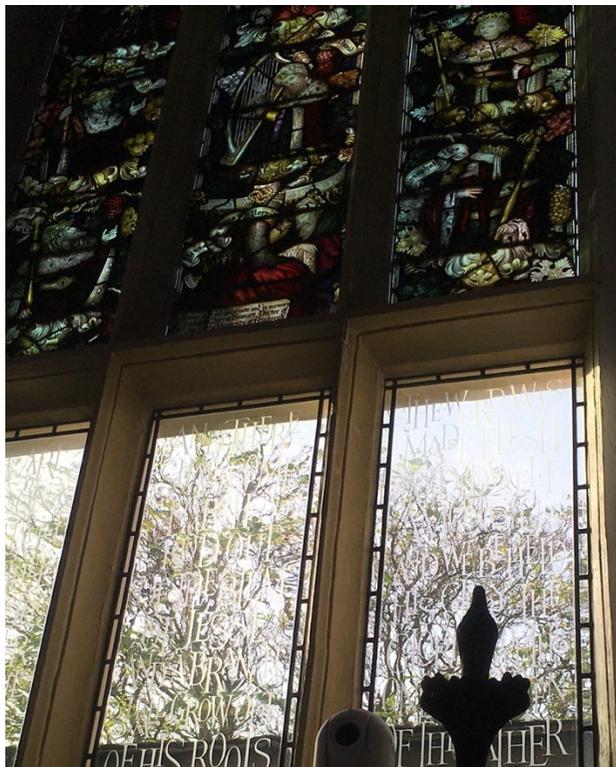


LITTLE S. MARY'S, CAMBRIDGE

December 2021: No. 576

NEWSLETTER



This newsletter contains:

In Praise of Hymns: Charles Wesley; Anticipation, Hope & Light at Christmas; Cambridge Churches Homelessness Project & other Social Justice news; X is for Xmas; Garden News; plus the usual Vicar's letter, daily intentions for prayer and more...

Highlights of December

Wednesday 1st, Tuesday 7th, Thursday 16th & Monday 20th
Advent Group (on Zoom) – 7.30pm ending with Compline at 9pm

Saturday 4th December

Advent Quiet Day: 10.45am-3pm, contact carolineshep@gmail.com

Sunday 5th December – **Advent II**

Advent Carol Service & Benediction

6pm – followed by refreshments

Tuesday 7th - **Concordia**

10am-12noon on the theme of **Advent and Christmas**

Wednesday 8th – **Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

10am **Monthly Healing Mass** with laying on of hands & anointing

7pm Sung Mass of the Feast, followed by refreshments.

Preacher: Fr Philip Murray, *Associate Vicar*.

Sunday 12th December – **Advent III**

10.30am **Pontifical High Mass & Confirmation:** The Bishop of Ely visits to celebrate Mass and Confirm 7 members of our congregation.

Sunday 19th December – **Advent IV**

2pm **Children's Christmas Party**, all families welcome; contact

kirstie.murray88@gmail.com

6pm **Nine Lessons & Carols** followed by mulled wine & mince pies

Friday 24th December – **Christmas Eve**

5pm **Children's Candlelight Nativity Service**

11pm **Midnight Mass**

Saturday 25th December – **Christmas Day**

8am **Low Mass**

10.30am **High Mass**

All Masses from 27th December to 1st January are at 10am.

Monday 27th December

S. John, apostle & evangelist – Low Mass 10am

Tuesday 28th December

The Holy Innocents – Low Mass 10am

From the Vicar

1st December 2021.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

‘It’s very difficult to be particularly positive at the moment.’ A member of the congregation said that to me the other day as they recounted the threats of Covid and climate change, the challenges of Brexit and inflation... The approach of the shortest day on 21st of this month means that the weather and the light reflect that mood too!

There can be no denying that we are living through difficult and uncertain times; and the purpose of the Christian faith is not to engage in fantasy or denial of reality and so I’m not going to try simply to counter these negative things with a list of positive things or occasions for thanksgiving. The world is tough at the moment, not least as the end of the pandemic seems to be perpetually pushed back, now by the arrival of the Omicron variant.

Yet what the Christian faith does say is that the world is fallen and that we should expect our life to be one of trial and tribulation. In the late 20th century much of the western world got used to peace and prosperity and, as Christianity declined, fell into the trap of believing that progress was inevitable and uninterrupted; and that history had therefore ‘ended’ as the writer Francis Fukuyama put it. Our Faith has always taught us that this is not the case and while we are to be a people of hope called to believe in the original goodness of creation, we are also the church militant in the world: in the old days a Bishop would gently slap candidates on the face at their Confirmation as a sign that they were, in a sense, being sent into battle.

