



St Mary's Parish Church, Haxby
December 2022

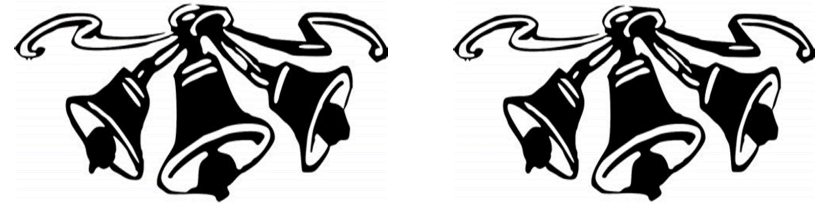


TALKABOUT..



CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

(1) In the Bleak Midwinter; (2) O Come, O Come, Emmanuel; (3) God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen; (4) Gaudete; (5) See Amid the Winter's Snow; (6) Good King Wenceslas; (7) Angels From the Realms of Glory; (8) The First Nowell; (9) Joy To The World; (10) Once In Royal David's City; (11) Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; (12) Coventry Carol; (13) O Come All Ye Faithful; (14) O Holy Night; (15) Do You Hear What I Hear?; (16) O Little Town of Bethlehem; (17) Away In A Manger; (18) Ding Dong! Merrily On High; (19) Silent Night; (20) The Virgin Mary Had A Baby; (21) We Three Kings Of Orient Are.



The editors would like to extend grateful thanks to all our contributors and wish them and all our readers a safe and peaceful Christmas.

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SERVICES FOR ADVENT, CHRISTMAS AND EPIPHANY

DECEMBER

- Saturday 17 10.30 am Churches Together Carol Singing,
outside St Mary's Church
- Sunday 18 4.00 pm Christmas Carol Service at St Nicholas'
Church
6.30 pm Christmas Carol Service by Candlelight at
St Mary's Church, with seasonal refreshments in the
Church Hall afterwards
- Saturday 24 Christmas Eve
3.30 pm Christmas Crib Service at St Mary's
Church
3.30 pm Family carols round the crib at St
Nicholas' Church
11.30 pm Midnight Mass at St Mary's Church
- Sunday 25 Christmas Day
10.00 am Christmas Day Sung Eucharist at St
Mary's Church
10.00 am Christmas Day Sung Eucharist St
Nicholas' Church
**(please note these times are different from our
usual service times)**
NO EVENSONG

JANUARY

- Sunday 1 10.00 am Sung Eucharist St Nicholas' Church
10.15 am Sung Eucharist at St Mary's Church
- Sunday 8 6.30 pm Epiphany Carol Service at St Mary's
Church

From the Rector

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play
And mild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth this Christmastide.

Till, ringing, singing, on its way.
The world revolved from night to day.
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth this Christmastide.

And in despair I bowed my head
'There is no peace on earth,' I said,
'For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth this Christmastide.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth this Christmastide.'

These words, adapted from the poem 'Christmas Bells' penned by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 - 1882) are sometimes sung at Christmas as 'The Bell Carol'. He would no doubt have witnessed the many changes and challenges of the 19th Century, particularly in the Victorian era, just as we, too, will have experienced in the Second Elizabethan age.

Looking back over this past year, with conflict in Europe and many other worldwide challenges, you may, perhaps, be tempted to sympathise with the poet's sentiments in the third verse of this carol. There may seem to be many factors which 'mock the song of peace on earth.'

I have recently re-visited York Castle Museum, and many of the rooms depicting previous centuries are appropriately dressed with the Christmas decorations of their era. Wandering by the different rooms the thought struck me that despite the challenges and privations of their time our

forebears remained resilient in their annual observance of Christ's birth. This is not to deny the very difficult circumstances in which many individuals, households and families today find themselves, but it is an assurance that we, too, in our time, join in that inheritance of faith and hope.

