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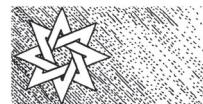
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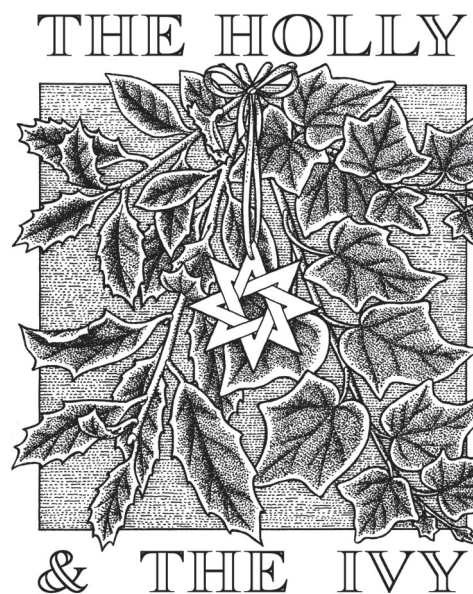


'Parish News'

**The Parish magazine for
Broughton Astley and Croft with
Stoney Stanton**

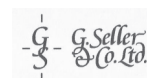


**December 2024
& January 2025**



40p

Supplied and printed by



The Genuine Independent Funeral Directors & Memorial Masons

Parish Contacts		
Rector	Position vacant	
Assisting Clergy	Revd Vic Goodman	01455 285410
Readers	Lester Halling Peter Yates	01455 282189 01455 285978
Associate Ministers	Sheila Yates Martin Macklin Alison Macklin	01455 285978 07732 788190 07906 577305
Pastoral Assistant	John Bass	01455 640381
PCC Secretary	Paula Atkinson	
PCC Treasurer	Barbara Bedford	01455 202812

To arrange Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals contact		
Parish Administrator	Denise Carrington Can be contacted Mondays and Fridays 9:00am – 12noon Wednesday s 12:30 – 3:30pm.	07534 820197 bacsschurches@gmail.com

Parish News Editor	Wendy Howe	07779 194730 wjhowe.t21@btinternet.com
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To subscribe to the Parish News please contact:		
Broughton Astley	Tom Cockerill	01455 698949
Croft	Hubert Lane	07787 910466
Stoney Stanton	Wendy Howe	07779 194730

For further information, see inside back cover or visit our website:
<http://www.stmaryandstmichaelschurches.co.uk>
Or follow us on Facebook: @bacsschurches

Services.....January

	<i>St Mary's Broughton Astley</i>	<i>St Michael's Stoney Stanton</i>	<i>St Michael & All Angel's Croft</i>
Sunday 5 January Epiphany	10:00 am United Service at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley		
Sunday 12 January Baptism of Christ	9:45 am Holy Communion	9:30 am Messy Church	11:15 am Holy Communion
Sunday 19 January Epiphany 2	9:45 am Messy Church	9:30 am Holy Communion	11:15 am Holy Communion
Sunday 26 January Epiphany 3	9:45 am Holy Communion	9:30 am Holy Communion	11:15 am Morning Prayer
Sunday 2 February Candlemas	10:00 am United Service at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton		

Weekday Services:
 Broughton Astley: Wednesday 9:30 am Either a service of Holy Communion or Morning Prayer
 Stoney Stanton: Thursday 9:30 am A service of Morning Prayer.

Details of services correct at time of going to print. However, please check weekly news sheet and Church noticeboards or visit the BACSS Facebook page regularly to check for any changes and updates.

(You don't need a Facebook login to see these pages).
<https://m.facebook.com/bacsschurches/posts/>

Services.....December

	<i>St Mary's Broughton Astley</i>	<i>St Michael's Stoney Stanton</i>	<i>St Michael & All Angel's Croft</i>
Sunday 1 December Advent Sunday	10:00 am United Service at St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley 6:00 pm A United Service for Advent Darkness Into Light St Mary's Church, Broughton Astley		
Sunday 8 December Advent 2	9:45 am Holy Communion	09:30 am Messy Church at Boundary Farm	11:15 am Morning Prayer
Saturday 14 December			4:00 pm Carol Service with Croft Silver Band
Sunday 15 December Advent 3	9:45 am Messy Church	9:30 am Holy Communion	11:15 am Holy Communion
Sunday 22 December Advent 4	9:45 am Morning Prayer 6:00 pm Parish Carol Service	9:30 am Holy Communion	11:15 am Holy Communion with Baptism
Tuesday 24 December CHRISTMAS EVE	4:00 pm Christingle 11:30 pm Midnight Mass	4:00 pm Christingle Trail 11:30 pm Midnight Mass	3:00 pm Christingle 10:00 pm Christmas Eve Mass
Wednesday 25 December CHRISTMAS DAY	10:00 am United Service at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton		
Sunday 29 December Christmas 1	10:00 am United Service at St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft		
	No midweek Services 26 December—2 January inclusive.		

