

Mattishall and Tudd Valley



Christmas Greetings from the
churches in East Tuddenham,
Hockering, Mattishall,
North Tuddenham, Welborne
and Yaxham.

2022

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Why do we celebrate Christmas on December 25th? The bible does not tell us what day Jesus was born, but it was almost certainly not mid-winter.

So why rather than a glorious light warm summer day, pick the opposite?

The first Christians came to faith in the heyday of the Roman Empire, and December 25th was seen then as the heart of winter and the darkest day of the year. Yet, Jesus said “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life”. So how better to celebrate the coming of the Light of Life into the world and into our lives than the darkest day of the year?

The bible teaches that when we accept Jesus’ gift of new life through the forgiveness of all that separates us from the love of God (our sins) then we also receive his light that transforms our lives and through us can transform others.

So that’s why Christmas celebrations are full of light – candles on Christmas trees or around the fireplace, candles on Christingle oranges, or counting the weeks down to Christmas on an Advent Crown – all are celebrating that into our dark world the most marvellous light has come.

Our world can seem very dark, and not just because it’s December – particularly at the moment with the cost-of-living crisis, too many households on or under the breadline, the threat of climate catastrophe, the war in the Ukraine and conflicts and injustice around the world. This darkness can seep into us, either because it is impacting on us directly, or because we become hopeless at the state of the world.

The birth of Jesus reminds us that darkness and hopelessness are not the end of the story. Light has come in Jesus and that light can come into our lives. Jesus also said "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in."

The coming of the light of Jesus to banish the darkness is also one reason why followers of Jesus, invest their energy in doing things that will make a difference to others. The Trussell Trust, who are behind the foodbank in Dereham, was set up by followers of Jesus. Christians against Poverty, who help people overcome debt, was obviously set up by followers of Jesus. The Children's Society, Barnardo's, Liveability, the Samaritans, and many of our village charities were set up by followers of Jesus. Light is there to be shared.

So this Christmas time, do support these or other organisations sharing light into the darkness of people's lives and discover for yourself the source of the light in the person of Jesus.

With every blessing,

Mark

Mark McCaghrey

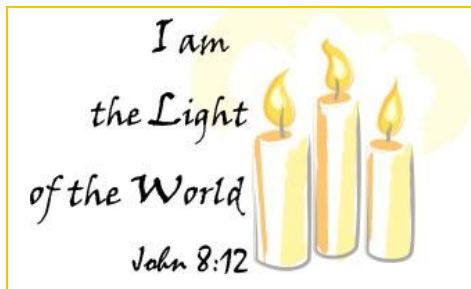
Rector: Mattishall and Tudd Valley Benefice

Benefice Office, Church Rooms, Dereham Road, Mattishall,
Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 3QA.

Phone: 01362 882260

Office: 01362 858873

www.matvchurch.uk



God Loves each one of us, God is love

Through prayer God can change things - try praying for a week and see what happens.

We can also pray for you, just ask someone you know who goes to Church or contact the Church Office (next door to Mattishall Surgery— full contact details on the last page of this booklet)

We pray for specific villages each morning at Morning Prayer on Zoom:



Monday—Hockering
Tuesday—Yaxham
Wednesday—Welborne
Thursday East Tuddenham
Friday—North Tuddenham
Saturday—Mattishall



An Evolving Story

Sarah Rodgers, a member of the Guiding Group at The Hive, reflects on two years of action.

We are almost at the end of our second full year as a project described as a 'new place for new people' which is one of the programmes promoted by the Methodist Evangelism and Growth Team.



When we set out on our journey in December 2020 we knew only that we had been called to offer pathways to God through a programme of creativity, spirituality and well-being and we knew that we had been called to do this simply, inclusively, by inviting and by listening. These have remained the values and hallmarks of our programmes and our approach. So how is our story evolving? There seem to be four distinct strands of development.

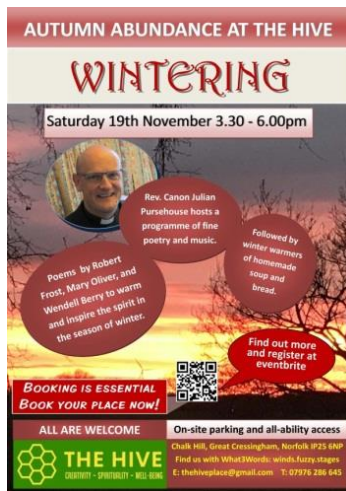
First, we are gathering a community.

Let's be clear, we are not trying to be, or wanting to be, an established church. Our community covers all faiths and none and people are free to 'belong without joining'. We want people to be involved on their terms, not ours, and our approach is bottom up, not top down. Perhaps the nature of the community at The Hive could be described as a network of communities, as not all come to every part of the programmes. Our strongest sense is that

each time we hold an event, those who come, form a community for the time that we are together. There is overlap across those communities, which gives the sense of a network. The underlying value, and a markedly Wesleyan one, is that *'all are welcome'* and only recently someone appeared at the door, having driven over from Newmarket, clutching one of our striking flyers and said, *"I've come because it says here, all are welcome"*.

Second, we are sharing our story.

We take advantage of as many ways as possible of sharing our story. Two of our team members have joined Methodist Pioneer Pathways which exists to support pioneers by talking through our calling, listening to other pioneers, receiving training and mentoring and sometimes being able, safely, to let off steam! We have also been welcomed into a Mission Enablers group run by Rev Tim Yau from the Diocese of Norwich and benefited from resources and conversations with other Christians. We have received offers to lead sessions such as a retreat day and forest church and only recently, Revd Canon Julian Pursehouse hosted Wintering, an evening of poetry and music *'to warm and inspire the spirit'*.



Third, we are providing a template.

A number of people have visited us to find out if ours is a model that they could follow where they are. Of course! Take from The Hive what helps, interests and inspires you. We are doing this for God's kingdom and where the Spirit has led we are more than happy for others to follow. Sometimes we provide ideas for programme content. Sometimes we give food for thought over structures which we believe should be as flexible as possible whilst ensuring there is compliance and accountability. Sometimes,



we provide the, ‘*well if you can do it, so can I*’ moment – we know of a forest church project near Sheringham that has come about directly from having taken part at The Hive. It’s not always easy to step out of the established mould, but, for the sake of the gospel, it is sometimes where we are called. We help to give people courage to step out.

Fourth, we are looking for spiritual growth.

As the guiding group at The Hive (Sarah, Geraldine, David and Susan), we recognise that we are moving from the old and towards the new. The only validation for this is to know that the Spirit walks ahead, behind and alongside us. Between us we share a spectrum of sparks that illuminate our way – light, breath, movement, healing, the present moment, creation and the universe. Being The Hive is fundamentally about opening up the possibility of spiritual pathways for others. As we try to do that, in the Ignation tradition, we ‘*rummage for God*’ and explore the creativity, spirituality and well-being in Christ that we are called to.



Email: thehiveplace@gmail.com

Telephone: 07976 286 645

When our grandson was 5, our daughter asked us if we would like to go to their house in London for Christmas.

‘No!’ he wailed, ‘Christmas only happens in Norfolk!’

Anna

Rudolph the Red

There was once a man whose name was Rudolph the Red. He was standing in his house one day with his wife. He looked out of the window and saw something happening. He said to his wife, 'Look darling, it's raining.'

She, being the obstinate type, responded, 'I don't think so dear. I think it's snowing.' But Rudolph knew better. So, he said to his wife, 'let's step outside and we'll find out.'

