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THE
WINDOW
News and Views from the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

Christmas Carol - But Which One?

The Revd Dr Charles Miller, Team Rector

Anyone getting into the 'Christmas spirit' with the aid of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* must reckon with not *one* Christmas but *three*. During his nightmarish sleep during Christmas present, Ebenezer Scrooge faces ghostly visitors of Christmas past and of Christmas future. Dickens unwittingly throws open an insight for Christians; I mean how past, present and future relate to one another, and at no season more strikingly than the lead-up to Christmas.

As the season of Christmas dawns in the world around us we find past and present very much in play. For instance, our Christmas present can be full of Christmases past--family 'traditions' passed on and still to be honoured; social habits like the annual 'Christmas Party' where one can become over-stuffed with mince pies and mulled wine; religious habits like attending a carol service, listening to King's College Choir's Nine Lessons & Carols broadcast live, or showing up for one's annual Holy Communion.

Of course Christmas present, however much it may glisten with accents of 'Christmas as it used to be' pervasively trumps the quaint offerings of Christmas past, since our focus is on the successive *nows* of purchases (especially when there are pre-Christmas sales) and consumption. Why wait for tomorrow when you can buy it (on credit?), eat it, or drink it today?

It's good to remember, though, that for centuries Christmas past and Christmas present were not the preoccupation or focus for Christians. For them the weight of interest lay in the future; for them an 'overloaded past' (and how many of us feel overloaded by inherited expectations each Christmas!) of religiosity and behaviour was fundamentally ended. Instead, those Christians 'lived wholly by expectation of *what was to come*'.¹

Our tradition of worship, though dwarfed before the sheer, high rock-face of 'Christmases past' and 'Christmas present', prompts us to honour that insight when we pray on the brink of Christmas that when Jesus Christ 'shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may with joy behold his appearing....'² T. S. Eliot's poem 'The Cultivation of Christmas Trees' likewise bids us keep our spiritual eyes on Christmas future:

So that before the end, the eightieth Christmas
(By 'eightieth' meaning whichever is the last)
The accumulated memories of annual emotion
May be concentrated in a great joy
Which shall also be a great fear, as on the occasion
When fear came upon every soul:
Because the beginning shall remind us of the end
And the first coming of the second coming.

On account of his three ghostly apparitions Ebenezer Scrooge got the message. 'I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.'

Nor should we. Merry Christmas!

¹ In *The Complete Poems and Plays* (London, 1969), p. 111.

² 'A Christmas Carol in Prose, being A Ghost Story of Christmas' in *The Oxford Illustrated Dickens* (reprinted 1974), p. 70.

The Editors

Alexandra Green
Louise Heffernan
Sheila Hills
Silvia Joinson
David Pope
Carol Worthington

Copy for next issue to
Parish Office or via
email by 5th of
preceding month

E-mail:
[StHelensWindow
@gmail.com](mailto:StHelensWindow@gmail.com)

Parish Office:
St Helen's Court,
Abingdon.
OX14 5BS

Tel: 01235 520144

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back page

This month in *The Window*...

There is plenty of interest to read over the Christmas period. Canon Robert Wright, one time vicar of Wantage, writes in the 50th anniversary month of the death of Thomas Merton, how Merton's works and life have inspired his painting. We hear about different ways in which members

of our parish community are involved in social action through Street Pastors, Young Carers and Rotary.

The puzzle page takes a different format this month - let us know if you enjoy them and would like to see more of the same.

News from the Parish



On Sunday 18 November Gwen Bevington was licenced for Lay Ministry in the Oxford Diocese at St Helen's Church. She is now able to serve this parish as she has previously as a Licenced Lay Minister in other Dioceses.

Gwen Bevington (left) with Anne Taylor, LLM advisor for Abingdon Deanery (right)

Quiz teams needed

The annual inter-church quiz will be taking place on Friday 25 January (see p.8) but now is the time to be brushing up on your general knowledge, Abingdon history, and odd bits of the Bible. Your church needs YOU! It's great fun, and with teams of 8 surely someone will know the answer! Booking deadline Monday 14th January to the Parish Office please.



Please Welcome to the Parish

Dominik Chmielecki, a second year ordinand at Ripon College Cuddesdon who will be spending from November to Easter on placement in the parish. Here he writes a little about his background and route to ordination.

Both Barbara and I have a Roman Catholic background, but some years ago we discovered Anglicanism and found it to be a better, more exciting and more challenging way to follow Christ. It helps us to see the world in more open, positive and inclusive way.