Friends

Do you remember, when you were young, how long it seemed from one Christmas to the next? Now Christmas seems to come around once every three months! No sooner have the Nativity figures been stowed away in the loft, it's time to fetch them down again. And how many times have we heard, or said, that 'Christmas is not what it used to be'?

I wonder if we ourselves have to take some of the blame for this frame of mind. Do we get carried along with the commercialisation of the festival, the frantic present buying and the need to provide 'the perfect Christmas Dinner' with all the frills, that we forget to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas? All that shopping and wrapping and we arrive at Christmas Day, tired, frazzled and worn out.

Is this what God wants?

God sent His son into the world, the greatest present ever given, to show us how much we are loved by Him. This is the message we should be sharing with our families, friends and community, a message often lost in our modern world.

Unfortunately, Christ has been taken out of Christmas and the void has been filled with too much food, too much drink and too much pressure to provide more than we can afford. Television and magazines implore us to keep coming up with bigger and better presents and meals. If you can't spend, spend, spend, then you are made to feel inadequate, uncaring, unloving. Many people finish up paying for Christmas for the rest of the year.

Is this the way to celebrate?

Christmas is about love. God's love for the world and our love for each other. Whether you are rich or poor, young or old, I hope that, this Christmas, we can take the time to celebrate its true meaning and, as we move into a New Year, take the Christmas message forward throughout the year. God sent His Son into the world for everyone.

A very blessed Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Sheila Yates



Baptisms

Stoney Stanton

Nathaniel Freddie Waterfield

Weddings

Croft

Jordon Jackson and Lauren Tempest

Funerals

Broughton Astley

George "Fred" Bullivant
Janet Wilson

Stoney Stanton

Sheila Naomi Gunby
Rodney Edward Payne
Frank Woodhall



Around the Churches

St Mary's, Broughton Astley

Churchwardens	John Bass Colin Atkinson	01455 640381
DCC Secretary	Moira Cooper	07951 134920
DCC Treasurer	Steve Windram	01455 272922
Tower Contact		
Tower Captain	Andy Kedie	01455 284777
Teddy Bear Bunch (Weds 10:30 Term time)	Heather Beadle	01455 284689

St Michael and All Angels, Croft

Churchwardens	Claire Jordan Mike Wootton	01455 282495 01455 283699
DCC Secretary	Claire Wootton	07423 041399
DCC Treasurer	Lester Halling	01455 282189
Tower Captain	Lester Halling	01455 282189

St Michael's, Stoney Stanton

Churchwardens	Paul Lawrence Rachel Smith	01455 274315 07376 031522 01455 642335
DCC Secretary	Christine Hartley	01455 274702
DCC Treasurer	Margie Brimacombe	01455 282429
Ringling Master	Margie Brimacombe	01455 282429
Tower Contact	Carol Griffiths	01455 697626

Facilities

Each of our three churches has a disabled access toilet and baby changing facility. Each Church also has a hearing loop system.

Stoney Stanton Village Hall

Newly refurbished throughout, this beautiful quarry stone building has loads of character, high ceilings & large rooms for events of all types

- The building holds up to 150 people
- main room is 12m x 6.6m with
- bi-fold doors for an additional 5m of length to the room
- chairs and tables available for events
- smaller lounge room with tables, chairs, sofa and reading area
- fully useable kitchen space
- WC's including disabled
- disabled access
- space for an indoor bouncy castle
- modern projector system
- free wifi
- asbestos free, fully water tested, a high quality fire alarm system for your safety
- from £12.50 per hour
- block bookings contact
clerk@stoneystanton.org.uk



NEW ONLINE BOOKING SYSTEM

<https://venuehire.scribeaccounts.com/Stoney-Stanton-Parish-Council>

scan me



Prayer Chain

Prayer Chain

Prayer Chain

Have you ever felt you would like someone to pray for you? Or maybe there is someone you know who needs prayers.