Lo and behold, they stepped outside and discovered it was in fact rain. Rudolph turned to his wife and replied, 'I knew it was raining. Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear!'



From *A Bucket of Surprises*, J John and Mark Stibbe, Monarch Books.



Please pop in for a warm welcome at Green Pastures.

We have lots of Christmas cards and gifts for you to browse.

We also sell Christening, Baptism, Wedding and Confirmation gifts.

You can buy National Book Tokens here too!

And, if you don't fancy the trip, we have a webstore where you can do your shopping online.

<https://www.greenpasturesdereham.org.uk/>

20 Norwich Street, Dereham, Norfolk. NR19 1BX

Tel: 01362 697953

Are you ready for Christmas?!

Well, it's that time of year again, Christmas is upon us! How did that happen? We know Christmas comes but once a year and we have plenty of time to prepare but it seems, to me anyway, that all of a sudden, it's here. The question I'm often asked, is 'are you ready for Christmas?'



Let me ask you. Are you ready for Christmas?

My answer, and I suspect some of your answers will be 'not quite'. Edith, one of our little granddaughters (who's 3) often answers "not quite" when asked if she is ready to do something or finished something. It's her answer of the moment! Olivia, her younger sister, says "in a second" when asked if she is ready to do something.

Were people ready for the first Christmas, were they prepared do you think? They should have been! There were many signs and prophecies about the child who would be born and who He was. The Old Testament book of Isaiah, written approximately 800 years before Christ's birth speaks of a child: Unto us a child is born, a son is given and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonder Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9 v 6.

In fact, Isaiah has quite a lot to say about the one who was to come, telling people from where He would come, which genetic family line, what He represented and what He would do. We have heard that He was to be called Emmanuel, meaning God with us. Taking a few of his other names we get to understand something of his character;

Wonderful Counsellor

Mighty God

Eternal or everlasting Father

Prince of Peace

The name of Jesus is very powerful when used correctly and there's a lot that can be said about the titles and names Jesus held. I'd run out of space in this

booklet to write them all down, so some of His names and titles will be for another time.

Just a few thoughts though;

The Hebrew word for Wonderful, used in this context, means something extraordinary, something miraculous and particularly, signifies the work of God.

Eternal, the Hebrew word used in this context means God's dwelling place.

The Hebrew word for Prince refers to one who has immediate authority (this was not a lesser royal title).

So, we are being told hundreds of years before He was born, that He would be extra ordinary, miraculous, God's dwelling place and have immediate authority.

People were being prepared for the arrival of the child, Emmanuel, God with us.

This baby was, like all babies, born to grow. Our children and grandchildren grow up so quickly and however much we'd love our little ones to stay little, even if it's just for a bit longer, they still grow up. Jesus didn't stay a baby in the manger, we can't keep Him there either. This child was born to bring about our salvation, so He grew into the man who was to be the Saviour of the world.

Can we have Christmas without Easter? Easter without Christmas? No, we can't have one without the other because He came for a reason.

Again, Isaiah spoke about Easter in chapter 53, he told the people (that's us by the way) about how Jesus would be treated by society (again that's us). Verse 5 tells us 'He would be crushed for our iniquities.' When I read the word iniquities, it didn't feel like a harsh word, it felt quite impersonal. Believe me, it isn't at all! In Hebrew, this word refers to the most serious of sin, which deserves the worst kind of punishment (it didn't feel quite so impersonal after I read that) and all of this was to be placed on Him. Isaiah 53 v 5 actually says, 'But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.'

On that first Easter day, the baby in the manger became the man on the cross, to rescue us from our sin, He took all of it upon Himself, so we could be free.

What happened on the cross was not the end of the story, He didn't stay on the cross and He didn't stay in the tomb! That again is for another time!

But why was He born, persecuted and made to suffer?

Well, John 3 v16 tells us quite simply, it was for love. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.'

He gave His only, adored, beloved, precious Son to us, so that we may be free from being condemned for our wrongdoing, our iniquities (the most serious of sin), our bad decisions, our mistakes (big and small) that have hurt people. I could go on...

Almighty God loves every one of us, without exception. He loves each of you. He loves me.

He understands us and gives us time to work things out, time to prepare to receive the Child and the Man He became. He loves us.

We don't need to take big steps towards believing in Him sometimes that takes time and He allows us to take small steps. I know this because my journey to faith was via small steps, sometimes one step forward, sometimes one step back! I had lots of questions and I am so thankful for His patience! In receiving Him, I received an inexplicable and profound peace. He is always with me whatever life throws my way and I know this not just because the Bible tells me so but because of my own life experiences.

We can take a step towards receiving the Lord into our lives and we can do it anytime but I invite you to take some time to reflect on that baby in the manger and the man on the cross, take time to reflect on His great love for us and the hope this love brings us. He loves us.

May the Lord bless you and all whom you love, this Christmas. Amen

Elizabeth Smith

Care for the Family is a registered charity and has been working to strengthen family life since 1988. I believe that every family should have somewhere to turn for support in both the good times and when family life is challenging.



Working throughout the UK, the charity provide parenting support, relationship and bereavement support, resources, courses, training, and volunteer networks. They also host excellent, informative events, both online and in person.

Its work is motived by Christian compassion and its resources and support are available to everyone, of any faith or none.

You can find Care for the Family on Facebook or simply check out their website for more information...
www.careforthefamily.org.uk



Anne Molyneux



YAXHAM CARES

HERE FOR YOU, HERE FOR US ALL

07765 263389

YAXHAMCARES@GMAIL.COM

Our story.....

Dean and I met in 1994 and were married in 1996. I have three children from a previous marriage. 1 boy and 2 girls. We have 7 grandchildren. 5 boys and 2 girls.

Neither Dean nor I come from a church back ground although I went to Sunday school as a child and obviously did RE at school.

In 2016 we decided to do an Alpha course with my sister and her husband along with their home group. This was done over FaceTime. When we got to the segment on the holy spirit my sister said 'Come up for the weekend and we can do it with our home group.' So we did. This turned out to be the start of something truly amazing !



At the start of the week, whilst my brother in law was praying, I started to talk gibberish and was unable to stop !!!! After my brother in law stopped I carried on. Everyone else joined in saying the same things as me. I was completely unable to comprehend what was going on. All of a sudden, we all stopped at the same time. I came out of only what I can describe as being a trance and looked at my sister and said....what just happened? She said you were praying in tongues. I had never heard of this before let alone done it.

One of the group members was a pastor and asked Dean what he thought about what had just happened. Dean said, 'Well, I thought it was a bit weird.' The pastor asked Dean if he'd like to become a Christian and he said having just witnessed that absolutely, yes !!!!

We went back home to Bedfordshire and looked to join a church immediately. We joined a Baptist church in Leighton Buzzard in 2016 and a year later on 26th February, were baptised in front of our church family and our families.

I do believe that God gave me the gift of tongues to show Dean his power and to lead him / us to faith.

We moved into the Mattishall exactly a year ago yesterday. We had been looking to join a church and prayed and felt that God wanted us to join All Saints Mattishall. We look forward to letting God lead us to do his work within our community and beyond.



Cheryl Bompas

Christmas 2022

What does Christmas mean to you? Parties, food, Santa, trees and lights, cards and presents, shops buzzing.....maybe not so exciting...money worries at this difficult time. How will we cope?

I think back to my childhood when Christmas began on Christmas morning. When I went to bed Christmas Eve there was no sign of anything different, except the stocking I hung at the foot of my bed.



