</b>			
<b>St George's</b>		<b>Bell ringers</b>	Anne Mayes 485 6477 Practise Mondays 7.45-9pm. Ring on Sundays 9.45-10.15am. Meet in the tower.		
<b>Deputy Wardens</b>	John Hardy 01663 764 462 Will Hesson 480 0630	<b>Bible Reading Fellowship Notes</b>	Janet Neilson 483 9025 Notes are ordered on request.		
<b>Verger</b>	Ian Staley 456 3093	<b>Bible Study Groups</b>	<i>contact the clergy</i> Study groups and courses are arranged from time to time.		
<b>Director of Music</b>	James Hibbert 07365 519207 <i>actingdirectorofmusic@gmail.com</i>	<b>Chancel Guild</b>	Meet on 2nd Tuesday of every month, 9.30-12 noon to care for the chancel.		
<b>Bookings for Parish Rooms</b>	Parish Office or 480 2453 Judith Swift 483 8681				
<b>St Gabriel's</b>					
<b>Secretary</b>	John Sutcliffe 286 2301				
<b>Bookings</b>	Parish Office 480 2453				
<b>Children's Activities</b>					
<b>St George's</b>					
<b>Children's Corner</b>	Available for children (and parents) during services. Equipped with books, crayons and soft toys.				
<b>Sunday Club</b>	Louise Clark 483 3703 For children of nursery and school age. Meet during the 10.15am Parish Communion service most weeks during term time.				
<b>Junior Choir</b>	James Hibbert 07365 519207 Practise 6.30-7.30 on Thursdays in the vestry; sing on Sundays for 10.15am service.				

### Front cover photo

Snow at St George's on  
29th December  
(photo by Janet Neilson)

**Services and events  
in February:  
see page 6**

## From the Editor:

Dear Readers,

IT SEEMS A long time since I wrote an editorial, but may I start by wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year. We are back in lockdown, of course, with many more cases of Covid reported, and St George's is again sadly closed for services, although not for long, as we all hope and pray. But the vaccinations are being administered, and a new spring is just round the corner, in more ways than one.

I particularly wanted to express our thanks and admiration to James, the choir, and all the musicians who made Advent and Christmas services so special with such wonderful music. And also to all those others, clergy, churchwardens, stewards, church cleaners and everyone else, who have worked so hard, and continue to work, to keep the flame of our faith burning brightly. The Advent candles representing faith, hope, joy, love and peace are still alight in the hearts of all our congregation and community. As Isaiah wrote, 'That time of darkness and despair will not go on for ever ... The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.' Matthew completed Isaiah's prophecy when he wrote triumphantly, 'A light has shined.'

The symbolism found in the Advent candles, as well as in *The Twelve Days of Christmas* (see Angela's article on p. 9), and in the story of Jesus's first miracle (see p. 15) reminds me of an old record from the 1960s, that became a hit both here and in America. It was Tex Ritter's *Deck of*

*Cards*, which recounted the story of a GI fighting in the Second World War, in the Battle of Monte Cassino. In a lull in the fighting, the soldier attended a church service led by the padre. The soldier was seen during the service to bring out a deck of cards and spread them out. His Sergeant sternly ordered him to put them away, and after the service he was brought before the Provost Marshal to be punished for his irreverent behaviour. The officer was horrified at the charge, and threatened the GI with the severest punishment he could give. The soldier said that he could explain. He had no prayer book or Bible in his pack, but only a deck of playing cards. He used the cards, he said, to remind him of his faith. The Marshal was intrigued, and asked him to explain. "You see," the soldier said, "The Ace reminds me there is one God. The 2 reminds me of the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the 3 of the Trinity. The four represents the 4 Gospels; the 5 the 5 Wise Virgins, and the 6 and 7 the Days of Creation and the seventh day when God rested."

The GI was acquitted.

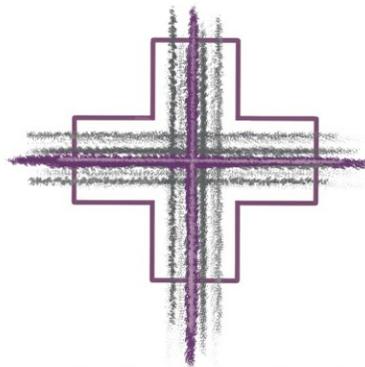
Perhaps you would like to think for yourselves what the rest of the cards represented! You could even listen to the song on YouTube! Answers next month, anyway!

Keep safe and well.

God bless!

Richard Parr.

Editor.



## ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent begins on Wednesday 17th February

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We can assist with the design of your display, if necessary, and make no charge for this.

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## GRAPEVINE would like to thank all our loyal advertisers

for their understanding and backing during this difficult period.

If you can, please continue to support them.

## Grapevine magazine is in digital form

**Please note:** Grapevine magazine will be published in **digital form only** during the current coronavirus restrictions. Copies can be downloaded from our website at [www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk](http://www.stgeorgestockport.org.uk)



## Elaine writes:

Not having the same freedom to go out and about during times off, it's easy enough to resort to watching the goggle box for some down time. The old faithfuls come out as re-runs and catch-up TV and I find myself drawn to programmes like Time Team and Antiques Road Trip and their associated spin offs.

It struck me that they are all seeking some kind of treasure, whether it be small shards of pottery, tiny artefacts of a forgotten age or poignant reminders of times past.

The antiques programmes are not just about "How much is it worth?" in financial terms but "How much is it worth?" in terms of story, history and legacy.

I'm intrigued by the samplers, those beautiful embroideries, each worked by a young woman depicting her family and home, careful stitches worked in poor lighting to create a reminder of her life at the time.

I'm touched by the group of letters featured on one Antiques Road Show that were written by a child on her way hopefully to safety in Canada during the Second World War. Sadly, she was never to arrive as the ship sank and the letters she had carefully penned were delivered to her family home sometime after the news of her death was conveyed. The militaria specialist struggled to hold back the tears as he presented her story.

I'm impressed by the archaeologists in Time Team, digging through layers of soil and debris in all weathers, carefully recording the minutiae along with the majestic, painstakingly exposing the treasures beneath.

The post holes, deep in the earth, showing evidence of buildings, animal bones, pot shards and implements indicating habitation, echoes of a lost civilisation who lived and worked there.

The landscape with its lumps and bumps hiding secrets which come to life through geophysics and excavation. Documents and maps, drawings and narrative become

part of the bigger picture than we might have previously thought.

Each discovery, each treasure adds a bit more to the story.

There is something so very precious about a hand-worked item or a carefully written letter which would come under the heading of treasure.

The creation of personal things leaves behind an imprint of the person who created it, a legacy, a story, a treasure in its own right.

When I have visited people's homes at times of bereavement, there are many such treasures to see: a piece of cross stitch, a knitted blanket, a painted seascape, a wonky carving. They are all important and all imbued with the sense of story and investment of the particular person who has gone from their sight but whose presence feels evident in what they have left behind.

I am minded to think about the treasure that has been left behind by Jesus; gone from our sight but whose presence is evident by what has been left behind. Jesus, image of the invisible God, *1 Colossians 1:15-20* has left behind tell-tale evidence of his presence among us. Whilst we might not necessarily find a piece of pottery from the jars at the wedding at Cana or a fish bone from when he fed 5000 people, there is evidence that Jesus really existed, evidence that he really walked this earth and evidence of the difference that he made to the people he met.

The treasure may be hidden but worth excavating, worth searching out, worth getting our hands dirty for.

