

# St Peter's Church Magazine



Festive  
Edition

December 2019  
and  
January 2020



*St Peter's Church, Formby*

# **ST PETER'S NEEDS YOU!**

Christmas will be upon us very soon and thoughts turn to the services over the Festive period. We need helpers to do various tasks before, during and after the following services: the three Christingle Services, the Midnight Service and the 10.00am Service on Christmas Day.

If you can spare some time, please contact Paul McHenry or Steve Edwards as soon as possible. A rota can then be drawn up.

24 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle 3.00pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle 4.30pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle 6.00pm
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Midnight Service 11.30pm
25 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Day Service 10.00am

Thank you in advance. Paul McHenry (871722)



## **Mince Pies Please!**

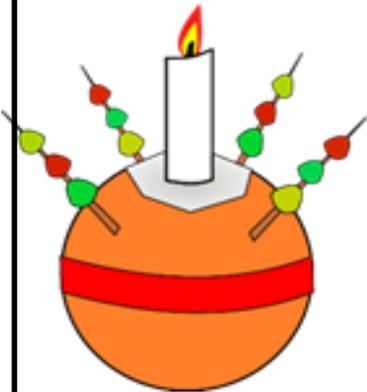
We would be very grateful to receive donations of mince pies for the Carol Service.

If you would be willing to donate a box, please bring to church or leave in the Parish Office by 16<sup>th</sup> December.



## **Christingle Makers Needed!**

A team will be preparing 600 CHRISTINGLES at 10.00am in the Bier House on Christmas Eve all help appreciated, children (school year 5 and above) and adults please. It is great fun and what better way to get in the festive mood!



## **Collect used stamps from Christmas cards**



Small stamps, large stamps, old stamps, new stamps, franked and international stamps... we want all your stamps! For more information on the Bone Cancer Research Trust see their website at [bcrt.org.uk](http://bcrt.org.uk) Thank you!

**FRONT COVER:** St Peter's Christmas Card on sale now from the Office and in Church. Designed especially for St Peter's by Barbara Leyland (née Smallwood).



# From the Editorial Team

Here we are again - Christmas is almost upon us and we wonder where another year has gone. Time - and the Christian Festivals in particular - seem to revolve with increasing rapidity.

This is a joint December/January edition - but the editorial meeting for the February edition is already booked, so if you have a contribution to make, get writing now while the spirit moves you.

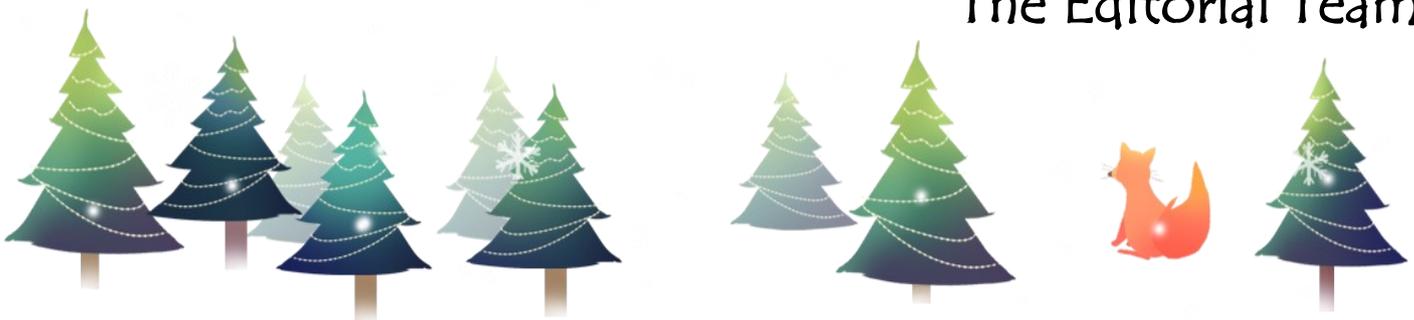
Talking of contributions, the "Reverse Advent Calendar" (page 15) is a novel and sensible idea. How about giving it a go?

Contributions of mince pies and shortbread for the Carol Service will be very welcome, as will Christingle makers on Christmas Eve (page 2 for details).

And how about turning out for the social event of the year - the Wardens' Church Clean and Churchyard Winter Tidy on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December (page 21)?

And may we wish you all a joyous Christmas and an invigorating New Year!

The Editorial Team



The magazine is an important means of outreach and keeps everyone informed and in touch with the life of St Peter's Church. The magazine is free, though it would be appreciated if you would like to give a donation towards production costs. If you would like a magazine delivered to your home, please contact the Parish Office.

*Please note the deadline for the February 2020 edition of the magazine is **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020**. Contributions to [alisonwhiffing@aol.com](mailto:alisonwhiffing@aol.com)*

## Dear Friends,

What better place to start a letter in Merseyside than with one of John Lennon's famous songs, "And so this is Christmas, and what have you done...?"



Writing this at the end of November, some of us will have to admit, 'Very little!' And we'll be in the usual last minute panic to get everything done in time for Christmas.

John Lennon's song continues, "And so this is Christmas, for weak and for strong, for rich and for poor ones, the world is so wrong."

And the busy-ness of the run up to Christmas this year isn't helped by all the uncertainty that a looming election brings. (Thinking of Brenda from Bristol I nearly wrote blooming election!)

And outside the UK, the situation is hardly any better - international animosities, riots in Hong Kong, cyber attacks and climate change to name but a few.

When Jesus was born the world was also in a troubled state, with much political unrest and uncertainty, and, as for us if all the election promises are to be kept, there was also the fear of more taxation. The purpose of the journey to Bethlehem by Joseph and Mary was a census from which more tax could be levied - pre-Budget planning Roman-style!

Into that dark world the birth of Jesus shone like a light. God was intervening to show us a better way - the way of love and service rather than greed and domination; the way of peace and reconciliation rather than the way of hatred and violence.

