

# The Lighthouse



## Sun [or Son] King [The Beatles]

Scripture reading: Philippians chapter 2 verses 1–11

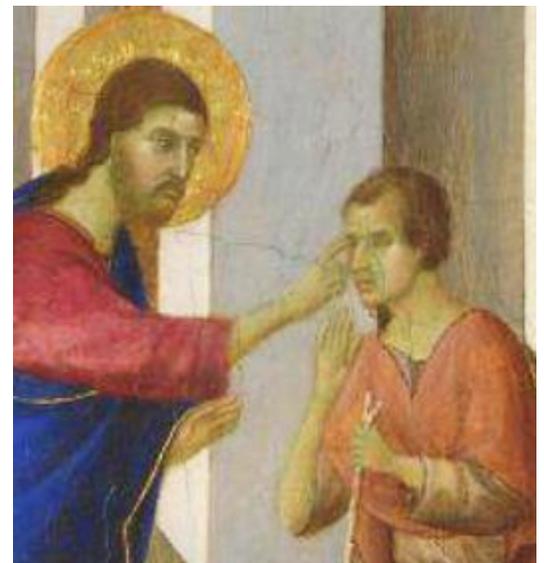
Dear Friends, Greetings! Father Christmas is on his way to Valley Rise. His sleigh can be seen in Bill's garden just down our road. On my walks I see several Christmas trees lit in homes. A friend in Liverpool sent me a photo of his house brightly lit with Christmas lights. Boxes of mince pies have been piled high in local stores since late September. But it is only November. I don't like to get to Christmas until...you know...it's actually Christmas. The lectionary, our weekly set readings, is already heading towards Christmas too. Today is 'Christ the King' Sunday. The title was the bright idea of Pope Pius XI in 1925. The church was having a crisis, hence the boost with a Sunday about the authority of Christ. We are reminded this Sunday of Christ the King, powerful and majestic. As we move further through the lectionary towards Christmas, we enter Advent when we are reminded of the second coming of Christ, and then we move into Christmas with our readings of Christ's first coming as a baby to our world, not as a conquering warrior, no throne, no crown, no sword. His royal cloak was 'swaddling bands', his throne a manger.

On Christ the King Sunday we look forward, seeing the hope of Advent, and we look behind us to see the reality of a year gone by. If we ever needed assurance of the authority of Christ it is now. So much uncertainty, politically and personally. What will the future bring when it comes to the vaccine? What will Christmas be like? Which Sunday will we all return to church? When will we be able to visit our grandchildren?

For these and other questions we are in the hands of Christ, for he is the King of Kings, all authority is his, now, yesterday and tomorrow. Pray for a quiet trust, for his peace each day, and the faith to watch and wait – which is the message of Advent, the assurance of Christ the King Sunday, and the joy of Christmas.

Wash your hands, cover your face, keep your distance.

Every blessing,  
Derek the Cleric



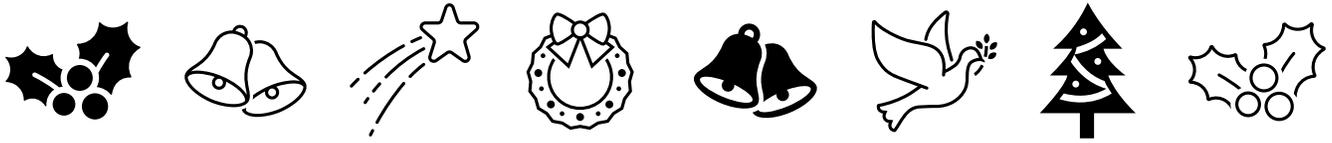
'...we are in the hands of Christ' – a detail from  
Duccio's 'The healing of the man born blind'  
(1308–1311)

National Gallery, London

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*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility  
value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests  
but each of you to the interests of the others. – Philippians 2:3–4*

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## Services for Advent and Christmas

The Ministry Team met this week to confirm as best as possible plans for Advent and Christmas. A gentle reminder: plans may need to adapt to the reserve plans, where applicable, depending on Government announcements. But I am pleased there will be a number of services ahead – so here goes, an insight.

Advent is on the horizon and with it comes the first of the special adapted services. On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November there will be the regular online worship, accessible in the normal way, but in addition there will be an **Advent evening service** meeting together online from 6:15pm through Zoom. Roger Dubois is co-ordinating the choir, recording virtually some music for the occasion. The Zoom service will also be an opportunity for us to see others before and after the service. Please email Pauline Martin for the Zoom access link so you can join in. [secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stnicholasdersingham.org.uk)

**Christingle** at Dersingham is booked for in church on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm in an adapted socially distanced approach. There is a plan B if the Government happen to extend the lockdown. As for Christingle and all services in church, please remember you need to book in via Pauline Martin (tel. 544561) for track and trace purposes. On the 6<sup>th</sup> December there will also be the first service back after lockdown, which is 10am at Anmer and will be Holy Communion from the Prayer Book.

