

The Log



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Following Jesus in Loving Community
Longridge

The Parish Magazine
December 2023 January 2024
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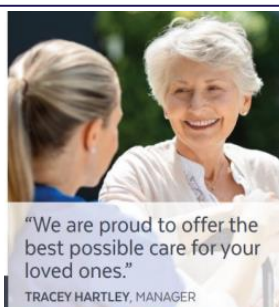
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Our Christmas Services 2023

St. Lawrence with St. Paul

Advent Carols

6:30PM | SUNDAY 3RD DECEMBER
at St. Lawrence Church

All Together Christingle Service

Longridge CLCG Brigade leading

10.00AM | SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER
at St. Paul's Church

9 Lessons and Carols

6.30PM | SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER
at St. Paul's Church

Christmas Eve Crib Service

5.00PM | SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER
at St. Paul's Church

All welcome!

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and singing: 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

Christmas Eve Midnight Communion

11.30PM | SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER
at St. Lawrence Church

Christmas Day Communion Service

8.00AM | MONDAY 25TH DECEMBER
at St. Lawrence Church

Christmas Day All Together Service

10.00AM | MONDAY 25TH DECEMBER
at St. Lawrence Church

Ecumenical Epiphany Service

6.30PM | SUNDAY 7TH JANUARY
at Our Lady & St. Michael Church, Alston Lane

VICAR'S NOTES

I like singing but unless I'm all alone in the shower and with the bathroom door closed so no one can hear, I'm not confident belting out a solo tune. I need others around to help give me a suitable lead and sing in the right key. Maybe you know the feeling? How wonderful then that at the birth of Jesus the Gospel writer Luke records, 'a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

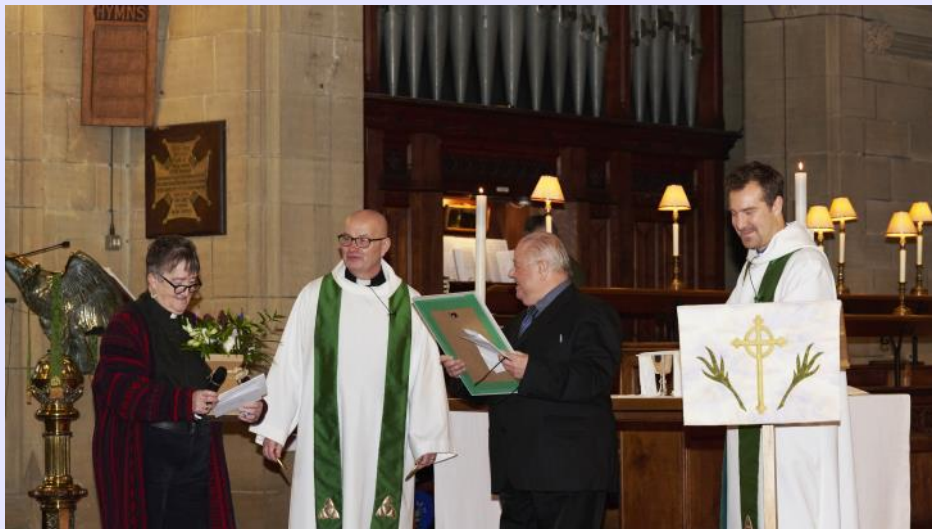
**"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."** (Luke 2.13-14).

I like to imagine that there was such jubilant praise it spilled over into song – hence the theme of 'Singing with the Angels' on this month's front cover. One thing for sure is that if you come along to our services at St Lawrence or Paul's Church over the Advent, Christmas or Epiphany season then there will be plenty of singing you can join in with. So whatever your singing ability, you're most welcome to share in the joy and hope that celebrating Jesus' birth still brings to millions of people all around the world.

Please see Page 3 for a list of our special seasonal services.

Farewell to Revd Gill and Gerald Mack

It was with deep sadness but also thanksgiving that in our 9.30am service on Sunday 19th November I was able to interview Revd Gill and Gerald to celebrate the beautiful gift of their ministry among us at St Lawrence with St Paul. Revd Gill and Gerald have been an inspiration to all of us in so many ways and will be dearly missed as they gradually transition to live in their new house close to family in Bradford. Don't be surprised though if in the short-term you see them in Longridge because Revd Gill is recovering from surgery to remove a cancer and will be continuing her treatment in Royal Preston Hospital so the transition to Bradford will happen over the course of a few months. We must continue to hold both in our thoughts and prayers and we look forward to welcoming them back to see us when the opportunity arises.



Luxury Christmas Hampers

Every year it's a privilege and delight to be able to show some people and families who've had a difficult year for one reason or another that God is with them, showing comfort and support through the local church. One of the best practical ways we're able to do this is through delivering Luxury Christmas Hampers in the immediate run up to Christmas.

Therefore, if you are able to help by dropping off luxury food (with at least a best before date later than Christmas Day) and other items at the vicarage door every weekday from now, apart from Tuesdays, I'd be most grateful. Alternatively, we're indebted to Andrew and Karen Burdett who wrap all the hampers ready for delivery and you can also drop any items with them before a final collection date of Friday 15th December. Thank you.

Ecumenical Service for Epiphany

The Churches Together in Longridge and District chairmanship passes to Canon Harry Doyle in 2024 which means that the Ecumenical Service for Epiphany will take place at Our Lady and St Michael's RC Church, Alston Lane on the evening of Sunday 7th January at 6.30pm.

Vision Emphasis for 2024

Another special date to put in your diary is Sunday 21st January because this is when I'll be sharing our vision emphasis for 2024 in all our services. You can rest assured it's based on our overarching vision of '*Following Jesus in Loving Community*', and I'm hopeful it will involve a church trip away!

Victorian Lamp at St Lawrence

Those walking up the slope from the St Lawrence Lychgate to the church will know how dark it can get during the winter months. I'm delighted therefore that we will shortly be installing a Victorian light, suitable for the setting, a little distance up the path to make life easier for everyone. I'm thankful to Barbara and Steve McCormick for the inspiration and implementation of this little project.

Finally, let me wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year. May you know the Lord's blessing over this wonderful season.

Rev. Mike Barton.

For many, Christmas is a time of joy as they share in celebrations with family and friends. For others it is a time of sadness, a time when loss feels more pronounced, family difficulties and fractures are more prevalent or when money worries come to the fore. In recognition that the festival of Christmas is not universally celebrated, there will be a "Blue Christmas" service held at St. Paul's Church on Monday 4th December at 7pm.

This quiet, reflective service of words and music will offer a safe space to acknowledge the hurt and brokenness before each other and before God. To remember someone we loved who is no longer here, to lament the difficult relationships and emotions that this season brings up. Whatever burden you are carrying this Christmas you would be most welcome to come and set it down for a while and take a long, deep breath.

Rev. Simon King

**A service of comfort and light,
for when pain seems the only
gift under the tree.**

Blue Christmas

**at 7.00pm
on Monday 4th
December 2023**

**at St. Paul's Church
Longridge**

**All are
welcome**



CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Please help us bring some festive cheer to special families within our Parish this Christmas.

We need Luxury Christmas Foods.

Chocolate Logs – Selection Boxes – Tinned Meats – Chocolate Biscuits – Christmas Puddings – Christmas Cakes – Mince Pies – Preserves – Coffee – Christmas Crackers – Biscuits for Cheese – Bottle of wine – Decent Confectionery – Nuts and Dried Fruits – Savoury selections – Crisps – Chutney – Pickles – After Dinner Mints.

Any suitable good quality non-perishable Christmas food.

Donations can be left at the Vicarage door every weekday, apart from Tuesdays, from Monday 4th to Friday 15th December.

**CAN WE LIGHT THE CANDLE?**

Advent – ‘Preparing for, remembering and celebrating the real meaning of Christmas,

for without Christmas there can be no Easter, and without Easter there is no Hope’

You will see on page 17 the report on this year’s Christmas Tree Fair – With a difference.