A modern poet, Frank Horne, has put it this way in his poem 'Kid Stuff':-

*"The wise guys tell me that Christmas is Kid Stuff.  
Maybe they've got something there –  
Two thousand years ago three wise guys  
chased a star across a continent  
to bring gold, frankincense and myrrh  
to a Kid born in a manger with an idea in his head.  
And as the bombs crash all over the world today  
The real wise guys know that we've all got to go  
chasing stars again  
In the hope that we can get back some of the Kid Stuff  
Born two thousand years ago."*



The world needs the Christmas message of peace, love and hope more than ever. So as we get out the candles and put the lights on the tree, let them be a prayer, that light will shine in the darkness, and may we also be human lights as we care not only for ourselves and our families but also remember and help those most in need, and try to bring joy where there is despair or loneliness.

There are many events and services coming up in St Peter's that will do just that along with the booklets that will be available called the # Follow the Star 12 Days of Christmas Wonder. In the booklet the two Archbishops issue us this welcome -



**“You too are welcome to follow the star this Christmas and find yourself in that humble stable, in a place where you are known and loved in the presence of God.”**

This small booklet of reflections, starting on Christmas Day, will be available during December. A wonderful resource as we journey together following - or chasing - the star of joy and wonder.

Our Bereavement Service this year will be on 8<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30pm. The change from the traditional month of November is in recognition of how difficult the Christmas season can be for those missing a loved one.

Then there will be services in St Joseph's Care Centre, a Relaxed Christmas Service, Halcyon House, Woodlands Nursing Home, singing in pubs, school plays and WOW services, parties, carol services and all before we get to three Christingle services on Christmas Eve!

We look forward once again to celebrating this very special time with everyone in St Peter's and all those who come to a service for the first time.

Nathan will be writing the February letter as I will be on study leave. A time to reflect and have ideas! Nathan will be looking after the running of the parish with the churchwardens.

Ted & I, along with Nathan & Poppy, hope that you will all have a very happy, love-filled Christmas, filled with Kid Stuff hope and joy – and that you will get everything done in time!

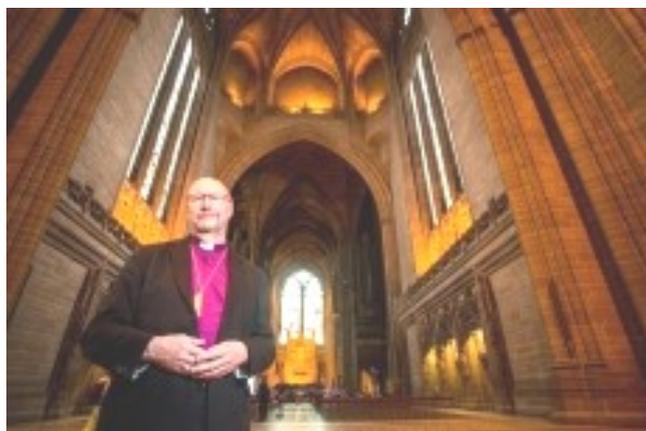


*Anne*

# Bishop Paul's Christmas Message 2019

A family flees for its life.

They have been living under the shadow of a murderous regime and they know that at any time the slaughter may reach them. They have no time. The journey is arduous and dangerous and there is no certainty of what they may find when they reach their destination.



This is a very present reality. It is the type of story we see almost every day on our news reports. The plight of the refugee, desperately crammed into boats trying to find a place of sanctuary. We feel sympathy, powerlessness, frustration. We look at the desperation and wonder how we have got to this in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We call out and ask where God is in this suffering.

Yet this is God's story. The family are Jesus' family and the tale is of the flight to Egypt. In it, as we know, the Christ child is being whisked away from Herod's pogrom. In it the only option is to travel to a strange land, a land full of potential danger and to an uncertain future.

So God became and refugee and as such is in the refugee's story. And he calls us to follow him into that story, to get alongside those in distress and above all find appropriate ways to welcome the stranger to our door.

In many ways the welcome of the stranger is central to the Christmas story. It is a harsh story in a difficult setting and it is one we dress up to be a picture postcard at our peril. Jesus's parents had been immigrants in Bethlehem struggling to find a place of shelter where they could have their child. They had been turned away many times and it was left to the poorest in society to offer a true, sacrificial welcome to the Lord of all. How often is that the case? The rich turn the needy away while those who could be seen to be in need are the ones that offer most love and comfort.

So Christ's story compels us to offer a proper Christmas welcome this year. And Christ's teaching reinforces that command. The command that the God of justice has echoed over the centuries. The command that is writ large throughout scripture. Jesus told us to look after the cold, the homeless, the hungry. Our neighbours. But Christ knew what that experience was like and Christ knew that all of humanity needs that love.

The media image of Christmas is one of self-indulgence. The time to spend, to party, to eat, drink and be merry. Jesus wouldn't want to deny you pleasure – he helped one party in Cana really get swinging.

But if Christ's story, the story of his beginnings, the story of his life is to continue to have lasting relevance and meaning then we should pause in the indulgence of our selves. And this Christmas look to indulge someone else. Support them, love them, aid them and bring them the welcome that so many denied to our Lord.

Then we can use Christmas to remind people that the birth of Christ made a bigger difference to the world than just a picture postcard story.

Happy Christmas.

# **HORIZONS REPORT**



*The Whitechapel Centre is the leading homeless and housing charity for the Liverpool region. They work with people who are rough sleeping, living in hostels or struggling to manage their accommodation. They are committed to help people find and maintain a home and learn the life skills essential for independent living.*

*Last year, the charity supported more than 4000 people in Liverpool who were experiencing homelessness.*

*The charity believes prevention is the first step in the fight against homelessness. They aim to offer support in housing at every step of the journey of homelessness, from the moment a person is at risk of losing their home, right through to those who have become entrenched in a 'street lifestyle'. The charity prevented 1243 individuals from becoming homeless thanks to interventions for those at risk including drop-in advice sessions, benefits advice and personal negotiations with landlords and agencies.*

*The Whitechapel Centre supported a further 1648 homeless people into the right accommodation for their needs. They also ensured 1199 people had access to education and employment activities to enable them to continue to live independently.*

*Because of support from organisations such as ours, the charity's vital services remain open to all, operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including day and night shelters, a 24 hr public helpline and dedicated Street Outreach Teams.*