Next morning, I would find. Santa had been and filled my stocking with an orange, nuts and sweets and perhaps a book. I was delighted and when I went downstairs, I discovered Santa had also brought and decorated a Christmas tree and put up some paper trimmings across the room. I was delighted and very excited. I could already

smell the oven which had a goose slowly roasting, a Christmas present from my great uncle. I felt so very lucky.

I had been brought up to go to church with my grandad who was a churchwarden. I went to Sunday school and learnt that we had Christmas because of the birth of Jesus. I remember being Herod in a nativity play and going into the pulpit to say my part but can't remember any more.

One thing I know was that I never knew why Jesus came. When I was about 11, I was confirmed at Watton church and learnt a lot about the catechism and the creed and the commandments but never why this was so important,

It was not until my Mum married a farmer's son and I left school and came to live in Yaxham that some of these things began to make sense.

I started to go to the chapel with my sister where I heard that I was a sinner. **Romans 3 verse 23** says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. **ALL**. All must include me. I knew I had done things I should not have done, I had told lies to get me out of a hole I remember. I had not done really wicked things like murder or such and had not realised that sin against God does not have to be that. Pride, envy and wrong thoughts or anything that we put first in our livesbefore Godwas breaking one of the 10 commandments and was sin.

This was all new to me, and there was more.

I discovered why Jesus was born! He was born to die! I know we all are, but this was different. Jesus came, God in human form, knowing that in a very few years Easter would come. He knew he would be crucified on the cross. Why on earth would he come knowing that...?

HE CAME BECAUSE HE LOVED ME AND HE LOVES YOU.

I knew I had to ask for forgiveness for all the things I had done which I should not have done and ask Jesus to come into my life and help me to live for Him.

I am so thankful that His death on the cross was not the end. Jesus rose from the dead and went back to heaven with his Father God. I am thankful that he left the Holy Spirit to walk with me every day.

So, when I look forward to Christmas, I am so grateful for the best gift I will every receive. The promise of eternal life in heaven with my Heavenly Father.

I love the Christmas lights because they remind me that Jesus is the light of the world and how much for which I have to be thankful.

So, what will this Christmas mean to you? Will it be the Christmas when you accept the best gift of all and ask Jesus to come into your heart. The Bible also says 'ask and you will receive.'

May this be your happiest Christmas ever. God bless you all with His peace.

Beryl Garner

"Strangers" in Norwich!

Some people like being on their own at Christmas - not many though.

We try to include all our families and friends in the celebrations, so that no-one feels left out in the cold, as Jesus and his parents were, when they first arrived in Bethlehem 2000 years ago.

The kindness of strangers made them welcome and warm.

This year, think about spreading your Christmas cheer a bit wider than family, church and community to include "Strangers"

The "Strangers" came to Norwich in 1650 (hence Strangers Hall) and were welcomed and given sanctuary.



Ever since, Norwich has been a place of welcome and safety.

Today's "Strangers" are fleeing persecution in Iran and elsewhere, poverty and hunger in Africa, and the terrifying effects of rapid climate changes, just about everywhere.

I volunteer with Bridge Plus, a small advice centre for refugees and we and many other small local charities, are reaching out to people who have nowhere else to go for support. This year we will be working twice as hard as usual, because of the increasing need, desperation even, all around us.

Spare a thought and a prayer for God's "Strangers" this Christmas.

Spare a kind word for those out on our city streets.

Spare some cash, whenever you see it is needed.

Then we will all surely have, a Happy Christmas.

Frances Middleton



North Breckland Youth for Christ

Generations come and go, things are changing and moving all the time. This can lead you to feeling disconnected from those that come after you. However all is not lost; the current generation could be described as “Selfie-taking yet unselfish, connected yet lonely, anxious yet pragmatic, distrustful of authority and valuing authenticity, risk-averse yet entrepreneurial.” However you react to that statement, still at the heart of it, human behaviour hasn’t changed all that much. One thing that spans the generations is the need for authenticity and love.

We at North Breckland Youth for Christ are about seeing young people’s lives changed by Jesus. We believe in the wellbeing of the whole person - the physical, the mental and the spiritual, and seek to see young people’s lives changed for the better. We do this in a variety of ways, we work with churches and schools and organisations, running clubs and projects to engage with young people and help support their needs and be a safe place for them to develop and grow.

A few weeks ago I was with a couple of young people who were talking about someone at school and being somewhat derogatory about that person. I asked them if I could share a story about Jesus with them. They said yes, so I told them how Jesus was confronted by a woman who was “caught in the act of adultery.” It was a trap set for Jesus to try and catch him out but he was told by those who had dragged this poor woman in front of him that the law stated that this woman should be killed for her actions by stones being thrown at her.

Jesus stooped down and started drawing in the sand at his feet. All the focus of the crowd and authorities was taken off the woman and onto Jesus. What was he going to say? How was he going to answer? Would the trap work? Jesus got up from drawing in the sand and said “If any of you are innocent of wrong doing, feel free to start throwing a stone at this woman.” Then he went back to drawing in the sand. I imagine at this point, starting with those who were more advanced in years to the younger people, the sound of stones dropping to the floor from clenched fists could be heard as each examined his own actions.

Having told this story to the girls I could see them thinking about this girl at their school and could see them examining their own lives. I physically saw their faces changing the longer they pondered. Now I have no idea what happened the next day at school but at least in that moment we were able to speak some goodness into their lives. This is an example of one way we work with young people.

For the observant among you, you may have realised we used to run a Youth Café in Mattishall which we have not relaunched post pandemic. We are still planning on working with the church to look to do something for the young people in the area so please watch this space.

Paul Roast

WHAT'S ON:



**Yaxham
Community
Café
Yaxham
Village Hall**

**A friendly café atmosphere awaits you in
the village hall twice a month.**

**Come and meet some new faces or bring
your own company.**

**Were open on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the
month from 10am – 12pm**



**November 10th & 24th
December 8th
January 12th & 26th
February 9th & 23rd
March 9th & 23rd
April 13th & 27th
May 11th & 25th**

Need transportation please
contact us on :
Café Coordinator:
07990 725728
yaxhamcommunity@gmail.com

Christmas Fayre

**All Saints Church, Mattishall
Saturday 26th November 2022**

10am to 3pm

**Crafts, gifts,
refreshments and
light lunches.**

Free entry



An Afternoon of Christmas Activities

Sunday 4th December, 2.00pm - 4.00pm

**All Saints' Church
Mattishall**

**Lots of Family Fun
Crafts, Games, Refreshments and more!**

Free Entry



You will find Father Christmas in his grotto at the church between
2.00pm - 4.00pm (£3.00 per child)

Followed by refreshments and music on the **Village Green** from 4.00 pm.
with the switching on of the Christmas Tree Lights at 5.00pm.

Hosted by Mattishall Parish Council



***Hockering Christmas Coffee Morning is the
3rd December 2022***



Hockering Coffee Mornings for 2023:

January 21st
February 18th
March 18th
May 20th
June 17th



July 15th
September 16th
October 21st
November 18th

What's on elsewhere in Mattishall:

Mattishall WI 2nd Weds. of month @ 7.30pm

Contact: Jackie Tooke jackierosina81@gmail.com

The Mattishall Society 2nd Mon. of month @ 7.30pm

Contact: Carol College 01362 858230

Concertina Club 3rd Thurs. of month 7.15 - 9.30pm

Contact: Sally Barrett 01362 858465 contact@squeezeast.org

Youth Club (YMCA) ages 10-16 every Fri. 6.30 -8.30pm

Contact: youthclubymcanorfolk.org

Lizzie's Book Lovers Club meets in All Saints Church, Mattishall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm. No set reading, we just tell each other about books we have read and swap them.