In 2012 I planted a small Anglican Congregation in Krakow (Southern Poland) and have been serving there since then as a pastoral leader and Lay Minister, responsible for public worship, preaching, Bible studies, pastoral care, outreach and evangelism, etc. The congregation built from scratch is now over 35 members and growing.



Dominik and family



The context of our Polish chaplaincy is very broad. It's not a "one churchmanship" type of place, but rather a home for all Anglicans; Anglo-Catholics, evangelicals, traditional and liberal and not only Anglicans.

Looking for a theological college, after my Bishop's Advisory Panel [a three day residential meeting to discern whether or not a candidate should be recommended for training for ordination], I had one goal, to find a place of broad range of traditions that will enable me to fully understand and appreciate the complex beauty of Christ's Church, to help me be more open, welcoming and inclusive in my future ministry. I believe that place is Cuddesdon.

I look forward to spending time at St Helen's and learning more about parish life and ministry in preparation for my ordination in 2019.

Adapted from Ripon College, Cuddesdon website

In new and unexpected places

Canon Robert Wright

'The Christian life... is a continual discovery of Christ in new and unexpected places'

Thomas Merton, monk. 1915 – 1968

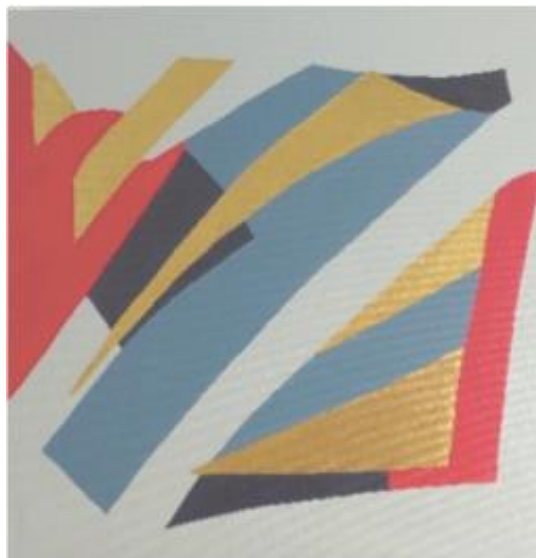
After his accidental death fifty years ago on 10 December 1968, Thomas Merton's friend and literary agent, Naomi Burton Stone wrote: 'Contrary to some concepts of holiness, my idea of the raw material of sanctity is not a thick river of molasses oozing sluggishly towards Heaven. It is fire and passion and pain and frustration and failure and renewed effort. For [Merton] the struggle is over.'

Thomas Merton doesn't fit easily into any category and perhaps because of that he speaks to a great variety of people wherever they find themselves on their journey to God. But he was above all a monk, an American Cistercian, who found that the monastic tradition brought him structure and rhythm, and taught him the values of reverence and respect both for people and material things. But from this firm foundation he was also a writer (writing 70 books), a poet, a prophet, a social critic, a rebel, a visionary, a correspondent (2,000 correspondents over 20 years), and so much more. He was a contemplative who lived as a hermit for the last years of his life and yet he loved the streams of people who came to visit him in his small hermitage in the Kentucky woods.

A deep and complex holy man, he was recognizable by his walk - rapid but not measured or orderly; clothes that didn't suit him – things seemed to hang on him so that they looked baggy and shapeless, never looking neat and spruce; he couldn't drive, having wrecked the monastery's truck; but his eyes were bright and eager, 'rich in life, never far from merriment' -



Thomas Merton 1915-1968



hidden in mystery

the eyes of a contemplative, a photographer, an artist. Yes, another aspect of this complex man!

The Bellarmine University holds some 1,000 of Merton's images. He himself wrote, 'many are just brush and ink drawings, 'calligraphic' style, with free and unorthodox handling of the brush. Others I first do on a piece of scrap paper and then print off on the good Japanese paper, which is what gets that nice rough effect and the tone.' They are not, he wrote, 'drawings of' but are 'summonses to awareness' but not 'awareness of.' That is, their 'meaning' is not to be sought on the level of concept, rather they are to be *seen*. Walking with his friend Ron Seitz in the woods near his Hermitage one day Merton drew an important distinction between looking and seeing.

