

January 2023

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From the Vicarage....

Dear Friends,

Well that was Christmas, done and dusted for another year – turkey finished (thank goodness!), tree down and decorations boxed up ready for next time, presents put neatly away and ‘thank yous’ written. Christmas done and dusted for another year... or is it??

As we step across the threshold of a new year it might seem as if carol singing and ‘baby Jesus’ are a dim and distant memory of the ‘old year’.

The shepherds have gone back to their fields to watch their flocks and there is not an angel to be seen! You might also think that the wise men have packed up their camels and ridden off across the desert again, back to the far and distant lands from whence they came. But there you would be wrong too, because the wise men do not strictly belong in the Christmas story at all.

Their story is a January story. It begins to unfold on 6th January when the Church celebrates the season of Epiphany (Epiphany meaning ‘to reveal that which is hidden’).

Baby Jesus was probably a little older and Mary and Joseph were unlikely to still be sheltering in a stable and this part of the story is set against a backdrop of the reign of a jealous tyrant king (Herod) whose cruelty will mean the young Holy family will soon need to flee and become refugees in another land.

But for now, a mysterious ‘awe and wonder’ moment; a visit by wise men from far off lands bringing gifts to the infant Jesus becomes the next instalment

of the Christmas story; a story which gradually reveals to the world who this baby, Jesus, really is; a story that keeps on giving; a story which will change the world forever.

The wise men bring, for their part in the story, gifts of great value – the best they could bring, and they lay them at the cradle of a child who is God, before returning home in the full knowledge that they have found the King they were looking for.

So in this January season of Epiphany you might just want to unpack your crib scene again – the Holy family and the kings - and put them back on the shelf until Candlemas on 2nd February when Epiphany season ends. They will remind you that the story of Christmas doesn’t end with the new year. In fact the story has continued through the centuries, as Jesus, the baby in the manger who grew to die for us on the cross, our God and Saviour, is revealed afresh for each new generation.



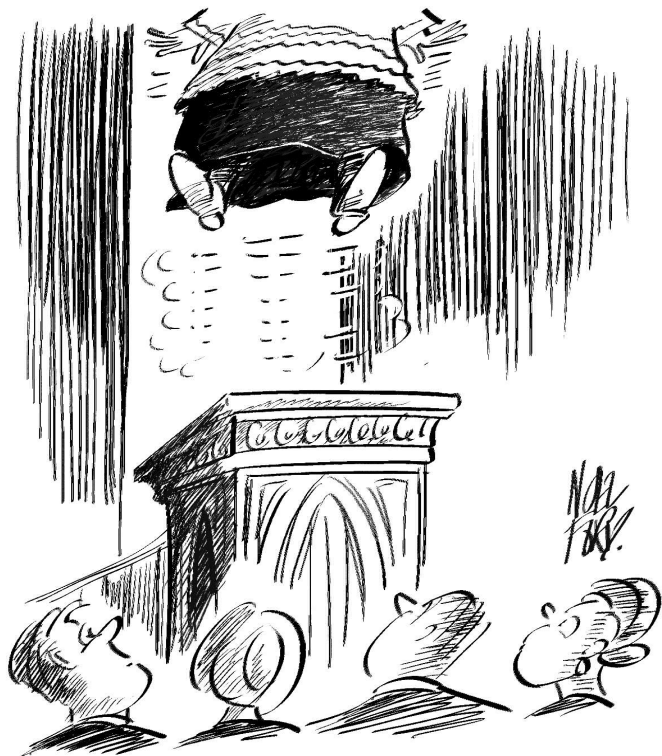
Yours in faith,
Vicar Becky

Good News

We are delighted to be welcoming to St Paul's next month the Revd Dr Lisa Redfern. Lisa is a self-supporting minister and works full time as a hospital doctor. Lisa will be with us at the weekends and is looking forward to helping develop our M33 Forest Church group.