*For further information:  
[www.whitechapelcentre.co.uk](http://www.whitechapelcentre.co.uk)*



## **SOUTHPORT OFFSHORE RESCUE TRUST**

*Run by the Southport Offshore Rescue Trust, Southport Lifeboat provides a lifeboat and land based search and rescue service around the Sefton coastline.*

*Independent of the RNLI, the Trust relies on donations and fundraising to support itself to provide a first class life saving service in an area of coast and water covering between the River Mersey and the River Ribble, and up to 25 miles offshore, including Southport Marine Lake.*

*The Southport Lifeboat has helped in the safe return of over 250 people since being formed in 1988, and aim to give their crews the best equipment possible to help save lives on our coastline.*

*The volunteer crews give up their time and comfort to carry out rescues in difficult and often dangerous conditions.*

*For further information:  
[www.southport-lifeboat.org.uk](http://www.southport-lifeboat.org.uk)*

**Paul McHenry**

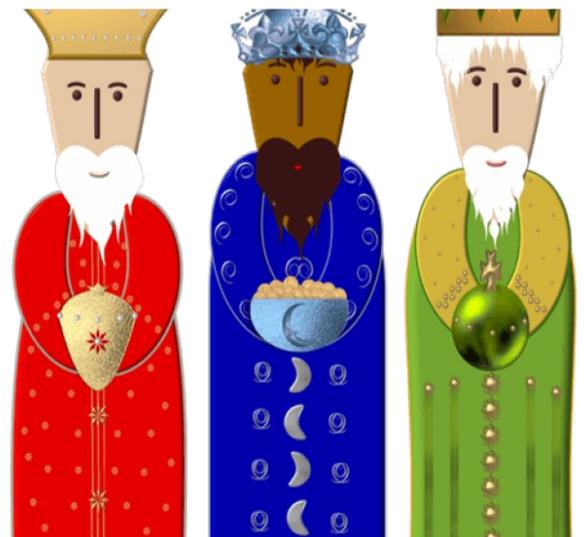
# A Gift

Auletes was amused by the antics of his crew when he instructed the steersman to change course for land. They had arrived at their destination after weeks travelling down the Red Sea. He had been personally instructed to undertake this voyage by Ptolemy, the king of Egypt himself. His constant need for incense had meant that Auletes had had to explore further down the sea for new areas which might produce the precious resin. Ahead was a low coastline lined with trees which might provide what he needed and having already done several trips he could speak some of the native language. After tying up the boat he told the crew to prepare to stay some weeks as they waited for favourable winds to return them home. Going ashore he was quickly told he would be allowed to trade his goods for frankincense.

Going out to see the trees he saw that they were already cutting the bark for the mixture to ooze into pots. Only half the trees were cut and on asking why he was told some trees were never cut as the seeds from cut trees rarely germinated. When the winds turned he sailed again to Egypt and handed over the blocks of frankincense. He held back two to sell for himself. So expensive was this resin that he made a fortune by selling it to merchants going up the Mediterranean where incense was much in demand. These merchants unloaded their goods at Jaffa and used camels to go inland.

Stopping at one of the caravanserai to rest for the night one small package dropped from a camel's pack and was picked up by a slave child working there. He had heard the traders talking about the incense resin and how it was used by kings and statesmen.

In the hostel were three well-dressed men discussing their journey northwards. They saw the half-starved slave boy and instructed the owner to feed him at their expense. The lad heard the three men say they were going to see a child king and wondering what gifts to give him. The unnamed slave boy shyly approached them and handed a package to them saying he understood the contents were used by kings. Opening it they saw frankincense, turned and thanked the boy.



The three men found the child king and then the sweet smell of frankincense was found to be coming from a stable.

**Rod Jacques**

At our meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November Revd Nathan told us about St Peter's visit to our partner community in Uganda. He outlined the history of the project and how it began through a connection with Sheilagh Williamson who had worked in the school there.

Our party, which included three teachers, performed building tasks, taking with them materials for this and also items for the school. His talk was accompanied by vibrant slides with some wonderful pictures of the children, shy at first, then showing their delight and affection for the visitors. Thank you, Nathan.

The MU's sixteen days of activism was marked by Holy Communion followed by lunch in the Cathedral on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

Our next meeting is the Christmas Party with agape lunch on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December starting at 1.00 pm in the Parish Hall. Please note time and place.

We are invited to St Michael's Christmas Party at St Michael's, Blundellsands, on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Our opening meeting in 2020 is on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January in the Bier House at 2.00 pm when Revd Peter Paine will talk on the visit he led to India.

The AGM and Bring & Buy are on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February in the Bier House. Please support the Bring & Buy as we depend on this for income.

We will resume collection of items for our three projects - magazines, woollens, etc. for Seafarers, cash for the yellow bucket in aid of holidays for disadvantaged children and toiletries for male refugees in Liverpool - at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January. The specific item for refugees will be toothbrushes.

We have been informed that subscriptions for 2020 will be £23.50.

Of this £23.00 goes to the central authority. The amount retained by the Deanery remains at 20p and by St Peter's MU 30p. Could you please let Tricia have a cheque for £23.50 made payable to St Peter's MU at the Christmas Party on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

As always, we welcome visitors at all our meetings. If you might be interested in joining the MU please contact Herbert (tel 873367).

We wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.



***Herbert and Jean***

# IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## Formby Quiet Time - Silent Communion

On Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 10.30am  
in the Bier House, St Peter's Church, Green Lane, Formby,  
Nathan will conduct a 'Silent Communion.'

Do please come and join us in this half hour of Quaker-style worship. This will be our last meeting, but we do thank all those who have supported us over the past years. I know that we have all found it immensely valuable as a time of reflection and prayer.

Sue Jacques 879643

## Primetime



will be meeting on the following Wednesday evenings 7.30-9.30pm.

**December 18<sup>th</sup>** - our Christmas Party **in the Bier House.**

**January 15<sup>th</sup>** - in the **Old School Room, Parish Hall.**

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** - date for your diary (1 week early to avoid half term!) in the **Old School Room, Parish Hall.**

All ladies welcome.