Help is at hand. The Prayer Chain is a group of people who regularly pray for people who are on the prayer chain list.

All requests are treated in confidence. It is up to you how much you want to tell the prayer chain about the request. It can simply be the first name of the person.

Each request is prayed for, from the date of the request, for 1 month. If you want prayers to continue after that month you need to make another request.

Please contact Jackie March with your request on bacsprayerchain@gmail.com .

You don't have to be a member of the Church to use the Prayer chain.

Jackie March

Think twice before buying that goat in Ghana

What are you buying your friends for Christmas this year? If you are tempted by 'socially responsible' gifts that involve you NOT giving your friends anything at all, but instead giving your money to a charity 'in their name', you may wish to think again. Such gifts as goats in Ghana or chickens in Chad can make you feel virtuous, but may damage your relationships.

A recent study has found that people who buy others 'socially responsible' gifts can actually be considered to be self-serving and inconsiderate by the people to whom they give them. It seems that such givers often over-estimate how appreciative their friends will be to receive nothing.

A study at the University of Southern California found that to be successful, a gift must make the recipient feel 'extraordinary, and special.' If you suspect giving your various loved ones news about a goat won't achieve that, there is only one solution: instead of *giving* only socially responsible gifts, insist on *receiving only them*. Then your mantelpiece will be full of photos of happy goats and chickens, and your family and friends will enjoy your more usual gifts, and still be speaking to you.



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www.Kirkwood-Lockerbie.co.uk



Nativity scene

"Here's a king!" announced the five-year-old as he unwrapped a figurine from the Christmas decorations box. "Here's a donkey!" he added a moment later.

Then he removed the tissue from another figure, finding the infant Jesus moulded permanently into the little manger. The child exclaimed, "And here's Baby Jesus in his car seat!"

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What sort of a Christmas card person are you?

The time to send and receive Christmas cards has come round again – time for our annual shock at the cost of a coloured card, and disbelief at what the Post Office intends to charge us to deliver them.

It seems there are three kinds of people when it comes to Christmas cards: the total abstainers, the total givers and the selective givers.

Abstainers write 'Happy Christmas everyone' on Facebook, and consider the job well done. Total givers spend a fortune on cards and stamps and send them to everyone they know. Selective givers try to cut corners, but then cannot remember who sent who what, and as the cards pour through their door, spend time worrying...

However you do it, it is good to stay in yearly touch with your widest circle of friends and family. Proverbs points out that: 'Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' Prov 25:25. Your loved ones will enjoy hearing from you!

Shelter Tree

With reference to the above article, at St Michael's Church, Stoney Stanton, we think we have a compromise.

For those friends at Church who you see regularly and can wish "Happy Christmas" to in person, you might like to add a card to a tree at Church to everyone. We then invite you to make a donation to the homeless charity "Shelter".

We have done this for many years now and hope that if you haven't participated before, that this year you would like to join us.

Thank you.



Enjoy Hot Soup and friendly company in our warm church



St Michael's Stoney Stanton

November 7th

December 5th

January 9th

February 6th

March 6th

Please come and join us
between 12 and 1:30



1st Stoney Stanton Scout Group

BEAVERS

Beaver Scouts

(Age 6 to 8 years)

Meet Wednesdays 6.30pm to 7.30pm

Cub Scouts

(Age 8 to 10½ years)

Meet Mondays 6.30pm to 8.00pm

cubs

SCOUTS

Scouts

(Age 10½ to 14 years)

Meet Fridays 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Explorer Scouts

(Age 14 to 18 years)

Meet Wednesdays 7.30pm to 9.00pm

EXPLORERS

We are currently looking for adults interested in joining our team of volunteer leaders who provide a wide range of Scouting activities for all of the age groups.

For more information on this or youth membership please contact

Carl West (Group Lead Volunteer) on 07711 077606
gs1stoneystanton@hotmail.com

For general enquiries contact

Stuart Wilson (Group Trustee Board Secretary) on 07929 479970
Group Headquarters The Old Chapel, Broughton Road, Stoney Stanton

Iconic Bethlehem Carol Sheet celebrates 70 years in print

It was back in 1954 when the charity, BibleLands Mission Aid Society, first tentatively decided to print a colourful compilation of popular Christmas carols, alongside images of some of the people BibleLands served.

From the start, the scheme was an immense success. The carol sheets were so popular that even that first year, 100,000 copies were insufficient to meet the demand of schools, churches, British Army bases at home and abroad and Royal Navy ships across the world. The donations appeal towards the BibleLands projects in the carol sheet also raised hundreds of pounds.