Lisa concluded her curacy at St Albans' in Broadheath and will be known as one of our Associate Ministers here at St Paul's. She will be licensed by Bishop Sam on Sunday February 5th at 6pm Taize Evening Prayer.

M33 Forest Church will be meeting next on Sunday 8th January at the earlier time of 2pm. Please do wrap appropriately for the weather as we try to spend as much time as possible outside. Hot drinks will be provided.



The fan-heater under the cassock idea proved not to be such a good one

St Paul's Jubilee Tree

The PCC agreed last year to plant a tree to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's Jubilee. The nation-wide initiative is called the 'Queen's Green Canopy.' Everyone from individuals to organisations are encouraged to enhance the environment by planting a tree during the winter planting season of 2022/23.

We considered various possible locations within the church grounds and for various reasons, settled on the border between the car park and the school boundary fence, a few metres in from the Springfield Road boundary.

Advice was sought as to an appropriate species for this location and the suggestion favoured by the PCC was a Whitebeam or Mountain Ash (*Sorbus Aria Lutescens*).

The bare rooted sapling was planted on 12th December 2022. Like most young deciduous trees, it doesn't look much without any leaves. However, we can expect striking silvery white, downy young foliage in the Spring. Clusters of scented white budded flowers will appear in April and May followed by orange-red berries in the Autumn that are popular with birds. The tree should grow up to six metres in height.

The Mountain Ash should have few demands and can be expected to tolerate wind, heat and dry soil. Sitting alongside the tree is a commemorative plaque. Let's hope the tree will thrive and we can watch it grow in memory of our beloved Queen Elizabeth II.

Brian Kerridge



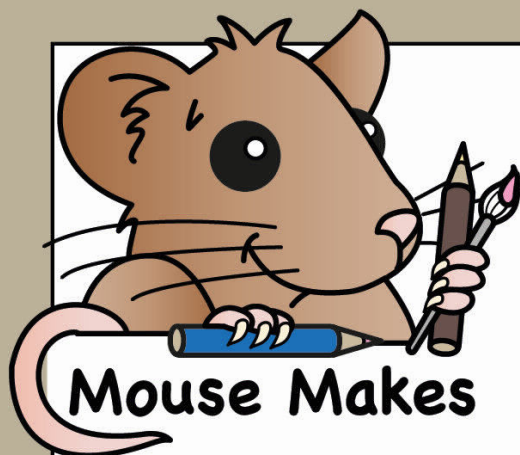
Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Genesis 12:1-9, 17:1-22, 18:1-15, 21:1-7

About 6000 years ago, God told Abram and his wife Sarai to leave their home and go to a new land that He would give them

<p>This land will belong to your family, but not yet</p>  <p>But Sarai and I cannot have children</p>	<p>and I am changing your names to Abraham and Sarah</p>  <p>'Abraham' means 'Father of many' 'Sarah' means 'Princess'</p>	<p>You and Sarah will have a son, Isaac</p>  <p>We are too old to have children. Ha ha ha!</p>
<p>It was noon, and everyone was resting from the heat...</p>  <p>When Abraham saw three men coming to his tents.</p>	<p>He recognised the Lord</p>  <p>Please stay and have something to eat.</p>	<p>He ran to tell everyone</p>  <p>Quick, we need a feast cooked for special guests</p>
<p>Sarah was in the tent, listening</p> <p>By this time next year, you will have a son</p>  <p>At our age? Ha ha ha!</p>	<p>Why did Sarah laugh?</p> 	<p>I didn't laugh</p>  <p>Yes, you did.</p>
<p>Soon afterwards...</p>  <p>I'm pregnant!</p>	<p>Sarah and Abraham's baby boy was born</p>  <p>I'm so happy, I can't stop laughing</p>	<p>They called him 'Isaac' which means 'laughter'</p>  <p>Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!</p>



A JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

When the **Magi** (wise men) came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

The _ _ _ _ _

Why did they make the journey?

What did they follow to get there?

A _ _ _ _ _

What did they see?