For further details call Sonia, Elaine or Ali on 833781 / 874635 / 879976



## Do you use Amazon for your Christmas shopping?



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charity. So spread the word, stop using amazon.co.uk and  
use smile.amazon.co.uk instead.

## Singing for Fun

**1<sup>st</sup> Monday  
of the month  
2 - 3.30pm  
The Parish Hall,  
Paradise Lane, Formby**

**Please join us for an  
afternoon of singing and  
refreshments.**

**Everyone welcome,  
especially those with  
memory loss.**

St Peter's Parish Office  
01704 871171

**Please note new venue.**

As this year draws to a close, may I say a massive thank you to everyone who has supported our Singing for Fun group this year.

We are very fortunate. We have had tremendous support from many local musicians who have given us their time and entertained us royally. Our volunteer team has gone above and beyond as we outgrew the Bier House and moved across to the Parish Hall. And to the people who have come along to join in singing every month, inspiring us with their singing and friendship.

Our Christmas Singing for Fun will be in the Parish Hall at 2pm on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, when we have been promised an upbeat start to the season by Peter Connor and friends.

Then in January, Maggie and Mandy are joining us on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January to banish the January blues.

Many thanks again and Seasons Greetings.

Vicky Hall

## Christmas Cards!

As this edition of our magazine covers January, if you would like to re-cycle any Christmas cards, (used or unused), please could you leave them in the box in the porch. They will be used in craft projects, by our Saturday Crew!

**Thank you!**

## Little Fishes Pre-school Group

Every Friday 9:15am - 11:30am in the Parish Hall, Paradise Lane.

Little Fishes is a group that extends a warm welcome to parents, grandparents and carers with children from birth to 3.

Contact Revd Nathan Thorpe

at [nathanthorpe1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:nathanthorpe1@hotmail.co.uk)

The dates are: 6<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> December;  
17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> January



Children start in church (10am) and then move to the

**Bier House for lots of fun.**

An adult comes with the child and can join in with the activities. All children are welcome though it is designed for the younger age group (up to Year 2).

**Sunday Club Dates:**

**8<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> December;  
12<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> January**



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If you would like some guidance, please feel free to come and have a chat with me, or alternatively please contact me on **07926 587776**

### **Caroline Speakman** **Member of the Society of Willwriters**

Email: [cspeakmanestateplanning@gmail.com](mailto:cspeakmanestateplanning@gmail.com)

Phone: 07926 587776

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## Beer & Christmas Carols



Come along, sup & sing with the Choir and friends who will be carol singing in aid of the Samaritans.

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December**  
**at 8.00 pm in The Grapes**

The more the merrier so please do join us.



### Churches Together are on Facebook

Look for Churches Together in Formby, Altcar and Hightown to keep up with all the events.



### **ECO TIP FOR DECEMBER 2019**

## Think Green this Christmas



**Recycle the Sherry!** - unopened biscuits, chocolates, bottles of wine, small gifts we would be delighted to have them. Will be used for parish events, raffles etc. Bring to church or the Parish Office. (please check they are in date).

**Christmas wrapping** - wrap your gifts with reusable materials.

**Crackers** - choose eco-conscious Christmas crackers.

**Christmas Dinner** - plan a zero-waste Christmas dinner and buy local and free-range.

**Party time** - avoid disposables, balloons and glitter.

**Christmas Cards & Stamps** - leave in the church porch and they will be reused for charities.



**Christmas Presents** - instead of buying more things why not 'Sponsor a Puppy' and give the gift of hope.

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



## REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Each day you add an item to the box and before Christmas Day you donate the contents to a foodbank



## Read a Book for Advent

There are books in the Church Library to read as we enter the season of Advent:-

### “Walking Backwards to Christmas”

Stephen Cottrell explores the Advent story through the eyes of some well - known characters.

“**Do Nothing, Christmas is Coming!**” by Stephen Cottrell. For every day of Advent providing short, practical steps to help us slow down, take time out - and resist the pressure of the Christmas whirl.

“**Advent for Everyone**” A Journey through Matthew by the popular writer Tom Wright.

“**Reflections for Christmas**” Steven Croft & Joanna Collicutt. A daily devotional companion throughout Advent.

If you would like to borrow a book or DVD please write your name in the book provided. The Library is situated in the Bier House. Take time to have a look.

### A NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Beginning 1<sup>st</sup> December, read one chapter of the Gospel of Luke each evening. There are 24 chapters. On Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus’ life and wake up Christmas morning knowing why we celebrate.



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for more information & availability

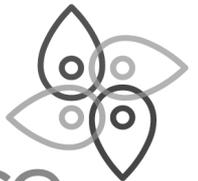
Tony Hill 01704 877335

07715 000282

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**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December**  
**7.00pm**  
**Holy Trinity Church**  
**Rosemary Lane,**  
**Formby L37 3HA**

**All proceeds to**  
**Queenscourt Hospice**  
**& Woodlands Hospice**

**Tickets £5**

Maggie 01704 879557

Sandra 01704 874044

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*let's dance!*

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**Sat. 11<sup>th</sup> Jan 7PM-10PM**

At **Holy Trinity Church Hall** Rosemary Lane, Formby, L37 3HA

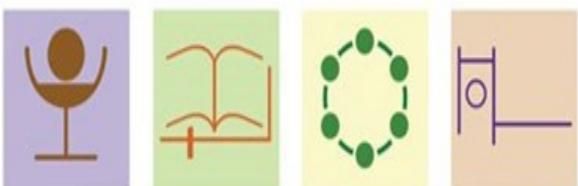
Entry by ticket\*: Adults **£12** u18's **£5**

**Price includes Hot Pot Meal**

(Please bring your own drinks and nibbles)



\*Tickets from Carol Paine (809517) or Cliff Cotsworth (871808)



**PARISHGIVINGScheme**

If interested, the full details are at  
[www.liverpool.anglican.org/parishgivingscheme](http://www.liverpool.anglican.org/parishgivingscheme)  
or contact St Peter's Stewardship Team  
who will be happy to discuss the scheme.  
Mike Fletcher 07808 310834  
or email: [stewardshipstpeter@gmail.com](mailto:stewardshipstpeter@gmail.com)