In our benefice over the past few weeks we have been thinking in our Advent Course about the life, person and work of Jesus. We have been challenged to answer the question, 'Who do you say that I am?' Jesus himself addressed this query to his disciples, and it was Simon Peter who confidently asserted 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' (Matthew 16 v 16)

This is what Christians down the years, and we ourselves today, have also asserted. By the cross and the resurrection, we know that Jesus is the anointed one, our Saviour and Redeemer. The events of Easter and Christmas are God's proclamation of his love and care for Creation, and each and every one of us.

As many of our Advent and Christmas readings display, the birth of the Saviour, and the in-breaking of God's kingdom of peace and justice was foreseen by the prophets, and experienced through the lives of Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds and wise men.

So, once again, in the company of all those who, for over 2,000 years, have gone before us in life and faith, we watch and wait in eager anticipation for the coming of our Lord, confident and resilient, in the words of the fourth verse of the Bell Carol:

'God is not dead, nor doth he sleep; the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth this Christmastide.'

May you know, with confidence, the joy and peace of the Christ Child this Christmas.

The Revd Kathryn Jackson

Comedy Corner

I used to wonder why aliens were not visiting our solar system, then I realised they probably looked up our reviews and saw that we had only one star.

The Dog Star, is moving closer to Earth at a rate of nine miles per second. This means that some day we could be in Sirius trouble.

What is Good King Wenceslas's favourite pizza?

Deep pan, crisp and even

How is the alphabet different on Christmas from every other day?

Noel

What do you call Santa's little helpers?

Subordinate Clauses

What is Santa's primary language?

North Polish

What does a star win in a competition?

A constellation prize!

What kinds of stars wear sunglasses?

Movie stars

Why did the star get arrested?

Because it was a shooting star

What is the distance from Betelgeuse to Procyon using a star chart?

About an inch and a half

At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures illustrating Biblical stories. The teacher walked by and noticed one little boy was drawing an airplane! "Oh, what Bible story are you drawing?" she asked. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy answered. "See, here are Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the front of the plane, "is Pontius, the Pilot."



Mothers' Union 'No More One in Three'

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is an annual international campaign begun by the United Nations, that kicks off every year on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day.

On Saturday, 26 November, my husband Ian and I went to York Minster to take part in a three-minute silence organised by the York Deanery Mothers' Union, joining with members of the Mothers' Union around the world. The time is significant, as it is linked to the estimate that worldwide the one in three women who are subject to domestic violence. It was very moving as we stood in the nave of the Minster and all movement and noise stopped for three minutes. Hopefully this will raise awareness of the situation and our 'No More One in Three' campaign.

The Mothers' Union Global Day of Action, 26 November, is Mothers' Union's response to the United Nation's call for 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Gender-based violence is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. Spanning many societies, it can affect anyone at any time and takes many forms. It can be part of a damaging cultural 'norm' or hidden behind closed doors. It can be very difficult to ask for help.

We believe it to be unacceptable that one in three women worldwide have experienced domestic or sexual abuse. At Mothers' Union, we work alongside communities to help stop domestic abuse and GBV, as well as supporting those who have been affected by it.

Joan Strong

ADVENT

It seems to me that over the years, the lectionary for the period between Remembrance Sunday and Christmas has changed. Most obviously, this has seen the development of the feast of Christ the King on what used to be called "The Sunday next before Advent" or, as it was more colloquially known, "Stir up Sunday". And into Advent, the stepping stones leading us to Christmas don't seem to be as sturdy as in days of yore – stepping stones that took us through the Patriarchs; the Prophets, to "the voice of one crying in the wilderness", as John the Baptist urges us to prepare the way of the Lord.

We are prepared for the coming of Christ. We acknowledge fulfilment of the prophesy "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son; and shall call his name Emmanuel – God with us." [Isaiah 7 v.14] and the obedience of Mary, accepting the most daunting task ever given. We prepare for both the coming of the Christ child and, amid the omens, for his second coming in glory. "There will be signs in the sun and the moon and on earth distress among nations ... Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and glory." [Luke 21 verses 25-27]. We are urged to be awake, to be alert, to be ready ... for both comings.