And this is where my interest lies. I have been reading Merton for many years but for the last 25 years or so I have been painting out of Merton's writings. As a priest and an abstract artist I seek to explore the connection between art, contemplation and the search for God. I am seeking to look into the essence of things, interested in the *inscape* (Gerard Manley Hopkins), *inseeing* (Rilke), and *aware-ing* (Martin Laird). Taking a phrase from Merton's writings I pray around

it, think about, and eventually a painting is formed in my mind, hopefully penetrating 'some of the mystery that is internal to reality' (Merton).

I suppose it is true to say that Thomas Merton never arrived, always breaking boundaries, enlarging horizons and asking new questions. Perhaps that is a definition of holiness. In the words of his friend Jim Forest: 'He is a brother in Christ who was—and through his writings still is—able to show us the way.'

Street Pastors: Churches working together, caring together

Gwen Bevington

Now comes the time of the seasonal office party, the girls' night out, the group of mates celebrating Christmas with a pub crawl...

Not just at Christmas but pretty well every Saturday night, a team of 3 or 4 Street Pastors goes out from 10pm to about 3am on the streets of central Abingdon to be alongside people who are in the pubs and restaurants. The Street Pastors are all members of local churches who have been recommended by a church leader, and have undertaken training to do this work. (They are part of a national phenomenon; the first Street Pastors were pioneered in Brixton in 2003.)



www.streetpastors.org/locations/abingdon/

What is their work?

Most Pastors would say they feel moved by the love of God to try to reach out to people in need. They promise not to preach! But they can answer questions about faith if asked; if asked, they can even pray with people. A way in is to offer lollies, and water – both often a boon to people who've been drinking a bit much – and flip-flops, for people who are having trouble with balancing. The Pastors offer reassurance, and work for safety and support. Their distinctive uniform makes clear who they are, and that they are not part of the police (although it's recognised that their presence usually contributes to a downturn in crime).

Street Pastors can be men or women, any age (20s to late 80s). The Street Pastors I've met, both here and on the Isle of Wight, are exceptionally cheerful, grounded, life-affirming people. They aren't killjoys – they are glad when they can report that everyone in town is having a good time – and often they have a real heart for young people.

I couldn't do what they do to save my life. But I was recruited by a friend from another Abingdon church to join the Prayer Pastors. We staff the base and support the Street Pastors by making the tea and praying for them while they're out. It has been a privilege to meet people from nearly all the other churches in Abingdon, and to pray with them. It's true that many of them are just a tad more "evangelical" than I now am. That doesn't

seem to matter; I've been warmly welcomed, and it's been humbling to hear from the Street Pastors about their encounters on a particular evening (confidentially – no names!), and from all the team about needs they can share from their own lives.

I think I'm the only person from the Team Parish currently involved; it would be nice to have company. After all, we have plenty of grounded, friendly people in the congregations, and people who know how to pray. The idea is for everyone to do about one Saturday a month, and we could do with a few more people to avoid some being overworked. You can say

when you're available, so there is no need to fear being groggy on a particularly heavy Sunday morning.

If you're interested, do think about it and ask me more.

Solution to November's Crossword—Gustav's Spheres by Eccles—The asterisked clues were planets - Holst's composition.

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

Supporting Young People who are Carers

Lesley Legge

Be Free Young Carers is one of the local charities that St Helen's community supports. We support vulnerable young people who have caring responsibilities for family members through:

- time away from their responsibilities
- opportunities to socialise with others who understand and can share problems
- respite day trips and activities where they can be themselves,
- emotional support away from their day to day caring obligations,
- training opportunities in First Aid, Cookery, relaxation etc.

A recent report on BBC Radio 2 found that 1 in 5 young people have some caring responsibilities for a family member and interviewed young carers with far ranging caring responsibilities. A short extract from the programme and a longer case study can be found here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-45510376/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-young-carer>

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/Being a young carer.](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-sh/Being_a_young_carer)

The report demonstrates the work and sacrifice of young carers who undertake sometimes harrowing but loving support care for family members. *Be Free Young Carers* is the only charity undertaking this support in Oxfordshire. Sadly, there is a lack of government support for young carers made worse by drastically cutting grants to local government.

Although we were in fear of closing earlier this year through lack of funds the

publicity over this fear brought immediate concern and sufficient financial support to allow us time to build sustainable long term funding. Funding is a major issue as it is vital that we continue our work.

In 2017-2018 we supported 91 young carers living in Abingdon and another 94 who attend state schools in Abingdon and more than 550 altogether in the Vale and South Oxfordshire. More young carers are registering with us every week, but many are never identified. It is estimated that every classroom contains at least two children who are young carers. Teachers and others with whom they are in daily contact often have no idea that the child who is sleepy in class is caring for a family member or just lying awake worrying what the next day will bring.