**Tea and Carols**, 13<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm – Steve and Mel have produced a great number of carols and Advent songs. The Tea and Carols this year will be available in two forms. The first is a Zoom service where you will have the opportunity to influence which carol is played by voting at the different points in the service! There will also be a recorded version which will be accessible online and via DVD. On the 13<sup>th</sup> there will also be a service in St Nicholas at 10am.

Another new venture this year to increase opportunities for people to join in or experience is that we are exploring live streaming the **Christmas Eve Midnight Holy Communion**, details to be confirmed. On **Christmas Day** there will be **8am BCP Holy Communion** and **10am Family Celebration** in Dersingham, and in addition there will be a recorded online Christmas Day version available.

There will also be an online virtual advent calendar with a bible reading and carol each day – more of this next week. There will be 20 Christmas trees decorated this year. In a revised approach, there won't be any stalls or refreshments but lots of trees to enjoy, starting on the weekend of 13<sup>th</sup> December. More details to follow.

I will write with more details about other services and adapted Carol Services for all four churches as we are able to share information or as plans change, depending on Government guidelines.

Finally, a few people have already asked about Crib service – will there be one? Yes, we hope to offer an adapted version on Christmas Eve.

The Ministry team are in the midst of planning and preparing many different services both for in churches and online, which all need careful Covid consideration. Please could I ask for your prayers as we prepare for this wonderful window of opportunity for the Gospel in celebrating the birth of our Lord and Saviour.

Thank you  
Rev Mark



*Detail from a stained glass window Nativity showing the Star of Bethlehem*

## Ideas for prayer

- + all those affected by the coronavirus
- + our NHS workers and those in care homes
- + our collective health and welfare, our nation and community life
- + our Government and its advisors
- + for wisdom and patience in dealing with the many changes to our ways of life
- + our children and young people, their parents, teachers and all support staff
- + our young adults
- + those working in essential services
- + those who have lost their jobs
- + those who are adjusting to new ways of working
- + those who are worried about their jobs, livelihoods and businesses
- + those who are homeless
- + those who are suffering any injustice – racial, social, economic
- + those facing any illness or medical treatment
- + those who feel isolated and those who cannot be with their families

- + wisdom in the safe use of our churches
- + families bereaved at this time and those not able to use the church as they would wish to
- + our public church services
- + our online worship service and fellowship
- + all who make our services possible and all who attend them, in church or online
- + hope, encouragement and peace for this time that we are spending in lockdown

We give thanks for:

- + God's presence in our lives
- + church community and our families and friendships
- + our village and its many amenities
- + God's grace and love
- + opportunities to serve others and share God's love
- + progress in understanding and treating the coronavirus
- + God's word, forgiveness of us and his help for our own situations
- + acts of kindness, courage, selflessness



We pray for all Christians in countries where they are persecuted for their faith.

### 2) AFGHANISTAN.

**Population 37.2 million. Thousands of Christians.**

Christians in Afghanistan have to keep their faith completely secret.

### Prayer Points

- Pray that secret believers would find miraculous ways to share their faith and have fellowship with other Christians.
- Pray that God would stem the tide of Islamic extremist groups and make them aware of their need for Christ.
- Pray for wisdom and strength for those working to support Afghan believers.

*Thanks to Revd Adrian for providing this new, regular feature of prayers for the persecuted church.*

# Towards Alpha: a brief history of evangelism

*Thanks to Allan Coleby for this week's story of how the Pilgrims formed congregations and governments.*

## Part 11: The Pilgrim Fathers [2]

The forty English Puritans who set off from Plymouth on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1620 and reached Cape Cod on 21<sup>st</sup> November were looking for a new land to practise their Christian beliefs without persecution by the Reformed Church of England. They believed that their faith in Christ had been corrupted by that Church and they wished to 'purify' that faith. They called themselves 'Separatists' as defined by 2 Corinthians 6:17.

William Bradford drew up the 'Mayflower Compact' and proclaimed it before they landed. They wanted to get the first Government of their new society in their own religious hands. They would create their own 'civil body politic' and abide by its laws. They would be a 'congregation' of 'God's elect' run by God's laws.