## Choir on Tour - St Peter's Choir and friends sang Evensong in Chester Cathedral.



### A PRAYER FOR THE 2019 GENERAL ELECTION

God of grace and truth,  
send your Spirit to guide us  
as we discover your will for our country.  
Help us to discuss the issues before us  
with courtesy, truth and mutual respect,  
and grant that all who stand for parliament  
will seek to serve the common good,  
through him who came not to be served but to serve,  
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



# CHRISTMAS GREETINGS WALL



**THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
CHRISTMAS GREETINGS WALL.**

**YOUR DONATIONS HAVE ADDED  
£ 105 TO THE UGANDA APPEAL -  
AND SAVED CARDS AND STAMPS!**



<p><b>CHURCH YARD WORK</b></p>	<p><b>Church Clean and Churchyard Winter Tidy</b> Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am Please come and help!</p>	<p><b>CHURCH CLEANING</b></p>
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## **Scout Fireworks & Bonfire**

The bonfire and firework display was once again a "roaring" success. The fireworks were a big improvement on last year without increasing our outlay.

The bonfire was the biggest I have seen in the Paddock; so much so the Fire Brigade arrived because the flames could be seen above the surrounding houses.

Well done to Explorers and Scouts for the clever construction and ingenious lighting method! Video available!

A massive thank you to all those who attended and to the people that make it possible, namely the Uniformed Group members, Retired Explorers, our fantastic leaders, parents, chefs and friends.

We made a profit of £3,000 including the contribution from our friends at Barclays so a fantastic evening once again.

Many thanks.

**Ian Espley,  
Chair 9<sup>th</sup> Formby (St Peter's)  
Scout Group**



# St Peter's Church, Formby



We wish you a  
joyful and peaceful  
Christmas

**Happy Christmas from St Peter's Church.**

**With this greeting comes an invitation to join with us for any of our Christmas Services which are listed on the opposite page.**

**St Peter's is an inclusive church and welcomes all who wish to worship with us.**

**Christmas is a time to remember and to rejoice in God's love, and you will find a warm welcome in St Peter's.**

*Revd Anne Taylor, Vicar*

*Revd Nathan Thorpe, Curate*



# Christmas Services at St Peter's Church 2019

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>

2.30pm

**A Relaxed Christmas Service**

30 minute service for older people  
followed by refreshments

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>

6.30pm

**Carols by Candlelight**

followed by mulled wine & mince pies

Christmas Eve

3.00pm

**Christingle**

for pre-school & primary school age

4.30pm

**Christingle**

for pre-school & primary school age

6.00pm

**Christingle**

All-age service with choir

11.30pm

**Midnight Eucharist**

Christmas Day

8.00am

**Eucharist**

10.00am

**Parish Eucharist**



For further information please contact:

Parish Office: 01704 871171  
email: [office@stpetersformby.co.uk](mailto:office@stpetersformby.co.uk)

or visit our website: [www.stpetersformby.co.uk](http://www.stpetersformby.co.uk)  
for full details of all our services



## St Peter's Shoebox Appeal 2019

Many, many thanks, indeed 231 of them, to our children at TSP school, who joined us on our church Shoebox day, and made a shoebox to be sent to a needy child abroad.

A big thank you also to everyone who helped make the day possible, especially our friends at Shoebox Express. We are well on our way to completing over 375 shoeboxes, and we will update you all in the New Year on this.



# What would we do without the choir?

They work so hard yet achieve wonderful things for their efforts. I know what hard work it is as I sang in a choir for most of my life, and it takes dedication.

The Fauré's Requiem was magnificent, yet sad. A requiem is for the dead, and as it was about the time of Armistice Day, it brought to mind those who died in wars across the world. Like the poor, wars have always been with us, and I am sure that until the end of time, will continue to be. Most of the stories in the Bible are about wars. I hate to think how many people King David killed, but the Old Testament can be very bloodthirsty in parts, yet great reading.



I also remembered all those in my family who have gone before me and wept a tear for them as I lit my candle in the Formby Chapel. Times like this remind us about those who are no more, but who have had great influence on our lives, and who have helped to make us who we are today.

The sad music reflected the mood, yet in a very short time the mood will have changed, and we will have the beautiful Advent music. That prepares us for the wonderful news of the Christ Child's birth. All through Advent we have lovely hymns and carols of preparation for the culmination of the year, Christmas.



Preparations are already being made for the festivities in most families, and the children are getting excited, looking forward to their presents. It is all about anticipation, the looking forward, not to the past, new life and New Year and new hope.

I don't know where I shall be this Christmas as I have to do as I am told by my family! Wherever I am I shall be happy, remembering Christmases past with loved ones, and being happy with the young generation who bewilder me with all their modern gadgets which are unfamiliar to me! And very expensive. Long gone is the stocking with a shiny new penny, an apple and an orange and some nuts, but we survived and lived to tell the tale.

However, I wish everyone a wonderful,  
Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

*Martha.*

**A packed church on a sunny  
Remembrance Sunday morning  
for our Parish Eucharist and  
All Age Parade Service**





The children at the WOW Service gave thanks.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December - 6:30 pm

# Bereavement Service

A simple service of prayers, readings and hymns,  
with the chance to light candles  
in memory of loved ones.