First Aid

We are very grateful to be well supported by St Helen's community, Abingdon and other town councils, and many parish councils and local groups but sadly this is only a fraction of the costs we need. We must find more regular donors and businesses to support us. We are grateful for any offers to raise funds for us or spread the word

to others who may be able to help. Please contact me if you think you can help with this in anyway.

Lesley Legge

Chairman, *Be Free Young Carers*

There is more on our website www.befreeyc.org.uk



Young Carers' outing

Book Review - The Magnitude of Meekness

Bonnie Thurston

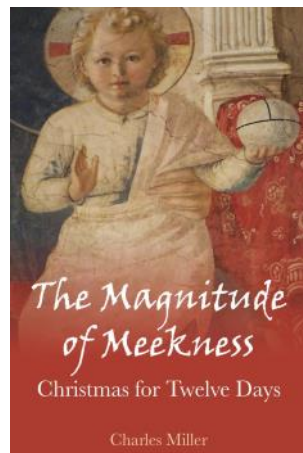
The Magnitude of Meekness: Christmas for Twelve Days,

Charles Miller, Window Press, 2017, £9.95 (paper). ISBN 9781999755201. **Reprinted 2018**

In Oxford Christmas lights went up in the Cornmarket before All Saints. No wonder people are 'burned out' by Christmas. Charles Miller's winsome little book is a healing corrective to 'the commercial take-over of Christmas and the ludicrously superficial, indeed trivial, ways' (4) it is celebrated. It reminds us 'that Christmas is more a season than a day', and helps us 'take stock of its rich spiritual meanings' (3).

The book presents twelve reflections, one per day of the season, days often themselves 'lesser feasts': St Stephens's, St John's, Holy Innocents, the Holy Name of Jesus. An Anglican parish priest and sometime academic, Miller is well placed to unpack the Biblical texts and events of the season.

Each reflection begins with a brief thought that invites pondering. The variety of source material is delightful. Music and children's books are quoted alongside classic theologians. For example, Dr Seuss and Gian Carlo Menotti share day three of Christmas; Loek Koopman, St Paul, and St Augustine day four. Miller employs



well- and lesser-known hymns and carols, a wide range of poetry (frequently T. S. Eliot), as well as novels and contemporary film to 'ponder more deeply what it means' that 'God came down at Christmas' (3). Nevertheless, he insists that 'the first Christmas ... was far more about worship than it was about words' (83).

Familiar Christmas traditions are re-examined with what I call 'baptized eyes', described with new meaning and significance. Gentle and challenging wisdom is rooted in our ordinary domestic and work lives as parents, partners, solitaires, the lonely, lost and last. Miller compares our world with the one inaugurated at the Incarnation, noting 'in the first world we get only what we earn or grasp (with occasional gifts along the way); in [the] other world we have what we receive, because everything is a gift' (82).

Speaking of gifts: Miller's beautifully produced, approachably written book makes a good Christmas one. And you won't have to brave crowds of frantic shoppers to procure it!

This article was first published in Fairacres Chronicle Winter 2017

Available from the Parish Office

Book Review - The Mystery of Christ

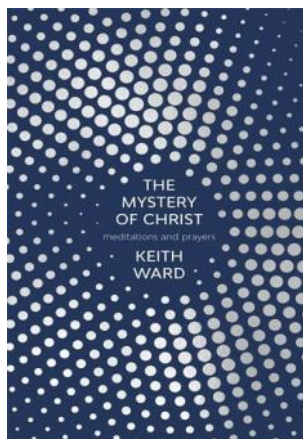
Louise Heffernan

The Mystery of Christ

by Professor Keith Ward FBA
SPCK Publishing (2018) ISBN:
9780281079155

The Mystery of Christ is not an 'unsolved puzzle' but 'the revelation of the unlimited love of God in and through the life of Jesus of Nazareth.' So states Professor Keith Ward in the introduction to his recent book of meditations and prayers.

A book by an eminent theologian might be regarded as rather a daunting choice of reading material, but Keith Ward has succeeded brilliantly in his aim to help us understand the historical and biblical presentation of Christ within a twenty-first century view of the cosmos. He has organised the work into a series of meditations, each beginning with



the Gospels' presentation of Christ and leading the reader through to reflection and to prayer. The interpretations focus on Christ's message as good news, 'on God's limitless capacity to forgive.'