*'New England Early Winter' (1849) by SL Gerry, MFA Boston*

Half the pilgrims died of hunger and extreme cold during their first winter. They survived because they found native wild turkeys, which they shot and ate. The indigenous population taught them which vegetables grew well in their soil, and they fished for clams, lobsters and cod. They called their new community Plymouth and the new territory New England. They celebrated their first year's survival with a service of Thanksgiving, the anniversary of which, still a public holiday in the United States, is November 26<sup>th</sup>.

The English Puritans built a community large enough to protect them in the religious life they wished to lead. The great majority of the Anglo-Americans came from the South-east of England. They were not used to the hamlets and isolated farms of the West and North, but to the large villages of the South-east of England. Of the 25,000 settlers in New England in 1640, 50% came from Suffolk, Essex and Herts.; 20% from Norfolk, Lincs., Notts, Kent, Surrey and Sussex. These may be collectively called the 'Pilgrim Fathers'. The tree whose branches were destined to cover the continent from sea to sea had its roots in the close-settled, democratic, Puritan land of the New England townships.

The leader of the Puritan settlers was John Winthrop from Lavenham in Suffolk, capital of the English wool industry. He was a strong Puritan appalled by the impurities of the Church. He sailed in March 1630 and created in Massachusetts the first truly self-governing colony. If anyone can be called the 'Founding Father of New England', he is it. He planted a 'city of God' and 'a government of Christ in exile'. Each community set up its own church with its 'congregation' who chose their minister by examining his credibility as a true believer, certified by 'God's elect', the people. Winthrop extended representative government, irrespective of wealth or origin, throughout the colony. Any freeman, if he were God-fearing, could achieve the highest post in the congregation.

His model of government spread to the so-called Middle Colonies until by 1733 there were twelve such colonies settled along the Atlantic seaboard – Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Connecticut, Maryland, Rhode Island, Delaware, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New Jersey, South Carolina and Georgia. There was some toleration of Baptists, Quakers and Catholics, and now, thirty million Americans can trace their ancestry back to the Puritan foundation of these colonies.

–Allan Coleby

# Wordsearch – Imitating Christ’s Humility

All the words in this week’s puzzle from Carol can be found in Philippians chapter 2 verses 1–11.

E	V	O	L	J	W	I	T	S	N	E	T	H	O
F	L	O	H	M	E	F	F	O	A	L	F	U	C
S	E	T	L	L	A	H	W	M	T	Y	H	M	O
H	N	L	O	O	U	S	Y	I	U	U	Y	I	N
A	E	O	L	M	I	M	E	L	R	N	O	L	F
T	O	S	A	O	U	A	H	O	E	I	F	I	E
R	R	N	U	N	W	S	A	T	C	O	L	T	S
O	F	I	N	E	E	S	I	I	E	B	B	Y	S
F	S	N	T	M	A	I	H	R	I	E	I	A	Y
M	T	M	Y	A	H	W	O	I	F	D	W	O	B
O	H	E	B	N	M	H	E	P	P	I	O	A	B
C	D	E	T	I	N	U	I	S	M	E	S	E	F
U	Y	O	J	N	C	B	R	P	T	N	O	N	I
J	T	V	W	E	Q	U	A	L	I	T	Y	T	I

FELLOWSHIP  
NAME  
LOVE  
HUMAN  
OBEDIENT  
NATURE  
BOW  
SPIRIT  
EQUALITY  
JOY  
COMFORT  
UNITED  
CONFESS  
HUMILITY

**Reminder**  
Public worship services are suspended during the lockdown. However, the church is still open for private prayer.

**Stopwatch:**  
how quickly can you solve these anagrams?  
  
TINY ORACLE  
IS JAM ETC  
HORNET  
SEA GEMS  
END VAT  
  
(All are words found in Derek’s Letter. Answers, below.)

## Homemade hot chocolate recipe



If you don’t have a sweet tooth, you might like this version of the winter favourite. Sweet-tooths: add sugar or honey.

- Ingredients:** 1 mug of milk, oat milk or milk alternative  
2 teaspoons of cocoa powder  
1 teaspoon of molasses  
1 tablespoon water just off the boil

In a mug, mix the cocoa powder and hot water to make a paste. Add the molasses. Gently warm the milk in a saucepan and pour half into the mug, blending everything. Pour it all back into the pan and gently bring to a boil. Take it off the heat and serve in a cold mug. Don’t burn your tongue! –lw

Anagrams: lectionary,  
majestic, throne,  
message, Advent  
With help from:  
anagrammaker.com

*‘Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!’  
‘Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’ – Luke 19:38*



www.stnicholasdersingham.org.uk  
dersinghamonlineworship.com

