

Free – but donations welcome



The Pinnacle

**A Magazine for the parish of
Kildwick, Cononley and Bradley**

***The Churches of St Andrew's,
St John's and St Mary's***

St John's is a Local Anglican/Methodist Ecumenical Partnership

Winter 2020/2021

A Church Directory

Interim Vicar	The Revd Julie Bacon revjulesbacon@gmail.com	01274 405170
Readers	Cononley: Mr Kevin Wood Mr Rod Tickner	633950 635368
Church Wardens	Kildwick: Mrs Joan McCartney Cononley: vacant Bradley: Mr Robert Hall	635736 635549
PCC Vice Chair	Mr Tim Chapman	635063
PCC Secretary	Mrs Jill Wright jill@woodchipcomputers.co.uk	634526
PCC Treasurer	Mrs Janet Wade	632369
Planned Giving & Gift Aid Secretaries	Kildwick: Mrs Brenda Brock Cononley: Mrs Janet Wade	633938 632369
Safeguarding Officer	Mrs Geraldine Sands	07437 857495
Parish Group Leaders	Buildings and Land: Mr Robert Hall Pastoral and Outreach: Mrs June Whitaker Worship: The Revd Julie Bacon Treasury: Mrs Janet Wade	635549 655320 01274 405170 632369
Bell Tower & MiniRingers	Kildwick: Mr Chris Wright	634526
CHUFFS (<i>Church for the u.5's</i>)	Kildwick: Mrs Lesley Hudson	07712 652101
Church Magazine magazine@ kcbchurches.org.uk	Kildwick: Mr Chris Wright Kildwick: Mrs Sylvia Clarke Cononley: Mrs Eileen Boothman	634526 636070 630659
CDFC Representatives	Kildwick: Mrs Christine Anderton Kildwick: Miss Glyn Evans	633596 630735
Flower Rota	Kildwick: Mrs June Whitaker	655320
Organist/Choir Leader	Kildwick: Miss Glyn Evans	630735
Parish Room Bookings	Kildwick: Mrs Libba Utley	631631
Pastoral Care	Kildwick: Mrs June Whitaker	655320

email: Contact the Pinnacle editorial team at **magazine@kcbchurches.org.uk**

Christmas is not cancelled

Over the last few weeks there's been a lot of uncertainty about what Christmas this year will look like. Will we be able to meet up with our family, friends and loved ones? Will we be able to do the things that we usually do at this time of year to celebrate together? Will Christmas be cancelled?

Christmas is a very special time of year for most people, Christian or not, and many of us have inherited or developed our own traditions around it. Many of those traditions involve getting together with other people, whether that's gathering for dinner on Christmas Day, or at another time over the festive period. I doubt that I'm the only one who feels deprived, even bereft, at the idea that this year we may not be able to do the things that are part of our annual rhythm – things that are almost part of us. We understand with our heads why things have to be different this year, but that doesn't stop our hearts from aching for the things that year by year speak of 'Christmas' to us.

But Christmas itself can't be cancelled. Even if we can't mark and celebrate it in the way we usually do, Christmas will still happen. Christians will still celebrate the mind-boggling truth that God stepped down from

eternity to earth, entered into the mess and muddle of this broken world, born as a human child in the most humble of circumstances.



And although we may not be able to hold carol services in our church buildings, and gather in crowds as we usually do to sing the old familiar songs together, we can still enjoy listening to them at home, and singing along. What's your favourite Christmas carol? I'm going to share two of mine, in which I will find new meaning this Christmas.

“ Many of those traditions involve getting together... ”

My all-time number one is 'It came upon a midnight clear'. The poetry of the words never fails to move me, but my favourite verse of all is this one:

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears
not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing.*

This year we've all known woes, including new ones that none of us have previously experienced. I find real joy and hope in the picture of that love-song being sung eternally over us, whatever is going on here on earth. When we 'hush our noise', we can hear that song.