On 17th February, it will be Ash Wednesday and we begin the period of Lent, a great time to think again about our faith, to search out the opportunities to reconnect with Jesus and to see how his story impacts on our lives today. There are a couple of specific opportunities to do that. If you'd like to, join us at our Lenten breakfasts, starting on the first Saturday in Lent and Christianity for the Curious which starts on 3rd February. More details are on p. 8. Due to the ongoing coronavirus restrictions, both of these courses will be on line via Zoom. Should you wish to explore further, please contact myself or Janine and we will give you the links you need.

With every blessing, Elaine.

## Simnel Cake

SIMNEL CAKE has been eaten since medieval times as both a rich, sweet treat and a symbolic ritual. The fruit cake is topped with eleven marzipan balls to represent the eleven apostles of Christ, minus Judas. Simnel cake is a light fruitcake that is often associated with Easter and Mothering Sunday.

The cake can be kept for a month in a cool dry container so you can spread out your enjoyment over a few weeks.

Following on from the success of our Christmas Cake making, we thought we'd have a go at Simnel Cake. If you would be interested in requesting one or even be willing to make one for someone else, please get in touch with Elaine.

We would be looking for a suggested donation of £5 for each cake.



## Parish News Roundup

### Holy Baptism

10th Jan Akbar Dehghan

### Holy Matrimony

None in December-January

### Funerals

7th Dec Olive Preece

15th Dec Gordon Stephenson

4th Jan Eric Booth (at the crematorium)

8th Jan Joan O'Neill (at the crematorium)

21st Jan Brenda Delaney (graveside service)

21st Jan Derek Watson Coles (at the crematorium)

25th Jan Hilary Forrester (at the crematorium)

### Communion Flowers were sponsored as follows:

6th Dec from Jean Martin, in memory of Ethel Henshaw from the Durnall family, in loving memory of John Durnall

13th Dec from the Stephenson Family, in memory of Elsie Brown

20th Dec from Pat Durnall, in loving memory of Asa and Ida Brooks and Mary, Ann and all the Brooks family

27th Dec from Phoebe Macleod, in memory of our best loved husband, Dad and Grandad, Rod Macleod, who made life special

3rd Jan from Mike and José Westwood, in memory of Barbara Westwood

## Parish News Roundup

10th Jan from Pat Durnall, in loving Memory of John Durnall and all the Durnall family

17th Jan from The Hayden and Alcraft families, in loving memory of Walter Fallows from Jill, Anne and Lynn, in memory of Brian & Nancy Wainwright

24th Jan from Jill, Anne and Lynn, in memory of Brian & Nancy Wainwright

31st Jan to thank all those who work tirelessly behind the scenes  
**Floodlighting**  
4th Dec from Kathleen McMahon, in loving memory of Louise Simone McMahon  
19th Dec from Tommy Bowden, in memory of my wife Brenda, on what is her 80th birthday.

17th Jan Morag and Malcolm Ranson for our wedding anniversary

### Message Board

You may be interested to see the postage increases over the last 20 years:

2000	1st class	27p
	2nd class	19p
2010	1st class	41p
	2nd class	32p
2020	1st class	76p
	2nd class	65p
From 1st January 2021:		
2021	1st class	85p (a 9p increase!)
	2nd class	66p (a 1p increase)

Be wary – the increases were usually introduced in the last week in

## Parish News Roundup

March. Not so this year, which may be the norm from now on.

### Absent Friends

We were very glad to receive good news over Christmas of two friends no longer able to worship with us.

**Frances Farrar** continues to be happy and well looked-after in her care home near Coventry. Closer to home, **Jean Davison** is well and cheerful in Appleton House, her lovely care home in Bredbury. She sends her love and best wishes to all church members. She can be visited in a safe and socially distanced way even during the latest lockdown, and enjoys a half-hour chat.

### Doctor in the House

We should like to congratulate Sarah Regan on her recent success in gaining a DPhil in experimental psychology from the University of Oxford. Well done, Sarah, and many congratulations also to proud parents Andrew and Kim!

### Baptisms, Banns and Marriage bookings:

Please contact the vicar  
telephone: 0161 456 9382  
or email:  
vicar@stgeorgestockport.org.uk.

### March 2021

#### Grapevine magazine dates:

Deadline copy date: **Fri 19th Feb**  
Committee meeting: via email

## Services at St George's in February

**Please note** that our services will all be **online** without a congregation present until further notice.

This decision, which has not been taken lightly, will be reviewed on **Wednesday 10th February**. Please see our Facebook page and website for the latest information.

### Live-streamed services and events

**Mondays to Fridays:** Morning Prayer at 9.30am

**Every Sunday:** Holy Communion at 10.15am  
Compline at 9pm

**Friday 5th Feb:** Messy Church Bake Off at 1pm

**Saturday 6th Feb:** Messy Church Craft/Outdoors at 1pm

**Sunday 7th Feb:** Celebration of baptism at 4pm (pre-recorded service)  
Story Time at 5pm

**Sunday 28th Feb:** Choral Evensong at 4pm

**The church will be open for individual private prayer in the Chapel as follows:**

**Wednesdays and Sundays:** 11am to 12 noon

# Service of Confirmation at St George's with Bishop Mark



(Hazel Jenkins)

THE FOLLOWING candidates were confirmed by Bishop Mark on Sunday 10th January at the morning service of Holy Communion, and are seen here in a socially distanced photo, outside the west door of the church:

- Pourya Alipour
- Page Wright-Harrison
- Gillian Wright-Harrison
- Akbar Dehghan (Akbar was also baptised)
- Akbar Khashei
- Gaynor Cartwright
- Sahar Zahraie
- Alireza Kalantari
- Lisa Darbyshire-Ellison

## Christingle Services on Christmas Eve

THREE CHRISTINGLE services were held at St George's on the afternoon of Christmas Eve. Entry to each service was by pre-booked ticket, with all households being socially distanced from one another in reserved seating.

About 200 people in total attended the three services, and there is always a very lovely atmosphere when the candles on the christingles are lit.



(Verity Isherwood-Cann)

### St George's floodlighting – sponsorship request form (Please return to Steven Kelly, 5 Holly Road, Bramhall, SK7 1HH).



Name ..... Phone no .....

Date of evening requested ..... £10 or £..... donation enclosed (Please make cheques payable to St George's Stockport PCC)

Reason for request (if appropriate) .....

If you are a taxpayer and would like the church to reclaim the tax on your donation please also complete the following Gift Aid declaration:

*I want to Gift Aid my donation of £..... to St George's Church, Stockport. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.*

Title..... First name or initial(s).....Surname.....

Home address:.....

Post Code ..... Signature..... Date .....

## Christianity for the Curious

THIS COURSE will be in six weekly sessions by Zoom.

Your computer does not have to have a camera and microphone, but it is helpful if it has. You will need speakers/headphones so that you can hear what is being said.

The course covers the following aspects of faith:

1. What is the Bible? 3rd February.
2. God the Father. 10th February.
3. God the Son. 17th February.
4. God the Holy Spirit. 24th February.
5. What did Jesus say and do? 3rd March.
6. What do Christians do? 10th March.

This is a great Christian basics course which will give you an insight into the Christian Faith and will explore areas which you might not have considered.

Suitable for emerging Christians, enquirers, those considering baptism and confirmation and those who would like the opportunity for a refresher course in a welcoming and open environment.

All on Wednesday starting promptly at 2pm until 2.40pm.

Email Elaine or Janine to let us know if you are interested and we will email the Zoom link back.

Look forward to seeing you.