As you will know, the Spring and Christmas Fairs are our two biggest fund-raising events of the year. That said many people have commented on how much they liked the other opportunities to give at this time, like the ‘Santa Totaliser’, and the ‘Reverse Advent Calendar’, especially those who were unable to attend the Fair.

The PCC asked Rie Waterman to make a totaliser for this year and Rie has chosen to make it in the form of a Candle – our aim being to raise £2,500 over the Advent period. The candle will ‘light up’ as we move through Advent towards our target.

How we get to that target is the challenge because we know that for many people these are difficult times but if you can give any donation, no matter how big or small, then you will be helping to ‘Light the Candle’.

Donations can be made in cash or by cheque using one of the yellow gift aid envelopes in church and marking it ‘Candle’. These can then be placed in the red post boxes in both churches or through the Vicarage letterbox. Alternatively, you can donate online through our website – stlawrencewithstpaul.org.uk – by selecting ‘GIVE’ from the top menu options, and then under the ‘Make a Donation’ heading on the GIVE page select ‘click here’. Or by using your own on-line banking - please send any donation to 52879860 30-96-85 including Candle as the reference. You can also donate using the card machine in St. Paul’s Church – please speak to the Steward looking after it at a Sunday Service and they will set up the machine for a ‘Candle’ donation. Please call Dot Little on 783998 if you wish your envelope to be collected.

The totaliser will be in place throughout Advent and the final total will be confirmed at Christmas.

As ever, thank you for your continued support, that helps meet our day-to-day running costs and enables God’s ministry to grow in our Parish and beyond. **Graham Kelsall.**

The Log Church Directory

Seven

Clergy & Church Officers

Vicar	Rev. Mike Barton	The Vicarage, Church Street	01772 783281	revmikebarton@gmail.com
Curate	Rev. Simon King	9 Willows Park Lane	07789 645138	revsimonking@gmail.com
Retired Clergy:	Rev. John Ball		07754 771220	
	Rev. Adrian Mairs	8 Hacking Drive	01772 356015	adrian.s.mairs@gmail.com
			07899 905768	
Readers	Muriel Anderson	12 Plessington Court	07526 025933	murielanderson33@gmail.com
Churchwarden	Dot Little	26 Hoghton Road	01772 783998	dotlittle003@gmail.com
	Dorothy Laver	19 The Pastures, Grimsargh	07719 389529	dorothy.laver@gmail.com
Deputy Wardens	Graham Kelsall			graham@oaktreehouse.net
PCC Secretary	Barbara Burton	7 Chaigley Road		brbrbrtn6@gmail.com
PCC Treasurer	Graham Kelsall			graham@oaktreehouse.net
Safeguarding Officer	Andrew Burdett		07808 701297	amburdett@icloud.com
Parish Administrator	Michael Dawson	See hours below	01772 783281	secretarystlandplongridge@gmail.com
Health and safety Officer	Chris Martin			
Electoral Role Officer	Michael Dawson			

Parochial Church Council

Chairman	<i>Rev. Mike Barton</i>
Hon. Secretary	<i>Barbara Burton</i>
Hon. Treasurer & Stewardship Recorder	<i>Graham Kelsall</i>
Members:	Clergy and Churchwardens Karen Boardman, Rob Bretherton,, Helen Clements, Michael Dawson, Andrew Filder, David Hartley, Philip Jones, Vernon Kinrade, Rosemary Lyons, Chris Martin, Barbara McCormick, Ali Ng, Annamarie Rogers-Waterman, Wendy Smyth, Val Wardley, Stephanie Willan.

Organisations

Parish Administrator

Michael Dawson
Parish Office Monday and Wednesday 9:30—12:30
Friday 9.30—15.30 01772 783281

Altar Flowers

Hon. Sec. St. Lawrence Dot Little 01772 783998
JudithKaye 01772 785114

Hon. Sec. St. Paul Donna Rowe-Green 07880 348597

Choir

Organist and Choir Director Paul Warren

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Bev Keating
Jean Saunders 01772640146

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Leader Judith Kaye Park View, Fleet Street, PR3 3ED
judithkaye@sky.com 01772 785114

Children's Church

Carolyn Barton carolynbarton@hotmail.co.uk

Mothers Union

7.30pm on 1st Tuesday
Enrolling Member Judith Kaye Park View, Fleet Street, PR3 3ED
judithkaye@sky.com 01772 785114

Prayerline If you would like our prayer team to pray for you e-mail
Muriel Anderson

Servers

Leader George Green 07935 080 443
georgebradegreen@gmail.com

Tuesday Club

7.30pm on 2nd Tuesday
Chairman Fred Little 26 Hoghton Road 01772 783998
Hon. Sec. Adrienne Atkinson 01772 783091
adbil1959@gmail.com

Walkie Talksies

Hannah Green 20 Darwen Close 01772 783558

Longridge C of E Primary School

www.longridge-ce.lancsngfl.ac.uk

Headteacher

Mrs Catherine Parkin
head@longridge-cofe.lancs.sch.uk

Clerk to the Governors

Val Morris 01524 581136 c/o the School Office
School Office 01772 782378
bursar@longridge-cofe.lancs.sch.uk

Pre-School

01772-780078

PTFA Hon. Sec.

Katie Keighley

Sidesmen and Sideswomen

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Peter Turver, Lib Turver, Graham Kelsall, Yvonne Ball,
Val Wardley, Muriel Anderson, Phil Walker, Marina Walker,
Emma Pettit, Carl Pettit, Becky Filder, Andrew Fielder,
Lawrence Ingham, Marilyn Kinrade, Barbara Burton,
Ian Cookson, Ruth Buckley, Jennifer Sturzaker, Kai Ng,
Helen Eccles, Keith Thompson, Joy Rushton. Judith Singleton,
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INSPIRATION WORDS brought to us by Canon Adrian Mairs.

CHRISTMAS CARDS.

Most of us will have bought our cards and possibly posted some already. Sometimes people leave this task till the very last minute, the last day of posting. I am reminded of a lady who did just that and in a panic rushed out, bought a pack of 40 cards and having written them posted them. Sometime later she read one of those left in the box which read 'Just to wish you Happy Christmas and to say a little gift is on the way'. Imagine her reaction not to mention the disappointment of those who didn't receive their gift.

All of us have been given a Christmas gift the gift of a Saviour.

One of the cards I have recently written has this message 'The gift of Christmas is here to remember'. It is easy to get caught up in the business of Christmas that we forget it's true significance, dealing with all our disappointments, hurts, fears and failures especially our own. The one who deals with all this for us and indeed all mankind is Jesus the child born in obscurity. He and He alone 'Our Gift' can Redeem Reconcile and Restore.

The following poem sums up the Gift God has given that doesn't disappoint if we accept Him into our lives and seek to live for Him.

One Solitary Life

He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant. He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter shop until he was 30. Then, for three years, he was an itinerant preacher.

He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn't go to college. He never lived in a big city. He never travelled 200 miles from the place he was born. He never did any of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself.

He was only 33 when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his garments, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave, through the pity of a friend.

Twenty centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned - put together - have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as this one, solitary life.

(By Dr James Allen Francis)

Bible Notes

Following Bible Sunday and the uptake of Bible reading notes from:

Every day with Jesus

Scripture union

Daily Bread

Word for today

BRF notes

I am happy to act as coordinator for these notes. If you would like Bible Reading Notes from January onwards please let me know and I will order. If we receive a bulk order the cost will be reduced.

If you prefer to order your own copies details are in your present notes.