And the second is 'God rest you merry gentleman'. It's one of the oldest carols still being sung, dating back before the 16th century. And because of its age, it's also one that we often sing wrongly! In modern English, it's very tempting to sing, 'God rest you, merry gentleman', which conjures up olde-worlde images of joyful, rather tipsy chaps, in top hats and cravats, carousing joyfully together. But in fact the way we should sing it is, 'God rest you merry, gentlemen'. The word 'rest' has a changed meaning to the ones we currently give it: as well as 'sleep' or 'relax', back in the 1540s it meant 'to keep, remain'. And that word 'merry' has nothing to do with mulled wine! A contemporary rendition of 'God rest you merry' would be 'May God grant you peace and happiness'. The carol is a joyful reminder that true peace and happiness, the kind that is found in God rather than in the transient things of the world, is given to us through Jesus's birth, celebrated at Christmas. And that's not just for 'gentlemen' (another product of the time in which the carol was written), but for everyone.

[An aside – if, like me and my family, you're fans of the Radio 4 sit-com "Cabin Pressure", written by the sublimely witty John Finnemore, you may be tempted instead to sing, "Get dressed, you merry gentlemen"...]

This year has been, in a variety of ways, one of hardship, strain and uncertainty for all of us. Some of us have lost loved ones; many people are facing severe economic pressures; the pandemic has changed our everyday lives in ways we never imagined. Christmas this year will be different - but the love and hope and light and joy that Jesus brought to that manger the very first Christmas is the same; it is still God's gift to us. There are still 'tidings of comfort and joy' to be received. This Christmas, may you all 'rest merry'.

With every blessing

Julie



*God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

A pattern of Services and Eucharistic Readings for December

	Sunday 6th 2 nd Sunday in Advent	Sunday 13th 3 rd Sunday in Advent	Sunday 20th 4 th Sunday in Advent	Thursday 24th Christmas Eve	Friday 25th Christmas Day	Sunday 27th 1 st Sunday of Christmas
Kildwick St Andrew	No Service	11.00am	11.00am	2.00pm	11.00am	No Services
		Eucharist <i>Is. 61.1-4, 8-end 1 Thess. 5.16-24 John 1.6-8, 19-28</i>	Informal Worship	Alternative Crib Service	Eucharist <i>Is. 62.6-end Titus 3.4-7 Lk. 2. [1-7] 8-20</i>	
Cononley St John	11.00am	11.00am	11.00am	11.00pm		
	Methodist- led service	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion <i>2 Sam. 7.1-11. 16 Rom. 16.25-end Lk. 1.26-38</i>	"This Holy Night" <i>a Zoom Service Is. 52.7-10 Heb. 1.1-4 [5-12] Jn. 1.1-14</i>		
Bradley St Mary	9.30am	10.45am	9.30am	9.30am		
	Holy Communion <i>Isaiah 40.1-11 2 Pet. 3.8-15a Mark 1.1-8</i>	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion <i>Readings as above or as Christmas Eve</i>		

St. John's -The Way Forward



The PCC asked St. John's to think about how the new space, created by the re-ordering, can be used for outreach in the village.

We are unable to do things at the moment; but looking to the future we need to make some plans.

After conversations with members of the congregation, a plan was presented to the PCC at its October meeting. From the ideas put forward, we needed to think what would be the most sustainable, both in terms of support from the village and the availability of volunteers. Shown below are the ideas which we felt would be a viable first step.

Tea and Toast on Tuesday

(the day doesn't matter but I thought it sounded good)

Open church once a week to provide a meeting place for a drink and a chat. Perhaps, we could provide newspapers and a children's corner. We would need two people each week to open up and host this. If we had eight or ten volunteers, it would mean a commitment to one session each month. We would envisage this facility operating every week, except for during very bad weather in the winter.

Bible Study Group

To meet in church, once a month, during the day; in addition to meeting in a home, once a month, in the evening.