*Peter Hall.*

## David Rogers

WE HAVE heard the **sad news** of the death of the Venerable David Rogers, a former curate of this parish. David trained for ordained ministry at Ridley Hall, in Cambridge, as did our current curate Janine. David was ordained deacon in 1949 and priested in 1950. He was curate at St George's from 1949 to 1953 before moving to St Peter's Levenshulme in Manchester Diocese until 1959. He went to be the vicar at Sedbergh in Bradford Diocese from 59-74 and took on being priest in charge of Cautley with Dowbiggin from 59-60 before becoming the vicar of the parish from 60-74. He also took on the priest in charge's role at Garsdale from 59-60, becoming vicar of the parish, 60-74. He then became the vicar over Sedbergh, Cautley and Garsdale 74-79 and priest in charge of Firbank, Howgill and Killington 73-77. To add to all of his duties, he became rural dean of Sedbergh 59-73 and later rural dean of Ewecross 73-77. He was made honorary canon of Bradford Cathedral 67-77 and the archdeacon of Craven 77-86 retiring in 1986, having licence to officiate in Bradford, and permission to officiate in Blackburn and Carlisle. He was much loved and highly spoken of by members of our own congregation who kept in touch with him over the years. We hold his family and friends in our

## Saturday morning Lent Breakfasts 2021

### *What has Covid Done for Me?*

THESE WILL be held online via Zoom. So please do join us on your computer, tablet or phone. Sessions will be from 10am – 10.40 am (the length of time of a free Zoom session)

The individual sessions will be as follows:

*20th February – The challenges of Covid and lockdown (Morag Ranson)*

*27th February – Staying connected (Janine)*

*6th March – Positives and opportunities (Elaine)*

*13th March – Maintaining mental health (Jonathan Lloyd, counsellor)*

*20th March – What has Covid taught us? (Chris Dawson)*

Please contact Chris Dawson to book a place and to receive the Zoom link:

[christopher.dawson4@ntlworld.com](mailto:christopher.dawson4@ntlworld.com)

Bring your own croissants and coffee to the screen!

## Live Lent: God's Story, Our Story

**Available in church, near the chapel, during opening times for private prayer.**

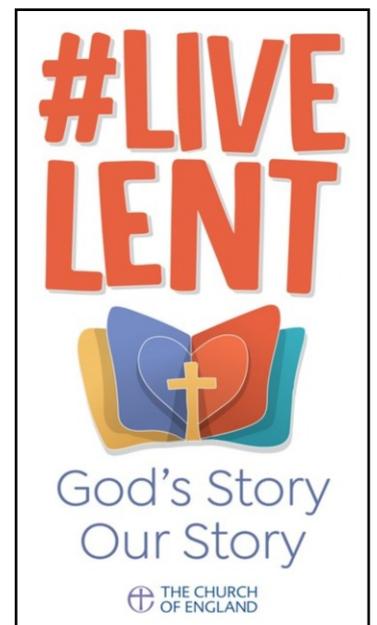
Live Lent: God's Story, Our Story is the Church of England's Lent campaign for 2021. This booklet invites each of us to reflect on our own story of God and how we might share it through our everyday lives as part of our Christian witness.

It encourages us to take a fresh look at evangelism, exploring how Jesus and his first followers communicated the good news of God's love by inviting, listening and responding creatively to others.

For each of the 40 days of Lent, the booklet includes a short Bible passage, a reflection and a prayer. The daily reflections follow weekly themes – each with an accompanying action – drawn from the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2021, *Living His Story: Sharing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways* by Hannah Steele (SPCK) (see page 19).

See more about this and other resources for Lent at:

[www.churchofengland.org/livelent](http://www.churchofengland.org/livelent)



## “The 12 Days of Christmas”: catechism or memory game?

IT WAS IN ANOTHER English parish magazine that I found the startling statement: “The song was written in England as one of the ‘catechism songs’ to help young Catholics learn the tenets of their faith.” It would therefore have to date somewhere during the period (1558 – 1829) when practising Catholicism was against the law. It then listed the hidden meanings of the gifts, with “my true love” being God himself:

- 1 a partridge in a pear tree ... Jesus
- 2 turtle doves ... the Old and New Testaments
- 3 French hens ... faith, hope and charity
- 4 calling birds ... the four Gospels
- 5 gold rings ... the first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch
- 6 geese ... the six days of creation
- 7 swans ... the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord)
- 8 maids ... the eight beatitudes, from the sermon on the mount
- 9 ladies dancing ... the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control)
- 10 lords ... the ten commandments
- 11 pipers ... the eleven faithful apostles
- 12 drummers ... the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles’ creed.

Having never heard of any of this, I did what we all do in such circumstances – I tried family and knowledgeable friends, then scuttled off to Wikipedia, as ever a worthwhile source, informative and in this case rather entertaining! Dear friends and family, we are all off the hook; there is no theological significance in the weird and expensive gift list. Giving presents at Christmas appears to be the only link with our faith.

1780 saw the first publication of “The twelve days of Christmas”, when it appeared in an English book for

children with the rather charming title, “Mirth without mischief”. This would presuppose a much longer oral history for a song or chant that would have been used as a memory game with forfeits. Other versions have been found in France, Scotland and the Faroes, with differing gifts, the one from the Faroes appealingly beginning with a feather! The giver is not always “my true love”; in some versions we have “my mother”. There is no way of knowing whether the words were sung or chanted until Frederic Austin in 1909 published the music we still use.

The first reference to it being a catechism song appeared as recently as 1979 in an article written by a Canadian hymnologist, H.D. McKellar. Wikipedia notes that McKellar offered no evidence for his claim. His words obviously fell on fertile ground as, three years later, Father Hal Stockert of New York wrote an article, as did Father James Gilhooley, also of New York, in 1987 and in 1992, all with identical claims.

The complete lack of historical evidence and the proposed gift items being no more Catholic than Protestant would probably have led to its disappearance from sight, but Father Stockert, despite making an apologetic admission for the fiction, nonetheless posted the claim on a Catholic website in 1995! Each Christmas sees a minor recycling, and it clearly has crossed the Atlantic. We seem to have watched the gestation of an urban myth!

Learning of the origin of this tiny example of fake news at exactly the time of the USA’s frenetic power struggle at presidential level felt ironic. Lies and half-truths, if they appeal, can obviously be immensely resistant, hence President Biden’s plea, “We must reject the culture in which facts themselves are manipulated and even manufactured”. It will be a mammoth task.

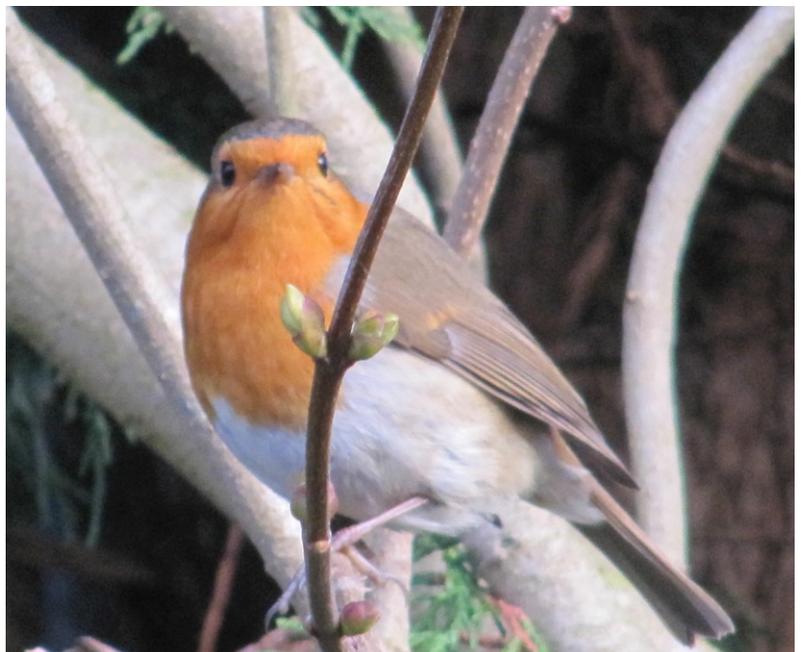
*Angela Foulkes*

## The Story of the Robin

LIKE MANY of you, I’m sure, our garden has been enlivened by the presence of a pair of robins. The male (I think!) has taken to waiting on the fence for me to bring out his breakfast, and seems to scold if it’s late. Maybe it’s a female, after all!