Contact: Lizzie 01362 850491

Mattishall Sports & Social Club South Green

Various Sports and Social Activities

Contact: Steph Hood 01362 850246

....and for our younger residents

Memorial Hall South Green

Junior Youth Club (YMCA) ages 6 – 9 every Friday 5.00 – 6.30pm

Youth Club (YMCA) ages 10 - 16 every Friday 6.30-8.30pm

Contact for both: youthclubs@ymcanorfolk.org

Scout HQ School grounds (Term time only)

Beavers ages 6 - 8 Tues. @ 6.15 - 7.30pm

Contact: Su McKinnell 07514 032678

Cubs ages 8 - 10 Weds. 7.00 - 8.30pm

Contact: Emma Day eeeyore41983@aol.com

Scouts ages 10 - 14 Mon. 7.00 - 9pm

Contact: Ann Futter ann.futter@live.co.uk

Changing times

What do we do when times change and along with it our circumstances and plans? The Christmas story is full of such changes.

Joseph thought he was going to marry his sweetheart, build a life together and probably have kids at some point. He was a carpenter, probably self-employed. He would have time to plan for changes; maybe build up some cash, but then he finds out his fiancé, Mary, is pregnant and he knows he is not the father. Then to top it off he has to take an unexpected trip to Bethlehem to register for taxes as there has been a change of government policy. He has a huge emotional change to go through and a huge financial challenge. He has a baby to support (and all parents know they are never cheap!) and a trip to finance.

The shepherds were minding their own business, doing their job, looking after their boss's sheep, chatting round the campfire; when the sky is suddenly full of angels, ANGELS!! talking about a new baby! They rush off to Bethlehem to see this child. Would their boss be pleased about that? Abandoning the sheep to see a baby? Would they have jobs to go back to?

The three Kings or Wise men were on a mission to follow a star to see a new king, they stopped in on King Herod to tell him, they probably expected to see the baby in the palace, be welcomed with open arms and join the lavish party. Instead, they found the new king in a smelly stable. How would they account for all the travel expenses, the hotel bills, the lavish gifts (Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh) then to top it off they are warned not to go back to King Herod – so no great party in the palace after all, just the long trudge home.

Back to Joseph, he has got his head round the fact that his fiancé is pregnant and now given birth, he has registered for the taxes and been visited by an angel. The new baby, Jesus, has been declared a King by wise men and been worshipped by shepherds. He is planning to return home to start a 'normal' life when he is visited by an angel and told to go to Egypt as King Herod wants to kill the baby Jesus. Now he must emigrate to another country, he doesn't have a home or a business there, he probably does not speak the language, and he and his very new family will be refugees. Talk about a change in economic circumstances!

All these people had massive economic problems and changes in personal circumstance, yet all of them had an encounter with Jesus and trusted in God to see them through the tough times. As we as a community face economic challenges, will we too encounter Jesus through the challenges and put our trust in God?

If you want to read more of this story you can find it in Matthew 1: 18 – 25, Matthew 2: 1- 15 & Luke 2: 1 – 20.

Paula Finlayson



Little Angels 11

I had heard much about Little Angels and how good it was, but didn't really appreciate how good it was, until I was able to join the team! Thank you for making me so welcome.

During term time, the church building is transformed into a huge play area with areas set aside for various activities which are changed week on week.

From speaking to the parents, carers, grandparents etc. they all feel it is a very good, very well run, group and really value their time there. I found many who have been going for years as their families grow.

Story time, singing, the parachute, snack time and the bubble machine are all great favourites as the children and adults come together.

One of the most important things about this group is the helpers have time to chat and listen.

Jackie Crisp



Little Angels Toddler Group

Little Angels Toddler Group meets at All Saints Church in Mattishall every **Wednesday in term time from 9.00 am – 11.30 am**. We have a wonderful team of volunteers to welcome you if you are interested in joining us.

There is a designated area for pre-walkers with their own age-related toys and there is a good selection of toys available for the older children to enjoy, either on their own or jointly with others. Each week we have a different simple craft based on well-known bible stories. There are opportunities for children to explore their creativity with playdough, painting, colouring etc. as well as role play and simply enjoying the space with their friends and parents. During the morning we have a session with a story (based on the craft activity) nursery rhymes and songs accompanied by the children on various musical instruments!!

On average about 25 families attend each week. Refreshments are served throughout the morning for the adults and there is a set time for the children, when healthy snacks are served.

If you have pre-school children in your care, we would love you to join us and explore. We charge £1.50 for one child or £2.00 for two or more. This helps pay for refreshments, heating and replenishment of toys. All our helpers are volunteers, no one is paid. We do it because we love serving our community.

We'd love to see you, pop in any Wednesday morning in term time and come and meets us. Please contact me, Sue Cossey, if you would like any further information: **sue.cossey@matvchurch.uk** or contact the Church Office on **01362 858873**.

Look forward to seeing you,

Sue



Gifts for giving and gifts to receive.

I am someone who likes to make lists. Lists for shopping, lists for the week's tasks and especially a Christmas gift list. In fact, I have recorded every Christmas present bought for family and friends for over 30 years to the amusement of my family.

I would like to share with you the greatest gift I have ever received which I attempted to resist for a year.

The gift of being called to Ordained Local Ministry (now known as Self Supporting Ministry) which can best be described as a journey.

It began in the mid 1990's when I used to walk my children to my parent's house. As I walked, I repeatedly heard the words *All things come from you and of our own do we give you.*

It would not go away so after a long time I needed to do something about it. To be honest I recognised the words. They came from David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29:10-20.

Was God talking to me? When in doubt, ask the Vicar which I did. His reply was that he thought I was being called to Ordained Local Ministry. I did not know what that was but said 'No you must be mistaken. Give me a year to decide.' The words I had heard came to me daily so after a year we went to the Parochial Church Council, and they wholeheartedly approved of me being put forward as a candidate for training.

The important part of the training was that a local team supported the candidate and did training courses with them. I passed the selection weekend and began training in 1999 and have now been in ministry for 20 years.

Reflecting on these past years I have identified milestones in my faith journey.

Being confirmed aged 25, in 1985 and receiving God into my heart. I remember being asked what it felt like to receive the Holy Spirit and replying that it felt so natural that it scared me.

Why would God choose me, but you know that the gifts God gives us are not for self but for sharing and growing His kingdom.

‘I will take you places you have not chosen and show you things you will not have seen,’ were words said to me on a benefice weekend soon after I had started my training.

They really bothered me because I did not want to move, our children were still young and happy at school. Colin worked locally and I was happy in my part-time job.

As my ministry developed, I came to realise that ‘the place’ were other people’s lives and the ‘showing’ was the sharing of joys and grief and pain and I realised how privileged and humbled I have been as people shared so much with me and I pray that I have been able to show God’s love and care in return.

As you think about what you will be giving and hope to receive this Christmas, I invite you to read the words from this carol.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,

If I were a wise one, I would do my part,

Yet what can I give Him, give my heart.

God is here waiting to bless us. Trust him and invite him in this Christmas, you will not regret it I promise.