Morning Coffee or Afternoon Tea

Possibly 4 or 5 times a year, on a weekend, so that people who do not work in the village have an opportunity to participate. With a few stalls, we could also use this event to raise funds. This will involve a greater degree of organisation and we are not sure how sustainable it will be. This requires someone to be willing to take the lead.

Kidz Club

We would hope to re-start this children's work as soon as we are able. Possibly, with a re-launch at Easter 2021.

Other ideas

The other ideas put forward, which we can look at when we are operational, were

- Messy Church
- Soup lunches
- Toddler Group or Toddler Praise
- Dementia Friendly Group

We do need to keep in mind:

- That we have enough volunteers to be sustainable.
- The access to church, which is difficult, with no obvious immediate solution.
- Church cleaning which will need to be more frequent than the current once a month.

Whilst we need to bear in mind the need to fund raise, it is important that whatever we do does not depend on asking people for money; but rather seeks to welcome them into church whatever their circumstances.

If you have any thoughts or comments please do speak to me or a member of your PCC. We have a great opportunity to reach out into our community, which we need to embrace in order to ensure the continued viability of our church.

Janet Clifford

Christmas Query

The tree's in the corner,
with baubles galore,
and presents are piled
all around on the floor.
There's tinsel and lights,
which we hope won't go out -
but is this what Christmas
is really about?



The shops are so full now
of people and noise
and turkeys, canned carols,
and highly-priced toys,
and I've wrapped all my presents
and sent my cards out -
but is this what Christmas
is really about?

There's magic at Christmas
when Santa Claus comes,
bringing presents for children,
their dads and their mums.
The sleigh's on the rooftop,
the children don't doubt -
but is this what Christmas
is really about?



The Christmas tree angels
bring heaven to earth,
and we picture them singing
as they sang at Christ's birth,
with shepherds and kings
kneeling down, all devout -
for this is what Christmas
is really about.

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Mrs Sandie Walton
Kildwick PCC
9 Holly Fold
Eastburn
KEIGHLEY
BD20 7SY

11 November 2020

Dear Mrs Walton,

Thank you from everyone in Tombohuaun!

We recently received the gift of £341.00 from Kildwick PCC, and wanted to thank you all so much for your generosity.

For girls like Lucy and Nancy, clean water will mean everything. Instead of having to walk for water, they will be able to play and dance as all little girls their age should.



The gift from Kildwick PCC will help us to install a tapstand in Tombohuaun, bringing a reliable source of clean water to the village. We'll also train the community on how to look after their new water supply so it lasts for the long term.

The amazing support from groups like yours is transforming lives around the world. We're looking forward to bringing good news from Tombohuaun as the community turn on their new taps for the very first time!

With warm regards and many thanks,

Katrina Kilkenny
Community Team, WaterAid

P.S. If you have any questions, want to find out about other ways to support WaterAid, or wish to stop receiving communications from us, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Supporter Care team on 020 7793 4594 or by email at supportercare@wateraid.org



WaterAid transforms the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people by improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.



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Christmas Gifts for the Salvation Army

Carolyn Scarr has spoken to The Salvation Army at Keighley and they have confirmed that they will be accepting new Christmas toys / gifts for boys & girls aged 0 to 16 years; please may the gifts be unwrapped & new.

All being well, the gifts will be accepted in Church during the first Sunday service at Cononley after lock down finishes - hopefully Dec 6th.

If anyone wants Carolyn to collect any of the gifts –please contact her (01535 634520) & arrange a mutually convenient time for her to pick them up from your doorstep.



No Nativity this year because the 3 Wise Men face a travel ban.
The shepherds have been furloughed.
The Inn keeper has shut under tier 3 regulations and had a slump in bookings.
Santa won't be working as he would break the rule of 6 with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner and Blitzen.
As for Rudolph, with that red nose, he should be isolating and taking a test. 🤒🤒



The CodeWord solution
(see page 18)

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



Christmas Greetings

Hello everyone

I hope you are keeping safe and well during this Coronavirus pandemic. The Coronavirus has certainly changed all our daily routines.

