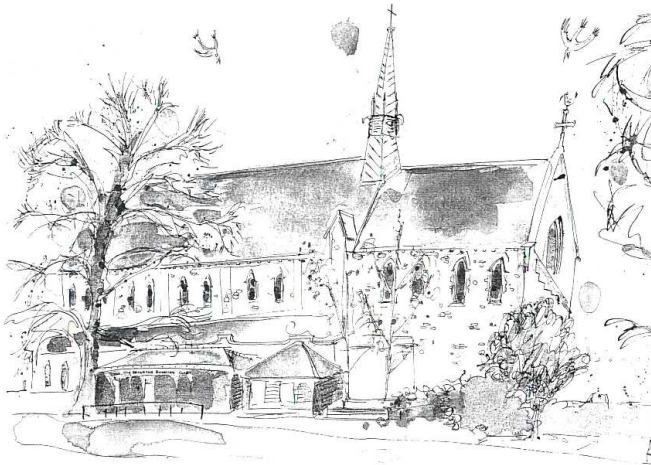


Focal Point



January 2012

The magazine of
St John the Evangelist
Preston, Brighton

Letter from Sue Crossfield

In the Beginning was the Word:
the Word was with God
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.
Through him all things came to be,
not one thing had its being but through him.
All that came to be had life in him
and that life was the light of men,
a Light that shines in the dark,
a Light that darkness cannot overpower.



John 1:1-5

Dear Friends

We hear these familiar words each year as we celebrate Christmas, giving thanks that the Divine Light of God was born in human form and lived as one of us.

His whole life was a light which shone out in the darkest of circumstances, in poverty and exile, faced with rejection and persecution, pain and suffering. His example showed that it is in the most desperate of times, that a single light can best be seen shining out more brightly by contrast to the surrounding darkness.

When we face difficult times, an uncertain future, financial worries, broken relationships, ill health, bereavement, it is then that we most need to see that the Light of Christ is still shining in our world. We do see the Divine light in acts of love and compassion, in the unexpected kindness of friends or strangers, when we are offered hope when all seems hopeless, when we find peace in the midst of turmoil.

Whatever our circumstances we know that any present darkness will never overcome the light. The light which can never be smothered, obscured or extinguished by the darkness.

As we live our lives in the love of God, so the Divine Light shines on our hearts and minds and so we in turn reflect his glory to the world.

Sue

Meditation - Taking stock of time

It is now common to regard the pessimism of old-age as a permanent phenomenon - the sense that everything one had believed in, or given one's life to seeking and promoting, is falling apart. But this feeling is not based upon realities even at a surface scrutiny.

The world changes and we change with it, even when our conscious wills appear to suggest otherwise. The old of today who lament the modern technological society in fact spend most of their time as its beneficiaries - either in the medical care they receive or in the television whose vapid offerings occupy their closing years. In a wider perspective, too, it is not the case that people always come to assess the prospects for the future with foreboding. There were progressive cultures of the past, when people really did suppose that the nature of society was improving, or when human inventiveness pointed the way to a better future. Our present movement of relative disillusionment derives from the consequences that have flowed from just such a time: the optimism and moral buoyancy of the Victorian era. The following century was to show that mass education, a more equitable distribution, an improvement in the physical circumstances of daily living, have shown no regenerative effect on humans themselves — who are as selfish and as self-seeking as ever, and whose disastrous option for the needs of their lower natures appears unchanged by widening the choices available to them. It is, in the very largest sense, possible that human society is on the verge of a truly decisive cultural change. It may be that the learning and values of Greek and Roman society, which have, as conveyed by Christian civilisation, prevailed to determine our world, are about to be replaced by some sort of electronically transmitted rendition of Humanist values. As in all moments of decisive change, there is no way of knowing until the beneficiaries of the outcome have formulated the novel intellectual categories appropriate to the expression of the new orthodoxies.

At the start of this approaching New Year, however, our reflections are still upon the world we have known. The times are not encouraging. Christian hope, furthermore, is not of some improvement in the conduct of men and women. Christian believers have always known that human nature does not change, and that fundamental human moral frailty will find its embodiment in whatever conditions are available. Additionally, humans are spiritually defective, in a state of rebellion against God - and even those who respond to the forgiveness which the death of Christ holds out will discover that the corruption of their natures as humans are not altered.

Continued on P. 4

Prayer for the Month . . . Linda Nutley

This prayer is in thanks for the kindness and warmth I have received at St John's since joining last April, and looking forward to the new year.

O Lord

*thank you for your love,
for the fellowship and warmth of your family in church.
As a new year unfolds
may you watch over and bless us as we go about our
daily lives in your name.
Grant us peace and joy -- and to all your people everywhere.
Amen*



Christmas Greetings from Jessie Niblett

Jessie has sent a card to us in St John's, and these are the words she wrote inside:-

"To all my friends at St John's

Thank you so much for the lovely card and messages which have been so uplifting, and the gift.