Sally Thurgill



Carol Services

East Tuddenham	Fri 24 Dec	16:30	
Hockering	Sun 18 Dec	15:00	
Mattishall	Sun 18 Dec	18:00	
North Tuddenham	Sun 18 Dec	14:00	
Welborne	Sun 11 Dec	15:00	
Yaxham	Sun 4 Dec	14:00	In the village hall

Christmas Eve

East Tuddenham	<i>Sat 24 Dec</i>	15:00	Carol Service
Hockering	Sat 24 Dec	20:00	Holy Communion
Mattishall	Sat 24 Dec	16:00	Christingle
North Tuddenham	Sat 24 Dec	21:30	Christmas Praise
Welborne	Sat 24 Dec	21:30	Holy Communion
Yaxham	Sat 24 Dec	23:30	Holy Communion

Christmas Day

Mattishall	Sun 25 Dec	10:30	Holy Communion
Yaxham	Sun 25 Dec	09:30	Crib Service

New Years Day

Welborne	Sun 1 Jan	10:00	New Years Communion
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Yaxham Chapel services:-

Sunday 18th December 6-30pm Carol Service
leader Sylvia Street with others taking part

Sunday 25th December 6-30pm Christmas Day praise service

Carol singing around Clint Green:-

Thursday 22nd December meeting at the school at 7-00pm

Saturday 24th December meeting at the bottom of Paper Street at 7-00pm



DROP IN takes place every Thursday morning in All Saints Church, Mattishall from 10am until 12. Everyone, both ladies and gents, is welcome to come along, especially through the winter when the church will be a relatively warm place to come to and meet people for a chat and refreshments. We serve unlimited teas and coffees, biscuits and cakes. We don't charge any specific amount but if people can make a small discretionary donation (suggest £2)

to cover expenses that will be appreciated.

It is a great place to make new friends and we sometimes have activities such as our Christmas party on the 15th of December. On that day we will serve a Christmas buffet lunch from 12 followed by entertainment until about 2pm.

The most important thing about DROP IN is that there is somewhere to go and stay warm, meet people and make friends.

If anyone feels they want to talk to someone personally, please ask for me and I will see if we can help. We have access to people able to offer support and direct people to appropriate help that is available.

Please do not be lonely, come along and enjoy a cuppa, listen or chat to others and join in as much as you feel you want to.



Lizzie

THE LINK



MATTISHALL DEMENTIA
SUPPORT GROUP

Season's Greetings to Mattishall from all at THE LINK.

According to the Alzheimer's Society, approximately 900,000 people have a diagnosis of dementia in the UK. Thinking about our village of Mattishall

this equates to about 30 people, each one an individual and on their own journey.

But the effects do not stay just with the person with the diagnosis. It also impacts spouses, partners, children, friends who are touched by seeing and anticipating the changes, the decline, in many ways, of their loved ones. The effects can be profound.

So what can we do at The Link for those affected? Well, we have no miracle cure, no magic wand making life's difficulties disappear, but we offer a couple of hours twice a month with fun, laughter, music, singing, games with people (volunteers) who understand and are aware, who accept and welcome the person with a dementia diagnosis and their carer(s). Carers can meet together separately and confidentially to share thoughts, emotions, possibly solutions, if they want to. Or just to chat together, hopefully to recharge worn batteries a little.

Our group is totally voluntarily staffed and funded. You may have seen us on the Village Green at the platinum jubilee, selling plants and running a bottle stall.

We run as a dementia café, open 10 till 12 noon on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at Mattishall Methodist church. Please feel free to give me a ring on **0776 957 3499** if you think we might be able to help or for more information or even to volunteer yourself!

Happy Christmas!

Lin Thompson - Co-ordinator

Website: mattishalldementiasupportgroup.org
Email: linlinkdementia@gmail.com



Jubilee events- fundraising on the Village Green and our “Street Party”

Charity money available



Some villages have charities associated with that village and applications can be made to receive grants.

Please contact Rev Mark in the first instance. (See back page for contact details)

Cost of living resources

The Diocese of Norwich which oversees the churches in our group, has put together a lot of information about what help and advice is available. Check it out - **Cost of living support and resources — Diocese of Norwich**

CAP
DEBT
HELP



Lifting the weight of debt

Free debt advice and personal
support in Dereham

Book your free appointment

0800 328 0006 capdebthelp.org

In partnership with Dereham Baptist Church



CAPuk



CAPuk_org



CAPukorg



CAP – local news

If you are in debt or not in debt, the offer of a private, personal health check on your finances may be a good thing to consider. You can make contact – see the opposite page or contact me for an even more local appointment. We are working in conjunction with Dereham Baptist Church to promote this service.

Jackie Crisp

jackie.crisp@matvchurch.uk or via the church office.

Is the CAP Money Course for me?

Whether you feel pretty organised or whether it's like a lucky dip every time you try to withdraw cash from your account, the CAP Money Course will help you take complete control of your finances. There are extra resources for those on low incomes, self-employed people, couples, families and those preparing for retirement – whoever you are, the CAP Money Course will be relevant to you.

The Norwich Diocese (heads up the churches in your area) has a great website and offers all sorts of help and advice, here it is again –

[Cost of living support and resources — Diocese of Norwich](#)

What is the CAP Money Course?

The CAP Money Course is a free course that will teach you budgeting skills and a simple, cash-based system that works. In just a few weeks, you will get to grips with your finances so you can budget, save and prevent debt.

The CAP Money Course was devised by the award winning charity, Christians Against Poverty, in 2008. More than 1,100 churches run the course for their communities, with over 10,000 people benefiting from it each year.



'I heard about the CAP Money Course from a friend who went on the course. I wanted to pay off my credit card and stay out of my overdraft. It changed my life! I never thought it could be so easy, but the CAP Money system is so simple.'

Annie



The Mid Norfolk Foodbank works hard in this area to feed many people and families who would otherwise not have the necessary resources to purchase basic food items.

Can you imagine not being able to buy food for your family or having to decide whether to buy food or pay for the heating? Not a comfortable place to be and it looks like it is going to get worse for many people.

If you would like to help, we are more than happy to receive donations of non-perishable, non-alcoholic products, and any hygiene products. These donations are taken on a weekly basis (Mondays at present) to the warehouse where items are sorted ready for distribution.

Your donations can be left at All Saints' Church, Mattishall, e.g. on a Thursday morning when Drop In is running or on a Sunday morning.

In this day and age of plenty this should not be happening but it is! Please donate as much or as little as you feel able. Monetary gifts can be accepted in the form of a cheque made payable to Mid Norfolk Foodbank and can be put in the donations box underneath the clock on the left as you go into ASM.

Thanks for your generosity,

Sue Cossey



From "Super Easy One Pound Family Meals"
(available on Amazon)

SERVES 4

Bacon & Onion Quiche



Ingredients

- 250g all-butter shortcrust pastry
- 150g bacon lardons
- 1 onion, chopped
- Large carton of double cream
- 150ml milk
- 2 large eggs + 2 egg yolks
- 150g grated cheddar

Method

- 1 Pre-heat the oven to fan 180C/Gas 5.
- 2 Cook the pastry for 15 minutes in a lined 22cm loose-bottomed tart tin. Before cooking, prick it and weight it down – dried pulses work well for this. After 15 mins take it out of the oven.
- 3 Meanwhile, cook the lardons in a frying pan until very crispy.
- 4 Remove the bacon from the pan and use the left over oil to gently cook the onions. Cook the spring onions in the fat over a moderate heat for 1 minute until softened. Remove with slotted spoon and tip over the bacon.
- 5 In a glass bowl combine together the lardons, onions, cream, milk, eggs, egg yolks and grated cheese.
- 6 Pour this into the pastry case. Reduce the heat in the oven to 160C/Gas 5 and cook for 30 mins or until the center is 'set' and firm to the touch.
- 7 Remove from the oven and place on a cooling rack before slicing and serving.