Professor Ward's aim is to explore the spiritual truths conveyed by the physical events recorded in the Gospels. As an aid to worship, a guide to daily contemplation and prayer, Professor Ward's book is both accessible and thought-provoking. It will appeal to all who seek greater understanding of the good news brought to us by Jesus in the

context of modern scientific thinking and twenty-first century critical thought. But the prayers included at the end of each section are simply expressed and heartfelt, helping the Christian reader come to God in prayer each day.

Service Above Self

Rod Hunt

Beginning next year, we will be inviting interested people to come along to a series of open meetings at 1.00pm on the first Friday of every month to meet Rotarians, hear a little about what Rotary stands for and enjoy a free buffet lunch. We are hoping that those who attend may be interested enough to consider joining us as members. As a club, we meet weekly for lunch, a speaker, and to conduct Rotary business and plan fund-raising initiatives and projects.

Rotary is a global network of 1.2 million members who are neighbours, friends, leaders, fundraisers and problem-solvers. We belong to a community where people take action to create lasting change across the globe. Our motto is *Service Above Self* because we're committed to helping, where we can, in making a difference to those with less fortunate lives than our own, whether through poverty, disease or misfortune. One of our projects is to eradicate polio throughout the

world (we've reduced cases by 99.9%); another to provide 'shelter boxes' which sustain people whose homes have been lost through natural disasters. We also support educational projects and offer scholarships and bursaries both to local young people and to overseas students



Solving real problems takes real commitment and vision. For more than 110 years, Rotary's people of action have used their passion, energy, and intelligence to

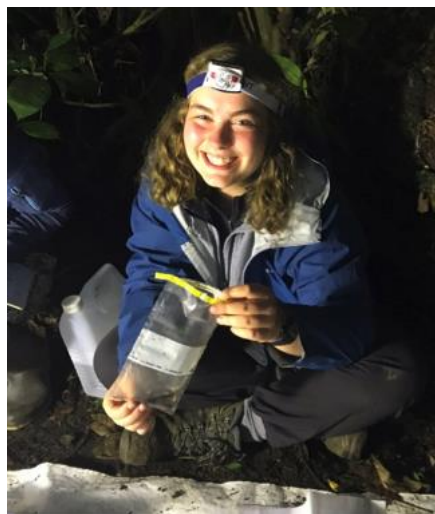
take action on sustainable projects. From literacy and peace to water and health, we are always working to better our world, and we stay committed to the end.

At least seven members of our churches' family belong to the club and if you are interested in finding out more about us please talk to our President, Richard Charles whose phone number is 532176 or email: chris.rich.charles@gmail.com

All Creatures Great and Green

Clare Horden

Last July, with the help of St Helen's very kind donations from my cupcake sales, I went to Honduras in Central America. Some may remember the presentation my friend and I gave at the Faith Forum breakfast morning in which we spoke about the research we would be helping once there. On the 2nd of July, all 5 of us flew to Honduras with *Operation Wallacea*, a conservation charity that sends scientists to remote and threatened natural habitats to collect vital data in order to gain more protection for the habitats. To raise money to fund this research, school students



Clare catching moths

like myself pay to go and be research assistants for 2 weeks.

The first week was in the cloud forests of Cusco National Park. Cusco is being threatened by deforestation and logging and, even more concerningly, global warming. Global warming is having unprecedented effects on the cloud forest which we are still trying to understand.

It is currently thought that as a result of the earth's temperature rising avian communities are being

(Continued on page 8)

All Creatures Great and Green - continued

(Continued from page 7)

pushed further upslope which could have disastrous effects for some of these species. The data we were helping to collect was to go towards a report to be sent to the Honduran government to ask for more protection for Cusco in order to try and begin to understand the implications of climate change.

One of the largest studies being undertaken that we were all contributing to was the work being done to understand the spread of the chytrid fungus. It has been noted as the worst infectious disease ever recorded among vertebrates when you consider the number of species impacted and its propensity to drive them to extinction. In order to try to understand how it spreads and which species are most vulnerable, we helped swab the feet and bellies of all the frogs of local guide could catch. We swabbed frogs as small as glass frogs, no bigger than a ten pence coin. Their name comes from their abdominal skin being transparent which means you can see all its internal organs including its very small heart beating away.

Cusco was filled with so many breath-taking species, I felt like a child in a sweet shop. Each day would consist of 3 hikes, 3 meals, a lecture and lots of data collecting. Some of the other species I was fortunate to help the scientists study were bats, birds, snakes, lizards, moths and dung beetles.