The Cononley WI met for the last time in the Village Institute in March where I introduced a team from Waitrose Otley who came to talk to us on Wine and Cheese, it was a fantastic evening. I think I can say every member thoroughly enjoyed the evening.



Then came, (dare I say it?) the COVID19 lockdown. When things started to ease we held two picnics on the Sports Field, one in July and the other in August. The WI Members brought their own food and drink and their own chair or blanket to sit on and of course social distancing was adhered to. These two events helped us to socialise and be together again.

The next event was going to be Fish and Chips on the Sports Field but unfortunately Boris Johnson brought in the rule of six so I am sad to say that had to be cancelled.

The days are getting shorter and the weather is much colder now so a decision was made to put the WI on hold until after Christmas and see what the New Year brings around COVID19.

On behalf of Cononley WI may I wish you all a peaceful Christmas and Happy New Year. Let's hope 2021 is a better year for all of us - Stay safe and well.

*Pauline Link - President
Cononley WI*



Cononley Art Group

Happy Christmas to all the members and also to our friends in the village who support us. Missing your company!

Cononley Singers

The singers would like to wish our friends in Cononley and Skipton, a very good Christmas. Looking forward to the time when we can all be together again.

From the very beginning was
Your Word
Which spoke this world into being
Your Word
Which thunders from the skies
Your Word
Which flows like mountain streams
Your Word
Which whispers in morning breeze
Your Word
Revealed through kings and prophets
Your Word
Revealed through Angels' praise
Your Word
Revealed in humble service
Your Word
Revealed through a tiny child
Your Word
Alive from the beginning of all things
And to eternity.

For the desert places in which
The streets we roam
The paths we cross
Guide our feet
Take us to places
Where you would go
Give us words that you
That in this Advent season
Of promise and presence
We might point the way
To the Lamb of God

May this eternal truth be always on our hearts
That the God who breathed this world into being
Placed stars into the heavens
And designed a butterfly's wing
Is the God who entrusted his life
to the care of ordinary people
became vulnerable that we might know
how strong is the power of Love
A mystery so deep it is impossible to grasp
A mystery so beautiful it is impossible to ignore

we walk

u would use
eason
eparation
e way with John the Baptist
od, who takes away the sin of the world!

Holy Trinity Church Ripon

Pleased to read about the booking for the National Conference of the Friends of Cathedrals, Abbeys and Greater Churches at our former church, which is planned for next year, mentioned by Jill in last month's Pinnacle. I wish to clarify the note concerning the crypt, or The Arches as it is now known.

The crypt of Holy Trinity is now known as The Arches, but when the church was built, it opened in 1827 complete with the crypt. It was initially used for burials, and one end of the crypt was sectioned off with walls, coffins being slotted in end on, then sealed. As church warden, visitors would occasionally ask me if they may look around. One "slot" was not sealed and there was an empty space. I might comment that "they had gone out for the day" which resulted with the occasional serious reply "Oh! Have they?"

The crypt also housed the boiler for the building. The boiler was at an advance stage of old age and consequently could be reluctant to fire up for Sunday mornings.

From the window of our bedroom over our shop at Blossomgate Stores, we could see the church and boiler chimney above the roof line at Saturday bedtime. If we could see no smoke from the chimney, it indicated no heating for the morning! Consequently, on with my coat and armed with church key and a torch, I would venture up the road to a darkened church and into the crypt, past the coffins in pitch black to press the boiler button, whereupon it would fire into life and hopefully to remain so for the rest of the night.