This holy season of Advent acts like a spiritual slap in the face, with its cry of ‘Awake!’ and its call to go into battle once more. The primary battle, however, is not physical but spiritual and in Advent it is to be awake and alert to the presence and activity of God in the world. It is an internal battle. We prepare for Christmas when God comes among us in the great beauty but also the immense ordinariness

of a baby. This is a sign to us that God's activity, the melody of eternity, is one we can miss and so we need to go into training to discern it, especially when the world can seem Godless in many ways.

I trust our Advent Book by Evelyn Underhill is proving encouraging and awakening and that you'll be able to join us in our Advent Groups, which from Tuesday 7th will be on Zoom rather than in person. I hope this makes it easier to take part. The book focuses on attending to God and discerning His work amid the darkness and freneticism of the world. It is an excellent Advent accompaniment.

Advent turns our minds to the ultimate things: death, judgement, heaven and hell. For the family of Judy Swan this has been more than theoretical and I'm sad to report to you her death. Neil and Judy have been part of our congregation for a number of years now but over the last two years Judy has been suffering from cancer and she died on Wednesday 1st with Neil by her side. Judy had been in the Arthur Rank hospice for almost two months, having stabilised considerably on moving there from hospital. What this long period of time allowed her to do, however, was to prepare for her death as a Christian, to take seriously the ultimate things. She was able to make her Confession, receive Communion (on several occasions), be Anointed and say goodbye to her family and friends. I think Neil and their sons would agree that it was a precious time. She passed into the arms of her Saviour very peacefully and entirely prepared for God's merciful and loving judgement and for her journey to heaven.

If this present, passing world does not give us much reason to be positive, then our Faith does, not just in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection and the world to come, but in seeing the action and presence of God right now, His light shining in darkness, and His great work of redemption approaching in the Child of Bethlehem.

With my love & prayers for this holy season, I am,
yours ever in the Christ who comes,

Fr Robert.

In Praise of Hymns – the Writers of the Words



Charles Wesley
by Charles Moseley

Advent again, and again the yearly cycle of the Liturgy - the ‘work done by and for the people’, in Greek - begins. The pattern of our ‘bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks’ to the Lord of all may not change, but we change all the time, and our perspective is always new as the years repeat their pattern. Each Advent we sing Charles Wesley’s *Lo, He comes with clouds descending* (NEH 9), now almost always to a tune, *Helmsley*, originally by Thomas Olivers (1725-1799)¹. Habitude could make it wearisome. But one Evensong years ago, in College Chapel, for the first time, I heard that magnificent descant by Christopher Robinson (b. 1936) which in the village choir at home (when I still was a treble) we could certainly not have managed. Suddenly the old warhorse’s

tired familiarity from those childhood Evensongs was stripped away: I sat up and took notice.



And it is a great hymn, full of good divinity. In 1885 James King wrote a survey, *Anglican Hymnology*, in which he considered 52 hymnals from churches in the Anglican Communion. On the basis of those statistics - all but one included it - he considered it one of the 'Four Great Anglican Hymns', along with *All praise to Thee, my God*, *this night* (not in our edition of NEH), *Hark, the herald angels sing*,

(yes, also Wesley's) - and another of my own favourites, Augustus Toplady's *Rock of ages, cleft for me* (NEH 445). *Lo, He comes* is, of course, based on the idea of the Second Coming, even echoes (in verse 2) Thomas of Celano's (1185 -1260) *Dies Irae*, and closes with the last words of the Revelation to Saint John, which in the Aramaic form *Maranatha* was used both as prayer and greeting by the early church: 'Lord, come quickly.'

So to Charles Wesley: 26 hymns in our edition of NEH, and author of over 6,000 more (yes, six thousand - some say the total is nearer ten thousand). He became the pre-eminent hymn writer of the new Methodist community. Sometimes he did rework what other people had written, and usually for the better. For example, the opening of *Lo, He comes* reworks John Cennick's (1718-1755) *Lo! He cometh, countless trumpets blow*, which is in a different form and metre. He clearly knew and was influenced by the deeply affective piety of the great George Herbert² - to my mind by far the finest of all English devotional poets - by Francis Quarles³ and John Mason (see the November *Newsletter*), and by Isaac Watts (on whom there will be an essay later). The collections he published in his lifetime include *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741, 1742), *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (1745), and *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (1762), and there were others marking the major Christian festivals. His poems are soaked in Scripture, full of echoes of the great spiritual poets of the past, and he had great facility with metrical and stanzaic forms. They became very significant in the huge contemporary appeal of Methodism - congregational singing was not then a regular part of the Anglican liturgy - and were soon taken up in the established church which for long had relied, if its flock sang at all, on versified psalms and settings of Biblical prose. They became a major contribution to the massive revival of congregational singing in the 19th century. With succinct elegance, the best of Wesley's hymns communicate several doctrines: the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the sanctifying work of the Spirit, mankind's need for salvation and humanity's personal accountability to God. Of the worst of his verse - e.g. one sugary one to *Gentle Jesus, meek and mild*, which was framed on my childhood bedroom wall in a coloured print showing a

very clean and androgynous Jesus caressing some unrealistically clean sheep – we shall in charity not speak.