I do miss coming to church and seeing you all and the services and the ever wonderful choir. I am getting a little stronger and hope to see you before long.

Again many thanks Jessie."

You will find her card on the string above the coffee table.

Meditation continued from P.3

Christians are the forgiven, by definition: they are not thereby exempted from the horrific effects of a fallen humanity. Yet there is the resilient hope of the new year; that we persist, in a strength only God will supply, when we ask him, in seeking forgiveness. The world endures, but we can be changed so that we can become candidates for eternity.

© Reprinted with permission from
Edward Norman who was
Chancellor of York Minster

In this issue

Naming of Jesus
Orpheus Choir
Crossword
Crisis in Syria
Thanks from Errol
The Way I see it
Burn's Night
Absent Friends
Bristol and Bath
Calendar
Concerts
Children's Page
St. James the Least

1 January - The naming of Jesus

It is Matthew and Luke who tell the story of how the angel instructed that Mary's baby was to be named Jesus - a common name meaning 'saviour'. The Church recalls the naming of Jesus on 1 January - eight days after 25 December (by the Jewish way of reckoning days). For in Jewish tradition, the male babies were circumcised and named on their eighth day of life.

For early Christians, the *name* of Jesus held a special significance. In Jewish tradition, names expressed aspects of personality. Jesus' name permeated his ministry, and it does so today: we are baptised in the name of Jesus (Acts 2:38), we are justified through the name of Jesus (1 Cor 6:11); and God the Father has given Jesus a name above all others (Phil 2:9). All Christian prayer is through 'Jesus Christ our Lord', and it is 'at the name of Jesus' that one day every knee shall bow.

Have you ever wondered where the name 'Jesus' comes from?

The name Jesus is a transliteration of a name that occurs in several languages. It is of Hebrew origin, 'Yehosua', or Joshua. Or there is the Hebrew-Aramaic form, 'Yesua'. In Greek, it became 'Ἰησοῦς' (*Iēsoûs*), and in Latin it became 'Iesus'.

The meaning of the name is 'Yahweh delivers' or 'Yahweh rescues', or 'Yahweh is salvation'. No wonder the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:26-33 told Mary to name her baby Jesus: "because he will save his people from their sins".

Choir Carol Singing

Instead of our usual two evenings of carol singing at ASDA, we decided to be more proactive in the parish. To this end, we spent the first night at the Princess Alexandra House Care Home and then Havelock Road; and the second night at Westwood Rest Home and then Loder and Bates Roads. It was lovely to see residents, with their children, coming out to listen to our singing and, in a couple of cases, requesting carols!

Our collection for the Chestnut Tree Children's Hospice raised £265. Our thanks to all who gave so generously and to Tony & Sylvia and Mary-Jane & Laura for their hospitality and providing well earned refreshments.



On Saturday 26th November in the presence of the Mayor of Brighton and Hove Cllr Anne Meadows, and Cllr Tony Meadows the Orpheus Choir performed the Petite Messe Solennelle by Rossini in the Church.


The concert, which had an audience of 285, was dedicated to the memory of Anne Cathcart and Peter Leacock, both past members of the Brighton Orpheus Choir.

The soloists were Eleanor Dennis (Soprano), Victoria Gray (Mezzo), Edmond Choo (Tenor) and Neil Baker (Bass) and were accompanied by Nicola Grunberg on the piano, Judith Maddison on the harmonium and Richard Toms on the organ. The conductor was Stella E. Hull.

This performance was sung in the original form, with piano and harmonium as Rossini orchestrated it, but with rather more singers. The organ was the most appropriate instrument for the *Offertory's Prelude religienx*. It was an exhilarating musical evening, and enjoyed by all who attended.

The retiring collection this year was for the Martlets Hospice.


Nicholas Keene



**Preston
Croquet
Club**

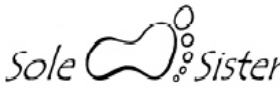
Preston Drove

If you are looking for somewhere to spend your leisure hours, why not try us. You can have a free trial to see if you like the game.



To find out more visit our website:-

www.PrestonCroquetClubBrighton.co.uk



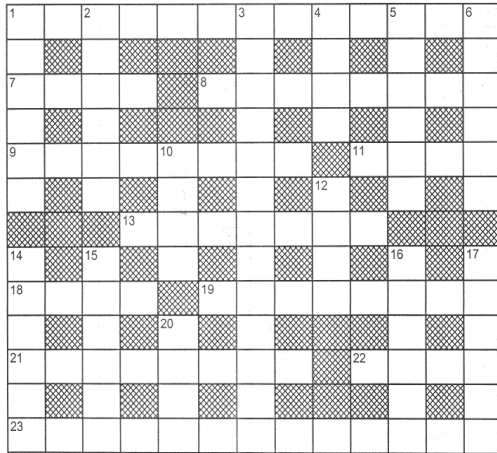
Podiatrists- Chiropractors

*Jane Faulkner
Natalie Tanner
John Doble*

*156a Preston Drove
Brighton
01273 553863*

enquiries@solesister.com

Island Crossword No. 122...