Tel. 01772 356015 Mob. 07899905768

Adrian

Hymns We Love - Adeste Fideles by Paul Warren

<i>Adeste fideles læti triumphantes, Venite, venite in Bethlehem. Natum videte Regem angelorum: Venite adoremus (3×) Dominum.</i>	O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; Come and behold him Born the King of Angels: O come, let us adore Him, (3×) Christ the Lord.
<i>Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine Gestant puellæ viscera Deum verum, genitum non factum. Venite adoremus (3×) Dominum.</i>	God of God, light of light, Lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb; Very God, begotten, not created: O come, let us adore Him, (3×) Christ the Lord.
<i>Cantet nunc io, chorus angelorum; Cantet nunc aula cælestium, Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo, Venite adoremus (3×) Dominum.</i>	Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above! Glory to God, glory in the highest: O come, let us adore Him, (3×) Christ the Lord.
<i>Ergo qui natus die hodierna. Jesu, tibi sit gloria, Patris æterni Verbum caro factum. Venite adoremus (3×)</i>	Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory given! Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! O come, let us adore Him, (3×) Christ the Lord.

Adeste Fideles, or 'O come, all ye faithful' as it is more commonly known must surely rank as one of the most popular Christmas Carols.

I don't know about you, my readers or listeners, but I endured three years of Latin at secondary school. I didn't enjoy the subject, and whole heartedly agreed with the schoolboy rhyme associated with the subject:

*Latin is a language,
As dead as dead can be,
First it killed the Romans,
And now it's killing me*

Being considerably older now, and hopefully a smidgen more mature, I now regret that I didn't study harder at Latin, because every time I see Latin script, I always want to translate it.

Of course, because our hymn in question was originally written in Latin, it's tempting to think it must be a pretty old hymn, probably written very many centuries ago somewhere in Europe. But this doesn't appear to be the case. Whilst we don't have a definitive answer to its origins, it now seems to have been written by an English Catholic called John Wade, probably around the year 1743. The tune that we all know and love is also attributed to the same person.

There are two striking things about this hymn. Firstly, its metre is irregular - no two verses have the same metre, but that doesn't stop us from fitting the words to a (mostly) regular tune. The second thing about it is that there is no rhyming.

Each of the four verses has its own distinctive character...

The first verse invites us to Bethlehem, to see the Holy Child.

The second verse is an affirmation of our faith (compare with for example the Nicene Creed).

The third verse is an exhortation of all heavenly dwellers to sing joyfully. You can easily see St Luke's narration of the first Christmas:

***Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:
'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased'.***

Actually, in writing this I'm seeing something I haven't noticed before. When Jesus was born, the world was wrapped in silence (see the hymn 'O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie'). Thus, whilst it was silent on earth, yet we have joyful exultation up in heaven.

The last verse is a greeting to our Saviour as we celebrate his nativity. Whilst the last verse restricts its use to Christmas Day ('Born this happy morn'), yet if we replace those words with something like 'Born for our salvation', then this renders it suitable for days other than Christmas Day itself. The very first attempt at translating the original Latin resulted in the following opening lines:

Ye faithful, approach ye,
Joyfully triumphant

So what we now sing in English is a looser translation, but arguably feels better English prose.

CHOIR NOTES from organist Paul Warren

The choir and I are both in overdrive mode with two Carol Services in December. The altos (who I call "The Three Altos" - I'm sure you've all heard of the Three Tenors, well, we have The Three Altos!), have been putting in extra practice sessions, and I'm very much looking forward to hearing the fruits of their labours at the Nine Lessons and Carols service on Sunday 17th December.

We've had some good choir attendances recently, and I've been particularly enjoying hearing them sing the psalms and canticles at Evensong.

There are good singing voices in the congregation, and I would ask those voices to consider joining the choir. There's always a warm welcome for new voices. We have strong leads in Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass, and I know that strong leads makes it easier for people who are unsure of their abilities when it comes to singing in harmony.

In the meantime, in addition to getting the choir ready for the Carol Services, I'm having to ponder over which pieces of music to air before and after church services. There's no shortage of Advent/Christmas organ music, but most of this music requires a fair amount of practice, and the clock is ticking away...!

From myself and the choir, as in the words of the well known carol, "We wish you a merry Christmas,
"We wish you a merry Christmas, We wish you a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year".

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN LONGRIDGE & DISTRICT

Blessing of the Town Crib. This will take place on Saturday 9th December at 11.00am when members of the clergy will lead the short service. Once again we will have some members of Longridge Band with us to accompany our carols. Our thanks to John Spencer and his team for once again seeing to the erecting of the crib.

Change of Chairperson. Canon Harry Doyle takes over from Revd. Sharon Thraves and will chair the meetings of Churches Together in 2024. Friday morning prayers at 7.45am will also move from Christ Church to St. Wilfrid's commencing on Friday 5th January. Do consider joining us as we start a new year. Prayers are led by each denomination in turn and last approximately 15 minutes.

A Different focus for Lancashire Sings Christmas. Over the years Churches Together in Longridge & District have encouraged people to join us as we tune in to Radio Lancashire for an hour of Christmas music, readings etc. Traditionally this event has taken place in the evening and we have gathered at various venues and joined in. This year, however, the timing is different as the programme will focus on carers and be titled 'Carers Sing Christmas'. The programme will go out on Monday 18th December at midday, live from the Blackburn Studio. If you have enjoyed listening to Lancashire Sings Christmas in the past do tune in and sing along to the carols.

Ecumenical Service for Epiphany. Our first Ecumenical Service of the New Year will be on Sunday 7th January at Our Lady & St. Michael's Alston Lane. Do join us at 6.30pm. Let Dot Little know if you need a lift down to Alston Lane for that Service. There will be no Evening Service at St. Lawrence on that evening.



A December Reflection from Canon Andrea Titterington Light

The Nativity Story, as told in two gospels, not only depicts Mary forced to give birth in a stable, but a stable that was a very crowded space. It wasn't only Joseph who was with his wife on this momentous occasion, but various animals shared the space and complete strangers arrived to worship the Messiah. According to Luke, the first to arrive were the shepherds who were living in the nearby fields, keeping watch over their flocks. They were overwhelmed by the appearance of "*an angel of the Lord...and the glory of the Lord shone around them*" followed by "*a great company of the heavenly host praising God..... When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.'*" (Luke 2:8-20)



In Matthew's gospel Herod, worried by the query of wise men from the East about the birth of "*the child who has been born king of the Jews? For [they] observed his star at its rising,*" sent them "*secretly...to search diligently for the child.....When they had heard [Herod], they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star they had seen at its rising until it stopped over the place where the child was.*" (Matthew 2:2-11)

Where we live it isn't always easy to see stars. Not only is it one of the rainiest parts of England with the accompanying clouds, but we also suffer from light pollution. Our house is not only graced by two street lamps, front and back, but neighbours who seem to be afraid of the dark. Floodlights, security lights, lights that stay on all night make seeing constellations a rare and celebrated event. I read about celestial wonders such as meteor showers, unusual moons, partial eclipses that are "visible" in the UK as fiction because we rarely have a night clear enough or dark enough to see them.

The UK suffers from what the CPRE calls "Night Blight" and if you look at their map of light pollution, the North West is one of the most affected areas. To escape light pollution we may have to go to the designated Dark Sky reserves such as Northumberland, North York Moors, Yorkshire Dales and South Downs National Parks. This situation is not only negative for us, but also for wildlife.

Those visits by the shepherds and the Magi to the stable in Bethlehem might not have happened at all if the Holy Land suffered from light pollution!

Our joy at the Nativity of our Messiah may be affected by doubt, worldly concerns, illness and grief. We may become cynical because of the season's commercialism. Like light pollution and clouds obscuring the stars, as we get older life may get in the way of our celebration of Christmas, the incarnation of Jesus.

This Christmas let us worship together to dispel the shadows and follow the star. Jesus is "*the Light of the World. Whoever follows [him] will never walk in darkness.*" (John 8:12) The Lord "*is a lamp to [our] feet and a light to [our] path.*" (Psalm 119:105) Merry Christmas.

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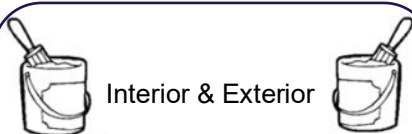
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OUR FAVOURITE RECIPE

Bev Keeting shares with us two tried and tested recipes from when she was a Domestic Science/Food Tech. teacher. Why not give them a try especially if you have left over vegetables or cream in the fridge after Christmas.