Refreshments served after the service

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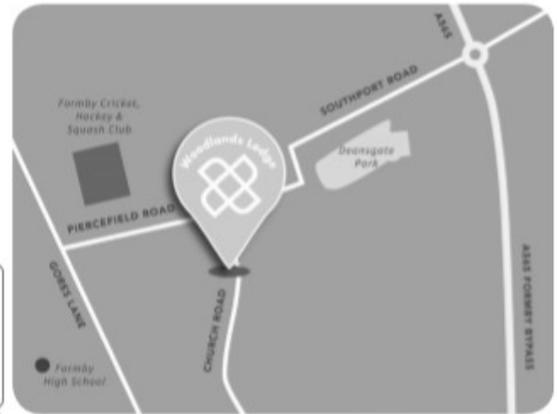


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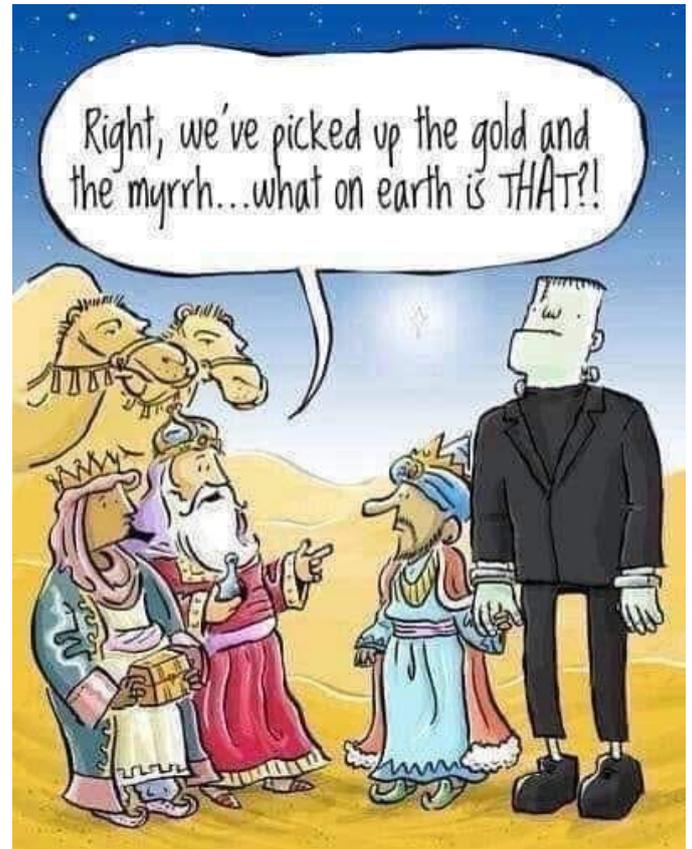
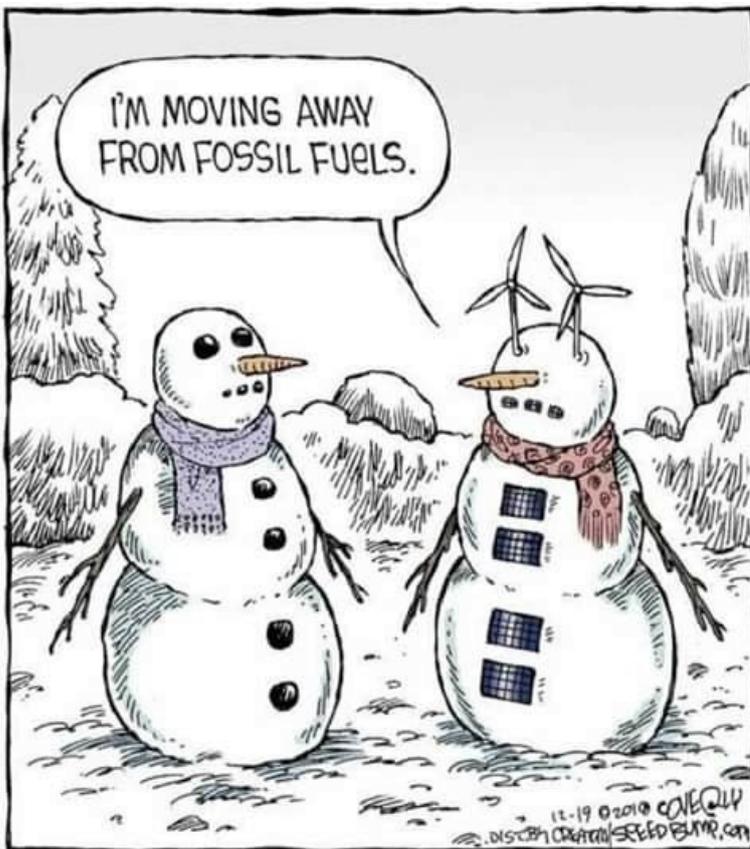
# WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BRITISH?

A British national daily newspaper asked readers: "What does it mean to be British?"

Some replies were hilarious but this one from a resident of Switzerland stood out:

"Being British is about driving a German car to an Irish pub for a Belgian beer, then going home, grabbing an Indian curry or a Turkish kebab on the way, to sit on Swedish furniture and watch American or Australian shows on a Japanese or Korean TV, which will soon be powered by a Chinese nuclear power station."

And the most British thing of all? "Suspicion of anything foreign."



## Curate's Bad Joke Corner.....

Who is the penguin's favourite Aunt? Aunt-Arctica!

What do you do with chemists when they die? Barium!

Santa was forced to attend a Christmas party because his presents was required.

I love when candy canes are in mint condition.

What does a festive sheep say at Christmastime? Fleece Navidad!

**Keep groaning!**



# A Visit from an Angel

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.  
Luke 1:30-31



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

THRONE	AFRAID	JESUS	MARY	MARRIED
JOSEPH	IMPOSSIBLE	BIRTH	GALILEE	VIRGIN
DAVID	SON	TOWN	NAZARETH	GABRIEL
NOTHING	ELIZABETH	BORN	KINGDOM	ANGEL

Which London Underground line is best with leftover turkey?  
The Piccalilli Line.

One night a Viking named Rudolph the Red was looking out the window when he said, "It's going to rain."

His wife asked, "How do you know?"

"Because Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."



**EMAIL DIRECTORY** We have a parish email directory which is used once or twice a month to send out dates for the month and also when a special event is coming up.

If you would like to be added to the email list please send an email to ***office@stpetersformby.co.uk***. This is a way to help us keep in touch.

Email addresses will be used only by St Peter's.

# From the Church Registers Baptisms 17<sup>th</sup> November



Helen Squire



George Thomas Bates, son of  
Thomas & Amanda with great Grandad Wilf

## Questions a Vicar Gets Asked!!

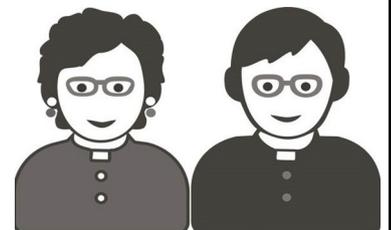
### Question - 'What is an interregnum?'

