

St Paul's Methodist Church, Crawley

Extraordinary Times

a magazine to help us through COVID-19

Issue 39

December 20th 2020

From your minister...

First of all, can I take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas. I know it's going to be strange this year, and I appreciate that you might not be seeing as many of your family as you would normally do, but I do hope that you will have a blessed time despite the restrictions. Can I give a special greeting to those of you who will be alone this Christmas – take heart and devote yourselves to the Lord, who came into our world bringing hope, light and love in the most desperate of situations. He will do the same for you; make Jesus your guest for Christmas this year.

St Paul's is open this Sunday December 20th for our usual service at 10.30am, for those who feel comfortable to attend.

Our Carol service will be live streamed on the St Pauls Facebook page at 4pm this Sunday. Please note that because we will be singing, we are unable under the current restrictions to invite you to attend in person. We will be led in a selection of Christmas carols by both the church choir and the young people's singing group. Please do join in at home!

In preparation for the carol service I would like to invite you, in your home, to equip yourself with a candle. As two of our young people light the Advent Ring in church at the beginning of the service, please light your candle too. We would love to know that as many people as possible are coming together to share the same light, even though we are separated from one another in person. And if you don't have internet access, then why not light your candle at 4pm anyway, knowing that people from your fellowship are doing the same thing.

Our Midnight Communion service for Christmas Eve will start in church on December 24th at 11.30 pm, led by our District Chairman, Rev David Hinchliffe. You are welcome to attend in person. As usual the service will be spoken word only, but will include the sharing of communion at the beginning of Christmas Day.

Our Christmas Day service will be in church at 10.30am, led by myself. You are most welcome to attend.

In years to come we will reflect upon this Christmas. Challenging as our circumstances are, let us be ever hopeful, ever joyful, and may the Holy Spirit unite us in love and peace with all our brothers and sisters across the world who are sharing in facing down this common enemy.

God bless, *Ralph*

Extraordinary Times is taking a break for Christmas.

Happy Christmas everyone

ET will be back on 27th December

What's On

Sunday 20th December 10:30am Worship with Rev Clive McKie

Sunday 27th 10:30am Miss Lorraine Valler

Note that all services are at St Paul's and livestreamed from our [Facebook page](#)

Christmas at St Paul's

Sunday 20th 4pm Carol service with Rev Ralph Ward **Online only**

Christmas Eve 11:30pm Communion with Rev David Hinchliffe

Christmas Day 10:30am Celebration with Rev Ralph Ward



In your prayers

Pray for those who will be alone this Christmas

Continue praying for Sumangali (Kaanji Thanmbipillai's sister-in-law) now recovering from surgery at home; Jean and Geoff Rose; members of our own church community who have contracted the Covid virus and for those you know who need prayers at this time.

Send your prayer requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com

Permission must be received from a person before their name is put on the Church prayer list

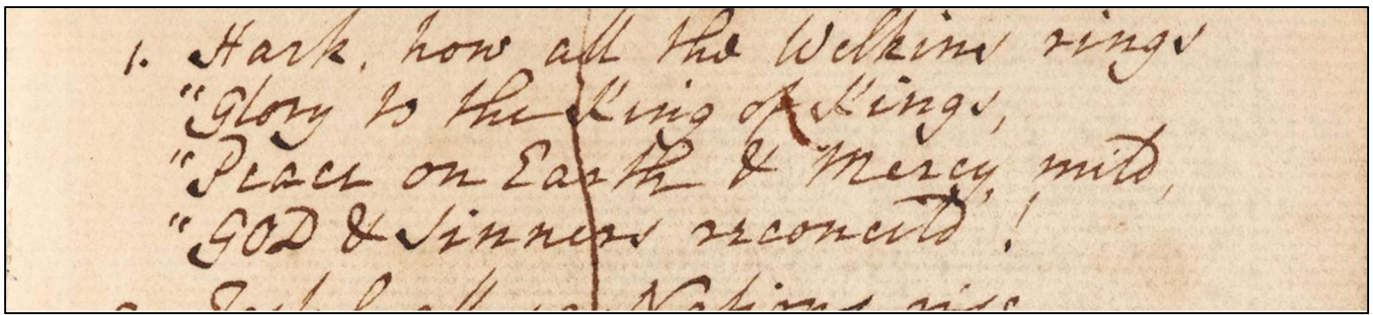
Christmas cards for St Paul's

Sadly, because of the current Covid rules, it is not possible to have our usual Christmas internal post to exchange cards with each other. We must also ask you not to use the pigeonholes in the church, or to pass cards to each other on the church premises. This year, please use the Royal Mail postal service to send cards to your St Paul's friends or, perhaps this once, send E-cards. There are some excellent online suppliers and you can even design your own with some of them.

The internal post has been one of our regular ways of raising funds for *Action for Children*. Last year, along with some of the church cash collections over Christmas and refreshment money, we were able to send them £151. So that we don't let them down in this most difficult of years, please consider making a donation on the [Action for Children](#) website, or by phone to 0300 123 2112 .

Many thanks, *Sheila Jones*

What's a Welkin?



Do the words in the picture above look a bit familiar? This is part of the original manuscript of Charles Wesley's carol *Hark the herald angels sing* written in 1738, within a year of his profoundly spiritual conversion experience. There are, though, a couple of differences to the words we sing every year. In the first line we see 'the Welkin', an archaic word meaning 'the vault of heaven' and in line two, Jesus is called the 'King of Kings'. These were changed in a new edition of 1753 to the words we know. The tune also underwent a change. Originally it was sung to the Easter hymn tune 'Christ the Lord is risen today' but, nearly a hundred years later, the 'official' tune was changed to the much more joyous one by Felix Mendelssohn that we now enjoy singing every year.