And, as so often, we take Wesley's work for granted, as if it has always been there, neatly corralled into tidy black marks on a white page. But it did not come out of a clear sky: it came not only out of a complex social and intellectual context but also out of a complicated personal journey, often highly emotional. His father Samuel was Rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire, where Charles was born in 1707. The parents had 19 children, of whom ten grew to adulthood: Charles' elder brothers Samuel and John (both might deserve essays of their own, if not as hymn writers) were nos 1 and 15 respectively, while Charles was no.18. He was sent to Westminster, where Samuel was usher and could provide lodgings. He was a King's Scholar and later head boy, then went up to Oxford, whither his brothers had preceded him. He was admitted to Christ Church. Serious-minded youths, the three brothers and a few friends – including, later, George Whitefield who became one of John Wesley's ablest helpers – agreed to meet three evenings a week to discuss the classical authors they had been reading and, on Sundays, a theological work. Oxford, like Cambridge at that time, was not noted for the seriousness and piety of its undergraduate members, and the group was soon scornfully nicknamed 'The Holy Club', 'The Bible Moths', and 'The Methodists' because everything was done to 'A Method' – including, unusually for that time when most Anglicans might take the sacrament at most once a month (if that), a search each week for a priest who was celebrating the Eucharist.⁴ All the Wesleys were eventually ordained, and John and Charles went out to Georgia on the suggestion of the colony's founder, General Oglethorpe, to evangelize the native Americans. It was in Georgia that John and Charles were deeply influenced by the piety and faith of the Moravian settlers (refugees from what they saw as oppressive Catholicism in their native Czech lands), and where John first broke with Anglican precedent and canon law by himself commissioning people to preach to the native Americans.

It is impossible to grasp the significance of Charles Wesley's hymns, or poems - call them what you will – without taking into account the

trajectory of John's career and thought after this visit. The brothers returned to England after two years, and though John (like Charles) to his death regarded himself as a loyal son, and priest, of the Church of England, his independence, his determination to preach to people of all sorts and conditions in the highways and byways, ignoring the parish structure where the incumbent had control, inevitably led to a breach with the established church. After 1739, John and Charles and their growing band of adherents were in fact persecuted: though they were ordained, many other Methodist leaders were not, and his flouting of the Church of England's definition of who had authority to preach was considered a threat to the institutions on which social order depended. Clergy attacked them in sermon and in pamphlet, and at times mobs threw stones. Wesley and his followers, continuing to work among those at the bottom of society's heap, were labelled promulgators of strange doctrines, fomenters of religious disturbance, fanatics who, claiming miraculous gifts, led people astray. Many clergy, feeling threatened, were deeply hostile. And they were accused – the ultimate political insult at that time - of trying to re-establish Roman Catholicism. Moreover, Wesley spoke with a passion that many thought deeply dangerous.

For passion was at the heart of early Methodism. It was precisely that passion and 'enthusiasm' a word always then used as an insult - that the established church deeply distrusted. It recalled all too well where such emotionalism had led in the terrible years of the Civil War and its aftermath. The heart of John Wesley's message was each person's relationship with the risen Lord, who loved each undeserving one of us; it was not simply about morality, good manners and paying your tithes and charity to the poor - though those might be among the consequences of the 'heart [being] strangely warmed' by the love of Christ.⁵

Charles shared his brother's views: they both rejected the strict Calvinism which marked much of the Dissenting tradition - and for that matter, the Church of England's 39 Articles (see X and XVII) have a strongly Calvinist cast - and stressed, with the Dutch theologian Jakob Hermanszoon (Latinised as Arminius), the universality of God's

love and the importance of our free response to it. The brothers had quite astonishing energy and stamina: it has been reckoned that John on his incessant journeys all over England, when he often read on horseback, preached about 500 sermons a year to often huge gatherings of people – for example, at Gwennap in Cornwall, his audience was some 20,000 - and Charles, aware of how powerful in building a community and as mnemonic was the act of singing together, made sure with his thousands of hymns that, based on sound Biblical doctrine, there was something to sing which reflected the passionate and emotional preaching of his brother. And as for tunes, well, as Charles Booth said later, ‘Why should the Devil have all the best ones?’ Charles had the great gift of encapsulating much of the doctrine that John preached in his innumerable sermons into memorable and singable verse, especially that doctrine of love and of an acutely personal relationship with the Saviour. This does raise an interesting issue, not limited to Wesley: when he wrote:

And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?

Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

it was very soon after what he regarded as his own conversion – or, if you prefer, that moment when intellectual *knowledge* becomes something you intimately *feel*. But when it is sung (the usual tune is *Sagina*) by people *in a group*, what is their relationship to the impulse, the effusion of *individual* feeling, the words describe? My thought is that this group singing of such things can subtly change, perhaps not immediately or even quickly, from a secondary record of experience to experience itself. We borrow someone else's words to know what it is we want to say: like when we quote a favourite love poem to our beloved. The saying and the singing changes us, even though we might not notice at the time.

We owe the Wesleys a great deal. In so many ways what they did anticipated the urgency of the Oxford Movement's mission a century later, the urgency with which the Church, *semper reformanda*, almost every century is challenged to rethink what it thought it knew, to get back to the bed-Rock. Charles' poems we can sing with joy as the seasons change through the year, and it is right that he and his brother are remembered, with gratitude with a Lesser Festival in the Church of England calendar on 24th May.

Footnotes:

¹ Some say he derived it from a dance tune he heard in the street, originally by Thomas Arne, who wrote *Rule, Britannia!* as well as many more interesting things.

² Herbert's *The Temple*, a collection of poems offering 'a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul, before I could subject mine to the will of Jesus, my Master, in whose service I have now found perfect freedom' was posthumously printed in 1633 by his friend Nicholas Ferrar of Little Gidding.

³ Francis Quarles' hugely popular *Emblemes* (1634), devotional pictures (by the often clumsy William Marshall) accompanied by verses in a small format convenient for pocket or placket, was reissued time and time again through the long eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.

⁴ John disliked the label, but later adopted it.

⁵ John Wesley's *Journal*, 24 May 1738: 'In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society [The Moravians] in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.'

Anticipation, hope and light at Christmas

by Emma Lloyd-Jones

For those of us lucky enough to have experienced, or experience, happy, comfy and cosy Christmases, the day is a truly special one – full of delights both sacred and secular and a time to be treasured with family and friends. It is a day with an extra dimension, or should be! But there are many for whom Christmas can be a time of deep unhappiness. Of loneliness, of dread of family arguments, of horror of excessive alcohol and the havoc that can spell. For those who have little money it is a time when such a fact is spelled out – they cannot participate in all the joys and treats that others can. They cannot buy the presents they wish for... or indulge in the good things to eat and drink and do.



But one hopes that there is some ray of hope and light. I am told that those who work for Crisis at Christmas say that these Christmases are some of the best – the spirit of fellowship and togetherness, and one hopes appreciation, is touching in the extreme.

For many, in our increasingly agnostic or atheist world, Christmas means nothing from the religious point of view. It is perhaps time off, or too much time off; fun, or too much fun; presents, or too many presents ... the commercial aspect of Christmas is hard hitting and often starts as early as August, ridiculous though that may seem. One hopes (in vain I fear) that Christmas will have some good for everyone, though I know that it can also be a poignant time, missing those who are no longer with us – those who 'rejoice ... on another shore' (as the annual Bidding Prayer at King's College prays). For those who are ill, too, in hospitals or terminally ill, or

those who have recently lost loved ones through death or the breaking up of a relationship – it can be excruciating. Our hearts should go out to them. But, for a more ‘idealised’ Christmas such as one dreams of and as stated for those of us lucky enough to have experienced the special time of celebration it is a time of anticipation, hope and light.

Of course, the excitement that reaches fever pitch for many children revolves round Father Christmas and his annual visit, laden with toys and goodies to put into their stockings. What a miracle! You hang up your empty stocking by your bed and when you wake up (probably in the early hours!) it is *full* of enticing sounding things. What child does not feel the stocking, trying busily to guess what its contents can be? Guessing, from the shape and sound. And then there are usually more presents later. And a feast to eat. And the tree and decorations. And the customs, often observed almost religiously from year to year.

One of the customs in our family was to listen to *A child's Christmas in Wales*, a magical and vivid description of the yearly festival in a small seaside town in Wales – imaginatively written by Dylan Thomas. And Christmas began – officially – when we all sat down to listen to the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College, Cambridge on Christmas Eve. Such marks were carved in stone; even now, with both my parents deceased, I try to observe these comforting rituals.