Mediterranean Tart

An interesting starter or main that is a hit for vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike. *It is so quick and so easy you can have it ready on the table in under 30 minutes.*



Ingredients

Base

Pack of pre-rolled puff pastry or half a block of puff pastry.

Filling

1. leek or onion.

Choose from or mix 100g mushrooms, 1 pepper, 2 courgettes, 2 handfuls of baby leaf spinach.

Optional layer

2. tblsp tomato purée or pesto.

Toppings

Vegetarian: 50-100g cherry tomatoes (halved).

Cheese: 100g grated cheese or bag of fresh mozzarella (sliced) or a large slice of goats' cheese.

A sprinkle of herbs eg basil and/or thyme.

Method

1. Set oven at 200 degrees Centigrade.
2. Place the sheet of pastry on a tray or roll out the block of pastry and place on tray.
3. Mark the edge with knife and create a border. Bake for 10 minutes until pale brown.
4. Chop leek/onion finely.
5. Chop the chosen vegetables into small pieces. Option to fry vegetables to soften them a little.
6. Spread the pastry with purée or pesto and then place chosen vegetables onto base and add toppings.
7. Bake for 15 minutes until edge is golden.

Tiramisu

A classic Italian favourite and good fun to make. *Tiramisu* is a no-bake Italian dessert combining espresso-dipped sponge and a creamy lightly sweetened mascarpone cream.

Ingredients

Base

Sponge fingers or trifle sponges or Madeira cake (enough to cover the base of your dish in one layer).

100ml strong black coffee, already mixed with 2 tblsp Brandy or Tia Maria.

Topping

250g mascarpone cream cheese or similar such as Philadelphia,
1 tsp vanilla essence,
250ml cream (double or whipped),
2-4 tbs icing sugar.



Decoration

1 tsp cocoa powder.

Method

1. Cover the base of your dish with the sponge and then pour over the coffee mixture so that all of the sponge/cake is covered.
2. Mix together the mascarpone, vanilla essence and icing sugar.
3. Whisk in the cream a little at a time until you have added all the cream.
4. Spread the cream mixture over all the sponge/cake.
5. Dust the top with sieved cocoa powder and then chill.



SANTA'S WORKSHOP KEPT BUSY AT CHRISTMAS TREE FAIR.

Looking back to the planning meeting and our discussions around the Christmas Fair this year we even wondered whether to have a Santa's Grotto at all because in previous year's Santa was tucked away in the side vestry – now the Foodbank store and certainly last year wasn't as kept busy as we had hoped. Rie Waterman and Barbara McCormick had however other ideas and set about creating the most wonderful Santa's Workshop on the dais area at the front of St. Paul's Church. It was without doubt the centre piece of the event and attracted lots of children who seemed to love it. Not only could they see Father Christmas but they could enjoy making a Christmas craft item; hear a story read and even write their Christmas list to make doubly sure no toys and gifts were going to be forgotten. So a special thank you must go to the Three Elves – Rie Waterman, Barbara McCormick and Andrew Filder who worked so hard before and on the day. You were brilliant! A word of thanks to Father Christmas too – what a job he has remembering all those requests.

If there was hard work going on at the front of the church there were definitely some hard workers in the Centenary Room. The turkey crowns were in the oven early and by mid morning you got that Christmas smell of cooking turkey and warming mulled wine. So well done once again to Ann Golding and her team of caterers – with everything sold out by 1.30pm.

In the main body of the church we had tried to create a more relaxed atmosphere and we hope we achieved that. There were less stalls and more space but all the stalls, the raffle and sideshows were all kept busy with a constant stream of visitors. Our thanks to everyone who supported the fair in any way and helped us raise over £2,500 for General Church Funds. We do take feedback seriously and next year will consider having two drinks stations. One thing is for certain Santa's Workshop has found a new home and will be back, we are told, with an even better one next year.



Grace Notes

Grace Notes is our outreach choir. We sing mainly in Care Homes in and around Longridge. After seven years of singing together, we are reluctantly having to say goodbye to our friends Gerald and Rev. Gill Mack, as they leave us for pastures new. Gerald has been our musical director. Paul Warren, our church organist, has very kindly stepped into the gap, but he will have to leave us at the end of this year because of other commitments.

This means that we need a new musical director, hopefully from the beginning of February 2024. We meet just one afternoon a week for about 90 minutes. This is a purely voluntary role and would ideally suit a retired music teacher.

If anyone is interested, or knows someone who may be interested, please contact Muriel Anderson on 07526 025933 or email murielanderson33@gmail.com.

SCHOOL NEWS – from Headteacher Catherine Parkin

School Worship: Friendship



Having spent last half term considering our friendships and what we think it means to be a friend, we have started to look at Jesus and the people he treated as friends. Peter was close to Jesus; he listened to Him and followed Him, yet when he took his eyes off Jesus and started to look around and think about other things, he literally started to sink beneath the waves (Matthew 14,22-33).

This same man, having said he would stay with Jesus until the very end, was to betray Him three times. Yet when Jesus returned from the dead he went to Peter to tell him that he still had wonderful plans for his life, asking him to 'Feed my lambs,' and, 'Take care of my sheep,' (John 21, 15-17). This is an amazing example of Jesus's unconditional friendship.



Remembrance



Mrs Dewhurst, Mrs Parkinson and some of our House Captains and Vice Captains represented school in the Remembrance Day Parade in Longridge last month. They walked from the Civic Hall to Stonebridge and stopped at the War Memorial for 11am where prayers were said and 2 minutes silence was held.



Developing our Prayer

In collective worship we have prayers that we use regularly and which the children are very familiar with. Prayers such as The Grace and The Lord's Prayer provide a way for us all to pray together and give us a common language, as does the liturgy we follow in church.

As the children move through school they have the opportunity to collect prayers for their worship areas and write their own to share with the class. In Class 2 the children have started to use a 'teaspoon' prayer to help them pray more spontaneously and be in the moment when they speak to God.



t.s.p
Thank you. Sorry. Please.

When we pray we can say a teaspoon prayer. Something we are **thankful** for, something we are **sorry** for and something we would like to ask - say **please** for.



RE in Year 3

Year 3's current RE unit is Called by God. After learning about the prophets in the Old Testament, we asked Revd Mike to come and talk to us about his calling. He talked to the children about the different ways that God can 'call' us. It was interesting to learn about Revd Mike's calling to help people in Sudan.

Primary School Places

Monday 15th January is the closing date for applications for primary school places for September 2024. If you know anyone who has a child ready to start Reception next September, please remind them to apply. If they attend a church, they should also fill in the supplementary application form. Please go to <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-primary-school/>

Events in December & January

Christmas lunch will take place on Wednesday 13th December. If your child does not usually have a school lunch but would like one on this day, please email Mrs McCormick (admin@longridge-cofe.lancs.sch.uk) in the school office to book.

Tue 5th Dec - Years 1 & 2 Afternoon Performance 2pm in the school hall

Thu 7th Dec - Years 1 & 2 Evening Performance 6pm in the school hall

Wed 13th Dec – Christmas Lunch

Thu 14th Dec – PTFA Christmas Film Night in school hall 3.30-5.30pm

Fri 15th Dec – Trophy Assembly in St Paul's Church at 9.15am

Fri 15th Dec - Reception Class with 2toSchool – Nativity Performance 2pm in St Paul's Church

Wed 20th Dec – School closes for Christmas at 3.30pm

Mon 8th Jan – School opens at 8.50am



PTFA News



Thank you to everyone who came to the Christmas Markets, it was a huge success and we raised lots of funds for extra activities which hopefully will go towards new iPads for the Children. It was lovely to see Longridge so busy.

We have a film night for the Children where they will be watching The Polar Express, we are all looking forward to it.



Have a lovely Christmas everyone.