(Extracted from a longer article, with more fascinating information about this carol, on The Methodist Church website by Charlotte Hoare, Special Collections Librarian, John Ryland's Library, Manchester. [Read the whole thing here](#))

Second verse challenge

Here are the first lines of the second verses of some familiar Christmas carols. Can you tell what they all are? Answers on the last page.

- 1 Shepherds in the fields abiding
- 2 Clear shining light
- 3 Happy all who hear the message
- 4 Still through the cloven skies they come
- 5 He laid his glory by
- 6 Worship we the Godhead
- 7 O morning stars together
- 8 Lo, within a manger lies
- 9 Star of silver sweep across the sky
- 10 Cradled in a stall was he

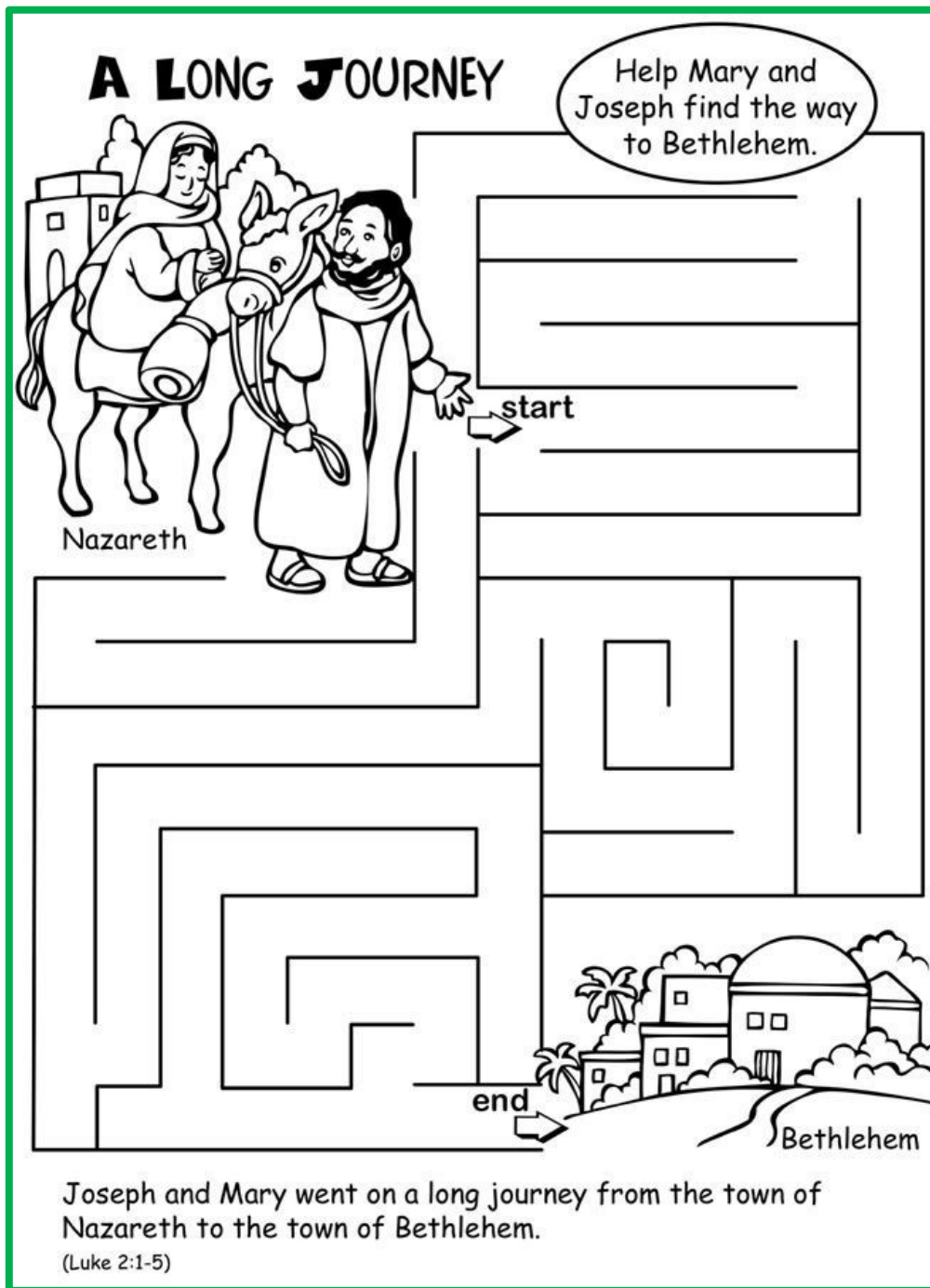
What to do with left-over Christmas pudding



Having any left-over is a strange idea, but just in case....

- Soften** some vanilla ice cream.
- Crumble** the left-over pudding.
- Mix** it into the ice cream.
- Refreeze.**
- Eat** Yummy!

Something for the young ones



Second verse answers

- 1 Angels from the realms of glory
- 2 Born in the night Mary's child
- 3 Cradled in a manger, meanly
- 4 It came upon the midnight clear
- 5 Let earth and heaven combine
- 6 Love came down at Christmas
- 7 O little town of Bethlehem
- 8 See amid the winter's snow
- 9 See him lying on a bed of straw
- 10 Unto us a boy is born

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St Paul's website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

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