Read *Matthew 2:1-12*

Why did **Joseph** and **Mary** travel to **Bethlehem**?

Read *Luke 2:1-4*

When **Samuel** came to **Bethlehem** who sent him? Who did he go to see?

_ _ _ _ _ and his sons.

Who had he come to anoint as king?

Read *1 Samuel 16:1-13*

Naomi and **Ruth** came to **Bethlehem** where had they travelled from?

_ _ _ _ _ and why?

When did they arrive?

At the _ _ _ _ _ harvest.

Read *Ruth 1:22*

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

The name **BETHLEHEM** means 'House of Bread'

Look up the Bible references to find the missing words, find them and these words below in the wordsearch

JOURNEY
BETHLEHEM • GOD
JOSEPH • MARY
JESUS • BORN
MAGI • MESSIAH
NAOMI • RUTH
FOOD • HARVEST
SAMUEL • ANOINT
KING • BREAD

Canon Paul Hardingham begins a new series on the spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and deepen our faith.

Spiritual Practices

January is a time for thinking about New Year Resolutions, even though we can struggle to keep them very long! However, this month is a good time to reset our spiritual disciplines. These practices, which engage our whole person, help our spiritual growth as disciples of Christ.

If we want more of Jesus' presence in our lives, we often find ourselves thinking, 'I'll have to try harder: to pray, listen to God or read the Bible'. Paul makes the important distinction between training and trying in the Christian life:

'Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever'.
(1 Corinthians 9:24,25).

Paul insists that runners undergo strict training if they are to win the race. It would be foolish to enter a marathon without adequate training. The runner wouldn't complete the course despite trying hard! The same principles apply to the Christian life: God wants us to train by developing spiritual practices: 'to train means to arrange my life around activities I can do that will enable me, over time, to do what I cannot do by direct effort alone' (Dallas Willard).

In his book *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster lists the following spiritual disciplines:

Inward Disciplines:

Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, Study

Outward Disciplines:

Simplicity, Solitude, Submission, Service

Corporate Disciplines:

Confession, Worship, Guidance, Celebration

Over the coming year we will be looking at some of these. Effective discipline is not drudgery, but delightful! Richard Foster insists that we can 'celebrate' these disciplines which can help us grow.

To all of you who have:

Created,
Decorated
Cleaned the loo
baked, boiled, brewed,
prayed, cared and shared,
grappled with glue and glitter
typed, tapped, or telephoned,
sauteed, seared, sizzled, served,
prayed, played, cared and shared,
shifted seating, screens or staging
organised, co-ordinated, arranged,
Washed up, cleared up or tidied up
Welcomed, ushered in and listened,
florested, de-forested or floricultured,
scrubbed, spruced up, scoured or swept
managed, manufactured, mended or minded
Balanced books, paid the bills, phoned the bank
tinkled, whistled, rang, sang, strummed or drummed
THANK
YOU



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CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL : 16th – 18th December 2022



Reverend Becky applied for a grant to help fund the event which included the heating and lighting, and refreshments for all ages. We were delighted when our application was successful and it was full steam ahead!

St Paul's hosted our first ever Christmas Tree Festival as part of our **Winter Warming Initiative** supported by the **Trafford Housing Trust**.

At Christmas-time, and this winter more than ever, our Church family, neighbours and local community are all in need of love, company, warmth and light, and as the Parish Church here in the centre of Sale, we are in an ideal location to offer all these things.

After reaching out to local organisations and community groups (some of which are based here with us at St Paul's), it became very clear that a tree festival would be very popular and inclusive for all ages.

Paul's Christmas Trees on Marsland Road were able to provide and deliver premium trees including bases which we discovered is very important!



The trees were then sponsored and decorated by **4th Sale Central (St Paul's) Brownies and Guides, 2nd Sale Central Rainbows, JGMT (James Goodwin**

Musical Theatre), St Paul's Babes & Tots, Kid's Rock Pre-School, Christians Against Poverty, the Children's Society Christingle tree, Springfield Primary School PTA, Sale High School, Stanley Square Sale, Edge Worldwide Logistics, a Prayer Tree, the Pantry Shelves foodbank tree and finally the Blue Christmas Tree where people could hang a star in memory of loved ones.