Emily Oates

TUESDAY CLUB

For our meeting on the 8th November we welcomed Stuart & Anita Kellington who gave us a very interesting talk, with lovely slides, on a walk in the Cotswolds from Chipping Camden to Bath. This really is a beautiful part of England and it came as no surprise to hear how popular this area is with visitors from all over the world. The Villages built of Cotswold stone were amazing and so very neat and tidy, most of them with a stream running through making them even more attractive and pleasant and I should expect houses will be very expensive to buy in this part of the country.

On the route there are many houses and gardens to visit and much history to explore for those of us that are not "walkers". Unfortunately, my walking days are over now, so it was lovely still to be able to enjoy the area through Stuart's superb slides along with Anita's very interesting commentary.

For our next meeting on the 12th December, with Christmas in mind, we look forward to the return of "Trouble at Mill" with their lively songs and monologues, plus Audrey's mince pies of course. Then in January we welcome back Steve Halliwell, this time with his presentation on the Cartmel Peninsula & Holker Hall.

I would like to wish all our members A Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy & Prosperous New Year and to thank you all for your continued support of the Tuesday Club meetings to which everyone is welcome.

Adrienne



BRIGADE NEWS



We've had a really busy few months here at Brigade. At the start of October, we celebrated Harvest by making baskets in Martins and Y-team, we also worked on the display for church and attended the service. Martha, Barbara and I supported the Poppy Appeal in Longridge and raised £458.45 over two weekends. The JTC and Seniors also had a trip to Blackpool Illuminations. We enjoyed walking through the lights, having fish and chips and donuts and even took part in a danceathon on the comedy carpet. Thank you to Rev Simon for joining us on the trip and being one of our dedicated drivers- we hope you enjoyed the evening as much as we did.

Our preparation then went into Remembrance. The Martins and Y-team talked about the significance of the boy's brigade during the war, and everyone practiced their marching with guns (made from hockey sticks). They then learnt about the contributions the girls brigade had and how they were nurses supporting the soldiers. They made a stretcher and learnt how to perform CPR and how to use a bandage.

We had a good turn out the following week in Longridge for the Remembrance Parade with Jacob and Daisy being chosen to lay the wreath this year. 19 of us attended the London Remembrance Parade this year- we set off on Friday 10th November to London and were settled in our rooms by 9pm. On Saturday we started the day off with breakfast and then left the hotel for our walk to St Pauls. Along the route we gave the members a challenge of playing in the giant's house at key locations- for those who don't know the game its where in a team they must make their bodies into objects which could be found in a giant's house- for example... In the giant's house there was a giant 'Tower of London'. We started by walking to the Tower of London then over Tower Bridge and along the embankment towards HMS Belfast. We then crossed back over the river at London Bridge and visited The Monument where the Great Fire of London started. We then made our way to St Pauls Cathedral where we spent time looking around and even had the opportunity to visit the Crypt where we located Florence Nightingales Statue. We then watched part of the Lord Mayors Parade before getting a quick McDonalds for Lunch. We then travelled across London to the Natural History Museum and spent a couple of hours here which was amazing. We then headed back to the hotel to start getting our uniforms ready for the next day. We had a conveyor belt of Uniform Ironing, Shoe Polishing and Sewing and once we were all ready, we had our evening meal before heading for an early night at about 8:30pm.

On Sunday morning, we woke at 5:30am and hair braiding commenced, and we started to head down for breakfast at 6:30am. We packed up and got dressed into our uniforms and left the hotel at 7:45am to get the Tube to Trafalgar Square to meet the other Brigade Members. We entered through security and ID checks onto Horse Guards and were formed up by 9am. We then slowly progressed onto Whitehall where we embarked on a long wait until 11am where we heard the cannons sound and then London fell into silence for 2 minutes. We then took part in the service before eventually setting off on the parade about 12:45pm. We marched down Whitehall past the *Cenotaph* and Jake carried our Wreath; this was the point we were visible on BBC. The parade then leads down to Westminster Abbey and past the Royal Salute (This year it was Princess Anne) and then onto Horse Guards where we finished. We then headed for some lunch and then headed back to the hotel to get changed, have some downtime before getting our train back home which arrived at about 9pm. It was a very busy weekend, but we had such an amazing time. I'm so very proud of all our members, especially those who attended for the first time, they all represented Brigade and our company so well- we had some lovely comments about how smart they all looked too. I also want to take the opportunity to thank all those who have supported us this year with our various fundraising activities. Without the generous support from the church family and wider local community we wouldn't be able to offer our members these incredible experiences- so thank you ever so much for all your donations and well wishes. A couple of our members, leaders and parents have shared some comments:

Eliza - *'I loved the Experience and the atmospheres of being on parade. I also really enjoyed the 'in the giants house' activity on Saturday'.*

Edward- *'I liked going on the tube and being part of the parade on the Sunday'.*

Leah- *'London has very nice tourist attractions and although the tubes were very busy after the Lord Mayors Parade it was great fun'.*

Maddie- *'I had the best time ever and cant wait to go again'.*

Martha and Barbara- *'Martha and I enjoyed London so much. The experience was amazing it felt so special to be there at the Cenotaph to commemorate those who lost their lives. Everything ran like clockwork and was so well organised, thank you for inviting us'.*

Mr H- *'It was a joy to be with our young people from Longridge who are so polite and with a good sense of humour. So smart and respectful as we marched past the cenotaph and happy to see The Princess Royal on the saluting base'.*



We've also started to get prepared for the Christingle Service which this year is being led by Brigade. Martins and Yteam have learnt all about the Christingle through some Christingle inspired games. They have completed a scavenger hunt, then went on to play an action game using the pieces of the Christingle as the actions before finally playing pin the candle on the Christingle. They have also started to make our giant Christingle display for church as part of craft. The JTC/Seniors have been researching and learning all about the history of the Christingle which will be the theme of our Sermon. They have created Posters which will be displayed in Church. We would love to see as many of you as possible at the Christingle Service!

Olivia Stewart

Children and Young People

During November in Children's Church we have been working through a series titled 'Meals with Jesus'. Both groups, Climbers and Explorers, have followed the same topics but approached them in different ways.

On the first Sunday, we looked at Jesus' parable of the wedding feast where people had chosen the best seats whereas Jesus taught that we should humble ourselves and put others first. In the younger group we learned how Jesus was invited to the Pharisee's party and how they were trying to trick him. At the party Jesus put the sick man first and healed him. We played lots of games and made a craft which reminded us to do as Jesus and put others first. The older group had a great time thinking about who is the most important out of a group of different people – there were differing views over how important in life professional footballers are! Then we looked at the same list through the eyes of Jesus and reflected on how He might see things differently.

On the second Sunday we learnt all about Zaccheus and how, out of all the people in the crowd, it was Zaccheus who Jesus pointed out and spoke to and invited himself to tea. In the younger group, we explored the story of Zacchaeus starting with finding all the lost people round the room and bringing them back together to 'God'. We then explored the story and retold it using small world props before decorating our own tree to help us remember the story, making a bookmark to help us remember we are all special to God and of course some fun play dough. The younger group loved playing some games together to finish. In the older group, we thought about what it means to feel 'lost' like Zaccheus did and how it feels to be found again. We also played find the lost Jelly Babies to keep our energy levels up for the conversation.



The third Sunday of the month will see us learning that in the Bible, Jesus invites us all to the Best Banquet Ever! A special party for all those who accept His invitation. We are going to have a party of our own and decorate party invitations to Jesus's amazing party to give to our loved ones.

We look forward to beginning our Christmas series in December and are excited about the Christingle and Crib service approaching! Happy Christmas to all!



We love to meet new families through our children's and young people's groups. Do come and join us or feel free to contact Barbara McCormick (barbara@her-email.co.uk) or Carolyn Barton (carolynbarton@hotmail.co.uk) if you'd like to find out more.

