



Holy Trinity



St.  
Gabriel

# The Parish of The Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne



St. James



St. Peter



St. Michael and All Angels

**JANUARY 2021**

**Price 50p**

## Editorial

This month we celebrate Epiphany, when we remember the Magi from the East who followed a star to find the baby Jesus: 'Where is He?' (Matthew 2:1).

At the start of a New Year, amid the uncertainty of the pandemic are we asking the same question? The gifts they offered show us how we can find Him in the uncertainty of the coming year: 'they presented Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.' (2:11).

The *gift of gold* reflects that the Magi saw in the baby a king, destined to rule over us all. In this coming year we need to remember that Jesus is on the throne, the seat of power and authority in the whole universe. Will we crown Him king of our lives and dedicate all that we are and do to Him?

The *gift of frankincense* reflects that the visitors saw not just an earthly king, but God in human flesh. Incense symbolises the prayers of God's people and so this gift reminds us that God is worthy of our worship and prayer. Will we offer our praise and prayer, as we seek God to guide us through the uncertainties of this time?

The *gift of myrrh* reflects that these astrologers saw beyond the baby's birth and life, to His death which would secure life for all. Jesus was offered myrrh on the cross and was a spice used in His tomb. As we face the sufferings of this New Year, we can be confident that Jesus knows and understands our experience. Are we ready to trust Him?

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*The views expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Parish of The Good Shepherd. The editor reserves the right to amend articles as appropriate, for editorial purposes. Please consider writing something for the magazine yourself! And, if you have any comments to make on the Magazine you can contact the editor, Roger Farnworth on 0161 330 2771 or talk to a member of your DCC or PCC who will pass on any comments that are made.*

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### The Parish Prayer

Father God, whose Son came to bring love and peace to the world, help us to grow in faith and share our hope and joy with all whom we meet, so that we can work together to build your kingdom in Ashton, welcome new people into our churches, and be relevant to those around us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[www.goodshepherdashton.org](http://www.goodshepherdashton.org)

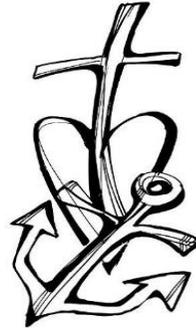
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## Welcome 2021!

In December I bought a 2021 calendar on one of my very infrequent trips over the past 10 months to the shops. I told the lady that I was buying it as an act of faith in the future, and that I hoped there would be a lot less Tippex in the new one than there was in the current one! She smiled, somewhat sadly, and said, "I know what you mean!".

We all know what I meant, don't we - the arrangements that had to be cancelled, the holidays that were lost, the appointments that were postponed. It was almost as if the world had stopped turning for each of us even though huge things were still happening - hundreds of thousands of people succumbing to the dreadful virus, hospital staff overwhelmed and exhausted, our churches shut, forest and moorland fires raging, people being flooded out during downpours that would have made Noah blink, the wildlife of Australia decimated, and not forgetting - who could ever forget - the craziest Presidential election certainly seen in our lifetime.

And we all learned a new language - the new normal, bubbles (though it has to said people's grasp of what constituted a bubble seemed to vary



according to daily circumstances), social distancing, quarantining, self-isolation, and, of course, the dreaded lockdown! Suddenly we were trotting these phrases out as if they were part of our normal conversation. It felt as if the world had gone a little mad! Did anyone catch sight of any of the horsemen of the Apocalypse? I'm sure they were around somewhere.

And here we are, at the start of a new year. How do we feel I wonder?

We can never forget what has happened - and neither should we. There were traumatic events for each of us in different ways - the tragically sudden and unexpected loss of family members, elderly relatives feeling that they were being imprisoned having done nothing wrong, not being able to hug or meet up with our families, anxiety about getting the food we needed and being able to access our NHS safely, people losing their jobs and their

livelihoods, people being incredibly stressed with trying to live their daily lives.

But there were things that happened that we should be so proud and thankful for - our hospital staff who gave more than ever could have been expected of them, key workers, emergency services who kept going towards the chaos when others might have turned and run, the scientists who developed a vaccine in record time, teachers working hard to try to keep life as normal as possible for their classes of children, neighbours who took on the responsibility of checking up on others, shopping for them and just giving them a cheery "Hello" or a phone call to help them to realise that they were still cared about.

And the dawn of this New Year is the perfect time to remember, and build on, the good things that came out of 2020, even though I'm sure we were all delighted to see the back of it.



Faith  
Love  
Hope

The sense of community that grew up in so many areas across the country and was so wonderful to see. Ordinary everyday people coming up with brilliant ideas of how to help and support their neighbours, especially those who were going through a really bad patch.

At Christmas 1939, with Great Britain at war with Nazi Germany, King George VI wanted to continue the holiday tradition of broadcasting to the nation. The news from the front wasn't good and King George wanted to give both comfort and support to everyone. He'd talked with his family about what he was going to say and how he was going to find just the right words to inspire people who were frightened and lost as they looked to the future.