Glass Frog released after being swabbed for the chytrid fungus



A Common Basilisk caught by a river being measured and weighed. Species also referred to as 'Jesus Christ Lizard' because they can 'run' on water.

Our second week in Honduras was spent on the island of Utila at a marine research centre by the coral reef. After many hours of hiking, never taking your boots off because a tarantula might make its home inside your boot and ice-cold showers, this week felt like a luxury holiday for my classmates however, I much preferred the first week! Every day we had 2 lectures and 2 trips out on the boat to go snorkelling in the coral reef. We learned about the plight of the world's coral reef and the steps that are being taken on land and in water to rebuild the reefs.

One particular measure being undertaken is the repopulation of the reef with spiny sea urchins which are critical to the health of the reef. We helped weigh and measure some urchins that had been caught and would be released to see how their populations were coping after a catastrophic local storm that nearly killed off the local population completely. Weighing a spiny sea urchin is as hard as it sounds with spines as long as your cat's tail in some cases.

I was so blessed to be given the opportunity to spend two weeks in Honduras and I am forever grateful for the support and encouragement that St Helen's gave me in the year leading up to the trip. My passion for wildlife and conserving endangered species has grown even greater as a result of being in Honduras.

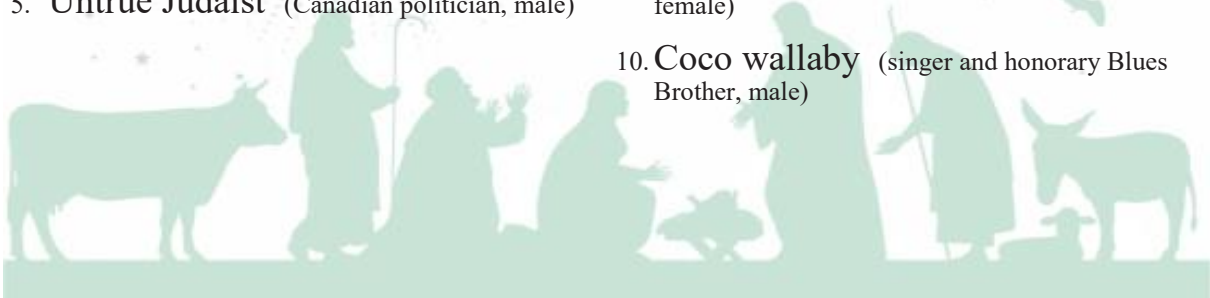
Puzzle Pages

Christmas Babies

Can you solve the following ten anagrams? They are the names of famous people born on Christmas Day, with a clue in brackets afterwards.

Thanks to Ben Jeapes for this puzzle

1. Was once a nit (big wig scientist, male)
2. Oh! Grumpy breath (Hollywood legend, male)
3. Try knee event (comedian and DJ, male)
4. In lone annex (singer, female)
5. Untrue Judaist (Canadian politician, male)
6. Nag ace showman (singer (just about), male)
7. Marry in a tick (singer (a lot better than no.6), male)
8. A grand dear (Hollywood legend, female)
9. Kiss spy case (also big in Hollywood, female)
10. Coco wallaby (singer and honorary Blues Brother, male)

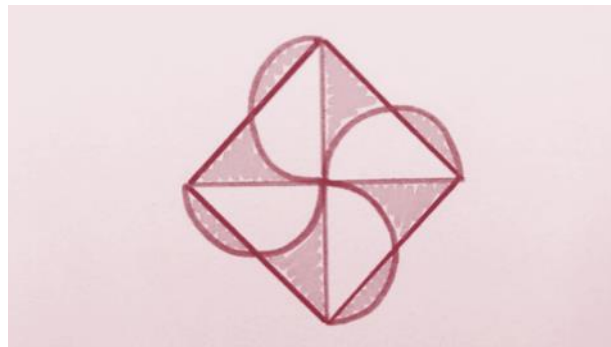


Catriona Shearer
@Cshearer41

Catriona Shearer, whom some of you will remember was a treble in St Helen's choir ten years ago, is now a maths teacher and has quite a following on Twitter for her geometric puzzles. Here are a small selection.