In our intercessions we have been praying for parishes in interregnum. An interregnum is a period of discontinuity or "gap" in a government, organization, or social order.

The term also refers to the periods between the election of a new parliament and the establishment of a new government.

Similarly, in some Christian denominations, "interregnum" describes the time between a vicar leaving and the appointment of a new vicar.

We pray for three parishes in our Deanery (Sefton North) in interregnum at this time - St Giles, Aintree, St Luke, Formby, and St Nicholas, Blundellsands.



**Sundays**

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1662)
- 10.00am Parish Eucharist (Coffee afterwards)
- 6.30pm Choral Evensong
  - Advent Carol Service 1<sup>st</sup> December
  - Bereavement Service 8<sup>th</sup> December
  - Sung Compline 15<sup>th</sup> December
  - Carols By Candlelight 22<sup>nd</sup> December
  - Christian Unity Service 26<sup>th</sup> January 6pm in the URC

**Service of Wholeness** will resume in February

**Weekdays**

- 9.00am Morning Prayer
  - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday
- 11.00am Wednesday Eucharist
- 6.30pm Eucharist 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month
- 9.00am **Breakfast Church** – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December
  - Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January
- 12noon **Children’s Hotdog Service**
  - Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January



**From the Church Registers**

**Funerals**

- 29<sup>th</sup> October Alan Johnson
- 7<sup>th</sup> November Michael Smith
- 12<sup>th</sup> November Leslie Will
- 15<sup>th</sup> November Susan Purcell

**Interment of Ashes**

- 11<sup>th</sup> November Ruth Andrews
- 16<sup>th</sup> November Barbara Harding
- 29<sup>th</sup> November David & Hilda Coultas





# From the Back Pew

## Ted Woods

### DATING CHRISTMAS

As no date is given in the Gospels or in the early writings of the church, how did 25<sup>th</sup> December come to be chosen as the birthday of Jesus? The early Christians weren't particularly interested in when Jesus was born. One of them, Clement of Alexandria (165 -264AD) went so far as to mock Roman celebrations of birthdays, dismissing them as pagan practices!

The first record of Jesus' birth being celebrated on 25<sup>th</sup> December was in 336AD, just at the end of the reign of the Emperor Constantine who is supposed to have converted to Christianity. Whether his conversion was genuine or not, it was in his reign that Christianity became the official religion of the Empire.

But why 25<sup>th</sup> December? There are many theories.

First, there was an ancient Christian tradition that the annunciation to Mary by the archangel Gabriel happened on the 25<sup>th</sup> March – the date we still commemorate for the annunciation. Conception on 25<sup>th</sup> March – the birth nine months later!

25<sup>th</sup> March was also calculated as the date of Jesus' death, the date of the first Good Friday, and there was a certain appeal and later tradition that Jesus was conceived and died on the same date.

Another theory is that under Constantine Christians were allowed to take over pagan festivals and "Christianise" them – as they did for St Valentine's Day on the Feast of Lupercalia (a rather licentious festival celebrating the birth of Spring). Saturnalia celebrated the winter solstice and the coming of light with the lengthening of days. So why not celebrate the coming of "the Light of the World" in Jesus? In 274, Saturnalia was called "The Birthday of the Unconquered Sun", so it's easy to see why this festival was chosen to preach about Jesus and encourage the spread of Christianity.



In the Golden Bough, an influential book of its time (1890), Sir James Frazer wrote:-

*“It was a custom of the heathen to celebrate on the twenty-fifth of December the birthday of the Sun, at which they kindled lights in token of festivity. In these solemnities and festivities the Christians also took part. Accordingly when the doctors of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnised on that day and the festival of the Epiphany on the sixth of January.”*

December is also the month of the Jewish Festival of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights. Again there is the link between Jesus and light, remembering that Jesus was a Jew, and remained one up to his crucifixion.

However, it took time for Christians to settle on a date, and even today there is a difference between Eastern and Western Christianity. Eastern Christians celebrate Christmas on 6<sup>th</sup> January, the date we celebrate the Visit of the Wise Men.

St Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury from 597 - 604 AD is generally credited as the person who started the widespread celebration of Christmas in England.

Other theories on the date of Jesus' birth choose springtime, the time when lambs for the Feast of Passover would be much in demand. And such theorists ask, would shepherds have been out on the hillsides in the depths of winter? As someone whose son is a sheep farmer, I would ask, “Why Not?”

The alternative theory that I like best is that Jesus may have been born sometime late September/early October. This is the date of the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles when Jews move outside and pitch temporary dwellings to live in to remember their wanderings in the wilderness when they had no permanent homes, but lived in tents. John 1:14 says, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...” Some translations put it that Jesus came and “tabernacle” with us, or “pitched his tent” among us. Was St John giving us a hint that this was the time when Jesus was born?

Whatever the date, it's important to celebrate the birth of Jesus, God's breaking into our world in the person of Jesus. It's probably ingrained in our cultural memories to celebrate the winter solstice, the coming of light, so let us continue to Christianise it and celebrate the coming of the Light of the World.

His message of love is still as necessary as it was all those years ago.

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**Sun 1<sup>st</sup>**

10.00am All Age Parade Service & Baptism  
6.30pm Advent Carol Service *followed by sherry & shortbread*

**Mon 2<sup>nd</sup>**

10.45am Meditation in Bier House  
2.00pm Singing for Fun in the Parish Hall

**Tues 3<sup>rd</sup>**

10.00am Bible Study Group *with Ken Ward* in the Bier House

**Wed 4<sup>th</sup>**

3.15pm Fishy Club – end of year party

**Thurs 5<sup>th</sup>**

1.00pm Mothers' Union Christmas Party in the Parish Hall

**Fri 6<sup>th</sup>**

9.15am Little Fishes in the Parish Hall

**Sat 7<sup>th</sup>**

6.30pm First Friday Eucharist  
9.00am Breakfast Church in the Bier House  
10.30-12.30 Leaf Rake in the Churchyard – all welcome  
10.30am Saturday Crew in the **OSR** (note venue change this month)