His daughter, the then 13yr old Princess Elizabeth, gave him a copy of a poem that she felt would absolutely suit the occasion and mood of the people. This is what he read in his broadcast:

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.'

And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, and put your hands into the Hand of God. That shall be better than a light, and safer than a

known way.” He finished his broadcast with the words, “May that Almighty Hand guide and uphold us all.”

None of us know what is ahead. As we desperately look forward to the success of the vaccines that are now being brought out, it is highly unlikely that they will stop the virus continuing to spread for some months to come and then we must all face the mountain of supporting each other and helping our country and our world to get back on its feet. We



must find that sense of community again to help each other to pick up the threads of the tapestry of our lives.

As Christians we can have no firmer rock on which to cling in difficult or happy times than the hand of Almighty God, and no surer knowledge that he will be with us, loving us and guiding us through the weeks and days ahead.

A blessed and better New Year to you all.

*Revd Pat Lodge*

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**Time to prepare for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity:  
18<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

This year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp in Switzerland. The theme, “Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit”, is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community’s vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the Church and the human family.

They are inviting churches across the world to enter into their tradition of prayer and silence that is rooted in the ancient traditions of the Church catholic.

Today the community has 50 sisters, spanning different generations, Church traditions, countries and continents. In their diversity the sisters are a living parable of communion.

Each year Christian Aid provides the ‘Week of Prayer for Christian Unity’ with ‘Go and Do’ action points for each of the daily reflections – linking into the important work of Christian Aid in the relief of poverty and advocacy of justice.

More at: <https://ctbi.org.uk/go-and-do-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2021/>

## **BECOME AN ECO CHURCH - Manchester Diocese**

Eco Church (run by [A Rocha UK](#)) encourages and supports churches in their care for God's creation across five areas of church life:

- worship and teaching
- buildings
- land
- community and personal engagement
- lifestyle

Eco Church Awards operate through an online survey asking churches how they care for God's earth in different areas of their life and work. By answering questions, you collect points towards a bronze, silver or gold Eco Church Award.

***We currently have 63 churches registered to become Eco Churches***

### **How do we get started?**

1. Register your church at <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk>
2. Build a team of people to help you answer the questions, including children, young people, and people beyond your regular congregation. Can you work together with local schools and community groups?
3. See how many points you achieve by completing the questionnaire.
4. The survey will suggest ideas for further action, many of them easily achievable and affordable. Be sure to update the survey with any changes you implement and notice what happens to your points.
5. Check out online resources and develop your ideas further. They include prayers, activities for young people, information on green energy, insulation and developing wildlife friendly church grounds.
6. When you have enough points, complete the Award Application Form.

### **How else can we get involved?**

We are providing training for clergy and laity (including the new ALM module in Ecology and Creation).

Share your progress on the [Manchester Eco Diocese Facebook page](#). If your church receives an Eco Church award, or has a good news story to share, please let us know.

Share your eco projects on Twitter and Instagram using the hashtag [#EcoDiocese](#)

Take a look at our [Grants](#) support page - could you get a grant to boost one of your eco projects?

[Support cycling](#) and find out if your church will be on a Beeline.

For help or advice and to share your good news stories, please contact [environment@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:environment@manchester.anglican.org)

# Coronavirus Pandemic



You are welcome to public worship services/private prayer in our churches when government restrictions allow.

Risk assessments have been carried out and we have put procedures in place to ensure that people follow all relevant public health advice, including social distancing guidelines and hand and respiratory hygiene measures.

*Please note that those who are extremely clinically vulnerable/shielding, or who have symptoms of a continuous cough or a high temperature or loss of or change to sense of smell or taste, should not attend church.*

## January Sunday Services

9.30am St James Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

9.30am St Gabriel Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

11.00am St Peter Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

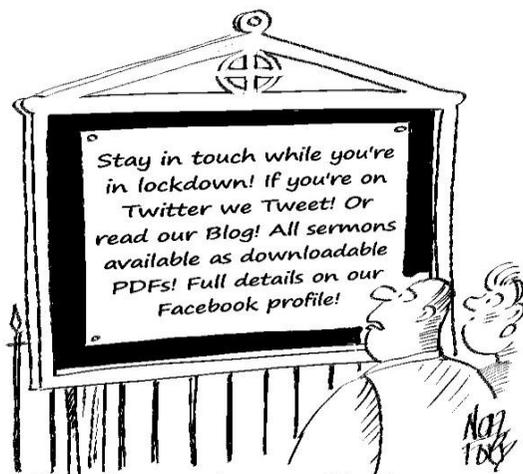
11.00am St Michael Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

St James on Sunday Afternoon - 4.00pm on 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> January

## Weekday Services

Thursday 3.30pm Holy Trinity Evening Prayer

(\*This will be a Eucharist Service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month)



"...and we used to grumble about not understanding archaic church language!"