So... what is it about Christmas and anticipation of it? Obviously, even if children rehearse and perform Nativity Plays, their anticipation of Christmas will be – most probably – the Day itself as described above. But there will most probably also be parties, and a pantomime, and carols, and maybe ice skating; and perhaps most conducive to anticipation might be Advent Calendars (designed to create a build up to Christmas Eve) and, one hopes, Carol Services which will sow the seed of lifelong loved markers in the Christmas world.

It is a source of hope really that, in our fluid, unpredictable and currently precarious world these familiar anchors are there still for those who wish to experience them. One hopes that current children will grow to carry on these treasured traditions. They are like a beacon of light in dark times. Familiar, timeless, revisited annually.

Obviously, an adult's anticipation (particularly a religious adult) of Christmas is rather different from that of a child. Hopefully, the season will not be dictated by presents – but by giving of a more spiritual nature. To 'give one's heart', as the Carol *In the bleak midwinter* says so beautifully. The period of Advent, with its religious requirement to fast in a similar way to during Lent, prepares one and cleanses one's soul hopefully - though a struggle amidst the endless meetings to share mince pies, mulled wine, sausages and so on.

As is often the case, the long-lasting beautiful words of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer Advent Collect expresses one of the purifying purposes of Advent...to be said every day throughout Advent:

'Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light'.

Casting away 'the works of darkness' is not easy – we need to fight, equipped with 'armour'. It is a test of our discipline. It is tough. But if we succeed we will experience more fully the special splendour given to us in the birth of the Christ Child in a humble stable, worshipped by shepherds and magi alike. They all recognised His significance. A true light of the world. And so many artistic representations of this show light radiating from the Child and His parents.

S. John's Gospel reading for Christmas (and in many Carol Services before the day) is of such depth and beauty, recording how:

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

'The Word' is Christ ... and foreseen as coming into the world from 'the beginning:

'In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.'

I am sure that everyone reading this article is more than familiar with the extract from John 1.14 and I recommend rereading it, as it is, yes, so deep and beautiful. We can anticipate the Birth of Christ and its significance; did the contemporaries know of His life and what His fate was to be? We can

hope – all of us, individually – that the light of Christmas will shine and start to transform our troubled world.

Light is a well-known and well-developed theme in many religions. The Christmas lights, however gaudy at times they may be; the silent beauty of lit votive candles; the blazing Christmas pudding; the candles with which people often decorate their festive tables - these are all symbols. Symbols of a more attractive, utopian and peaceful world which so many people currently desire so wholeheartedly.

Let us pray, through childish or more adult eyes, that this Christmas will indeed be one of refreshment, rejuvenation and restoration. We, I am sure, will anticipate hope and light this year, and into the future – and pray that as many people as possible worldwide can be touched by Christmas for the better and that it can be a time when the Dove of Peace features as well as Christ as our Saviour, born in a manger.



An A-Z of Interesting Things

X is for Xmas

Xmas, as a common abbreviation for Christmas, originated in handwritten abbreviations. The 'X' refers to the Greek letter X (Chi), being the first letter of *Christos* (*Χριστός*), which became Christ in English. This abbreviation was used from early Christian times in the Chi Rho symbol, showing the first two letters of *Christos*:



It is commonly thought the use of 'Xmas' has been a secular attempt to 'take Christ out of Christmas', but its use actually starts in the 16th century in the form of 'X'temmas'. It is known to have been used by Samuel Coleridge (1801), Lord Byron (1811) and Lewis Carroll (1864).



Calendar for December

WED 1st S. Eligius, bishop

THU 2nd

FRI 3rd *S. Francis Xavier, priest & missionary*

SAT 4th *Nicholas Ferrar, deacon*

SUN 5th SECOND SUNDAY in ADVENT

MON 6th S. Nicholas, bishop

TUE 7th S. Ambrose, bishop

WED 8th Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ember Day

THU 9th Ember Day

FRI 10th

SAT 11th of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ember Day

SUN 12th THIRD SUNDAY in ADVENT (*Gaudete*)