CHEF'S NOTE

You could replace the bacon lardons for ham or if you've already cooked a gammon joint for any of the other recipes.

BBQ Sauce and Belly Pork Rolls

Ingredients

- 4 tbsp ketchup
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tsp English mustard
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 500g pork belly joint
- 1 small tub coleslaw
- 4 Brioche burger buns

Method

- 1 Pre-heat the oven to 160C/Gas4.
- 2 In a glass bowl combine together the ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, sugar, balsamic vinegar, soy sauce, mustard & garlic to make a BBQ sauce.
- 3 Slice the pork belly joint into 8 thick slices and place on a large piece of kitchen foil.
- 4 Slather all the BBQ sauce over the pork, coating each side. Then loosely but completely cover with foil to make a foil dome over the top so that the air inside can circulate.
- 5 Place on a baking tray and roast for approx. 1hr 30 mins or until completely tender.
- 6 Load the BBQ pork slices in Brioche buns with coleslaw and serve.

CHEF'S NOTE

Brioche buns add a touch of luxury to this rustic lunch. You can pick up a pack for less than 80p.

Pesto Steak

SERVES 4

Pesto Steak

**Super
EASY**

Ingredients

- 800g new potatoes
- 200g frozen peas
- 2 tbsp green pesto
- 200g beef frying steak, sliced into strips
- 1 tbsp olive oil

Method

- 1 Halve the new potatoes and cook in salted boiling water for approx. 15 minutes or until tender. Put the peas in with the potatoes for the last few minutes of cooking.
- 2 Drain and put to one side while you heat the olive oil in a deep frying pan or wok.
- 3 Flash fry the steak for a couple of minutes in the oil then pile in the potatoes, peas and pesto.
- 4 Stir-fry until everything is cooked through and piping hot.
- 5 Divide into bowls and serve.

CHEF'S NOTE

This makes a fantastic filling meal. Increase the amount of beef steak if your budget can stretch to it.

Tofu Laska

Ingredients

- 1 onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tbsp ground curry powder
- 1 tbsp tamarind paste
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tsp, chilli flakes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 500ml vegetable stock
- 1 tin coconut milk
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 125g tofu, cubed
- 200g thin egg noodles
- Salt & pepper to taste

Method

- 1 Place the onions, garlic cloves, lemon, tomato puree, tamarind paste, tomatoes & chilli in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped into a fresh paste.
- 2 Using the olive oil sauté the paste in a large non-stick saucepan for 5 minutes.
- 3 Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer for 3-5 minutes or until everything is cooked through and piping hot.
- 4 Check the seasoning and serve.

CHEF'S NOTE

Try serving with some freshly chopped chilli or lime wedges.



Who Let The Dads Out? is monthly Saturday group for dads (and other male carers) and their kiddies, from birth up to and including school year 2. It is a lovely opportunity for dads to meet up with other dads (and the Who Let The Dads Out? team). Each time, we have bacon rolls, snacks and hot and cold drinks available. We

have a large range of toys for the youngsters (which we gradually change over the months), a special area for crawlers and a number of things which are for the dads as well, e.g. Jenga, air hockey, table football and (magnetic) darts. We usually have a story time or something daft like the hokey-cokey and/or playing with a parachute at the end of the session.

If you are interested, do just turn up with your kiddy or kiddies or, if you would like more information first, you can contact Alan Cossey at **alan.cossey@matvchurch.uk** or on **01362 857904**. Dads are welcome to come as often or as little as they like. There is no expectation to commit to continue coming after a first visit, though obviously we hope you and your little ones will enjoy it and want to come back regularly. We do ask for you to register your contact details for safety purposes only.



We meet on the 1st Saturday of each month, both in term time and outside term time, in All Saints' Church, Mattishall with the session running from 9:00 to 10:30, though everyone is welcome to come for as long or as short a time as they wish.

Each session is still £2 per family.

A Christmas shopping trip up the city.....

We went up to Norrich last Saturday a shopping,
For Christmas, the Mrs, Old Charlie and me.
And that there ole bus, bor, that kept on a stopping
That picked up more folks than I ever did see.
We hent bin there lately an that were amazing,
We went up St Stephens to see all them sights,
Ole Charlie an me an the Mrs stood gazing,
At them tricalations an colours an lights.
Our shopping wunt easy with so many coming
An going an shoving an talking an all,
Then all that traffic, bor, that was a rumman,
But we had time for chips at our regular stall.
That was dark when the time cum for leaving the city,
An the missus kept mobbing o cos o her feet.
With all them windows a looken so pretty
Why bor, for we knew it, we'd reached Surry Street.
An so we come home with a little less money
That were raining an all on we got a bit damp.
An it wus dark in the lane an that wunt very funny,
I wish I'd brought my ole hurricane lamp.
We stopped at our gate an said goodnight to Charlie,
He live up the lane near the meadow you see,
Goodnight an God Bless ye, don't get up too early
He say. Then we stood there the missus and me.
She say, 'John ent that quiet out here arter the city,
Why there wernt no room there, thas nice to be home.
Just then that came to me wunt that a pity
For that baby in Bethlehem there wunt no room.
So indoors we went. We put a match to the fire,
The missus soon brewed a nice pot of tea.
An then we just sat there, she drawed her chair nigher
To warm her ole hands then she said to me
Thas nice to go shpooing where bright lights a swingen
But here we've got suffen better than gold.
I reckon thas hard for them angels a singen,
Unless you got peace like them shepherds of ole.



Found by **Sylvia Street!**

IRON CHRISTMAS

Nativity play, with a difference, performed by adult members of Yaxham chapel and St Peter's church and friends from the village.



Free admission to both performances.

December 11th at 3.00pm in Yaxham Jubilee Hall.

December 16th at 7.00pm in St Peters church, Yaxham.

See you all there?



Yaxham VA Primary School

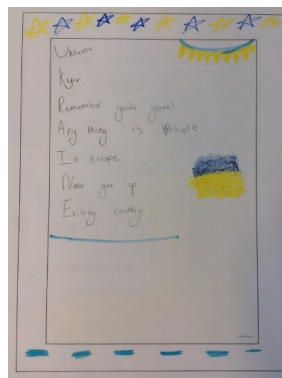
*Through loving God and loving others,
we flourish, learn & grow.*



Children, families and staff have been putting our vision into practice over the last year at Yaxham. Outward looking as always, they have supported those within the local community and beyond.

On hearing of the war in the Ukraine, they quickly thought about what we could do to offer our support, Collecting and sending clothing and other equipment over. When families were welcomed locally, we were proud of the beautiful posters our children created to welcome families at the local support hub. Children have since learnt more about the country, including some of the language to help welcome children to our school.

'Love your neighbour as yourself.'



Food Bank



As we have returned for the autumn term we are all aware of the increasing challenges for family finances and we were concerned that asking for support for our harvest festival, but as always, our families wanted to provide

support for others. Our prefects researched the support needed at the local foodbank and requested that if they were able families support. We were overwhelmed with the 73.1kg we were able to donate.

Reflecting on the way our community continues to care for others, the children have displayed their thoughts on why people will feel safe and welcome at our school in the entrance. The fact that our youngest children were able to contribute to this after only 6 weeks with is credit to this inclusive environment.



As we move forward into the festive season, we will continue to provide all the support we can to those around us. We will also begin our application to

become a Norfolk School of Sanctuary because of the resounding welcome everyone receives at our school.