After a year or so passed, Sunday school attendance exceeded one hundred and spilled into the vicarage as Sunday school would not all fit into the village hall. Thus the PCC looked to the crypt for expansion, and half of it was developed with a kitchen and rooms during the 1980's. A team of "moles" from the congregation were formed to lower the floor to increase headroom and remove many years of rubbish – even an old cycle (Whoops – it was mine!) After we left for Cononley, the development was stripped out and started all over again using the whole space from end to end of what was renamed "The Arches". It has since been used for Sunday school as well as multiple purposes, hence the booking next year for the Friends conference.

David Clarke



Christingle

2020

Sadly, due to Covid restrictions we are not able to hold our usual Christingle Celebration this year; however, St.

John's would like to invite you to receive a Christingle Celebration in a bag.

Sunday 6th December 2020, between 2-3pm.

We will deliver in Cononley to your gate*

Suitable for ages 3-10 years

Christingle kit, Christmas story and activities.

Donations to The Children's Society welcome.

If you would like a Christingle Celebration in a bag, please contact Janet on 01535 631653.

These plans may change; we will endeavour to keep you informed

*wearing gloves



All I want for Christmas is Compost

Well, probably not! Few people think about compost at all, but doing so would be a great present for the planet. Christmas is a great time to think about waste. Look how much gets chucked out, bulging green and blue bins on Boxing Day. One big culprit is wrapping paper, particularly the bright, sparkly stuff; my granddaughter is heavily into sparkle. Go online for alternatives - brown paper, colourful ribbons, paper stickers, fabric wrappers that can be re-used and passed round the family. And all that cardboard does wonders on a compost heap.

It's good when families bring out the same Christmas decorations year after year. It doesn't matter if some are plastic; it is a wonderful material for certain things, we must just make it work better for the planet. Don't throw it away until you absolutely have to; use it, re-use it and then up-cycle it, AKA make it into something else. And try not to buy anything new made out of unrecyclable stuff. Think before you buy anything you intend to discard after Christmas - do you really need it? And if you do need it, can it naturally decompose?

So back to compost: if someone wants to do it but doesn't have time, energy or space, buy them a wormery. Compact, easy to set up and keep going, it produces stunning compost in easy to handle quantities and a liquid "worm tea" which is perfect as a plant feed. Save all the money you spend on liquid fertiliser. Look up wormeries or worm composting on-line. Not cheap sadly but gives your green credentials a boost.

Bokashi is a system which can deal with all that left over food on plates on Christmas Day. It's undoubtedly a faff but once you get into a routine it's easy to do and very satisfying. Food waste is literally pickled in an airtight container with the application of Bokashi bran and after 4 weeks you add it to your compost bin, where it helps to produce amazing stuff for the garden. In North Yorkshire 40% of rubbish going to Landfill or incinerators is food waste, the worst kind because it generates lots of bad gases as it decomposes in anaerobic conditions. The County Council has numerous strategies for persuading the public to reduce the percentage by composting at home (including the North Yorkshire Rotters which I volunteer for).

Books make great environmentally friendly presents; The Garden Organic Book of Compost is a comprehensive guide to every aspect of the subject. Wish your friends and family a Happy Christmas and a Composting New Year.

The Thumbnail Sketch



A 1968 school prize was a book token. The book I chose was 'The Meaning and Magic of Art' by a man called Fred Gettings. I must add here that the supernatural aspects of the book were not what I was fully expecting to see but other parts of the text and illustrations were the things I wanted to learn about in more detail.

In 1969 I went to Teacher Training College in SE London, met John, married in 1974 and moved to Keighley (we couldn't afford to buy a house down South on two lowly teachers'

salaries). We moved house twice more, had 2 children (now aged 38 and 34) and kept the book in its original cover all through the following years.

When we moved in 1988 to the house where we still live, it didn't take long to become acquainted with our neighbours at both sides and a little way up and down the road. We developed friendships with several of them and spent time at each others houses - for cups of tea, meals and generally socialising.

In about 1990 two of the neighbours came to us for a meal, by which time we obviously knew their names - the husband being Fred Gettings.