MON 13th S. Lucy, virgin & martyr

TUE 14th S. John of the Cross, religious & doctor

WED 15th

THU 16th of Requiem

FRI 17th *O Sapientia*

SAT 18th *O Adonai*

SUN 19th FOURTH SUNDAY in ADVENT, *O Radix Jesse*

MON 20th *O Clavis David*

TUE 21st *O Oriens*

WED 22nd *O Rex Gentium*

THU 23rd *O Emmanuel*

FRI 24th Christmas Eve

SAT 25th CHRISTMAS DAY

SUN 26th FIRST SUNDAY after CHRISTMAS

MON 27th S. John, apostle & evangelist

TUE 28th Holy Innocents

WED 29th S. Stephen, deacon & martyr

THU 30th in the Octave of Christmas

FRI 31st in the Octave of Christmas

Daily Intentions & Anniversaries of death

Those who care for animals	<i>Douglas Bird, Brian Jordan</i> 1 st
A good keeping of Advent	<i>Anthony Morcom, pr.</i> 2 nd
Missionaries	3 rd
Deacons	<i>Romo Gorrada</i> 4 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Michael Fisher, SSF bp.</i> 5 th
Children	<i>David Strutt</i> 6 th
Bishops	<i>Michael Barnard</i> 7 th
10am: Sick, 7pm: Pregnant women	8 th
Ordinands	<i>Cyril Hankey, pr., Charles Goodhart</i> 9 th
Preparation for our death	10 th
Vocations to the religious life	<i>John Robson</i> 11 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Alan Ashton</i> 12 th
Light of Christ in our lives	<i>Glyn Daniel, Dennis Peck</i> 13 th
Spiritual directors & confessors	14 th
Our keeping of Advent	<i>Gladys Stockbridge</i> 15 th
The Faithful Departed	16 th
Wisdom for those in government	<i>Jack Grist, Diana Galletly</i> 17 th
Our Jewish brothers & sisters	18 th

Our Parish & People	<i>Eric Lawson</i> 19 th
Prisoners	<i>Yvonne Masheder</i> 20 th
The homeless	<i>Joan Garrett, Irene Gore</i> 21 st
Our parish mission links	22 nd
The lonely	<i>Ruth Wheatley</i> 23 rd
Spiritual preparation for Christmas	24 th
Joy at the Incarnation	<i>Nelson Bleackley</i> 25 th

Our Parish & People	26 th
Openness to Christ	<i>Muriel Ellis, Leonard Beard</i> 27 th
Vulnerable children	28 th
Persecuted Christians	<i>Leonard Askham, pr., Peter Walker, bp.</i> 29 th
Those for whom Christmas is difficult	<i>Joy James</i> 30 th
Thanksgiving for God's graces in 2021	<i>Muriel Brittain, Rita Ollett</i> 31 st

Current News from our Social & Global Justice & Responsibility Group

WHITWORTH HOUSE

The staff are excited to share that they have been successful in tendering for the Young People's Housing Related Support service on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. The partnership is a joint venture with CHS Group, Richmond Fellowship, Orwell Housing, Riverside and YMCA Trinity Group. It consists of a Partnership Board, Operational Team, Staff Network and Young People's Voice to oversee client outcomes, review local policies and procedures and act as a sounding board on the evolution of the service model. The new contract starts on 1st January 2022. As a very new and innovative way of working together it will improve access to services, clearer pathways and prevent homelessness for many young people going forward.

Whitworth House is recognised as the specialist female service within the partnership. Their service will continue to work within a gendered, strengths-based approach recognising the additional trauma that many of their young women have faced or continue to face. They will also be increasing staffing levels to offer a concierge service outside office hours throughout the night, in recognition of the increased needs of their young people.

They anticipate this new partnership will be a great benefit to many young people in Cambridge as they come together to share experience, expertise and resources to offer a consistent and quality service across the network.

CAMBRIDGE CHURCHES HOMELESSNESS PROJECT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, both for all your prayers and your donations. CCHP remains entirely dependent upon the generosity of our friends and donors to continue to serve our homeless brothers and sisters.

This is a brief update to highlight the progress we have made over the last year, and to share our plans for this winter.

As you may know from our end of winter season report, owing to the restrictions in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, we were not allowed to run our annual winter night shelter; however, thanks to the commitment and generosity of our donors and volunteers, we had a good winter of delivering services to the vulnerable and homeless in our local community. Over the course of the winter, we directed funds to providing emergency accommodation in bed and breakfast, and worked with local charities, and the authorities, to provide longer term housing solutions for our guests. We also provided the laundry services at the Masters' House initiative, run by *It Takes a City* and the City Council, ensuring that needles and sharps were safely removed before the laundry was sent off site. By the end of the season we had directly accommodated 18 individuals and supported the housing of over 300 individuals.