There were crafts for children to enjoy, and visitors were able to vote for their favourite Christmas Tree. We had an instant Nativity dressing up area and children could add their own decorations to the trees.

There will be more events to follow as part of the Winter Warming Initiative as we enter the New Year ... including the continuation of Soup Sundays as we continue to provide support within our own family here at St Paul's and our local community.



During the 3 days of the event, we counted just over 800 people who visited the Church and enjoyed the warm space, refreshments, the festive spirit, live music of all genres including: our amazing organists Donald and Kevin, carol singing Rainbows, Ed Billingham and Jo Wade Classical Guitar, The Salvation Army Junior Brass Band, and Catherine Mathew and Becky Mathew on recorder.



Lisa Clarke



After our Carol Service, a few people mentioned they were touched by the haunting piece, A Miracle from Manchester Carols, sung by the choir.

Yes, it would be a miracle indeed
if everyone who needs somewhere to sleep could find a bed;
The tired the lost, the homeless dispossessed,
Somewhere to rest.
O Bethlehem, at last we would agree
That it would be a miracle indeed.

Yes, it would be a miracle for sure
If everyone who fears the men with guns knew no more war;
The shot, the bombed, the injured innocents
Were whole once more.
O Bethlehem, our hearts would not ignore
That it would be a miracle for sure.

Yes, it would be a miracle tonight
If everyone who stumble in the dark could find a light;
The weak, the poor, the hungry multitudes,
Something to eat.
O Bethlehem, we would believe it right
That it would be a miracle tonight.

We first learnt another of the 12 pieces in 2019, words written by the poet laureate Carol Ann Duffy and set to music by local composer Sasha Johnson Manning. At the time we updated a couple of the Balkan cities mentioned in the original 2007 text to reflect the conflict in Afghanistan. Three years, and a worldwide pandemic later, we sing again – and there is another war in another place on our screens and in our hearts.

The nativity story is, in part, about a family leaving their home village and familiar safe surroundings in an occupied land. A courageous, fearful young woman gives birth in a stable before the family become refugees, fleeing the tyrannical despot Herod.

In 2022, around 12 million Ukrainians have been displaced from their familiar, safe surroundings; courageous and fearful young women give birth in darkened bomb shelters and cellars without power

to the sound of missiles sent by a tyrannical despot; grandmothers who survived the last occupation of their country are led from their homes in the snow.

In another picture we see a priest light a candle on an upturned crate as he chants the Divine Liturgy. The small, flickering light illuminates the richly coloured icon in the dank, stinking darkness-dignified holiness and timeless, powerful beauty amid grey, chaotic wretchedness. Faith and hope meet here to remember the true light sent from God to a cold stable in a strange place. This great light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Anne
Allen



Reflected Faith Series : To the Glory of God

Last month I wrote about the use of flowers to decorate the church during Advent and Christmas and how they reflected our faith and the time of year. Did you manage to see any of the three I mentioned: poinsettias, lilies or even irises?

They each have a ‘meaning’ which tells you part of the story of faith; the iris demonstrating light and hope by its very colourful face, while the lily symbolises Jesus’ mother Mary, as well as the Easter resurrection, chastity, innocence, and purity.

The various parts of the poinsettia emphasise different aspects of Christmas. The shape of the flower and leaves resemble the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red coloured leaves represent the blood of Christ shed for the world. The white leaves represent His purity.

This month I wanted to think about ‘creatures’ in church.

I don’t mean whether dogs should or shouldn’t be allowed in the building or how to deal with an infestation of woodworm or bats - but rather how creatures are used to decorate the interior of church buildings, giving hidden symbolisms.

What animals, birds or insects have you noticed? You will often find them carved in stone or wood as well as within paintings and pictures. It’s not that the craftsmen are wanting to include their pets, but rather each creature brings its own natural meaning.