When 500,000 copies were quickly sold in 1955, BibleLands knew it had a winner on its hands.

So it was that, in 1956, with 1.5 million carol sheets sales as the target, an accompanying catalogue of Christmas cards and gifts and prayers for God's favour was also launched. The plan was overwhelmingly successful – much needed funds were raised for the work of BibleLands.

Since then, many millions of carol sheets have been sold, until this year the charity, now renamed Embrace the Middle East, has produced a new-look Edition with 27 popular carols, including three new additions for this year: O Holy Night, See Him Lying on a Bed of Straw (Calypso Carol) and The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came.

Sign for Christmas

An old country preacher wanted a sign that told people driving on the nearby dual carriageway about the miracle of Christmas. So he sent a short message to the general store in the village.

This story picks up at the sign-making company and the astonished clerk who received the message. The message that she read was: "Unto us a child is born, 6 ft long and 3 ft wide."



Friday 13 to Sunday 15 December 2024
at St Mary's, Broughton Astley

St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival

Open 11am to 5pm each day

Admission - adults £2, children under 12 free

Refreshments available: tea, coffee and cakes; soup and roll; bacon, sausage and turkey and cranberry baps.

Christmas Raffle will be drawn on Sunday 15 December at 4pm.

- **Entry forms to enter a tree**, available by emailing moira763@gmail.com,
- also available in church from September.



Tripping down memory lane

A look through some old Parish Magazines (Part 2)

Last month's article covered the period 1943 – 1984. This one brings us nearly to the Millenium.

In an astonishingly quick turnaround for the Church of England, George Cooper left in October 1984, and a new incumbent was appointed, to take up his duties at the start of the following May. We moved from a quiet, traditional Rector, to a new more adventurous one, Tim Newcombe who came with fresh ideas and the energy of a younger man. In the magazine, little changed. A series started by George Cooper and continued by Mick Vernon on the 'Rectors of Stoney Stanton' continued, there was an article by Rev'd David Jennings on the controversial Bishop of Durham. Social life in the village went on as Carnival Day drew near. But things in the church, were going to change quite dramatically. In a relatively short period of 'six full years' as Tim described it in his final letter, the church had had the massive and hugely expensive restoration of a decaying roof to deal with, the building was reordered to provide a nave altar, and thanks to a generous bequest, was reglazed, with the clear glass you see today. The Alternative Service Book was introduced and in full use, the traditional Book of Common Prayer retained for Evensong and Weekday Communion. Social activity in the church developed, as it had to, to pay the bills, and reached out into the community. Tim was described as having been a 'very visible Rector' as one non-churchgoer put it, when she heard he was leaving .

The magazine too had seen much change. Eileen and Bruce Laurie had moved away to Yorkshire, due to Bruce's employment, and the church lost, at one fell swoop, a churchwarden and magazine editor. The latter was solved by a superb piece of forward planning by Eileen, who appointed a committee of people, to undertake a job she had been carrying out virtually single-handed. The team was most ably headed up by Helen Coombs.

But time moved on and as Tim moved away, down to Cornwall, the parish was fortunate enough to have in situ a very able assistant priest, to care for things during the interregnum. And it will be a familiar face to all present readers of 'Parish News'. Vic Goodman had the care of the parish for the next couple of years alongside his professional work.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone that let us borrow their lights for the Let Your Light Shine event at the church on Saturday, it was full sparkle and it was lovely to see so many people there.

Thank you also to everyone that helped to set everything up and helped during the event, we really couldn't have done it without you.

But most of all, thank you for coming and supporting our event, your donations were gratefully received and go towards the upkeep of the church to allow us to keep supporting our community with these events. So from the bottom of our hearts, Thank You!



Let your Lights Shine

And they did in St Michael and All Angels Church Croft, on Saturday 16 November.

The path up to the Church was lined with fairy lights, with a lamp and more lights to welcome us in the porch (including a pink sign saying "Party"!)

Once inside, there were ornaments and decorations of all shapes and sizes lighting up the Church.

Each window had an ornament and candles, with fairy lights underneath, which had stained glass window pictures hung from them, which had been made by the school children.

Boards were placed across the pews and tables in the side chapel and at the high altar where there were arrangements of lighted items.



It is hard to explain how lovely the Church looked, unless you were there. Hopefully the photos will give readers an idea of what it looked like. With all the Church lights turned off, it created a lovely atmosphere.