FISHY



**Sun 8<sup>th</sup>**

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun of Advent**

10.00am Sunday Club  
6.30pm Bereavement Service *followed by refreshments*  
10.45am Meditation in Bier House – *starts again on 6<sup>th</sup> January*

**Mon 9<sup>th</sup>**

10.00am Bible Study *with Ken Ward* in Bier House

**Tues 10<sup>th</sup>**

2.00pm WOW Service for pre-school children

**Wed 11<sup>th</sup>**

7.30pm Bible Study with Alison Woodhouse in Bier House

**Thurs 12<sup>th</sup>**

2.00pm Halcyon House Carol Service – all welcome

**Fri 13<sup>th</sup>**

3.30pm Woodlands Home Christmas Eucharist  
9.15am Little Fishes in the Parish Hall – *finish for Christmas*

**Sun 15<sup>th</sup>**

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent**

10.00am Sunday Club  
2.30pm Relaxed Christmas Service for older people  
6.30pm Sung Compline  
10.00am Bible Study Group *with Ken Ward* in Bier House  
10.30am St Joseph's Care Home Christmas Service *with Yr6 from TSP*  
7.30pm Primetime Christmas Party in the Bier House  
9.00am Trinity St Peter's Christmas Service in St Peter's Church  
2.00pm Halcyon House Christmas Eucharist



**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight *followed by mulled wine & mince pies*

**Tues 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Eve**

10.00am Christingle making in the Bier House – helpers needed  
3.00pm Christingle Service  
4.30pm Christingle Service  
6.00pm Christingle Service  
11.30pm Midnight Eucharist

**Wed 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Day**

8.00am Holy Communion  
10.00am Parish Eucharist

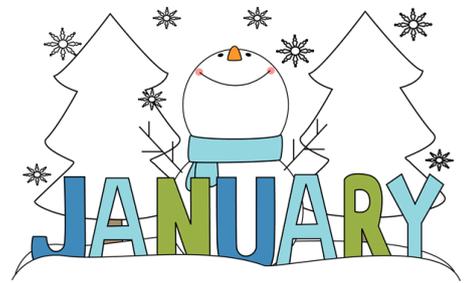


**Sun 29<sup>th</sup>**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

No Evensong

# JANUARY 2020



Wed 1<sup>st</sup> 11.00am New Year's Eucharist  
 Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> No First Friday Eucharist  
 Sat 4<sup>th</sup> 9.00am Breakfast Church in the Bier House  
 10.30am Saturday Crew in the Bier House



**Sun 5<sup>th</sup>** **The Epiphany**  
 Mon 6<sup>th</sup> 10.45am Meditation in Bier House  
 2.00pm Singing for Fun in the Parish Hall  
 Tues 7<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Bible Study Group *with Ken Ward* in Bier House  
 Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Bible Study with *Alison Woodhouse* in Bier House

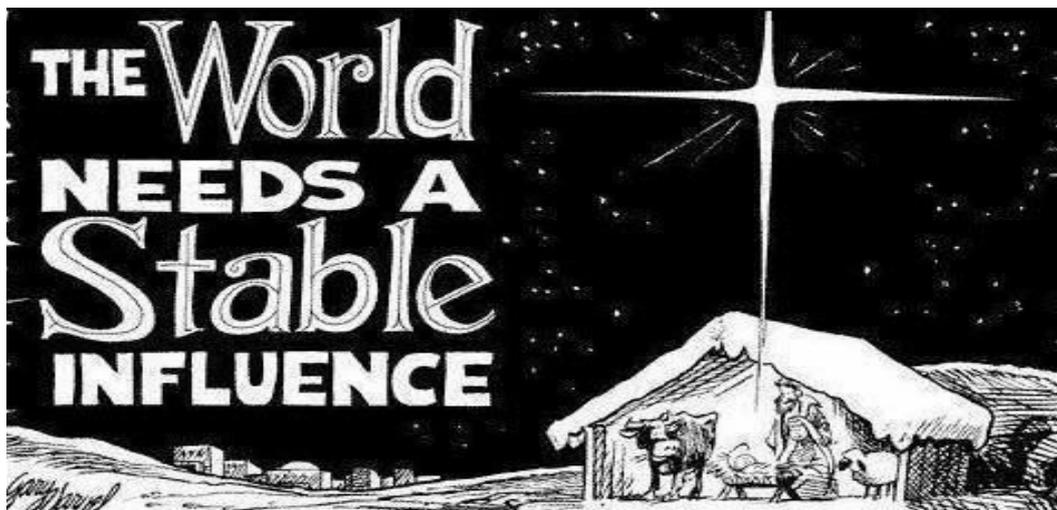
**Sun 12<sup>th</sup>** **The Baptism of Christ / The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
 10.00am Sunday Club  
 Mon 13<sup>th</sup> 10.45am Meditation in Bier House  
 Tues 14<sup>th</sup> 10.00am Bible Study Group *with Ken Ward* in Bier House  
 Wed 15<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm WOW Service for pre-school children  
 7.30pm Primetime in the Parish Hall  
 Fri 17<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Little Fishes in the Parish Hall



**Sun 19<sup>th</sup>** **The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany / Christian Unity Week**  
 10.00am Sunday Club  
 Mon 20<sup>th</sup> 10.45am Meditation in Bier House  
 Tues 21<sup>st</sup> 10.00am Bible Study Group *with Ken Ward* in Bier House  
 Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> 7.30pm Bible Study *with Alison Woodhouse* in the Old School Room  
 Fri 24<sup>th</sup> 9.15am Little Fishes in the Parish Hall



**Sun 26<sup>th</sup>** **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Epiphany**  
 12noon Hot Dog Service for Children  
 6.00pm Christian Unity Service at the United Reformed Church  
***No Evening Service at St Peter's***  
 Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm Eucharist at Halcyon House  
 3.00pm Eucharist at Woodlands Home  
 Fri 31<sup>st</sup> 9.15am Little Fishes in the Parish Hall



**THAT MOMENT WHEN YOU'RE SO DESPERATE  
TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD THAT  
YOU RISK FLEEING TO ANOTHER COUNTRY**