Answers supplied in the next issue, or you can see the solutions and follow her at @Cshearer41 on Twitter.com

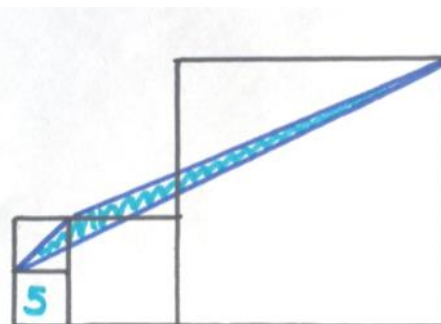
If the radius of each semicircle is 5, what is the total shaded area?



10 equally spaced dots are joined by semicircles to make this spiral. Is more of it shaded red or orange? By how much?



The area of the bottom left square is 5. What is the area of the shaded triangle?



SERVICES IN ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE

2018



Carol Services in the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames

Sunday 2 December - 5.30 pm Advent Carols at St Helen's Church

A service of carols and readings to mark the beginning of Advent and the wait for Christmas.

Sunday 16 December - 6.30 pm Christmas Carol Service at St Nicolas' Church

Music and readings for Christmas in our town centre church. All welcome.

Sunday 23 December - 5.30 pm Carols by Candlelight at St Helen's Church

A service of music and readings for Christmas in the special light of hundreds of candles.

Monday 24 Dec. Christmas Eve - 6.00 pm Christmas Lessons and Carols at St Michael and All Angels' Church

This traditional service tells the Christmas Story through readings and music.

Sunday 13 January 2019 - 4.30 pm Epiphany Carols at St Helen's Church

A short service of music and readings to mark the arrival of the Wise Men to visit the Christ Child. Followed by tea and cakes. All families welcome.

for Families - Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve - 3.00 pm

Crib Service

St Michael's Church

Journey with us from Nazareth to Bethlehem to hear the Christmas Story, sing carols and build up the nativity scene in the crib ready for Christmas Day. Children are welcome to come dressed up as someone from the Nativity. Families with young children especially welcome to this well-attended service.

Christmas Eve - 4.00 pm

Crib Service

St Nicolas' Church

Help us assemble our Christmas Crib. Families with young children are especially welcome to come to this family service.

Christmas Eve - 4.30 pm

Christingle Service

St Helen's Church

*With over 500 Christingles to hand out, this service is really popular with families. Doors open at 3.45 pm. There is a collection for **The Children's Society** in this, the 50th year of Christingle Services.*

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

Sunday 13 January 2019, 4.30 - 6pm

Epiphany Carols, Tea and Blessing of Families St Helen's Church

After a short (25 min.) service of music and readings to mark the arrival of the Wise Men to visit the Christ Child, we celebrate with refreshments and home-made delights, including, for the grown-ups, Kir Royale. Everyone welcome and especially families with children baptised at St Helen's.



A leaflet with these details is available from the churches and from www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk/publications

What's on in the Parish

Devotional

Sunday 2 December

Faith Forum

9.00 - Parish Centre at St Helen's
How do our Eucharistic Prayers measure up?
 The Revd Dr Charles Miller
 Breakfast bar from 9.00 followed by talk
 and discussion, completed by 10.00

Tuesday 4, 11, 18 December

Advent Labyrinth Walks

11.00 - 12.00 and 19.00 - 20.00
 St Michael and All Angels'
*Walk the Labyrinth or simply enjoy a sacred
 place. A short prayer will be said
 at the start and end of each session, but feel free
 to come and go as you please.*

Tuesday 4 December

Mothers' Union

Advent Reading and Carols
 10.30 - Parish Centre at St Helen's

Thursday 6 December

Moving into Stillness

Circle dancing to music from Taizé
 9.45 - 10.45 - St Michael's and All Angels

Tuesday 7 January 2019

Mothers' Union

A talk on the GIDEONS by Hugh Parkman
 10.30 - Parish Centre at St Helen's

Sunday 27 January

Church in Abingdon United Service

Christ Church, Northcourt Road
 15.00

Tuesday 29 January

Silent Reflections

19.30 - St Michael and All Angels'
*Prayerful activities in the sanctuary with option
 of coming together to share your journey at the
 end of the session.*

Social

December 1 -16

Cards for Good Causes

9.30 - 17.30 St Nicolas' Church

Sunday 2 December

Parish Christmas Lunch

12.30 - Cosener's House
 £22 per head. Booking forms at the back of the
 church to be returned to the Churchwarden at St
 Nicolas' by 25 November.