A selection of savoury refreshments along with tea and coffee were served. Visitors

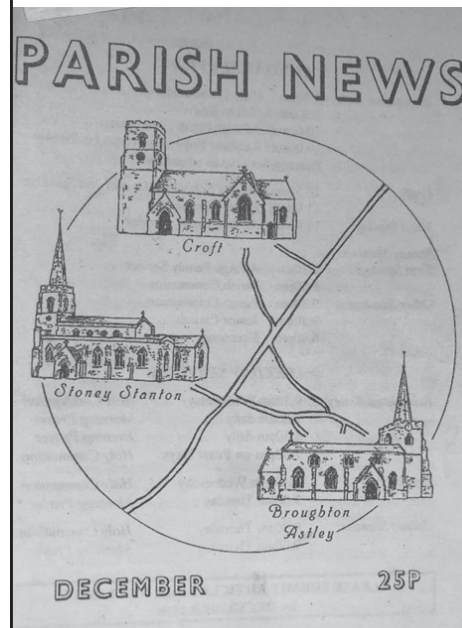
were asked to make a donation, and over £300 was raised.

An enormous thank you goes to Claire Jordan and Claire Wooton and their team of helpers for creating such a wonderful atmosphere. I'm not sure how long it took them to switch all the lights on before visitors arrived!! Also grateful thanks to all those who donated their lights.

The magazine itself, in the intervening years had undergone a sea-change. Looking back to the simple magazines of the past, it had become a different publication, brimming with local news, now illustrated, and enjoying an income from advertisements, something which a previous Rector had abhorred in the strongest of terms. And one of the first advertisers, G.Seller, funeral Directors 'had a slot' and they are still with us!

But the parish itself was undergoing change, organisational change. A final alteration to the whole 'look' of things was on the way.

For a little while, and throughout the previous incumbency Stoney Stanton and Croft had become a United Benefice. Now it was going to enlarge yet again. Peter Burrows, the Rector of Broughton Astley would be Priest in Charge of a new unit to include all three villages, and the last of the magazines in the file represents the new order. From being simply 'Stoney Stanton Parish magazine' it became 'Parish News' a group venture between all three churches. Social activities under Peter flourished..... I have to say that in the three churches there seems to have been a lot of sherry offered at Christmas social events that first year! New names arrive, old disappear.



In less than 60 years, there seems to have been a great deal of change, some of it social, some propelled by changing fashion, some by the prevailing thinking of the C of E. It is gently reflected in this small collection of magazines, starting in wartime, ending as we were looking forward to the Millennium. It will be interesting to see what happens in coming years! Who can tell?

All in the month of December

It was:

1750 years ago, on 25 December 274 that the Roman Emperor Aurelian founded the cult of Sol Invictus as an official religion. He erected a temple and declared 25 December a national holiday, to be known as the Feast of the Unconquered Sun. In 336, after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine, 25 December began to be celebrated by the church in Rome as the birthday of God's Son.

500 years ago, on 24 December 1524 that Vasco da Gama, Portuguese explorer, died of malaria. He was the first European to reach India by sea.

200 years ago, on 21 December 1824 that James Parkinson, British surgeon and politician, died. He was the first person to describe Parkinson's disease, in 1817.

125 years ago, on 5 December 1899 that Henry Tate, British sugar merchant and philanthropist, died. He established the Tate Gallery in London.

Also 125 years ago, on 16 December 1899 that Noel Coward, British playwright, composer, director, actor and singer, was born. His plays include *Hay Fever*, *Private Lives*, and *Blithe Spirit*.

Also 125 years ago, on 22 December 1899 that Dwight L Moody, famous American evangelist, died.

80 years ago, from 16 December 1944 to 16 January 1945 that the Battle of the Bulge (Belgium) took place. German forces launched a surprise assault on the Allies in the Ardennes Forest – their last major counter-offensive operation of the war.

75 years ago, on 13 December 1949 that Jerusalem became the capital of Israel, replacing Tel Aviv.

60 years ago, on 31 December 1964 that Donald Campbell broke the world water speed record, and became the only person to break both the land speed record and the water speed record in the same year.

50 years ago, on 5 December 1974 that the last episode of the TV comedy series *Monty Python's Flying Circus* was broadcast in the UK. It had begun in October 1969.