I mentioned to Fred about my book having been a school prize from 1968 and asked him if he was the author and illustrator. The book was in good condition as I had kept it in its original dust cover and took it out from time to time to browse through.

Fred looked at it and was astonished - yes he was the author and hadn't seen a copy of his book in such good condition for many years. The outcome was that I asked him to sign it for me which he did very willingly. My daughter was interested in the history of how I came to have this book and the amazing way in which I had actually become friends with the author 22 years later.

Who would think that when I first was given the book token at my school 50 miles away in East Yorkshire that I would end up in Keighley and actually meet the man whose book I chose as a school prize all those years ago!

Ellie Barfoot

Sudan Calendar for December

The water was as muddy as it looks. The photo was taken by Anne, leaping out of a minibus as we travelled past.



We had visited a rural school in Kenana, an hour's off-road driving from the nearest town. The school served a very large settlement, homes to workers in a large sugar factory with acres of sugar cane. It is in the Gezira, a vast irrigated area between the Blue and White Niles. At this point the rivers are 75 miles apart, and water is channelled in through

canals. There is no piped water for the settlement. People buy their water by the bucket or barrel load. If you are poor, and water is expensive for you then you turn to the 'free' water that can be got from the canal.

You don't really have to tell people they shouldn't drink muddy water. They do know the difference in quality even if they've never been taught about bacteria or worse.

At the school, a young mother giggled when asked about politics and the future of Sudan. She said she wasn't interested or not well-informed about such things. "We are not often thinking about such things: I'm just looking for the food to just live."

Christian Aid has commented on the difficulty of humanitarian work in high inflation situations such as Sudan is currently facing. By the time projects are planned and budgets sorted, prices have increased to such an extent that the budget is no longer valid. As a consequence, water pumps are not repaired, water points are not completed, and thousands of people are not able to get access to safe water.

There's something we can't afford either. We can't afford to do nothing. We aren't a big agency that can implement mega solutions, but we are called to respond with justice and mercy. Our Diocese funded the complete rebuilding of the school. The Link Working Group has talked about putting in a clean water supply. During our visit 50 children shared a mug to scoop water out of a barrel – and the barrel was empty.

Odd, but it feels normal when you are standing there.

Jigsaw Ministries



It was a privilege to welcome Tim Lee to our online Zoom meeting on Advent Sunday. He and Kate joined our worship from Kuala Lumpur, thus showcasing one of the gifts that this Coronavirus

epidemic has brought to us. There aren't so many gifts so we celebrate those that arrive!

Tim spoke powerfully of the amazing work that Jigsaw Ministries is doing in the very difficult circumstances of the COVID-locked slum areas that are Jigsaw's "parish". Schooling, health work, feeding and education have moved out from Jigsaw premises to become home based. Jigsaw vans with food parcels and oxygen cylinders are penetrating areas where the police and health officials don't dare to go. And Jigsaw workers on the doorstep are, through the children, penetrating into homes that have been closed off to them in more normal times.

Tim sends us a regular newsletter. It is sometimes reprinted here - but it is always available on the KCB website. The latest one is at:
<https://kcbchurches.org.uk/index.php/jigsaw-newsletters>



The old lady handed her card to a bank teller and asked to withdraw £10.

The teller said, "For withdrawals less than £100, please use the ATM."

When asked why, the teller returned her bank card and irritably told her, "That's the rules. Please move on. There is a line of customers behind you."

The old lady remained silent for a few seconds, then handed the card back to the teller and said, "Please help me withdraw all the money I have."

The teller checked the account balance, leaned over, and respectfully told her, "You have £300,000 in your account and we don't hold that much cash. Could you make an appointment and come again tomorrow?"