From an operational perspective, at the end of the last winter season we said several sad goodbyes to longstanding friends and colleagues, and thanked them for their outstanding and lasting contributions, and we wish them all the best for the future. Our Chair and CCHP co-founder, Fr Jon Canessa, stood down and has relocated to Northumberland with his family; I know our loss is very much their gain. Marie Bull, who admirably took on both the task of Trustee, and that of Secretary to the Trustee Board, also stood down in the spring and we miss her input hugely. Over the summer, we said farewell to Jackie Cottingham, who served many dedicated winters as our Volunteer Co-ordinator. Over Jackie's time with us, our volunteers became familiar with her emails, when we had a last-minute dropout or a space which needed filling, as she worked tirelessly to ensure that we were always on track. Following these departures, we welcomed back Fr Robert Mackley to the fold; as a CCHP co-founder he has been a great addition to the Trustees. Finally, while preparing for this coming season, we were shocked and saddened by the sudden death of Stephen Barwise, our co-founder, Trustee, tireless fundraiser, OLEM rota co-ordinator, Team Leader and volunteer. As a Board of Trustees, we have never been more committed to ensuring that the legacy Stephen has left is only strengthened and built upon, and we will be back among our homeless brothers and sisters this winter, serving with a renewed sense of purpose.

This winter we are still working within a framework dictated by the restrictions in place following the pandemic. As such, a rotating night shelter model was again blocked by the Council in line with Covid-19 guidelines. We took the decision to split our focus in two directions; firstly, we will be providing emergency Bed and breakfast accommodation to the most vulnerable in our society, in the same way as we did last winter; to those with no access to public funding, women, and those with no other option available to them. We hope to raise enough funds to give our guests this offer of safety and security. Unfortunately, unlike last winter, hospitality is now running at full price, and reluctant to give discounts owing to the financial instability of the last year. This means that we are facing a winter where a room will cost us an average of £50 per night per guest. If we were to house the guests we served last winter, in the same way, we would be facing an expenditure in the tens of thousands of pounds. This is why we ask you to pray for us this winter. Hold us, our guests and our fundraising efforts, in your thoughts and prayers as we look to keep as many of the vulnerable warm and safe this winter as we possibly can.

Our second venture this winter is our Crossways project. We took the decision to go into a one-off partnership with *It Takes A City* (ITAC), to enable us to have the opportunity to serve our community. Crossways is a hostel set-up, with 20 en-suite rooms available for our guests. There is on-site security, social workers and other services available Monday-Friday at the hostel, so that we can offer more of a rounded package to our guests. At its core, Crossways is an opportunity to provide someone with the chance to access a range of support aimed at giving them a long-term housing option, and hope of a stable future. From addiction services to support completing housing applications, we will be working to deliver wrap around care to our guests this winter. Cambridge Churches Homeless Project will be the heart of Crossways, providing lunch, a hot evening meal and a tangible sense of community and care throughout. As in previous winters, we will run at Crossways from the beginning of December to the end of March and our committed, generous, and kind Volunteers will be picking up their previous mantle of Welcoming Hosts, Cooks and Evening Leads ensuring the gentle and nurturing atmosphere that makes our guests feel welcome.

None of this would have been, or will be, possible without the support of our volunteers and donors. CCHP's income fell by nearly 30% compared to the previous year last winter; however, our donors rallied magnificently and we

achieved our objective. We stood firm to serve those most in need and we will do so again this winter.

We will not cure homelessness, but we will make a difference to those with whom we engage. Christ said, "I was hungry and you fed Me; I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink, I was a stranger and you made Me welcome." This is the mantra of the Cambridge Churches Homeless Project, and at the beginning of our ninth successive winter, it is this core belief which defines our purpose. I believe that we have made and can make a difference to those with whom we engage. CCHP is totally dependent on the support of the churches and the synagogue for our ability to function and serve. With your support we will be able to grant safety, food, and shelter to our guests once more this winter.

To all our supporters I wish to say thank you, for without your backing there would be no direct action, or intervention, by CCHP. Please remember our guests and CCHP in your prayers.

Judith Barwise, Trustee, CCHP

The **FOODBANK** has closed its Christmas Hamper Appeal but the Junior Choir are still in the process of putting one together, which we will take to the Foodbank at the beginning of December. Current items needed are always posted on the website: bags for life, noodles, instant coffee and tea bags, olive oil 500ml, puddings, angel delight, jelly, sponge puddings, pasta sauce, jam, rice, ketchup, laundry powder. Please contact **Mary Ward** for further information.

CONCORDIA meets on the first Tuesday of every month is going well, and we had a moving discussion, having looked at some poetry, on the theme of remembrance. It has been good to welcome one or two people from outside the congregation, and I'm grateful to Fiona for her brilliant craft activities. The poppies are adorning a noticeboard in the Parish Centre. Jane provides wonderful cakes every month and Janice looks after us beautifully with coffee and tea at the break. Concordia meets on the first Tuesday of every month, in the Parish Centre from 10am until 12 noon. The themes we have discussed, through poetry and art, are Hope, Companionship and Remembrance. In December we will consider Advent and Christmas, and January, Beginnings. Everyone is welcome and Fiona and I are most grateful to Jane for the

wonderful cakes she provides every session. Please contact **Mary Ward or Fiona Blake** for any further information.