Bees and their hives are a great example. The bee is symbolic of tireless activity. It represents a good work ethic and being diligent at a task. Because the worker bees do not mate, they symbolize virginity and chastity. (Though I’m never sure how that relates to the queen bee!)

Because the bee appears to die in the winter and reappear in the early summer, it symbolizes rebirth. The bees’ hard work is connected to the beehive, which symbolizes order. The bee represents the Christian and the beehive symbolizes the church.

This month

Have a look at the ‘creatures’ used in a church near you. What do they ‘say’? What aspects of their way of being, speak to you of the glory of God?



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Who's Who? Members of the Parochial Church Council (not mentioned on the back page)

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Carole Shakeshaft 969-6319
Paula Hughes 973-5121
Joyce Green 973-0396
Jean Law 962-6761
Fiona Vaughan-Thomas
Amanda Pearson

GARRY PROLZE

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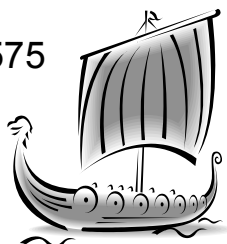
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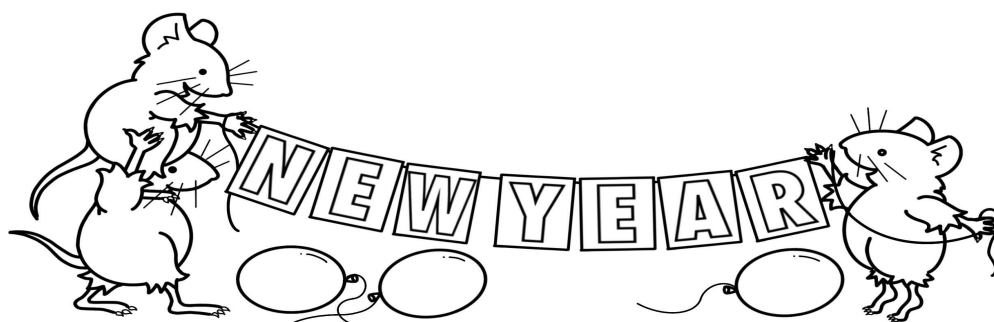
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January

1 st January	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist No Evening Prayer
4 th January	Wednesday	10.00am	Midweek Communion (CW)
8 th January	Sunday	10.00am 2.00pm 6.00pm	Parish Eucharist M33 Forest Church Evening Prayer
10 th January	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
11 th January	Wednesday	10.00am	Midweek Communion
13 th January	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
15 th January	Sunday	10.00am 6.00pm	Parish Eucharist Evening Prayer
Deadline for the January Parish News			
17 th January	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
18 th January	Wednesday	10.00am	Midweek Communion
20 th January	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
22 nd January	Sunday	10.00am 6.00pm	Parish Eucharist Evening Prayer
24 th January	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots
25 th January	Wednesday	10.00am 7.45pm	Midweek Communion PCC Meeting
27 th January	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
29 th January	Sunday	10.00am 12.00 noon 6.00pm	Parish Eucharist Soup Sunday Evening Prayer
31 st January	Tuesday	9.30am	Babes & Tots



Next Month:-

1 st February	Wednesday	10.00am	Midweek Communion
3 rd	Friday	1.30pm	Community Choir
5 th	Sunday	10.00am	Parish Eucharist
		6.00pm	Taize Style Evening Prayer and Bishop Sam
			Licensing of Revd. Dr Lisa Redfern



Please check the weekly pew sheets for any service changes that may occur.

New Year

(Gal 3:29, Mt 28:20)

Jesus,
Heir of the promise,
Hope of the years,
You are here.

Help us Lord,
To know that You are *there*, too,
Before us
As You are behind us,
Already in the new moment,
The new day,
The new year.