I love the legend of how the robin acquired his distinctive red breast. The robin was present at the Crucifixion, and in his pity and love, hopped onto Jesus’s shoulder and sang to comfort him. He also tried to remove the thorns from the crown that was cutting so cruelly into Jesus’s head. In doing so his chest became covered with blood. Since that day, the robin has proudly displayed his red breast.

*Richard Parr*





## Garden Gnomes

THIS TIME last year, I was looking forward to a trip to Rome and excitedly awaiting the birth of our granddaughter. Like so many others, our holiday had to be cancelled as the whole of Italy went into lockdown just a few hours before our flight was due to depart on March 10th. The following week, we were all advised to cease unnecessary social contact and on March 23rd Boris Johnson told us we must stay at home. Two weeks into lockdown, on April 8th, our beautiful granddaughter Lily Alba Griffiths arrived safely. In the months that have followed, I have been very fortunate to see Lily regularly on walks in Cale Green Park, socially distanced of course.

I wonder how many of you will be sending or receiving flowers this month? Lilies are a romantic favourite. White lilies represent sincere love and purity, whilst purple or red mean passion and admiration. Roses are the traditional choice for those wishing to show their love on St Valentine's Day. It is popularly believed that Valentine was a third century priest from Rome. Emperor Claudius II believed married men made bad soldiers and banned marriage. Valentine arranged secret ceremonies but was discovered, jailed and sentenced to death. He fell in love with the jailer's daughter and sent her a love letter signed "from your Valentine". He was taken to be killed on February 14th.

The rose is England's national flower but they are out of season in February. Most of our Valentine's Day roses come from Holland and the remainder from Kenya (31%) and Columbia(5%). Whilst flying long distances is not environmentally friendly, flowers are usually flown as belly freight on commercial passenger airlines except during peak periods. Due to the power required to heat greenhouses in a cooler climate, roses from the Netherlands produce up to six times more carbon dioxide emissions than those from Kenya.

The giving of a single red rose on Valentine's Day says "I love you", a dozen red roses says "Be mine". White roses say "I am the one for you" and yellow roses "We are friends ". Yellow with a red tip "I am falling in love with you ". Other colours and numbers have their own special meanings so a quick Google search will reveal the message of your Valentine's bouquet!

Many times over the past year, I have felt very fortunate to have our own garden, our own private outdoor space. No doubt, all our gardens have benefited from the extra care and attention many received, particularly during the good spring weather we had in 2020.

February's garden jobs are mainly about preparation, getting things ready for the spring.

Choose and buy your seeds and organise them according to sowing date. Think about what compost you will need and buy it – I wish we had done this last year !

Check your garden tools and equipment – clean and oil anything that needs it.

Prune wisteria, summer-flowering clematis and winter flowering shrubs.

Trim winter flowering heathers.

Lift and divide snowdrops to create more plants.

Start chitting potatoes.

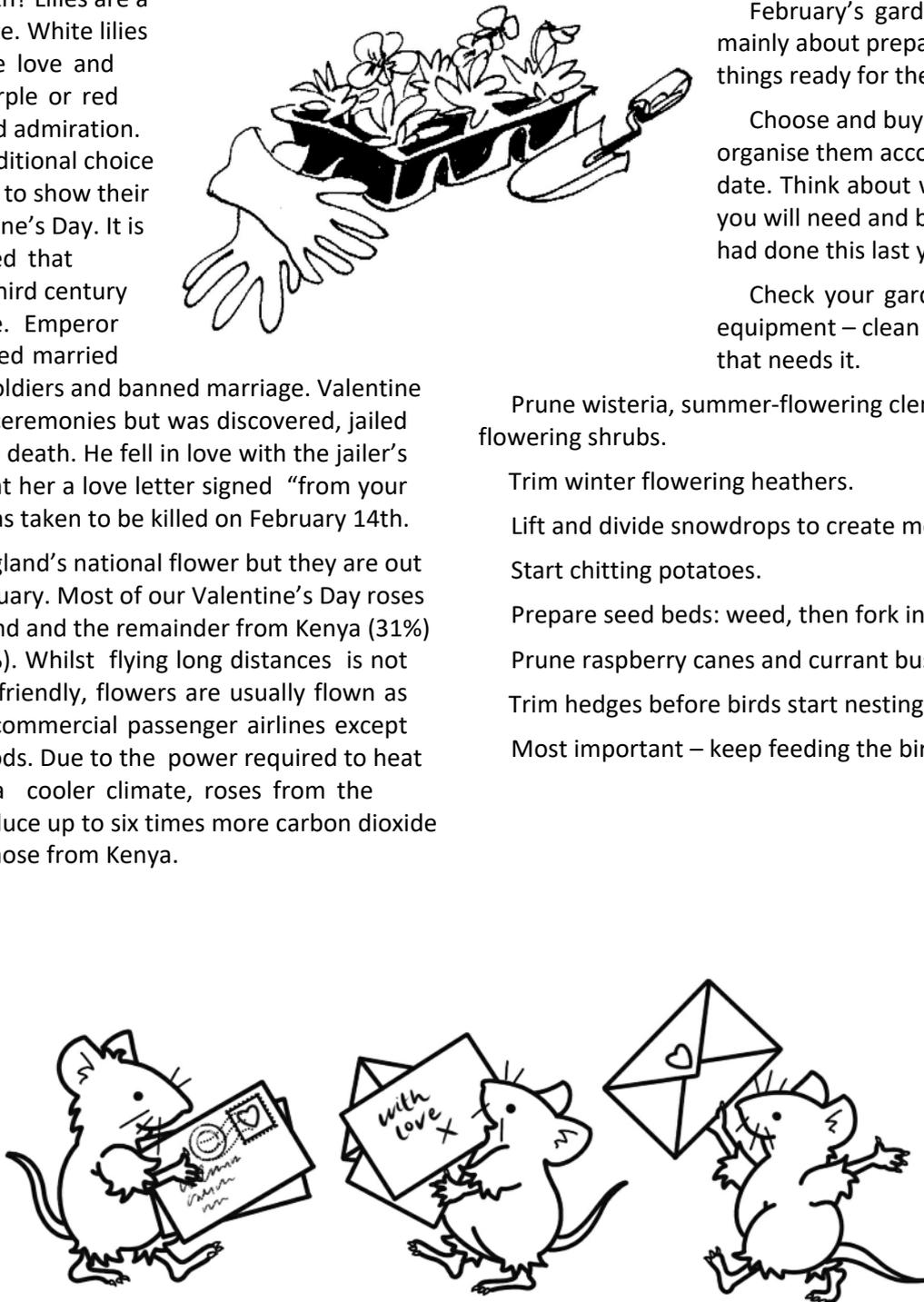
Prepare seed beds: weed, then fork in compost.

Prune raspberry canes and currant bushes.

Trim hedges before birds start nesting.

Most important – keep feeding the birds!

*Gnome Viv*



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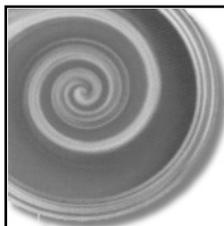
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## Annual Subscription reminder

A reminder for those of you who  
pay annually, in January, for the  
*Grapevine* magazine –  
subscription is now due and is £10  
as usual.

Thank you.