**Norfolk
Schools of Sanctuary**

Michael Mouse – a Nativity Story

*Adapted from a Christmas Script that appeared in **Cloth for the Cradle**, Wild Goose Publications (first published in 1997) and still available from: <https://www.ionabooks.com/product/cloth-for-the-cradle/>*

A long, long time ago, on the night when Jesus was born, there was a tiny mouse called Michael. Now I hope you're not afraid of mice because this was a very friendly one. He had big ears and a long tail, sparkly eyes and a red onesie to keep out the cold. He was asleep in a small hole just above a stream dreaming nice dreams and making nice snoring noises.



Suddenly he was woken up by a strange sound. He came out of his hole, looked up into the sky and saw that it was bright, bright as day though it was in the middle of the night. And then he heard beautiful voices singing.

Michael thought he would like to find out what the singing was all about, so he scampered along to see a good friend of his, an owl, who lived up a tree and had a very good view of everything that went on.



"Tu-wit-tu-woo, tu-wit-tu-woo" said the owl.

"What's all the noise about?" asked Michael, and the owl replied:

"There's a great commotion, all because a little baby has been born in the village of Bethlehem. Everybody's going to see him, so it seems."

"Bethlehem, that's miles away" said Michael. "Do you think it's worth me going too?"

"Oh, I'm sure you would find it a memorable experience" replied the owl.

"Tu-wit-tu-woo, tu-wit-tu-woo"

So off went Michael. There weren't any buses or trains in those days, so he had to swim across two rivers and climb hills all on his own. There was a long way to go.

At last he arrived and stood in the yard just next to the stable where Jesus was born. He was quite exhausted and his little onesie was all dirty. So he gave himself a lick to clean himself up as best he could. After all, he wanted the tiny baby to see him at his best. While he was sorting himself out along came some sheep.

"Baaa.....baaa.....baaa."

"Hello you....I mean... Mrs Ewe" Michael said to one of the mummy sheep.

"Where are you going?"

"Aaahhm goooing to see the weee baaaby" replied the sheep.

"Can I come with you?" asked Michael thinking he'd get a good view if he stood on the sheep's shoulders.

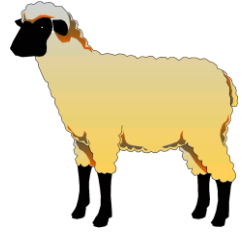
"Haaave you got a preeaseeent?" asked the sheep.

"No" answered Michael for he didn't think of bringing a present.

"Then you caaan't cooome with meee."

"What kind of present have you got, Mrs Ewe?" enquired Michael.

"I've got some wool to keep the baaaby waaarm. Baaa.....baaa.....baaa." and into the stable walked Mrs Ewe and her friends.



As they left, Michael heard another sound.



"Mooo....mooo....mooo."

"Well, hello, Mrs Coosorry, Mrs Cow, How do you dow? I mean do? And where are you off to?" asked Michael.

"Moo...moo...I'm not off anywhere. I'm here to see the tiny baby" replied the cow.

"Would you give me a ride on your back so that I can see him too?" enquired Michael.

"Moo...moo...do you have a present?" said the cow.

"No" replied Michael.

"Then you cannot come too."

"What kind of present have you got, Mrs Cow?" enquired Michael.

"I've got some milk in case the little baby gets thirsty. Moo.....moo..." So Mrs Cow moo-mooed her way into the stable.

Michael was quite sad. He could not get in and he was especially sad when he heard how the people inside were enjoying themselves and singing. Michael laa-laaed along with them.

Michael was laa-laaing along to himself when he heard another visitor.

"Cluck-cluck, cluck-cluck, cluck."

"Well hello hen" said Michael.

"Mrs Hen to you, son, if you don't mind" the hen snapped!

"Ok, Ok. Don't get your feathers ruffled. I'm surprised to see you here all the same" said Michael.



"Cluck-cluck. No surprise at all. This isn't the first maternity ward I've visited. I like to see babies just as much as anyone else. Cluck-cluck."

"That's why I'm here" explained Michael, "just in case you were wondering. What are the chances of us going in together? You see, I don't know anybody."

"Have you a present for the dear baby?" asked the hen.

"No, I don't" replied Michael.

"Well, you can't come with me. At least I've bought some eggs with me. That's my gift to the child" said the hen.

Michael was puzzled. "But I don't see any eggs."

"That's because I haven't laid them yet. Cluck-cluck" and away she clucked into the stable.

Michael got sadder and sadder. He was determined to get in, but he didn't know how. So he thought he'd walk around for a bit and eventually found himself right outside the stable door. He looked up and you'll never guess what was staring him right in the face...



"Meeaaouw...meeaaouw..."

It was a big cat....

"Meeaaouw.."

It was a big tortoiseshell tom cat with smelly breath. It had been eating a fish supper and it hadn't cleaned its teeth. It breathed right into Michael's face.

"Just what are you after?" growled the cat.

"I'm just here to see the baby, honest" said Michael, shaking with fear.

"You're just here to see the baby, eh? Have you got a present for the baby?"

"No, I haven't" replied Michael, sadly.

"Well, you're not getting in" snapped the cat.

"But what about you? You don't have a present for the baby. What are you doing in the stable?" asked Michael.

"I'm employed to keep hooligans like you far, far away. Take this!" and at that the cat went to hit Michael with his big paw. But Michael scampered away and ran to the side of the stable where he puffed and puffed, breathless with fear and excitement.

While he was puffing and panting, he saw some other visitors to the stable, not hens or sheep or cows but other ones ... you know who.

So there was Michael. He'd run all the way, he'd got his clothes dirty, he'd talked to the visitors going in to the stable, he'd heard the singing inside, he'd been threatened by a maladjusted tom cat. And he couldn't...he couldn't get in. Michael was sad. He was very, very sad and he began to cry.



A big tear rolled down to the end of his nose and on to his onesie ... he was so sad.

I don't know what it was, but something made him look up. He looked up the stable wall and, though it was very dark, he saw a chink of light about the size of a ten pence piece. It was a tiny hole in the wall and Michael wondered if he could maybe climb up to it. It was very high and as he climbed higher and

higher the wind got louder and louder. It was blowing a gale by the time he reached the hole.

First he squeezed his head in, then he squeezed his body in, and then he went headfirst into the hole and stuck his bottom in it and let his tail dangle down the outside.

It took him a little while to get used to the light, because it was quite bright in the stable. But as soon as his eyes were all right, the first thing he noticed was that Mary, the baby's mother, was looking over at him. She gave him a big wink. Then she got Joseph, the baby's father, to look over at Michael and he too gave Michael a big wink and then said, ever so gently,

"Thank you, young man"

That puzzled Michael. Why should Joseph thank him? And then he realised what he had done. You see, the hole in the wall was too high for Joseph to reach up and plug it, and he and Mary were worried in case Jesus would feel the draught and catch a cold. Of course, the moment Michael plonked his bottom in the hole, the draught stopped. Mary didn't have to worry any longer and so in Michael's honour, she sung a lullaby.

Oh, Michael was really thrilled and he felt especially pleased now he had a bird's-eye view ... though it was really a mouse-eye view. He could see everything. He saw the sheep giving their wool to keep the baby warm. He saw the cow giving her milk to the baby when he was thirsty. Then he saw the hen laying her eggs... and, since she wasn't sure whether it was right to give eggs to such a tiny baby, she gave them to Mary instead. And he saw the shepherds and the wise men give their presents and everybody looked so happy, even the big tortoiseshell tom cat with the smelly breath.