By mid-December, many of us will be focused on the coming celebration of Christmas and be well into our preparations - the Christmas cake has been baked; the shopping for presents and the Christmas table well underway and those of us who sing will have been rehearsing carols for weeks, to ensure that Christmas carol concerts and services are worthy of the coming festival.

With all this preparation and anticipation, there is the likelihood that we will arrive in Bethlehem before Joseph and Mary do. We will metaphorically book ourselves in, taking the comfortable rooms and perhaps leaving no room in the inn for those coming later. Cocooned in the warmth and comfort of our homes, would we even notice a young woman giving birth to her first child in an

unsanitary outhouse, alone, apart that is from her flustered partner?

Yet this is the greatest story ever told. "God became man and dwelt among us" [John 1 verse 14]. Or as my favourite carol* puts it:

O may we keep and ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind;
trace we the babe, who hath retrieved our loss,
from his poor manger to his bitter cross;
tread in his steps, assisted by his grace,
till man's first heavenly state again takes place.

Yes, the greatest story ever told. May you have a blessed, peaceful and contemplative Christmas.

Ian Evans.

* Christians, Awake, Salute The Happy Morn
(words by John Byrom, music 'Yorkshire' by John Wainwright)

Christmas Reflections of a shepherd.

"Memory does strange things". I was talking with my friend about the past few days when, suddenly, I remembered that night on a cold hilltop thirty or more years ago.

I was twelve. My father had told me that now I was a man I had to do a man's work and help him with the sheep. We were all there, my dad, some uncles and a couple of older cousins and me. The sheep were peaceful and we just sat round the fire chatting; well, they chatted, I was trying not to fall asleep. It was dark but with so many stars in the sky that I couldn't count them all. One star seemed to shine more brightly than the others. Peace and quiet, it was great.

Then, suddenly, there was an apparition, a person, no not a person no person ever shone that brightly. There was a huge

St. Mary's supporting YoYo York Schools and Youth Trust

Founded in 1996, YoYo seeks to work with York schools and churches to bring the Christian faith alive.

YoYo is a non-denominational charity managed by a Board of Trustees and currently has 9 members on the staff team.

YoYo exists to:

- Effectively communicate the Christian faith to children and young people in York schools.*
- Serve the primary and secondary schools of York by supporting them in their teaching of the Christian faith.*
- Encourage, equip and support churches to work with children and young people from their local schools.*
- Encourage and help Christians in school as they live out their faith.*

If you would like to find out more about their aims and objectives, and read their statement of faith, please visit the website at <http://www.yoyotrust.org.uk/>

- YoYo seeks to work with York schools and churches to bring the Christian faith alive. Kathryn has seen them working to communicate the Christian faith to children and young people here in the Benefice as well as in York schools throughout the city.*

MOTHERS' UNION 2022

This year we were able to resume our meetings in the Church Hall on the third Wednesday of the month and enjoyed some interesting topics. Julian Cundiff, a former clerk to York Magistrates Court, was very entertaining and funny. Mrs Barbara Symons gave an interesting talk about the churches she has attended in her life (and contributed to the life of those churches too).

We had a thought-provoking session about Safeguarding, and most of us were surprised to learn that it's not just about children. The meeting where we listened to some stories of the survivors of domestic abuse was very powerful too.

The year will end as usual with an Advent Hour, on Wednesday 21 December at 2.15 pm, in Church led by the Rector, Revd Kathryn Jackson.

Everyone is welcome to our meetings; we are more than tea and cakes!

Joan Strong
Branch Leader
Haxby and Wigginton Mothers' Union

The festive season is often a mixture of joy and sadness, smiles and laughter mingling alongside worries and anxiety. The past couple of Christmases have had stipulations attached, this Christmas sees many facing different challenges.