### Sudoku puzzle: easy

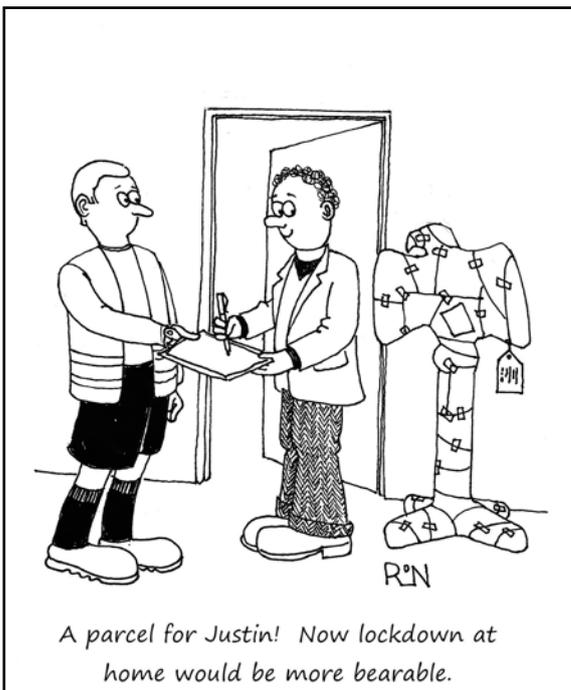
	5		9			7	2	3
2		4	3	8			1	
	3		5				6	
		6			9			
5		3	2		4	6		1
			6			5		
	4				8			3
	2			6	3	8		9
3	8	9			5			4

### Sudoku puzzle: intermediate

		1		6			8	
8			5				7	2
		9	2	4		3		
	5							
		3	7	1	5	2		
							5	
		8		7	9	5		
2	9				6			8
	3			2		7		

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(Answers to all puzzles are on p. 23)



### Crossword

1		2		3		4		5		6		7
8												
9				10								
11	12					13		14				15
16		17				18		19		20		21
22				23						24		
25												

#### Across

- 8 Interrogated (Acts 12:19) (5-8)  
 9 'Burn it in a wood fire on the — heap' (Leviticus 4:12) (3)  
 10 Tobit, Judith, Baruch and the books of Esdras and the Maccabees are part of it (9)  
 11 Science fiction (abbrev.) (3-2)  
 13 Clay pit (anag.) (7)  
 16 Went to (John 4:46) (7)  
 19 'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to — your bodies as living sacrifices' (Romans 12:1) (5)  
 22 David's plea to God concerning those referred to in 14 Down: 'On — — let them escape' (Psalm 56:7) (2,7)  
 24 Royal Automobile Club (1,1,1) 25 How the book of Ezekiel refers to God more than 200 times (Ezekiel 2:4) (9,4)

#### Down

- 1 Seas (Proverbs 8:24) (6)  
 2 One of the sons of Eli the priest, killed in battle by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11) (6)  
 3 Specialist in the study of the Muslim religion (8)

- 4 'Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but — him as if he were your father' (1 Timothy 5:1) (6)  
 5 One of Esau's grandsons (Genesis 36:11) (4)  
 6 Taking a chance (colloq.) (2,4)  
 7 God's instructions to the Israelites concerning grain offerings: ' — salt to — your offerings' (Leviticus 2:13) (3,3)  
 12 Confederation of British Industry (1,1,1)  
 14 'All day long they twist my words; they are always — to harm me' (Psalm 56:5) (8)  
 15 The crowd's reaction to Jesus bringing back to life a widow's son in Nain (Luke 7:16) (3)  
 16 Disappear (Psalm 104:35) (6)  
 17 How Jeremiah was likely to die if he wasn't rescued from the cistern where he was imprisoned (Jeremiah 38:9) (6)  
 18 What the prophets do to a wall, with whitewash (Ezekiel 13:10, RSV) (4,2)  
 20 Made by a plough (Job 39:10) (6)  
 21 Noah was relieved when the flood waters continued to — (Genesis 8:5) (6)  
 23 Jesus gave the Twelve the power and authority to do this to diseases (Luke 9:1) (4)

## Knutton's News

IT WAS DURING the first lockdown in March, that Stella Evans (owner of Knuttons opticians) took stock – she had celebrated a significant birthday and was enjoying the simple pleasures of being at home and appreciating her husband's company. But it was due to Covid-19 that she decided that the time had come to hang up her ophthalmoscope and retire.

Despite having been unable to carry out consultations since March, and an uncertain future, retirement was still a difficult decision, as Knuttons has been such an important part of Stella's life since the early 1980s.

The original practice was established over a century ago by Mr Alfred Knutton. It was situated on Chestergate, in Stockport, near The Three Shires. Mr Knutton employed an assistant optician, Jack Cavanagh, and when Mr Knutton retired Jack and his wife Nora took over the business. In the late 1970s the landlord refused to renew their lease, so Jack and Nora transferred the practice to Bramhall Lane. Jack and Nora ran the business along with their special friend, Olive Wilson, but two years later there was a tragedy because Jack died very suddenly. Nora was not qualified in optics but knew a lot about the business so with Olive's help she kept the practice going and employed locums. Stella was one of those locums and joined them in 1982 along with a new receptionist, Shirley Widdup. Shirley has worked on reception, looked after the accounts and helped many people to select frames for nearly 40 years until the pandemic led to her decision to retire.

Stella took over the practice in 1990 when Nora retired. It was a natural transition because she already knew many

of the patients and everything went smoothly. I suspect this is when Knuttons first advertised in the church magazine, so they are definitely one of our long-term advertisers.

Now, after serving the community for such a long period, Stella is delighted to report that the practice, including the patient list, has been taken over by Anthony Sharples and Marcus Hassall. Mr Sharples is an optometrist with many years' experience and Mr Hassall is an expert in all aspects of frame styling and dispensing. Since August, they have been working part-time at Knuttons, so many of the patients will have already met them. They are enthusiastic about Knuttons and its history, and have embarked on a refurbishment programme to bring the facilities in line with their plans for the future. The practice was closed during December and part of January, but is now open again for eye examinations. Look out for the new advert in Grapevine magazine.

Some things will not change, and Mrs Susan Lee, who has worked with Stella for 16 years, will still be available at reception to greet everyone with her welcoming smile.

A final word from Stella: 'It has always been a pleasure to meet you and work to improve the vision of the people who live in the area; many of you have become friends. I sincerely thank you for your loyalty over the years. I wish you well for the future and hope that you will support Marcus and Anthony as they write the next chapter of the Alfred Knutton story.'

*Rosie Stead*

## ...Was Lost, and Now Is Found.

AT THE END of the year before last, an appeal was made in the Grapevine for any information leading to the recovery of our Director of Music's mitre-crowned rubber duck, known, somewhat irreverently, as the 'Bishop of Bath'. The bishop disappeared without trace some time during the last Christmas Tree Festival in November 2019, and had long been given up for lost.

But now there are tidings of great joy: the bishop has reappeared, having been discovered on Christmas Eve, during the first Christingle service, sitting quietly alongside a toy motor cycle on the table in the Children's Corner. He was immediately reunited with his owner (who threatened in future to nail him to the organ lid) and we hope that his travelling days are over.

The bishop has divulged none of his adventures during his long absence, and we can only speculate that he was most probably befriended by a child during the Christmas Tree Festival, and invited back to their home for a sleepover. Given the long months of lockdown which followed soon after, the Christingle service would have been the first opportunity to return him, and it seems that the family duly attended. He looks sleek and glowing, and has clearly been loved and well cared for over the last thirteen months. To whoever brought the bishop back into the fold, we extend our warmest gratitude.

*Penny Bisby*



# Inviting Jesus to the party: A Sermon on the Wedding at Cana in Galilee

I HAVE TO admit to a small smile while reading this passage for today. How many Covid-19 restrictions would this wedding party have broken? We live in a very different world now – different from the context of this wedding feast and different even from a year ago – but the story we can draw from it is timeless.