Michael stayed in the hole in the wall all night until the morning came. Then when the wind had stopped howling, without any fuss he climbed down the outside wall and headed for home.

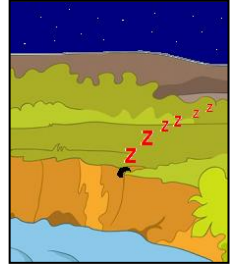
By the time he got back to the stream where he lived, he was very tired, but his friend was waiting there to greet him.

“Tu-wit-tu-woo ...I’ve heard all about it, you know. I’ve spoken to the sheep, I’ve had a word with the cow, and I listened for ages to one of the hens. They told me all about it. And they told me how you didn’t get to see the baby because you didn’t have a present for him.”

“Oh yes, I did see the baby!” exclaimed Michael.

“But I thought you didn’t have a present. What did you give him?” asked the owl.

“I gave him me for as long as he needed me.”



Then Michael turned and disappeared into his little hole at the side of the stream.

And that is where the story ends, with Michael’s words...

“I gave him me for as long as he needed me.”

There is no better gift to give Jesus today or any day.

Adapted by Heather Flint
St. Michael’s, Hockering

The Christmas Story

If you would like to read the Christmas Story in the bible here is a suggestion for you:

1. Isaiah 9:6-7 – The prophesy
2. Matthew 1:18-23 – Mary and Joseph
3. Luke 2:1-7 – The birth of Jesus
4. Luke 2:8-16 – the shepherds and the angels
5. Matthew 2:1-12 – The Wise Men

You can read the rest of the story in the New Testament in the books of Matthew and Luke. There is so much more to discover.....
Enjoy



Hockering Church of England Primary Academy

Planetary Work

from students at Hockering Academy

Mars

Magestic Mars tugs at the vivid imagination like
no other planet

All of the planet is covered by magical rusty red
sand

Radiating mystery this desert is like an omen in
the night

Staring up into the sky, this marvel is calling to me.

By Ivy Andrews



Neptune

Neptune, windy and cold, the dark diamond
colour is very bold

Enchanted planet, navy and dark, the
ground of the planet feels like bark

Planet Neptune is the 4th biggest planet in
space

The planet is as blue as the deepest, depths of the ocean

Under the microscope, it is a lonely and sad planet

Never stop loving this majestic sphere

Entering Neptune is like entering a new world with different
shades of blue

By Leo Surrell-Parfitt





Navy Neptune is misty and murky and it is as indigo as the ocean and also as freezing as the bottom of the sea

Everybody loves the marvellous artwork of Neptune the most prettiest, majestic planet and it calls for you to learn more.

Purple is a colour you wont see on Neptune but blue is the most dominant colour on there and the whole planet is basically blue.

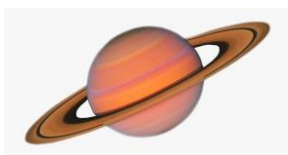
Terrible clouds cover the marvellous planet and they take 18 hours to stop whistling and move away

Under a telescope the navy blue really reflects the beauty of the planet

Never has anyone said the colour looks horrible, the texture is amazing

Everybody loves Neptune it is an amazing planet to know and see

By Reuben Baker



Saturn

Spectacular Saturn is the second largest planet from the sun.

An existing planet bringing dreams to life,

The orange ocean washes against the sandy shore,

Up in the sky, the stars twinkle like Saturn's eyes,

Rubbish consumes the earth but Saturn is unimaginable its rings are like a disco ball in the sky,

Neptune is my peaceful neighbour.

By Emily Brend

T	I	S	G/PW
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A million more moments
with the former set in
displaying out how
the playing with
breath-taking and
auto-magical sugar
the milk the two see
not that set.

At the same time the
wound of the warriors with
they spread tails

Mom Amelia was
born Oct 1890
Bertha May was born
May 1907. At
mom her birthday she
would have some
brownie's something
made by her brother
but the letter was
interesting but A Mother
Marianne enjoyed but she
never returned.

'If I may interject under point 789.3a of the constitution

Fur is no longer appropriate wear for small infants, both due to risk of allergy to animal fur, and for ethical reasons. Therefore faux fur, a nice cellular blanket or perhaps micro-fleece material should be considered a suitable alternative. Please note, only persons who have been subject to a DBS check and have enhanced clearance will be permitted to rock baby Jesus. Persons must carry their DBS disclosure with them at all times and be prepared to provide three forms of identification before rocking commences.'

Jingle Bells

Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way



'If I may remind you all that a risk assessment must be submitted before an open sleigh is considered safe for members of the public to travel on. The risk assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly if passengers are of larger proportions. Please note, permission must be gained from landowners before entering their fields. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we would request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.'

While Shepherds Watched

While shepherds watched
Their flocks by night
All seated on the ground
The angel of the Lord came down
And glory shone around



'The Union of Shepherds has complained that it breaches health and safety regulations to insist that shepherds watch their flocks without appropriate seating arrangements being provided, therefore benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available. Shepherds have also

requested that due to the inclement weather conditions at this time of year, they should watch their flocks via CCTV cameras from centrally heated shepherd observation huts.

Please note, the angel of the lord is reminded that before shining his/her glory all around s /he must ascertain that all shepherds have been issued with glasses capable of filtering out the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and the overwhelming effects of Glory.'

Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer

Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer
had a very shiny nose.
And if you ever saw him,
you would even say it glows.



'You are advised that under the Equal Opportunities for All policy, point 349E it is inappropriate for persons to make comment with regard to the ruddiness of any part of Mr. R. Reindeer. Further to this, it will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of this offence. A full investigation will be implemented and sanctions – including suspension on full pay - will be considered whilst this investigation takes place.'

Little Donkey

Little donkey, little donkey on the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards with your
precious load



'Although not under the jurisdiction of the Health and safety and ethical considerations for Christmas Committee, the RSPCA have issued strict guidelines with regard to how heavy a load that a donkey of small stature is permitted to carry, also included in the guidelines is guidance regarding how often to feed the donkey and how many rest breaks are required over a four hour plodding period.

Please note that due to the increased risk of pollution from the dusty road, Mary and Joseph are required to wear face masks to prevent inhalation of any airborne particles.

The donkey has expressed being offended at being labelled 'little'. To comment upon his height or lack thereof may be considered an infringement of his equine rights.'

We Three Kings

We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star



'The following comments are purely advisory

Whilst the gift of gold is still considered acceptable - as it may be redeemed at a later date through such organisations as 'cash for gold' etc. gifts of frankincense and myrrh are not appropriate due to the potential risk of oils and fragrances causing allergic reactions. A suggested gift alternative would be to make a donation to a worthy cause in the recipient's name or perhaps give a gift voucher. We would not advise that the traversing kings rely on navigation by stars in order to reach their destinations and suggest the use of RAC route finder or satellite navigation, which will provide the quickest route and advice regarding fuel consumption. Please note as per the guidelines from the RSPCA for Mr Donkey, the camels carrying the three kings of Orient will require regular food and rest breaks. Facemasks for the three kings are also advisable due to the likelihood of dust from the camels' hooves.'



Away in a Manger No Crib for a bed

'This is definitely one for Social Services.'



www.matvchurch.uk

Check out our website for information on who we are, what we do, where we do it and how we do it!

You have an open invitation to all events and are most welcome to worship with us; we would love to see you!

Contact Us — for whatever reason.....

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Open: Monday, Thursday & Friday 9.00am- 1.00pm

Mattishall and Tudd Valley Benefice

Serves the villages of East & North Tuddenham, Hockering, Mattishall, Welborne and Yaxham