Thursday 6, 13 December 2018

10, 17, 24, 31 January 2019

Circle Dancing

11.00-12.00- St Michael's and All Angels
 Traditional folk dancing and modern steps in a
 circle to a variety of music. No prior experience
 or partner needed. Contact Mary 520608

Friday 25th January

Church in Abingdon Quiz

19.30 for 19.40 prompt start
 St Helen's Church,

Suggested £2 donation per person.

Team size: Max 8 per table.

Refreshments: Basics provided; you're welcome
 to bring bottles and snacks.

Bookings by Monday 14th January please to the
 Parish Office

administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

Ab 520144

Saturday 26 January

Soup and Ploughman's lunch

12.00 - 14.00 - Parish centre at St Helen's

Future Events

Sunday 25 February

Newcomers' Lunch

12.30 - Parish Centre at St Helen's

If you would like anything included in this Diary,
 please contact the editors through the email on the
 front page

Services in December 2018 and January 2019

Divine Service at St Helen's Church, West St Helen's St

Holy Communion 1662	08.00	Sundays in December (January at St Nicolas')
Sung Eucharist	10.30	Every Sunday with Junior Church
Tues 25 Dec	10.30	Sung Eucharist with all age address.
Sun 13 Jan	10.30	Sung Eucharist and Blessing of the Waters
Morning Prayer	09.10	Monday to Friday (except 24 to 4 Jan inclusive)
Evening Prayer	17.10	Monday to Friday (except 24 to 4 Jan inclusive)
Junior Church	10.30	Sundays – starts in Church
Morning Praise	09.15	Sun 9 December; No Morning Praise in January
Wednesday Church	10.30	Every Wednesday, Holy Communion in the Parish Centre with refreshments after (except 26 Dec.)

Divine Service at St Michael and All Angels', Park Road

Family Mass	09.30	First Sunday of the month, with Thanksgiving and Welcome.
Sung Mass	09.30	Every Sunday
Tues 25 Dec	10.00	Sung Mass
Thursday Mass	12.30	Every Thursday followed by a light lunch (except Dec 27)
Tues Said Mass	19.30	Tuesdays in January (except 1 Jan)
Silent Reflections	19.30	Tuesday 29 January

Divine Service at St Nicolas' Church, Market Place

Holy Communion 1662	08.00	Sundays in January (December at St Helen's)
Morning Prayer	11.15	(Mattins) 1st Sunday in the month
Holy Communion	11.15	2nd and 4th Sundays with Junior Church
Tues 25 Dec	10.00	Holy Communion
Third Sunday Service	11.15	A short, less formal Service on 3rd Sundays.
Family Communion	11.15	5th Sundays in the month
Junior Church	11.15	2nd and 4th Sundays

Sunday Evening Services 17.30 at St Helen's Church

2 Dec	Advent readings and music
9 Dec	<i>at St Nicolas'</i> - Choral Evensong for the Feast of St Nicolas
16 Dec	<i>at St Nicolas'</i> - Christmas Carol Service <i>at 18.30</i>
23 Dec	Christmas Carols
30 Dec	<i>No evening service</i>
6 Jan	Vespers
13 Jan	Epiphany readings, music and tea. <i>NB starts 16.30</i>
20 Jan	Choral Evensong
27 Jan	<i>No evening service</i>



see pp 10 - 11 for
Christmas Events
and Services



Advent Labyrinth Walks

At St Michael's Church
Tuesdays 4, 11 & 18 December
11-12.00 and 19-20.00
An opportunity to walk the beautiful labyrinth as a time of reflection and preparation for Christmas. Beginning and ending with a short time of prayer.

The services and events listed here are correct at the time of going to press – please consult the weekly Pewsheets or Newsletter if in doubt, or see the online version of The Window on the websites below.

To arrange baptisms, weddings and funerals contact the Parish Office.
Clergy are available in the Parish Office between 19.00 - 20.00 on Wednesdays.
Please call the office to book an appointment.

Team Rector: The Revd Dr Charles Miller

Team Vicar: The Revd Paul Smith

Associate Priest: The Revd Mary Williamson

Directors of Music: Dr Peter Foster (St H), Glynne Butt, Graham Howell (St M)

Parish Administrator: Mrs Jenny Balshaw

Parish Office: St Helen's Court, Abingdon, OX14 5BS
01235 520144

Normal opening hours 10.00 to 13.00 weekdays, except Thursdays - closed

E-mail: administrator@sthelens-abingdon.org.uk

www.abingdon-st-helens.org.uk www.stmichaels-abingdon.org.uk www.stnicolasabingdon.org.uk