20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)

21 Rite (anag.) (4)

22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)

23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

Down

1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)

2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)

4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)

5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)

6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)

7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)

10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)

12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)

13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)

16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)

18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)

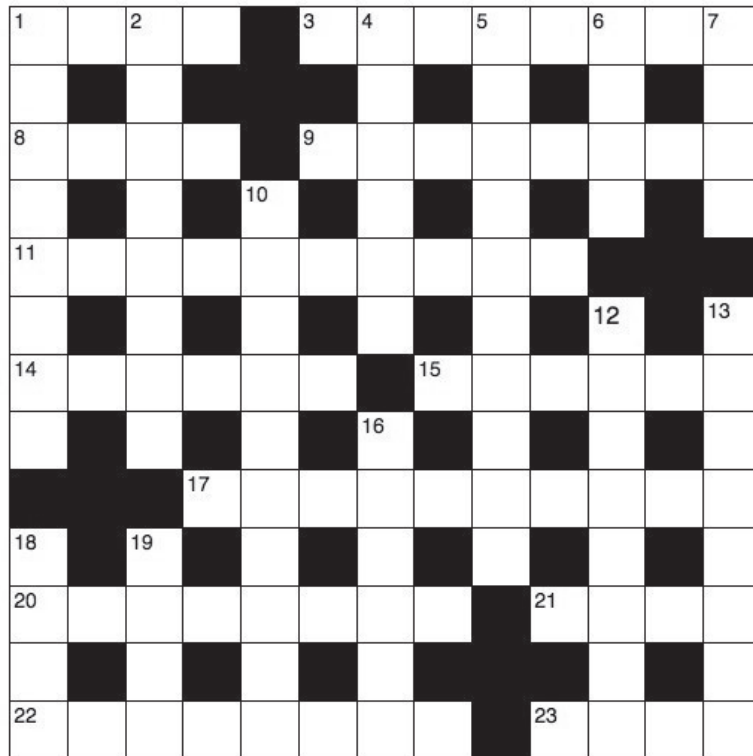
19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)

November Crossword Solutions

ACROSS: 1, Charioteers. 9, Immoral. 10, Cairo. 11, SAE. 13, Inns. 16, Firm. 17, Accuse. 18, East. 20, Ogam. 21, Judith. 22, Seba. 23, Msgr. 25, Den. 28, Inane. 29, Entreat. 30, Chrysoprase.

DOWN: 2, Human. 3, Rare. 4, Oils. 5, Ecce. 6, Raising. 7, Citizenship. 8, Commemorate. 12, Assail. 14, Sat. 15, Scouse. 19, Sabbath. 20, Ohm. 24, Seeds. 25, Deny. 26, Nero. 27, Star.

Crossword - December



Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)
- 15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8) (6)
- 17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)

50 years ago, on 24 December 1974 that British politician John Stonehouse was arrested in Australia (on suspicion of being Lord Lucan.) He had faked his death on 20 November by leaving a pile of clothing on a beach in Miami Florida.

40 years ago, on 3 December that the Bhopal disaster took place in India. A poisonous gas leak at a Union Carbide pesticide plant killed thousands of people and left at least 120,000 with long-term health problems.

Also 40 years ago, on 19 December 1984 that the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed by Britain and China. Britain agreed to return Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty on 1 July 1997.

Also 40 years ago, on 31 December 1984 that the Bank of England stopped producing one pound notes. They remained legal tender until 1988.

30 years ago, on 9 December 1994 that Sinn Fein held its first formal talks with the British government. This eventually led to the IRA ceasefire, the Good Friday Agreement, and the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998.

25 years ago, on 1 December 1999 that an international team of scientists working for the Human Genome Project announced that they had mapped an entire human chromosome (number 22). In April 2003 they announced that they had mapped all human chromosomes.

Also 25 years ago, on 2 December 1999 that the UK devolved political power in Northern Ireland to the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive Committee.

Also 25 years ago, on 31 December 1999 that the London Eye – the world's tallest Ferris wheel at the time, was officially opened on the banks of the River Thames. It opened to passengers in March 2000.

20 years ago, on 26 December 2004 that the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (also called the Boxing Day Tsunami) took place. A massive undersea earthquake near Sumatra caused a devastating tsunami that swamped coastal areas in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and East Africa. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history, killing more than 230,000 people in 14 countries.

What's in a name?

December - Nicholas

Imagine the scene!