CHURCH FLOWER CLUB



This is a funny time of year flower wise. There are a number of traditions to take note of. Obviously in November our displays were predominantly made up of poppies as we joined the nation in the act of Remembrance for all of those who paid the ultimate price for the freedom that we enjoy. Also in October and November there were flowers in remembrance of two young men who are special to members of our congregation. We often use carnations within these arrangements. These are a symbol of love, with one school of thought being that the name carnation comes from the Latin word 'incarnation', meaning God in the flesh. They can also be used as a way to express love for the loved ones who are grieving. Sometimes it can be hard to know how to show our feelings of sorrow and support for those who are facing a tough time. A simple bunch of flowers, no matter what the content, can just let someone know you are thinking of them. So, if you are visiting either St Lawrence's or St Paul's church, please know that the flowers at the front are not just for decoration, they are there to let you know that you are thought of.

As we head into December there are a whole new set of traditions to acknowledge. We will be installing our advent wreaths soon. During advent, there will be no other flowers in the churches. However, we will be flooding the church with flowers ready for Christmas. If you would like to make a donation towards the Christmas flowers there will be baskets put out nearer the time.

If you would like to join our monthly flower club, it is open to anyone. You do not have to arrange flowers in church to come along to our meetings. We have a range of activities and demonstrations throughout the year on the 4th Tuesday on the month, 7.30 – 8.30.

If you would like any information on how you can be involved with our flower team, both at St Paul's and St Lawrence's or how to help fund the blooms in church, please do give me a call on 07880348597 or email donnarowegreen@gmail.com.

Thank you so much. Donna

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Saturday from 10am to 4pm
Sunday from 12.30pm to 4pm
at St. Paul's Church,
Longridge PR3 3WA

**FREE
ADMISSION**

Refreshments include: soup, sandwiches, cakes and scones.

FOR MORE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT: Dot Little on 01772 783998

St Lawrence with St Paul Longridge

Following the Christmas Tree Fair the Fellowship, Fun and Fundraising Group now have jigsaws on their mind with the Jigsaw Celebration taking place in St. Paul's Church on Saturday 20th January 10am – 4pm and Sunday 21st 12.30pm – 4pm. As the poster indicates this is the fourth time we have run the event and we are hoping it will be bigger and better than ever with more jigsaws on display – a display that is constantly changing as jigsaws are sold and replaced. With free admission you can come and go as many times as you want over the two days - why not come and enjoy a soup and sandwich lunch or coffee and cake as well as hopefully finding some jigsaws you like. The success of an event of this kind relies on people coming not only from the local area but from further afield. Some of us have certainly enjoyed visiting other Jigsaw Festivals travelling to Ramsbottom and to Cockerham this year. At many of the festivals there is also a raffle or a tombola and we would certainly be happy to receive items for a tombola and to run this over the weekend if we get sufficient prizes.

As last year we will be looking for Stewards and people to help in the kitchen and after Christmas there will be a rota for people to sign. One thing we will certainly not be short of is jigsaws and we are so grateful to the people completing them for us. We are also grateful to Wentworth, Ravensburger and Gibson's who have supported our January 2024 event.

Mothers' Union

Some of you will know that Keith died recently. Obviously I'm not thinking too clearly at the moment so to write the sort of thing I would normally submit is beyond me just now. My family are aware of the many offers of support from the church family so I would like to share the following with you and thank you for the many good wishes we have received.

Memories

*Life can never stay the same
No matter how we try
Our hands can never stop
The clock of life from ticking by
But love remains, unchanging
In the care of sorrowing hearts
For as the love of life is stilled
The love of memory starts*

Dates	
December 5 th	Party 6.30pm start
January	No meeting
February 6 th	Favourite Recipes

Judith

50 Years at the NHS for Irene Wallace.

Parishioner Irene Wallace is a lady who at the age of 84, (85 at Christmas), still enjoys going to work, albeit part time these days. Earlier in the year she found herself on the front cover of an NHS publication called 'People First' celebrating the fact that she had worked for the NHS for 50 years.

Irene is a part time Chef at Longridge Community Hospital and loves her work. These days she only officially works on Mondays but is happy to cover for colleagues during sickness or holidays. Irene mentions in the article that she especially likes baking and that baking skill came from her mum who was a confectioner. When Irene left Berry Lane School at 15 her first job was at the Co-op Shoe Shop in Berry Lane but later having married husband Frank and having son Paul, went into business with her mum running a successful confectioners and cafe in Berry Lane until her mum became ill and they had to sell the business on.



Irene and husband Frank then bought The Cabin on Higher Road changing it from just an ice cream and mineral shop to a general store but then with the arrival of much wanted second son Andrew it was time to move on from a full time business and enjoy being a mum again. Irene kept her catering hand in by working in the kitchen at Alston Hall for a while at weekends but then moved to Ribchester Hospital as a kitchen assistant and the start of her time with the NHS. Irene was scheduled to retire at 62 after helping with the move from Ribchester Hospital to the newly opened Longridge Community Hospital but it didn't happen.

She officially retired in 2001 when she was 62 celebrating with a huge party and an article in Longridge News but she just couldn't leave and went back two days a week and covered for sickness and holidays. She then planned to go when she was 70 and again when she was 80 – she's now planning to possibly retire when she's 90 but will leave earlier if she feels she's no longer helpful in the workplace or can't keep up with the work.

If you ask Irene what she enjoys about her job its all about people. Working both at Ribchester Hospital and now at Longridge she says its been like a family and she still looks forward to going to work. Her NHS colleagues call her Mum and she's pleased they don't call her Grandma – even though Irene has four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Keep going Irene – you've earned the love and respect of your colleagues, and we are sure still very much valued.

BREW TIME

We will be open on the 20th December as normal but closed on the 27th before re-opening on the 3rd January, 2024.

May we take this opportunity to thank you for all your kind support over the last twelve months and wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Kath, Jacqui, Bev and John.

Foodbank Christmas Opening.

The Longridge Foodbank will be open as normal on Friday
22nd and 29th December from 11am - 1.30pm
in St. Paul's Church.

The emergency number to call over the Christmas period is
07522 544260

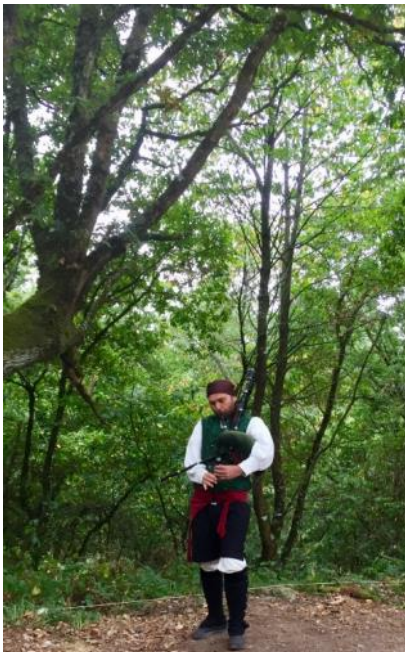


OUR PILGRIMAGE ON THE CAMINO DE SANTIAGO WAY (PART 3 & FINAL LEG) CHRIS AND ELIZABETH MARTIN

This month we join Chris and Elizabeth Martin on the concluding part of their Pilgrimage on the Camino De Santiago Way.

Arzua - Amenal 19km (Bagpipes, peppers and octopus!)

This stretch was our favourite part of the Camino. Our walk took us through many shaded woodland areas that sometimes broke to give us stunning views of local valleys. The scenery had a magical, mystical feel to it, especially one early morning when we were walking through the mist. The woodlands of Galicia are said to resemble their Celtic relative in Ireland. We came across a piper in costume playing traditional Galician folk tunes that really added to the atmosphere. Galicia has a very strong sense of regional identity and has a unique history in the establishment of Spain. In past times the bagpipes were one way of promoting its unique heritage and local traditions.



The Galician piper in the woods in traditional costume

If you are a foodie and a cheese lover, Arzua cheese is a special treat, very smooth and creamy with a tangy edge. Coupled with the local delicacy of quince jelly made with oranges and lemon together with fresh locally baked bread it was absolutely delicious and it definitely goes well with the local beer!