SIXTEEN DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND ABUSE IN ALL ITS FORMS

25th November to 10th December is an annual United Nations' campaign. The Mothers' Union joins with thousands of other organisations to encourage more people to stand up and stop all forms of violence. Their campaign is focused on the fact that one in three women is a victims of violence or abuse. To raise awareness of this disturbing reality, they are encouraging people to hold a three-minute silence at 1.03pm on Saturday 27th November (Our Day of Action). 'No more 1 in 3.'

PAPUA NEW GUINEA CHURCH PARTNERSHIP

While Papua New Guinea's highlands Provinces have had relatively few confirmed cases and deaths, numbers are now steadily rising and the full level is not known owing to limited testing.

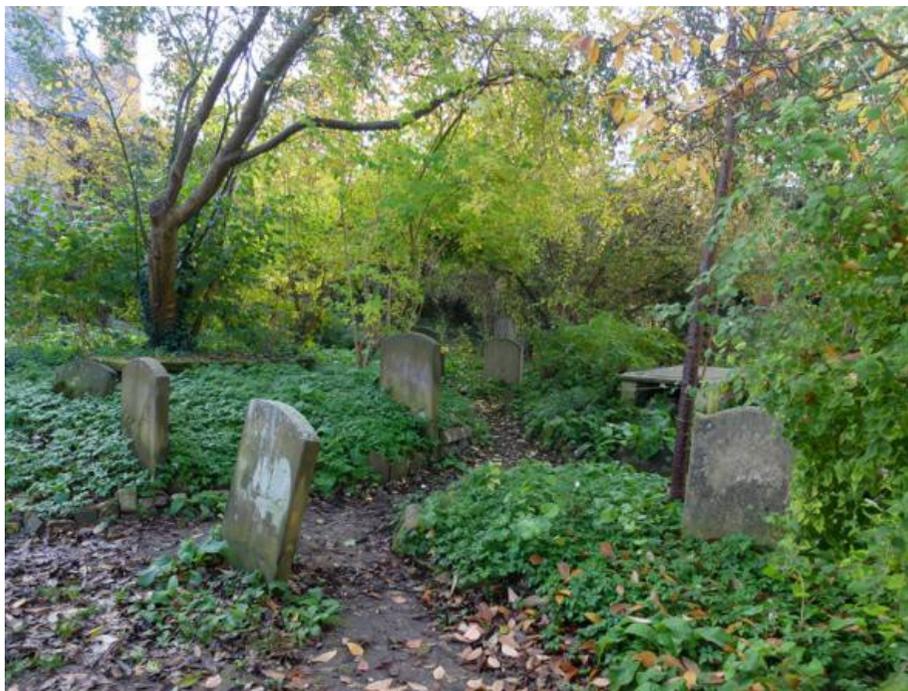
If the virus does get a hold, health services will struggle to cope. In the Simbai area there are no adequate health facilities. People have to travel to Provincial Centre's Western Highlands, Jiwaka and Madang for any medical needs and this is very expensive and also not possible in times of lockdown.

Look at the presentation from the PNGCP Supporters' Day on the Global page of the LSM website

www.lsm.org.uk/groups/lsm-global

for details of the latest initiative by the Church in PNG to improve medical care.

Garden News



There is still a lot of greenery to be seen in the garden, so the beds are being left at the moment and volunteers are concentrating on making sure the paths are clear and safe for our visitors. Don't forget it is there and do come and see how clear the paths are becoming.

Christine Tipple cstipple@gmail.com

Friends of Fulbourn Hospital – Urgent Appeal

The Friends of Fulbourn Hospital (which is supported by LSM) is one of very few charities offering individual grants to help people with mental health problems live independent lives in the community. There is clearly a considerable need for this support, and we have a constant stream of applications, mostly for the most basic items necessary for everyday living. We have a limit of £150 per application, but we have a standard procedure for joint funding with Cambridge Aid (also supported by LSM), who have a £200 limit, which gives us a total spend of up to £350 per application.

We are in danger of running out of money to support these grants and need additional funding urgently. At 19 November, we had just over £500 of general funds available for new grants. While we have a small income from investments, we are otherwise dependent on donations.

If we run out of available cash, we shall have to shut up shop and stop paying grants, or otherwise draw on investment capital.

Can you help? We would welcome either one-off donations or regular gifts by standing order.

One-off payments can be made to LSM for onward transmission to the Friends, but if you would like to give regularly, please get in touch with me (clivebrown21@virginmedia.com , tel 01223 467616) and I can give you the bank details of the charity. Please help us to keep up this work.