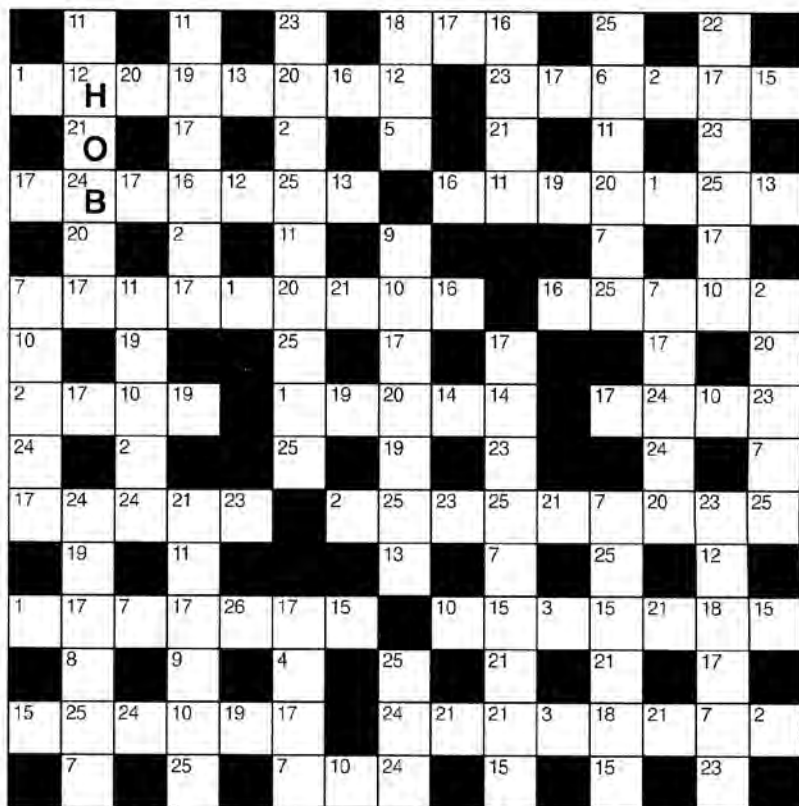
The old lady then asked how much she could withdraw immediately. The teller told her any amount up to £3000.

"Well, please let me have £3000 now." The old lady put £10 in her purse and asked the teller to deposit £2990 back into her account.

Don't be difficult with old people, they've spent a lifetime learning the skills.

The Conundrum Corner

You may have spotted that I quite like CodeWords! They are fairly simple to fill in. In this one, every square with a 12 is an "H". 24 is "B". Once those three letters are filled in, you need to take an educated guess for the next. The first guess will be a bit of a stab in the dark, but it gets easier as you go along!



It helps to write out all of the letters so you can cross them out as you "get" them – and a grid of numbers so you can write in the letters.

You won't want to wait till February for the solution, so you'll find it elsewhere in this magazine.



I promised last month that the solution would take no more than a single line! Remember; it concerned five workers with five cars of five colours. Here's that one line! ***The Violet Saab is owned by the preacher.***

A Christmas Carol Treasure Hunt

As we go to press, the final arrangements for a Christmas Carol Trail are coming together.

Each one of our three churches will be setting up a trail of eight boards. You'll start with a map (that's also available on your phone) and a set of locations using "What3Words?" (If you don't know W3W, it's worth finding out. It will pinpoint to within 3 metres any place on earth (literally!) using three simple words.) You might like to visit

<https://w3w.co/novels.trace.status> or

<https://w3w.co/recur.uppermost.reinforce> or

<https://w3w.co/bearable.windmills.toothpick>

At each board, you'll see an appropriate picture for the Christmas Story. There's a short reading from the Bible – and a QR code that you can scan on your smartphone to hear the carol that fits the story.

None of the trails will be too long for little legs and each one will lead to...

Well. What will it lead to? I am afraid, dear reader, that you'll just have to do the trail to find out!

The trails will be launched on the weekend of 12th/13th December. There will be one in each village – and you can find out where to start on our Facebook page or the website.