# St Peter's CE Primary School

## Reception 2021 -2022

As a Tameside resident, you should apply using the online application form which is available on the School Admissions pages of Tameside's website at the following address from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020.

[www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions)

the closing date for application forms is 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021

We have invested in our EYFS and have well-resourced indoor and outdoor learning spaces. We pride ourselves on our strong Christian Ethos, engaging learning environment, exciting book-led curriculum and close parental links.

All Reception children have weekly baking, music and PE sessions (with specialist teachers). We also employ our own Artist in Residence and Speech and Language Therapist.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we are unable to host our usual tours. We'd still love to tell you all about our wonderful school via a virtual 'Meet and Greet' session with our EYFS team.

If you have any further questions or wish to book yourself on a 'Meet and Greet' Session, please phone the School Office on: 0161 330 1691 or email: [help@st-peters-ashton.tameside.sch.uk](mailto:help@st-peters-ashton.tameside.sch.uk).

*'Growing and Learning together' so we can become strong and dependable, just like the Mustard Seed.*

*Matthew 13:32*

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## Happy New Year

...as we continue to live in a broken world and COVID-19 Lockdown.

Well-wishing is more important now, as we continue to hope for a brighter future, love and peace – virus free.

Emphasise the positive – humility, love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control etc - God's ways.

Eliminate the negative – division of any kind, sin, Satan, hatred, prejudice, violence, war, death, destruction, greed etc. - Our ways

Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us.

God bless us all

Barry Bowden

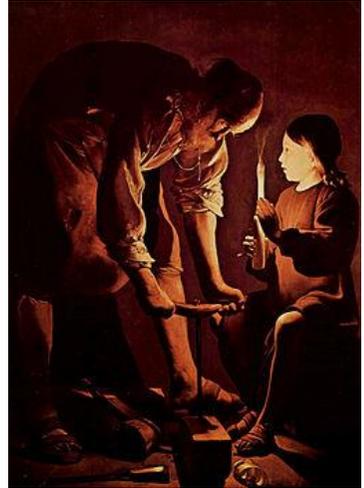
## GOD IN THE ARTS

- Revd Michael Burgess

**The hidden years** - 'St Joseph the Carpenter' by Georges de la Tour.  
It now hangs in The Louvre.

In obedience and love Jesus followed the will of His Father through His ministry from baptism to the cross and Easter beyond.

But what about that period called 'the hidden years', after the Holy Family's return from Egypt? The Gospels tell us of only one event in that period leading up to adulthood: the pilgrimage to Jerusalem when Jesus was 12. For the rest of those 30 years, He lived with Mary and Joseph 'growing in wisdom and in divine and human favour.' Just as He followed His heavenly Father's will in His ministry, so in these growing years He followed the guidance and teaching of Mary and Joseph.



This painting highlights one moment in those years of growth - 'Highlights' is the right word, because this painting captures the strong contrast of light and darkness. Georges de la Tour lived from 1593 to 1652 in Lorraine. He was part of a Franciscan-led revival in that area, and this work from the 1640s captures St Joseph and the Christ-Child with tenderness and insight.

We can see the tools of Joseph's trade on the ground. He leans over them, hard at work on a piece of wood. Jesus is sitting by his side, his face lit by the candle, which lights up the carpenter's shop. As well as contrasting light and dark, there is the contrast of young and old, and the thought that the child learning from the old man is also the one who can teach us. Here the artist shows the candlelight illuminating the face of the child Jesus who will grow up to the Light of the world.

As this New Year begins, we can think back to the light from the Bethlehem manger we celebrated at Christmas. We can look ahead to the light shining from the adult Jesus through His teaching and healing. Here in these hidden years, we can celebrate the light of wisdom and divine favour, as Luke calls them, shining on the face of the child Jesus. We pray for that light to guide us through this New Year. When the way ahead may look dark and uncertain, let us pray that God's light will make clear the path ahead.

# Parish Notices

From the December registers:

There were no funerals, baptisms or weddings in December

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## Free national phonenumber bringing worship and prayer



Government figures show that 2.5 million people aged 75 and above have never used the internet. And so, to help them, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, recently launched a free national phonenumber to bring worship and prayer into the homes of those without access to the internet.

Daily Hope, which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England.

## CONTACT DETAILS

**CLERGY:** (\*usual day off)

Revd Roger Farnworth, Team Rector (\*Tues.)  
The Vicarage, Westbury Street, Ashton OL6 9NL 330 2771

Revd Ben Brady, Team Curate (\*Fri) 400 1556

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The Parish of the Good Shepherd, Ashton-under-Lyne  
is a Fair Trade Parish. Our churches have promised to serve only  
Fairly Traded Tea and Coffee and to work for justice for the world's poor