I want you to picture the scene: there are hundreds if not thousands of guests celebrating a wedding. As was the custom at the time, the wedding feast went on for days and it was the host's responsibility to provide food and drink for the guests. Hospitality is a big part of social life; guests would have travelled a long way; the feast did not just mark the wedding but it was a mark of the host's social status.

Here at the wedding in Cana, everything is fine until the wine runs out and the party is about to come to a screeching halt. This would have been a social catastrophe. It's not just inconvenient, and you can't just nip to the local shops for a click and collect. The wine has gone, it's run out and there is no more. It's a game changer, there are even records of people taking legal action against hosts who run out of wine at wedding feasts – that is how important it is.

Reading the passage, it seems the guests (and the host) are not yet aware that social catastrophe is about to happen, as there is no panic. Only Mary, it seems, has noticed what is happening and she calls on Jesus to help.

Now, I don't know about you, but anyone who can turn water into wine is a great person to have at a party! So Mary calls Jesus and he is not keen. I love this bit. Mary asks Jesus to help; Jesus is not keen, because, "it is not my hour," and Mary appears to completely ignore Jesus's protests. She turns to the servants and says, "Do as he says". She is in command and control, isn't she?

So, Jesus does as he is asked, as he is invited to do.

And Jesus performs the first of the seven signs we read about in John's Gospel.

There are many symbolisms and messages in this passage, but today I want to look at Jesus's presence at that party and I want to ask you a question: where has Jesus been in your life over the last year? Where has Jesus been in your life over the last year?

Has he been ever-present? Or is Jesus someone you call on only when the party is about to come to a screeching halt, only at the most difficult of times when everything else has failed? When there is nobody else to turn to?

I think we all have a tendency to do that. When our life is going well it's easy to forget, to put Jesus in a corner until we need him.

I wonder how often you call on Jesus and when?

Are you someone who invites Jesus to the party, who seeks his company and his presence even when times are good?

Or, do you only call on Jesus when times are bad – when things are so bad there is nowhere else to go, no one else to call on?

Is Jesus your companion or your crisis manager?

Jesus could help at the wedding feast because he was there – he was at the party; he was part of the celebration; he was there for the highs as well as the lows; he was invited to the party.

The transformation of water into wine is an example of Jesus's transforming power and it is symbolic of how Jesus transforms us. It's a transformation that is often hidden, unnoticed. Just as the transformation of water to wine was unnoticed until the wine was drawn and tasted, so, too, is the transformation in us often unnoticed until it is drawn out of us; until we need to respond to a situation and we need to forgive the seemingly unforgivable; we need to love the seemingly unlovable; we need to make sacrifices. Only then do we begin to notice the ongoing transformation that is happening in us and the growth; the transformation within us.

But Jesus can only work in us by invitation: we have to invite Jesus to the party, in the good times as well as the bad. If we only ever call on Jesus at times of crisis, we limit his transforming power to that of intensive care instead of preventative health and growth and flourishing.

So, is Jesus your companion or your crisis manager?

Over the last year most of us will have sailed through many storms. It's not just about having lockdown limits in our lives, it's about the sense of isolation; the fear of being ill; concern for our own health and that of our loved ones; anxiety about a rapidly changing world; shock at the vulnerability of the world around us; the relentlessness of time.

Inviting Jesus into our lives helps us weather those storms. He doesn't make everything perfect; he doesn't stop the wine running out, but if Jesus is at our party, working in us, transforming us from within, we are better equipped to weather the storms we are sailing through.

Over the next few weeks, we will be running some online discipleship and Lent courses. We also have some booklets here for you to read – you can take one. We can't meet together. Maybe we will have a big party when all this is over, but for now we need to meet virtually. Keep an eye out for the dates and how to join; we may be separated but we are not alone and we journey together. So please do ask me or Elaine for details.

Amen.

*Janine*



# The Giving Machine™

## Raise funds for St George's whilst you shop on line

IN THE LAST year I have acquired the new habit of shopping online. I did do it before 2020 but really I'm the type of shopper who likes to have a good look at something before I buy it. However, necessity has changed my habits as I'm sure it has for lots of us. Many of you are already registered with The Giving Machine and I was delighted to realise that every time I do a Morrison's online delivery order I am putting a bit of money directly into St George's coffers. This is true when you purchase from any of at least 2000 other suppliers. So far we have 48 supporters who have raised £1,127.98 for church funds.

It's very easy to join: just go to [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/st-georges-church-stockport/support](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk/causes/st-georges-church-stockport/support) or go to [www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk](http://www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk) and enter the code: 61889.

Once you have joined, you can go to the drop down menu at "For Shoppers" on the top menu bar of the website and you will see the option "Install desktop reminder". If you install this, every time you click on a site

through which you could donate, a little reminder box pops up in the top corner of your screen allowing you easy access.

Beware of accessing Amazon through this route as the money generated goes back to Amazon to fund them.

However if you do shop on Amazon, there is a similar scheme available. Go to [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk), and choose "The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Stockport, St George" as your nominated charity. (The simplest way is to search for Stockport St George.) Then each time you shop at Amazon (providing that you start at [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk)) St George's will receive 0.5% of the cost of eligible purchases – not a lot on a single purchase, but it all adds up if many people participate.

At the moment it is definitely a case of every little helps, so if you are able to help, thank you very much.

*Hazel Jenkins Steve Kelly*

## Word of the year – too many to choose

EACH YEAR the Oxford English Dictionary chooses to name a word of the year. But last year, 2020, it was left speechless as there were too many to choose from. So, for the first time ever, it has chosen not to name a word of the year. The Collins dictionary, beloved of Scrabble players, chose 'lockdown' for its word of the year in November 2020.

Suddenly we have all become armchair epidemiologists, routinely talking about the 'R number', 'getting the R down' or 'bringing the R below 1'. 'Covid-19', first recorded on 11 February 2020, in a report by the World Health Organisation, quickly overtook 'Coronavirus' in frequency of use. Also 'flatten the curve' and 'community transmission' became everyday phrases.

Other words or phrases which have increased in frequency since 2019 are: 'following the science';

'pandemic'; 'circuit breaker'; 'lockdown'; 'shelter-in-place'; 'bubbles'; 'face masks' and 'key workers'.

The need to work from home has affected the use of language with 'remote' and 'remotely'; 'mute' and 'unmute' and 'workation' and 'staycation' increasing in usage.

Other news events have also dominated use of language: 'impeachment'; 'acquittal'; 'mail-in'; 'Black Lives Matter' and 'BLM'. The term 'QAnon' and 'conspiracy theory' also increased in usage in 2019. Interestingly, the use of 'Brexit' dropped by 80% last year!

So, a year that left the OED speechless, 2020, produced more new words than any other.

*Rosie Stead*

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## The White Lion pub on Great Underbank wins an award

... not just 'an award' but a prestigious award, at last year's North West regional construction awards.

The pub, which had been derelict for more than 10 years, has now won best in class in the conservation and regeneration category at the virtual awards ceremony. This Grade II-listed building has recently been transformed into 11 one- and two-bedroomed apartments, thanks to a £2.4m investment by Trafford Housing Trust alongside the local council.

Councillor David Meller, committee member for regeneration and economy at Stockport Council, said: 'Creating new homes to this standard is vital to establish the town centre as a location of choice in South Manchester, and breathes new life into what was formerly a disused building. The building looks fantastic

and has been given the respect it deserves in its new life as luxury apartments.'

The renovation was part of the council's £7million investment in the Underbanks and Market Place area. The White Lion was rebuilt several times over the centuries and was re-fronted in a mock Tudor black and white style in 1823.