St Mary's is returning to our Big Card with messages of Love and Hope shared between us in a sustainable manner. By leaving your message and a donation for a local charity, YoYo., means you can save money, avoid the postal strike and chaos, help with our carbon footprints AND you can make a difference to children in the York area facing challenges brought by Christmas 2022.

bright shining figure and I was terrified! We were all terrified, even my dad, standing with his mouth open and then falling down on the ground calling on God for mercy. The Angel, we agreed afterwards that it was an Angel, spoke. Somehow, hearing a voice was calming. He told us not to be afraid, he might even have said it twice. Then he said he had good news, wonderful, joyful news for everyone. He told us that the Messiah had been born in the city of David, that's Bethlehem.

That's where we lived. It had seen better days but, the Messiah? We expected the Messiah to appear on a big horse, battle ready, all set to command his people to throw the Romans out of our land for good. I suppose a great leader has to be born somewhere but, my home town? Bethlehem?

By now we were all listening to the Angel and he told us to go down into Bethlehem and find this wonderful baby who would be wrapped tightly and be lying in a manger. Not a great place for a baby but warm I suppose. As we looked at each other wondering if we were all having the same dream the sky suddenly exploded with Angels all shining and singing 'Glory to God and peace on earth', over and over again. Then, as suddenly as they had burst upon us they were gone. Strangely it wasn't as cold, there was a warmth in me I'd never known before.

We agreed to go and see if we could find this new baby so we almost ran down the hillside, and through the little town. Don't ask how we knew where we were going but we found him. His parents were looking tired but happy and they must have expected us because they let our rough group in to look at their baby. He opened his eyes to look at us, I'm sure he did.

A week ago those same eyes looked down from a cross and today, don't ask me how, those very same living eyes looked at me again, smiling and full of love.

Barbara Symons

Messy Church 'Shine Like a Star'

Jesus has passed on to us the responsibility to become light in the world on his behalf. "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven". So as the nights get longer we picked the theme of being stars shining Jesus' light. This is how it went...

We began by creating a Walk of Fame with each child making their own star 'pavement' plaque with their name on as in Hollywood. Then they dressed up as film stars and made a grand entrance to applause (luckily St Nicholas has a red carpet down the aisle!). After an introduction to the theme we made crafts, including star shaped biscuits and stars mounted on glow sticks. For our Celebration we turned all the lights off and waved our glow sticks while Kathryn told us a story explaining how Jesus asked us to shine like stars. We waved our glow sticks to show how if we all shine our lights together it makes a big difference in the darkness.

After a song we finished with this prayer. Whenever the prayer mentioned the word 'light' we flicked our hands out like a star or a light going on.

As we leave this place,
we go in your light
As we begin a new week,
we go in your light.
As we encounter new experiences,
we go in your light.
As we meet old friends and new,
may we be your light.
Everything we do in the week ahead,
may we be your light.

Amen

Nicola Simpson

CHRISTMAS QUIZ (continued)

9. The words, dreamed up by English writer Isaac Watts, are based on the second half of Psalm 98 in the Bible.
10. The words for this carol were first written by children's poet Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander.
11. The lyrics for this carol were written by Charles Wesley, and were set to a tune by Mendelssohn. It's also got a cracking descant
12. The lyrics of which carol refer to the 'Massacre of the Innocents' by King Herod?
13. It is unclear who first wrote the lyrics to this carol, although possible candidates include King John IV of Portugal and John Francis Wade.
14. This carol is the result of Placide Cappeau, a wine seller from southern France, being asked by the local parish priest to write a festive poem in 1847 to celebrate the church organ's renovation.
15. This carol was composed in October 1962 as an appeal for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The lyrics recall the birth of Jesus and the events surrounding the traditional Christmas story.
16. This carol, by Phillips Brooks, tells the story of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land.
17. This late 19th-century carol is hugely popular with children. The melody was originally composed in 1837 by Jonathan E. Spilman, but was later adapted in 1895 by William J Kirkpatrick.
18. The words are by the English composer George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848–1934), and the carol was first published in 1924.
19. Originally written in German, this carol was composed in 1818 by Franz Xaver Gruber with lyrics by Joseph Mohr.
20. A West Indian carol that originated in Trinidad, this song became popular when Harry Belafonte recorded it in 1958.
21. John Henry Hopkins Jr. wrote this hearty carol in 1857, for a Christmas pageant in New York City. He wrote it so that three male voices would each sing a verse by themselves.