Help us Lord
To delight in Your company,
To walk Your safe way,
To shine Your clear light
Of hope for the year.

By Daphne Kitching

Donald's Afternoon Tea

It was great to see so many of you mixing with my neighbours and friends and enjoying yourselves at the event. Thank you for all the good wishes and cards and for your generous donations to the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. I cannot give you a final figure as some people donated on –line.

A big thank you to Maxine and Garry who organised the tea and decorated the room before it all began.... it was the best kept secret in Sale.

I think my grand-daughter Hanna summed it up when she said 'Grandad you are not 90—only 75 + VAT!'

A very Happy New Year to your all

Donald

Future Dates and Events 2023

Thursday 9 th February	Churches Together AGM
Saturday 18 th February	Pancake Party
22 nd February	Ash Wednesday
	Beginning of Lent



Christmas...

Every time a hand reaches out
To help another....that is Christmas
Every time someone puts anger aside
And strives for understanding
That is Christmas
Every time people forget their differences
And realize their love for each other
That is Christmas
May this Christmas bring us
Closer to the spirit of human understanding
Closer to the blessing of peace!



From Susan Kallumpram

Because of my disability I cannot come and personally thank everyone who has kindly sent me best wishes and get well messages. I have been coming to St. Paul's for nearly sixty-odd years. Thank you once again

St. Paul's Parish Directory

Vicar:	Revd. Becky Mathew	217-8795 / 07584 604627
Email:	revbmathewstpaulsale@gmail.com	
Associate Ministers:	Revd. Dr Margaret Jones	* 973-7790
	Revd. Shemil Mathew	217-8795
Churchwardens:	Yvonne Stevenson	* 283-1065
	Yvonne Kerridge	* 962-4066
Reader:	Michael Riley	* 969-2795
Pastoral Workers:	Yvonne Kerridge	* 962-4066
	Karen Salisbury	* 283-8309
Treasurer to the PCC:	Vacant (Contact the Parish Office)	
Secretary to the PCC:	Karen Salisbury	* 283-8309
Director of Music:	Anne Allen	* 01925-763103
Assistant Organists:	John Clisset	962-2096
	Kevin Drury	962-7963
	Donald Brooks	
Safeguarding Officer	Carole Shakeshaft	* 969-6319
Parish Giving Officer	Brian Kerridge	* 962-4066
Electoral Roll Officer:	Yvonne Stevenson	* 283-1065
Parish News Editor:	Karen Salisbury	* 283-8309
Bible Reading Fellowship:	Rachel Lee	* 973-1282
Men's Society:	Michael Riley	* 969-2795
Women's Tuesday Group:	Hilary Moore	* 969-1831
St. Paul's Babes & Tots	Rachel Lee	* 973-1282
Tower Warden:	Ian Moore	0787-670-6834
Christian Aid:	Anita Evans	973-4679
Children's Society Rep:	Sheila Clarke	962-4678
Church Hall Bookings:	Contact via the Parish Office	
4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Rainbows, Brownies & Guides	Vicky Williams	07986 525898

Parish Office

962-0082

Parish Office e-mail

salestpaul@aol.com

*Names above marked with * are members of the Parochial Church Council. Please note that **Vicar Becky** is part-time and her working hours are flexible so she might not be able to reply or respond immediately to your calls and emails.*

Parish Organisations affiliated to St Paul's

The following groups meet in St Paul's Church Hall unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday	9.30am-11am	St. Paul's Babes & Tots (school term time)
	1.15pm	Women's Tuesday Group (2 nd of every month)
	6.15pm	4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Brownies
	7.30pm	4 th Sale Central (St. Paul's) Guides
Thursday	9.30am-11am	St. Paul's Babes & Tots (<i>currently not meeting</i>)
	7.30pm	Chorister Training and Choir Practice
	8.00pm	Men's Society (last of every month Sept to May but not Dec)
Friday	1.30pm-2.30pm	Community Choir (school term time)
	5.30pm	4 th Sale Central (St Paul's) Rainbows