It was sympathetically restored. The grand staircase, original glass and unique turret room have all been preserved and finished in a modern design, whilst the original pub sign has also been incorporated into the development, giving a nod to the past and its former life.

*Rosie Stead*

*Edited version of an article which appeared in the Stockport Express 23 December 2020*

## Recipe of the month: Lentil Bolognese

*This is a quick, easy and economical vegetarian recipe. I suggest you start with the lower amount of soy sauce, check later and add more if it's needed.*

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, any colour, chopped
- ¼ teasp salt
- 2 large stalks celery, chopped
- 2 large garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons tomato purée
- 2 tablespoons pesto
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes

80ml water

1 cup green or brown lentils, pre cooked (or one 400g tin of lentils, drained and rinsed)

1-2 tablespoons soy sauce

1 teasp sugar (optional)

Fry onion for 5 minutes. Add garlic and celery and fry for a few minutes more. Add tomato purée and pesto and cook a further 2 minutes.

Add tomatoes, water, lentils and soy sauce and simmer 10 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.

*Pamela Ferguson*

## Love is ...

AS WE MARK Valentines' Day this month, it's good to ask the question: *what does real love look like?*

The Apostle Paul says: '*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*' (1 Corinthians 13: 4-8).

*Love is unconditional:*

At heart, love is not just feelings but action! Paul talks here about unconditional love, using the word *agape*, which demonstrated in God's love for us: '*We love, because He first loved us.*' (1 John 4:19).

*Love is forgiving:*

According to the film Love Story, '*Love means never having to say you're sorry.*' This is rarely true in our

experience! According to Paul, love is being ready to forgive others and '*keeping no record of wrongs*' (5). We can only forgive others because we know God forgiveness in our own lives.

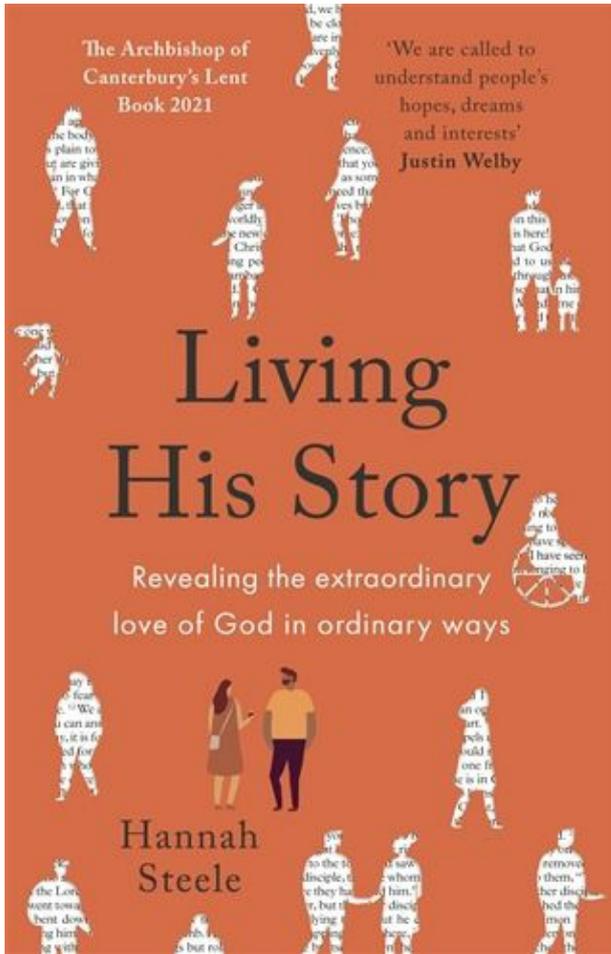
*Love is sacrificial:*

Paul says that *agape* love is not selfish or self-seeking, but selfless and self-sacrificial, putting the needs of other people first. This is modelled by Jesus giving His life for us on the cross. Take the words from 1 Corinthians and instead of the word *love*, substitute your own name. Now substitute the word *Jesus*. This is the Jesus who is available to you to make your love for others grow and flourish.

Someone once compared love being like a group of porcupines huddling together on a cold night. The closer they get, the more they jab and hurt each other. '*To love at all is to be vulnerable.*' (C S Lewis).

*Canon Paul Hardingham*

# Living His Story – revealing the extraordinary love of God in ordinary ways



## The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2021

by Hannah Steele, SPCK, £7.99

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2021, *Living His Story*, explores evangelism as a way of sharing God's love with people. How can we convey the love of God to our neighbours in a post-Christian world that has largely forgotten the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Hannah Steele uncovers liberating and practical ways of sharing the Gospel story afresh. With warmth and encouragement, she shows us how we can live Jesus' story in our own lives simply by being the people God made us and allowing people to be drawn to him through our natural gifts.

*Living His Story* is a Lent devotional that will change the way you think about evangelism, show how ideally suited it is for the world we live in and fill you with confidence in sharing God's love with the people around you.

Set out in six sessions to take you through Lent, the book can be used as a single study for individuals or small groups to prepare for Easter. It will help you find space to see evangelism from a new practical perspective.

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## Lent – then and now

IN JUST OVER two weeks' time we will be entering the season of Lent, traditionally a time for us to think about our Christian faith and practice. In the past this often involved some form of self-discipline – which often included serious 'fasting'.

I've been reading recently the trilogy of books by Hilary Mantel, works of historical fiction, based on the life of Thomas Cromwell, who rose from being the son of a blacksmith in Putney to being the Lord Privy Seal and right-hand man of King Henry VIII.

It is a fascinating account of life in a very different world from ours, and, amongst other things, I was struck by the way Lent was observed in those days, when the influence of the Church was so powerful. For the people of Tudor times, food and feasting (at least for the well-to-do) was a very important part of life, and any opportunity to celebrate was readily taken up. Saints days – of which there were many – weddings, 'sports' events, such as jousting or hunting, were all excuses for a good feed. However, come Shrove Tuesday, all the staple ingredients in the larder would be consumed ready to start the Lenten fast. This would require giving up partaking of meat, cheese, eggs, butter and similar products. (Fish was allowed, however.)

The compliance was strictly observed and enforced, with only one meal a day allowed. In some ways it compares with the Muslims' observance of Ramadan. It certainly makes just giving up chocolate a rather insignificant penance, even if it might be good for us healthwise.

Of course, life in general was very different in those days, with rules and regulations being strictly, and often brutally, enforced.

Lent also required daily attendance at church worship, and religion as a whole had a very high profile at all levels of society. In particular, the people's lives were being affected by the advent of the Protestant Reformation, and the question of the position of the Church in the nation's affairs. In addition, the rulers of the major European Christian nations subscribed to the doctrine of the 'Divine Right of Kings'. This decreed that kings ruled by God's authority alone, and therefore any decisions they made were God-inspired. In effect, they had absolute power and demanded total obedience, and Henry VIII was a prime example of this belief. In fact, this doctrine continued up until William of Orange came to the throne in 1689, at the invitation of Parliament, on the basis that he would be responsible to them in how he ruled.

Nowadays, we might think the Divine Right would be a ridiculous concept to hold, but traces of the mindset still pop up among national leaders of a certain type. I have a vivid memory of Donald Trump, in recent times, likening his position as President of the USA to that of kings and royalty, with the implication of having absolute power. A chilling thought for us all, and especially for his own country, which is a Republic.

It was the historian, Lord Acton, who warned, 'Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely', and his statement begs the question – if power is so toxic, who should we trust?

Here in the UK, we are fortunate to have grown up in a country with a long democratic tradition, although it is a freedom that has to be jealously guarded, even in this day and age as recent events both here and abroad have demonstrated. We are also fortunate to have a monarchy which is committed to the principles established when William II came to the throne.