But beyond the birth is the life of Jesus and his death on the cross.

My cross is broken in two places because it is so delicate.

'This is my body broken for you,' we hear at every Communion service.

And beyond the cross is the resurrection and our future hope.

In the very last chapter of the Bible we are told:

'I am the root and descendent of David, the bright morning star.' (Rev 22.16)

In the long dark night of suffering on earth, Christ as the morning star is a picture of great promise and hope. The eternal morning is about to dawn.

Dianne Cox

CHRISTMAS QUIZ - Name these carols

1. This carol was based on a poem by Christina Rossetti.
2. Sung at both Advent and Christmas, this hymn was originally written in Latin, but translated to English in 1861.
3. Is this the oldest carol? It is believed to date from the 16th century, if not earlier.
4. 'Rejoice, Jesus is born from the Virgin Mary! Rejoice!' is also known as ...?
5. Also known as 'Hymn for Christmas Day', this 19th century English carol was written by Edward Caswall.
6. This carol is based on the life of a Duke of Bohemia, who became a martyr after being killed by his wicked brother, Boleslaw the Bad.
7. This carol was written over 200 years ago by Scottish poet James Montgomery.
8. There's a misconception that this carol is French, but it is actually of Cornish origin.

IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR ... A CAROL TO MAKE US THINK

The Christmas carol, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, is one of the very few that doesn't actually mention the birth of the Saviour. It focuses on the angels and the message they bring to the world as Jesus the Saviour is born.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, goodwill to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

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

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,

Look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

For lo!, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Edmund Sears, a pastor in Wayland, Massachusetts, wrote the poem in 1849 after suffering a breakdown. Sears was experiencing a time of sadness with the revolution in Europe and the war with Mexico in the U.S., he saw everything around him as full of “sin and strife”. The hymn was printed in the Christian Register, a Boston paper published on December 29, 1849. The third verse shows how worried Edmund Sears was about the world situation.

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

Surely Edmund Sears would be worried about the state of affairs in the world today. The “Two thousand years of wrong” have increased year by year, we are facing perilous times yet again and war rages in many parts of our troubled world. We welcome a reason to celebrate or bring life into this darkness. This season of Christmas, full of hope, reminds us all of the Saviour who was born so long ago. He didn’t stay in the manger, but gave His very life for us and one day we will reign with Him and the “whole world give back the song which now the angels sing”. There is much to be hopeful for then, the angels are bringing a message of good cheer. Let us not only “hear the angels sing”, but listen to what they are saying:

“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all
-gracious King”.

May we share the love shown to us in the body of Jesus and work together for peace at Christmas and beyond.

Elizabeth Moran

Follow that star: The Oberammergau Cross

In 2010 I went to the Oberammergau Passion Play in Bavaria. I brought back an example of the delicate wood carvings also famous in the area.

It is in the shape of a cross. But it tells the nativity story inside. On both ‘wings’ of the cross there are angels blowing trumpets to proclaim the birth of Christ.

At the bottom there are sheep, and a shepherd. Then there is a camel, a star and an Eastern building, showing where the wise men started. Above them is a wise man (actually he has a crown though we know they were not kings) on his camel.



At the centre, at the crossing of the two pieces of wood is the traditional nativity scene with Mary and Joseph leaning tenderly over the baby, Joseph holding a lantern.

Finally at the top there is the star again, shining with all its splendour on the scene below.

The whole wonderful story is encompassed in the cross.

It is right that we celebrate the incarnation of Jesus with joy and gladness.