On the subject of beer, it was on this stretch that we stoppeded at a hostel in Salceda called Casa Tia Teresa. The hostel has a tradition where pilgrims have a bottle of the local Peregrina beer and afterwards you write your name, hometown and a wish posting it in the bottle. At Christmas time the hostel makes a Christmas tree of good wishes. Of course it would have been rude not to participate in this tradition! Our good wishes were for our family and friends and the congregation at St Lawrence and St Pauls.

Casa Tia Teresa is a good point to mention the character of the locals and the hospitality along the Camino. Our host at the hotel was a portly gentleman who didn't speak English and despite a stern outward manner had an amusing twinkle in his eye and he couldn't have been more helpful. A local delicacy in Galicia is 'pulpo' or octopus, usually served with tentacles on a bed of lettuce!! Another

popular local dish is 'pimientos de Padron' or green peppers, cooked on a high heat in olive oil and sprinkled with salt – very tasty and compatible with a nice glass of chilled white wine!

Our hosts son, Alejandro served our dessert. Chris asked for two scoops of ice cream, indicating vanilla and chocolate, Alejandro shook his head and said 'Non!' and promptly served three large scoops of vanilla ice-cream much to our amusement!

During breakfast at Casa Tia Teresa our host diligently created a pattern in a cup of coffee with a smiley face and the word 'Love', as Chris reached for the coffee over the table, the gentleman waved his finger at Chris saying gruffly 'Non' indicating the coffee was meant for Elizabeth!!



A Work of Art

Hospitality is something the Galicians do very well, and there are many interesting stories connected with the development of the route stemming back hundreds of years. We came across a small church in the hamlet of San Xulian. Saint Julian is the patron Saint of Pilgrims, hotel keepers, wandering musicians and those who lived and worked the Camino

Amenal – Lavacolla 9.5km (nearly there!)



Chris getting his pilgrim passport stamped in A Calzada

Our last stay on the Camino took us to the beautiful country house at Pazo Xan Xordo, a real treat! It was here that we had a wonderful home cooked meal with the best cheesecake called *tarta de requesón* we have ever tasted! *Tarta de requesón* is a typical dessert in all corners of Galicia. The traditional recipe includes yogurt, *requesón* (a by-product of cheese-making that's smooth, creamy and delicious), eggs, flour and sugar. Galicians serve this cake cold and often topped with a generous drizzle of honey. Definitely a slice of heaven with an immediate five star rating on Trip Advisor given!

Curiously with only one more day to reach Santiago, we became quietly reflective of our journey so far. Moments of silence seemed to last longer (not because we had fallen out I hasten to add, honestly!) it felt freeing and refreshing to not feel obligated to fill the silence with conversation. This freedom brought an inner peace and calmness whilst walking down the winding forest paths where sunlight streamed through the trees casting shadows in the early morning. These moments of silence often saw us both in moments of quiet

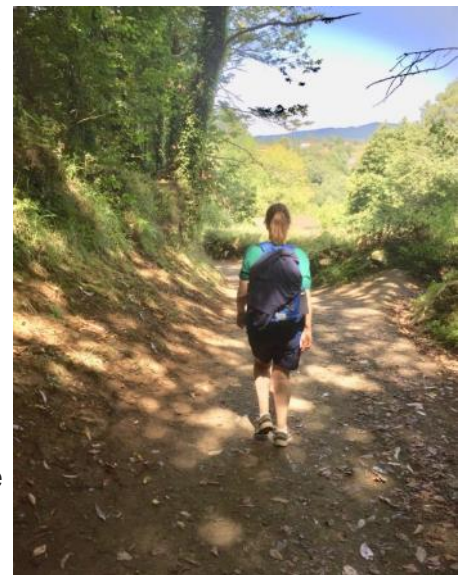
prayer, praising God for the gift of his wonderful creation and taking stock of where we found ourselves in this stage of our lives and perhaps which direction we would like to go... The pilgrimage was working its magic...



It was on this stretch that we nearly had an injury, Elizabeth lost footing walking down a steep stretch ending up with a nasty bruised back, whilst this didn't stop us walking it slowed down our pace a little. Luckily two fellow pilgrims rushed to help us, for which we were very

grateful. The next morning we visited a local chemist – and with the power of Google to translate bought some very powerful tablets! All recovered now and no lasting harm was done.

The simple act of two strangers rushing to help us really brought the spirit of the pilgrim experience to life, on the Camino everyone is 'in it together' for a common purpose and you really begin to bond with strangers and even share personal experiences of your life. Every pilgrim has a story and a path to be travelled. Every pilgrim is being watched over by God and our Lord Jesus Christ but the point is, the pilgrimage doesn't end when you reach Santiago....



A Quiet moment leaving Amenal

Lavacolla – Santiago de Compostella 11km (The Last Day – Success!)

Waking up in the morning knowing this was the day we would reach Santiago had a special, exciting feel but also a sense of sadness that we would reach the end of the Camino trail. The first part is a steep ascent through wooded paths with many tall trees and an abundance of Eucalyptus trees which had a very aromatic smell. At this point in our journey we saw many pilgrims, and we often saw groups buzzing with excitement and singing on the final leg of their pilgrimage. The atmosphere felt celebratory and less reflective with anticipation of reaching Santiago.

Around eighty minutes before reaching the outskirts of Santiago, you ascend to Monte de Gozo which overlooks the city. Monte De Gozo wonderfully means 'The Hill of Joy' because this is where pilgrims can see their first glimpse of the three spires of Santiago de Compostela Cathedral. There is a viewing platform and a large monument commemorating the visit of Pope John Paul the Second in 1989 and St Francis of Assisi in 1214.



Pilgrim scallop shells and messages left at Monte de Gozo



The pilgrim statues pointing towards Santiago on Mont de Gozo

Walking downhill into the city of Santiago seemed to take forever, it felt strange to emerge from tranquil woodland countryside into a busy suburban town, passing the airport and waving to planes taking off. Nothing could have prepared us for the sight of the

cathedral and the conflicting emotions we felt on our arrival. As we drew nearer into the inner city we saw tantalizing glimpses of old cobble streets and narrow houses. Walking down an alleyway which looked like The Shambles in York, we crossed over uneven cobblestones and heard the haunting sounds of the bagpipes that we had heard and seen earlier on our journey in the forest. The sense of anticipation was heightened and our pace became faster as we heard shouts of joy and singing as pilgrims reached the main square.

Walking past the piper in an enclosed dark alleyway, we walked into the blazing sunshine and large open square and then, there it was, the very thing that our journey had been aimed at seeing, the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral...

The cathedral loomed over us in all its imposing majesty. It was simply a breath-taking 'Wow!' moment that we will never forget. We had made it pilgrims!

The feelings of pride, happiness, relief, accomplishment and gratitude that we had safely reached the end of the journey made us feel very emotional.

We sat on the cobblestones hot and weary, laying on our backs with our backpacks doubling as a headrest to drink in the moment. Pilgrims were hugging each other, taking photographs, laughing, singing and some speechless with the whole experience.

I watched one young woman round the corner and as soon as she saw the cathedral, her face crumpled and she wept. She made her way to the front of the church and touched it as if to make sure it was really there.



The Altar inside Santiago de Compostela Cathedral

I spoke to one man who asked me to take a photograph of him and his two friends and with broken English he told me of a fantastic experience. This man had completed the Camino alone and had decided to continue his journey to the nearest seaport and then return to Santiago. He said that as he returned he felt sad because he was alone and had said to himself "Dear God, I don't want to be alone in this place, please let me meet someone I know". He walked across the square then bumped into two of his friends who he didn't know had also just completed the Camino the previous day who had decided to stay on for another evening! Certainly a prayer answered.

Another group of six had done the full 800km Camino whilst pulling their disabled friend in a custom made sporty cart, their dedication and commitment was simply inspiring.

We attended the daily Pilgrims Mass with over a thousand other pilgrims and gave Thanks and Prayers for our journey and proudly obtained our official certificates.