A young Englishman, working in Amsterdam, heard a noise outside. He looked out of the window and to his astonishment saw that the banks of the adjacent waterway were filled with excited children from the nearby schools. And as he looked, quite mystified, he could see a boat, bearing a figure in full Bishop's gear, and a long white beard being greeted with cheers, as a celebrity, while sweets were distributed among the assembled children. Around him whirled a quantity of other boats, packed with revellers, some in costume, others in their day-to-day clothes all celebrating the occasion!

Sinterklaas had arrived for his annual visit to Amsterdam.

The traditional arrival of the figure, from whom we largely derive our idea of Santa Claus, takes place each year on or around 5 December the Eve of the Feast-day of St. Nicholas. In Holland, this is present-giving time!

The original St. Nicholas was a Bishop of Myra, around whom a whole multitude of legends seem to have accumulated. He was renowned as a miracle worker and soul of generosity, which suits well the later practice of associating him with Christmas gifts. The name Nicholas is a combination of Greek words meaning '*victory of the people*'.

Due to the reverence given to St. Nicholas throughout the Christian Church, it has been a consistently popular name for centuries. In the Russian Orthodox church he is a popular saint, the subject of many, heavily adorned icons, created for the reverence of worshippers, reminding them of the sort of people they should be, generous to a fault.

The name has many variations, as is common after so many years of popular usage. Nicola, of course is the feminine version.

Clubs, activities & events in January

W.I. Meetings etc.....

Where at.....	Date and Time	Speaker	Competition
Broughton Astley Village Hall	Tuesday 14 January 7:30 pm	"Life on Board the Royal Yacht Britannia" Bill Hayley	
Stoney Stanton St Michael's Church	Wednesday 8 January 7:30 pm	Aromatherapy Demonstration Louise Mac	
Ladies Fellowship Group St Mary's Church Broughton Astley	Wednesday 8 January 2pm Contact Denise 285410 or Wendy 272050 for more information	New Year Party and Secret Santa	

Christmas play

The Sunday School Christmas play was in full swing when the teacher prompted: "And what was it that guided the Wise Men from the East?" Right on cue, the pre-schoolers turned their large white letters to face the audience. However, the last four children in the lineup had somehow reversed their sequence, and so the answer was: C H R I S T M A S R A T S.

Fragile Nativity


A couple visited their son and his family for Christmas, and admired their beautiful nativity set in the hallway. The grandfather asked his young granddaughter if she knew what it was. "Oh yes," she said immediately. "Of course I do. It's breakable."

Clubs, activities & events in December

W.I. Meetings etc.....

Where at.....	Date and Time	Speaker	Competition
Broughton Astley Village Hall	Tuesday 10 December 7:30 pm	Christmas Party with "The Great Adamos" Adam Chappell	
Stoney Stanton St Michael's Church	Wednesday 11 December 7:30 pm	Our Time Social £2 Gift wrapped to impress Faith Supper	
Ladies Fellowship Group St Mary's Church Broughton Astley	Wednesday 11 December 2pm Contact Denise 285410 or Wendy 272050 for more information	Christmas Lunch	

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For me, the man bearing this name who may have come closest to achieving the ideal reflected in its meaning was Nicholas Winton, the instigator of the Kindertransport, moving Jewish Children to safety in the troubled days of WW2, giving them the most precious gift, that of freedom.



Sinterklaas and his companion Swarte Piet

Father Christmas

Of course, I had expected that by the age of seven it was inevitable that my son would begin to have serious thoughts about Father Christmas. Sure enough, one day near Christmas he suddenly said: "Mum, I know something about Father Christmas, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy." Taking a deep breath, I asked him what that might be. "Easy," he said, "They are all nocturnal."

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh? Nothing. It was on the house.

Carol Service
Stoney Stanton Methodist Chapel
Thursday 12 December
7:30 pm
Refreshments afterwards
All welcome



Christmas carols

One night as Christmas approached, some friends decided to go carol singing. A man answered the door of one house, and gasped as they launched into the opening lines of the first carol. Within half a minute, he looked stricken. Soon tears were welling up in his eyes. The carollers sang and sang, and the man looked very moved by what he heard. One caroller ventured: "I understand - our singing reminds you of your happy childhood Christmases."

The man looked at her with misery in his eyes. "No," he whispered back. "It's just that I am a musician!"