However, the answer to the question 'Who should we trust?' is for us, as followers of Christ, clear: ultimately we are called to put our trust in him, and in God our heavenly Father. We acknowledge this when we regularly say to God, in the Lord's Prayer, 'Your kingdom come... for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory'.

When Jesus gave his followers this commandment on how to pray, it was the context of living in a time of autocratic power being wielded by individuals, both Romans and Jews. That is how his disciples would understand it. We should also remember that even amongst Israel's most famous leaders and kings, such as David, there were those who at times showed their weaknesses and failings.

Jesus, however, by his teaching and example has shown us that in God we have a loving King and Father. He is a ruler who cares for each one of us, yet gives us the freedom to choose how, and to what extent will we serve him. Whatever our position in society, to do this truly and faithfully, we have to be prepared to be open to his guidance, and follow what is right in his sight. So, with this in mind, as we approach another Lenten season, let us find time to consider how we might better serve our King, our God, our loving Father, so that we can play our part in making his 'Kingdom come, on earth, as in heaven'.

*Walter Stead*

*Editorial in the Stockport Sunday School Newsletter, February 2021. Reproduced with their kind permission.*

**Carol Singing outside St George's on Christmas Morning** *(Photos: Hazel Jenkins)*



*The choir, socially distanced, singing carols after the morning service*



*St George's Church with Christmas banners, seen through the west door on Christmas morning*





## ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, STOCKPORT MUSIC LIST – FEBRUARY 2021

Due to current circumstances this music scheme may be subject to change at short notice  
Music provided by Cantor and Organist

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup> February – The Second Sunday before Lent			
10:15am – St. George's Service		4:00pm – Baptism Thanksgiving Service [Pre-recorded]	
Setting:	Mass of St. Thomas – Thorne	Hymn:	175 Come down, O Love divine,
Hymn:	611 We bring you, Lord, our prayer...	Hymn:	267 Thou, whose almighty word
Hymn:	267 Thou, whose almighty word	Anthem:	Christ be our light – Farrell

Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup> February – The Sunday next before Lent / Transfiguration Sunday			
10:15am – St. George's Service		4:00pm – Service currently suspended	
Setting:	The Lincoln Setting – Archer		
Hymn:	2 Christ, whose glory fills the skies,		
Hymn:	248 'Tis good, Lord, to be here,		

Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> February – Ash Wednesday			
		7:30pm – St. George's Service	
		Setting:	Addington Service – Shephard
		Hymn:	95 Forty days and forty nights
		Hymn:	96 Jesu, lover of my soul,

Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup> February – The First Sunday of Lent			
10:15am – St. George's Service		4:00pm – Service currently suspended	
Setting:	Mass of St. Thomas – Thorne		
Hymn:	95 Forty days and forty nights		
Hymn:	97 Lord Jesus, think on me,		

Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> February – The Second Sunday of Lent			
10:15am – St. George's Service		4:00pm – Choral Evensong	
Setting:	Mass of St. Thomas – Thorne	Format to be confirmed.	
Hymn:	586 The God of Abraham praise		
Hymn:	582 Take up thy cross, the Saviour said,		

Director of Music – Mr. James Hibbert *FGLO FSCO*

Vicar – Rev Canon Elaine Chegwin Hall *MTh*

### Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day (16th February)

EVER WONDER why we eat pancakes just before Lent? The tradition dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, when Christians spent Lent in repentance and severe fasting.

So on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon them to confession, where they would be 'shriven', or absolved from their sins, which gives us Shrove Tuesday. At home, they would then eat up their last eggs and fat, and making a pancake was the easiest way to do this. For the next 47 days, they pretty well starved themselves.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439, and today's pancake races are in remembrance of a panicked woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire. She was making pancakes when she heard the shriving

bell calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron, and still holding the pan.

Flipping pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 runs: "And every man and maide doe take their turne, And tosse their Pancakes up for feare they burne."

Some people have noted that the ingredients of pancakes can be used to highlight four significant things about this time of year: eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, while salt keeps things wholesome, and milk stands for purity.

Shrove Tuesday is always 47 days before Easter Sunday and falls between 3rd February and 9th March.

# National Nestbox Week – time to help your garden birds

OUR BIRDS are short of nesting holes, and no wonder: gardens, parks and woodland are much neater than they used to be, and modern homes offer few crannies for nest building.

National Nestbox Week, which is celebrated from 14th February each year, aims to encourage us to put up more nestboxes, and to consider planting shrubs or trees with fruit that birds eat. These can make all the difference to birds struggling to survive, especially blue tits, great tits, house sparrows, robins and starlings.

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) offers a variety of ideas for building and placing nestboxes. Go to: [www.nestboxweek.com](http://www.nestboxweek.com)

## From the editor:

WHILE SPENDING so much time together during the pandemic my wife asked me not to keep singing, "I'm a Believer" by The Monkees because she found it annoying. At first I thought she was kidding.

But then I saw her face ...

## Puzzle solutions

Easy Sudoku solution:

1	5	8	9	4	6	7	2	3
2	6	4	3	8	7	9	1	5
9	3	7	5	1	2	4	6	8
4	1	6	8	5	9	3	7	2
5	9	3	2	7	4	6	8	1
8	7	2	6	3	1	5	9	4
6	4	5	1	9	8	2	3	7
7	2	1	4	6	3	8	5	9
3	8	9	7	2	5	1	4	6

Intermediate Sudoku solution:

3	2	1	9	6	7	4	8	5
8	4	6	5	3	1	9	7	2
5	7	9	2	4	8	3	1	6
7	5	4	6	9	2	8	3	1
6	8	3	7	1	5	2	9	4
9	1	2	4	8	3	6	5	7
4	6	8	1	7	9	5	2	3
2	9	7	3	5	6	1	4	8
1	3	5	8	2	4	7	6	9

Crossword

O		H		I		E		O		O		A
C	R	O	S	S	E	X	A	M	I	N	E	D
E		P		L		H		A		S		D
A	S	H		A	P	O	C	R	Y	P	H	A
N		N		M		R				E		L
S	C	I	F	I		T	Y	P	I	C	A	L
	B			S			L				W	
V	I	S	I	T	E	D		O	F	F	E	R
A		T				A		T		U		E
N	O	A	C	C	O	U	N	T		R	A	C
I		R		U		B		I		R		E
S	O	V	E	R	E	I	G	N	L	O	R	D
H		E		E		T		G		W		E

Life is like a journey on a train with its stations, with changes of routes and with accidents!  
At birth we boarded the train and met our parents and we believe they will always travel on our side.  
However, at some station our parents will step down from the train, leaving us on this journey alone.  
As time goes by, other people will board the train and they will be significant i.e. our siblings, friends, children and even the love of our life.  
Many will step down and leave a permanent vacuum.  
Others will go so unnoticed that we don't realize that they vacated their seats!  
This train ride will be full of joy, sorrow, fantasy, expectations, hellos, goodbyes and farewells.  
Success consists of having a good relationship with all the passengers requiring that we give the best of ourselves.

The mystery to everyone is : We do not know at which station we ourselves will step down.  
So, we must live in the best way - Love, forgive and offer the best of who we are.  
It is important to do this because when the time comes for us to step down and leave our seat empty, we should leave behind beautiful memories for those who will continue to travel on the train of life without us.  
I wish you a joyful journey for the coming years on your train of life.

Reap success.  
Give lots of love and be happy.  
More importantly, be thankful for the journey!

Lastly, I thank you for being one of the passengers on my train!

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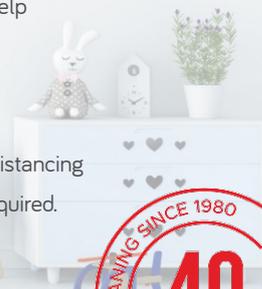
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