- The Camino is not just a 'long walk'... It's about letting go of things and ideas about your life that may no longer serve you. It's about being open to spiritual growth and healing, concentrating on the gifts of today whilst giving positive hope for the future. Much of the modern philosophy of 'Mindfulness' is contained within the Bible. The Camino reminded us of a few important words from the Gospels. Matthew 6:34 reads 'Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own'
- Proverbs 3:5-6, TPT Trust in the Lord completely, and do not rely on your own opinions. With all your heart rely on him to guide you, and he will lead you in every decision you make.
- Proverbs 27:1 "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring."
- James 4:13-14 "Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money, Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow.'

Amazing things can truly happen when God surprises us with his Grace.

Buen Camino!



**Our arrival at Santiago de Compostela Cathedral
The End...or The Beginning?**

OUR WORSHIP AND READINGS

Our vision is With Jesus On Mission

Our regular Sunday 'in church' services are below.

St Paul's Holy Communion Service at 9:30am (arrival from 9:00am)

St Paul's Informal Service at 11:15am (not on 2nd Sunday of the month)

St. Paul's 'All together' Service 10:00am on 2nd Sunday of the Month

St Lawrence's at 6:30pm (arrival from 6:00pm)

The readings that will feature in these services are listed below.

Our regular mid-week Holy Communion Service takes place on Thursday at St Paul's at 10am

3rd December – Advent 1

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Isaiah 64:1-9
Mark 13:24-37

11:15am Informal Service

Isaiah 64:1-9
Mark 13:24-37

**6:30pm St Lawrence's
Advent Carol Service**

10th December - Advent 2— Christingle

10:00am St Paul's and Live Stream

Isaiah 40:1-11
Mark 1: 1-8

6:30pm St Lawrence's (Holy Communion)

Isaiah 40:1-11
Mark 1: 1-8

17th December – Advent 3

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
John 1: 6-8, 19-28

11:15am Informal Service

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
John 1: 6-8, 19-28

**6:30pm St LPaul's
9 Lessons and Carols**

24th December – Advent 4

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

2 Samuel 7:1-16
Luke 1: 26-38

Crib Service

5:00-6:00pm St. Paul's

2 Samuel 7:1-16
Luke 1: 26-38

Midnight Holy Communion

11:30pm St Lawrence's

Isaiah 52:7-10
John 1: 1-14

25th December – Christmas Day

8:00am St Lawrence

Early Christmas Communion

Isaiah 62: 6-12
Luke 2: 1-20

All Together Service

10:00am St. Lawrences

Isaiah 62: 6-12
Luke 2: 1-20

No Evening Service

31st December - Christmas 1

10:00am All Together Service St Paul's and Live Stream

Isaiah 61.10—62.3
Luke 2 : 15-21

No Evening Service

St. Lawrence Flower Rota

ADVENT No flowers

December 24th, 25th & 31st Christmas Flowers

January 7th In memory of Samuel Wallace

14th Vacant

21st In memory of Revd. Peter and Doreen Furness

28th Vacant

St. Paul's Flowers

Donna Rowe-Green and Barbara McCormick

(There will be baskets in both churches for donations towards the cost of the Christmas arrangements)



OUR WORSHIP AND READINGS.....continued

Our vision is With Jesus on Mission

7th January - Epiphany

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Isaiah 60 : 1-6
Matthew 2: 1-12

11:15am Informal Service

Isaiah 60 : 1-6
Matthew 2: 1-12

6:30pm Ecumenical Service

(CTLD)
Our Lady and St Michael's RC
Church, Alston Lane

14th January - Second Sunday After Epiphany

10:00am All Together Service St Paul's and Live Stream

Samuel 3 : 1-10
John 1 : 43-51

6:30pm St Lawrence's

(Holy Communion)
Samuel 3 : 1-10
John 1 : 43-51

21st January-Vision Sunday - Following Jesus with the Northern Saints

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Revelations 5 : 1-10
Matthew 17: 1-9

11:15am Informal Service

Revelations 5 : 1-10
Matthew 17: 1-9

6:30pm St Lawrence's (Evensong)

Psalms 85
Revelations 5 : 1-10
Matthew 17: 1-9

28th January— Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Malachi 3 :1-5
Luke 2 :22-40

11:15am Informal Service

Luke 2 :22-40

6:30pm St Lawrence's (Evensong)

Psalms 34:1-10
Malachi 3 :1-5
Luke 2 :22-40

4th February— Fifth Sunday After Epiphany

9:30am St Paul's and Live Stream

Proverbs 8. 1, 22-31
John 1:1-14

11:15am Informal Service

John 1:1-14

6:30pm St Lawrence's (Evensong)

Psalms 65:1-8
Proverbs 8. 1, 22-31
John 1:1-14

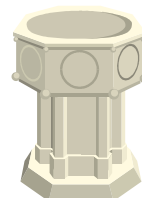
Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child, Baptisms, Marriages

Arrangements for these should be made with the Vicar (Tel: 01772 783281) or via the Church website
Do you know anybody who is in hospital or ill at home? If so, please let the Vicar know so that they may be visited.

BAPTISMS

We congratulate and pray for those who have been recently Baptised into our Church family:

Imogen Iris Kay on Sunday 3rd December 2023 at St. Lawrence's Church
Jack Thomas Robinson on Sunday 10th December at St. Lawrence's Church



WEDDINGS

We congratulate and pray for the life-long happiness of those who are newly married:

The Marriage of Stephen Paul Appleton and Glynis Lloyd at St. Lawrence's Church
on Thur. 2nd November



FUNERALS

We commend to God those who have died recently and pray for those who mourn their loss

Evelyn Mary Hornby

Veronica Wilson

Keith Kaye



The Last Word

From the Vicar



In the run up to Christmas 2023 I'd like to coin a new phrase, 'Organic Humanity'. You will of course have heard of 'Organic Food' which is the product of food being produced without artificial farming techniques such as chemical fertilisers, use of pesticides, or genetic modification - In fact, a whole industry has grown out of this, and some products are clearly labelled 'Organic' which mean they're probably a bit more expensive, but you know they're generally kinder on the local environment.

Well with the recent and rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI), I think we're getting to the point when it's important we know whether we're dealing with a real human being.

Just in case it's helpful to have a quick definition of what artificial

intelligence is, then according to the AI website ChatGPT it is, '...the

simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and learn like humans.'

Such AI can either have a narrow focus to perform a particular task, such as in medicine where AI works very effectively in spotting cancerous tumours. Or it can have a general focus where it attempts to apply machine learning across a whole range of domains, in a similar way a human might draw on wisdom to make decisions on situations they've not come across before. To be clear, presently general AI is just a theoretical concept.

So why might we need to coin the phrase 'Organic Humanity'? Well, I think it's important to consider the areas of life where we're voluntarily handing over our human agency into the 'hands' of a machine. For instance, if I just want to know my bank balance so I don't overspend on my Christmas shopping, I don't feel the need to wait in a queue for a human to tell me, perhaps once I would, but now I'm happy for a computer algorithm to give the result. But if someone has wronged me and they're writing to apologise, I'd like to know if they're being sincere. If I know they've taken the time and trouble to carefully craft the words they write, I'm more likely to want to restore the relationship than if they've just spent five seconds to cut and paste some computer-generated prose. I would say using their own thinking skills to apologise properly would be a good use of their 'Organic Humanity'. Hopefully I'm making sense!

At the heart of what I'm coining 'Organic Humanity' is the Christian belief that humans are created in the image of God, each of us with real agency and real responsibility to think through how we should live and behave. And at Christmas time we're reminded that God the Father sent Jesus the Son as a real human being because dying to take the weight of human sin demanded much more than an artificially generated response. In the midst of all our joys and frailties, it's good to know God loves us so much that he moved heaven to earth in order to be personally involved.

So as the use of AI continues to grow and develop there will be lots of brilliant applications to take advantage of in the future, but if we just plough ahead unconsciously there will be big job losses and ethically dubious results that will impact the poorest the most. Using our 'Organic Humanity' might end up being a bit more expensive but I'm sure in many cases it will be a price worth paying.

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