EFFFI (Elmesthorpe Friends Food and Flower Initiative)

Raising money for St Mary's Church and other local charities

Coffee Mornings
Elmesthorpe Village Hall
10:00—11:30
Saturdays 28 December and 25 January

All Welcome

Stoney Stanton Methodist Chapel

Coffee Mornings

Thursdays 19 December and 30 January
10:00 am—11:30 am



Come and Join Us

Coffee Mornings and Lunches

St Mary's Broughton Astley

Saturdays 7 December and 4 January

10 am— 12 noon

Community Market and Coffee Morning

St Michael and All Angels Croft

Lunch

Saturday 7 December

12 noon - 1:30 pm

Booking Essential

For more information

Contact Libby on 01455 282629

No lunches in January and February

St Michael's Stoney Stanton

Saturdays 14 December and 11 January

10 am - 12 noon

Coffee Morning

The Colours of Christmas

There are several colours that we traditionally associate with Christmas. They are green, red, and gold, and to a lesser extent, white and blue.

Green: Evergreen plants like holly, ivy and mistletoe were used for thousands of years to decorate buildings during the long dark winters. The Romans exchanged evergreen branches in January to wish each other good luck. The ancient Egyptians brought palm branches into their home during the mid-winter festivals. In Europe during the Middle Ages, the 'Paradise tree' which figured in plays about the loss of Eden, was normally a pine tree with red apples tied to it.

Red: This is the colour of holly berries, and it reminded people of Jesus's blood when He died on the cross. Red is also the colour of bishops' robes, which is how St Nicholas came to be portrayed wearing red. Red is also the colour of fire, which keep you warm during cold dark nights.

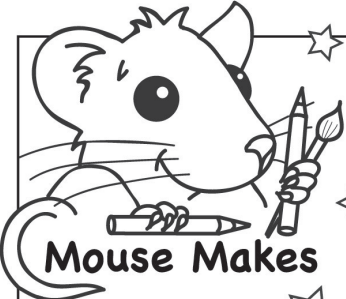
Gold: This is the colour of the Sun and light. It was the present of one of the Wise Men, and traditionally, was the colour of the star over Bethlehem.

White: This is the colour of purity and peace. It is the colour of the altar cloth at Christmas.

Blue: This is the colour of Mary's robe. It is also the colour of the sky and heaven.

You can tell

You can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.



Mouse Makes

"The child to be born will be called H _____, the _____ of _____" **THE GREATEST GIFT**
Luke 1:35

"She will bear a son, and shall call his name _____ for he will save his people from their sins."
Matthew 1:21

"For unto you is born this day a S _____ who is _____ R _____ the _____ R _____"
Luke 2:11

"Jesus said, I am the _____ Y _____ and the _____ U _____ and the _____ I _____." *John 14:6*

No one comes to the Father except through me."
John 14:6

"Jesus said, I am the _____ and the life."
John 11:25

WORD SEARCH 1:
 B L I G H T L O
 R A Y W O J J R
 E M M A N U E L
 A B Y J E S O
 D S A V I O U R
 S A V R J S D

WORD SEARCH 2:
 O H O L Y O R C R T U
 S O N O F M A N H A R T
 N L S H E P H E R D U
 O Y A E P E R G I F T G
 C H R I S T M A S T H S
 R E S U R R E C T I O N

WORD SEARCH 3:
 P R O P H E T I
 R E D E E M E R
 I E M I L I G
 E M E S S I A H
 S R M E G F T
 T E A C H E R E

WORD SEARCH 4:
 E V E R L A S T I N G
 K I N G O F K I N G S
 I N K I G W F D O U
 S E S O N O F G O D D
 S E W O C O U W O R D
 C O U N S E L L O R U

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Find the words from the Bible verses too!

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St Mary's Subscription Draw

November

- First Prize - £40.00 - No 64 - Mr J Bass
 Second Prize - £20.00 - No 8 - Mr R Sweeting
 Third Prize - £10.00 - No 21 - Miss J Harrison

Some numbers still available – an excellent way to support the church and have some fun in these difficult times.
 Contact Tom Cockerill on 01455 698949.

St Michael's Stoney Stanton 100 Club Draw

November

- First Prize - £25.00 - No 45 - Jill Stevenson
 Second Prize - £15.00 - No 30 - Sarah and Max Eaves
 Third Prize - £10.00 - No 44 - Caroline Reene

There are numbers available for this draw.
 Please contact Julie on 07738 764245

An Eco Christmas Tree

As part of St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival, December 13, 14 & 15 December, I would like to decorate an 'EcoTree'. For this I would like a used tree decoration from as many of you as possible. Please let me have your contribution during November- just one decoration please!!!! I know how your generosity can run away with you!

Thank you

Sheila Yates