I can't tell you now because we don't yet know ourselves!



God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Luke 1:26-33



Scan QR code for the carol:
'Silent Night'



"Christmas is a necessity. There has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves."

Eric Sevareid

The Birds in Your Garden Caching



Photo: John Harding

We've all watched squirrels dashing around in the autumn gathering acorns and nuts and running off to bury them. Caching, as it is called, is a well-known squirrel

pastime and is probably the origin of many of our oak trees. As with most types of animal behaviour, there is a lot more to it than meets the eye. Grey Squirrels, for instance, travel further and are more vigilant when burying their food if they think they are being watched. They are known to turn their backs on potential on-lookers and to create 'dummy caches', where nothing is stored.

Caching behaviour in birds is rather less obvious though; it's difficult to tell whether they are taking seeds away from a feeder to eat them in safety, or to hide them for future use, and it was this behaviour by a Nuthatch on my feeder that prompted me to find out more.

But which garden birds do cache food?

Alongside Nuthatches, Coal Tits are probably the most obvious cachers, then Great Tits and corvids - Jays in particular, but also Magpies and Crows.

When a Coal Tit finds a supply of seeds in a feeder in someone's garden, it will take one, hide it somewhere, such as a crevice in tree bark, and keep coming back to do the same thing. Indeed, a small flock of Coal Tits can empty a feeder of black sunflower seeds in less than a day doing just this.

If you didn't know what was going on, you might be forgiven for thinking that hundreds of them were involved in a raid on your feeder, rather than the probable half-dozen.

As part of their caching strategy, Coal Tits will use multiple locations to hoard their winter supplies. This is called 'scatter hoarding' and ensures that if another species finds the cache – e.g. the dominant Great Tit –, then only one or two seeds will be stolen. Their memories are rather short though, probably no more than a month, so many of the cached seeds will be left to grow. Ever wondered why sunflowers pop up in strange places when you've never grown them? They use a variety of hidey-holes to help reduce this thieving.

Nuthatches, on the other hand, defend their territories, protecting their caches, and pilfering rates tend to be lower. Like Grey Squirrels, they will safeguard their stores by being cagier if a potential thief is around by storing less and eating more.

Corvids, being the clever birds they are, go further in their strategies than most others. Their ingenuity doesn't stop with simply burying their food—they'll also play the role of thief. They watch as their neighbour buries food, and when their back is turned, sneak in and nick it!

Unsurprisingly, corvids also employ counter strategies to try to prevent their hoard being raided. They will try to bury their food out of sight of potential thieves, and if there's no option but to cache food in front of them, they will often return once the others have left and move it.

Individual Jays can collect and store as many as 5,000 acorns, which for subordinate birds can be particularly arduous. Research shows that a dominant Jay will not just hide food, but will raid the caches of a social inferior despite its presence, so a subordinate Jay has to be much more secretive about where it hides its food, and only becomes a thief when dominant birds are some distance away.

Jays can store acorns several kilometres from where they are gathered, although most are cached within a few hundred metres. Taller trees are often used, making rediscovering their stores easier as they are less likely to get covered in snow or leaf fall, or be otherwise obscured.

If you find the lives of our garden birds to be of interest, and would like to join in and count the feathered occupants of your garden, please contact me or visit the BTO Garden BirdWatch website (www.bto.org/gbw). Mike Gray gbwmike@gmail.com.



"I'm sorry Michael – even if you HAVE changed your ring-tone to 'Away In-A-Manger', it's still ALL mobiles OFF!"

Deadlines

We take a break over Christmas! Our next edition is scheduled for the beginning of February 2021. The deadline for this is

Sunday 24th January

Please let us have your material at least by then
(but earlier is better!)

The Pinnacle on the front cover is from Alltrails.com
The Prayer Page view is provided by Eileen Boothman

***We are still running out of cover photos!
Have you got any pictures of the Pinnacle?***