Across:

1. Comprehension (13)
7. Green vegetable (4)
8. Valuable possession (8)
9. Christmas decoration (8)
11. Light source (4)
13. Parents (7)
18. Oh dear (4)
19. 90° segment (8)
21. Flowers (8)
22. Travel document (4)
23. Advance stipulations (13)

Down:

1. If not (6)
2. Dull (6)
3. Triple - M number (5,8)
4. Tidy (4)
5. Strengthened (6)
6. Vegetables (6)
10. Bridge system (4)
12. Squared diagram (4)
14. Horse ride (6)
15. Risky flutter (6)
16. Fabric (6)
17. Belts (6)
20. Too (4)

Solution to Double-Crossic No. 121 from the December Magazine

Wilbur Smith - Monsoon

He found himself in a labyrinth of small rooms and passageways. He ran forward, glancing into each room as he passed.

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Windsor | 7. Space | 13. Owns |
| 2. Inlay | 8. Molar | 14. Neath |
| 3. Loofah | 9. Islam | 15. Scraped |
| 4. Blade | 10. Thyme | 16. Offer |
| 5. Unsafe | 11. Hash | 17. Ordain |
| 6. Rags | 12. Mash | 18. Noggin |

(Wilf thanks all those readers who have given his crosswords their support during the past ten years.)

Christians affected by worsening crisis in Syria

Christian leaders in Syria and neighbouring countries have expressed growing concern about the deteriorating situation in Syria, and in particular what it means for the vulnerable Christian minority.

The Arab League recently suspended Syria over its crackdown on protestors in a move that highlights how far conditions in the country have worsened since anti-government demonstrations broke out in March 2011. The UN says that at least 3,500 people have been killed.

Should the Assad regime fall, it is feared that Syria could go the way of Iraq post-Saddam Hussein. Saddam, like Assad, restrained the influence of militant Islamists, but after his fall they were free to wreak havoc on the Christian community; hundreds of thousands of Christians were consequently forced to flee the violence. Many of them went to Syria.

MAGAZINE DEAD LINE DATES

February Magazine

18th January

March Magazine

15th February

Hike4Hospices

I would like to thank everyone who sponsored me, or offered good wishes, for the 43-mile hike on 20 and 21 August. All the money has now been collected and forwarded to the organising committee.



I collected a total of £1200.00 and look forward, God and fitness permitting, to doing better next year.

Thank you all Errol

Local Window Cleaner

P&J's Window Cleaning Services

Excellent Service and Rates

Telephone:
01273 273756

Mobile:
07931 298 481



PRESTON DROVE LAUNDERETTE

Open 7 days a week
7.30am - 10.00pm

Self Service Prices are:

Single wash £3.20

25lb wash £4.40

30lb wash £5.60

Drying 3 minutes for 20p

SERVICE WASHES AVAILABLE

from 8.30am - 12.30pm
(includes drying, soap and softener)

Single load wash £7.00

25lb load £11.00

30lb load £12.00

COLLECT AND DELIVERY ONLY £1

01273 889894

90 Preston Drive Brighton
(junction of Preston Drive and Beaconsfield Villas)

The Way I See It: RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW

It's probably because I'm just a Grumpy Old Man, but I do find it hard to see the point of 'celebrating' New Year. For me, the event has all the stupendous excitement of the mileometer in the car clicking over from 39,999 to 40,000. It isn't the solstice or equinox. Nothing actually happens. It doesn't commemorate anything, except that we're all that much older, that much nearer a pension or the great retirement home in the sky.

Nevertheless, whatever the weather, New Year always sees vast crowds on the streets of our great cities, cheering, getting drunk and dancing in the fountains of Trafalgar Square. Dark men for some obscure reason carry bits of coal into neighbours' houses, and people who have no idea what the words mean, sing 'Auld Lang Syne'. So what is it that they're celebrating?

Surely not 2011 and its miserable economic news, recession and unemployment? Surely not, either, the remorseless tread of time. I suspect in fact most of them have simply turned up for the party, or perhaps it's not 2011 at all that they have in mind, but the new year, 2012 - hope triumphing over experience.

Of course the gloom of 2011 was lightened by personal highs - the birth of a child or grand-child, perhaps, a marriage, a new friend. But reason (and in my case long experience) tells me that 2012 will be very much like 2011, but, hey, hope springs eternal.

So is it stupid, or pointless, or even wrong to celebrate the New Year? No, of course not. Time is too serious, too important for us to take it lightly. The Old Preacher in the Bible assures us that 'for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven'. He sees the passing of time as part of the way the Creation works - 'God has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into our minds' (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Humans, in other words, have an understanding of past, present, future: we live in a world with *tenses*. And he has done this 'so that all should stand in awe before him'. Time, a gift of God, is awesome, and its passage deeply significant.

No reason, then, not to mark the passing of the old year and the birth of the new one, but every reason to recognise that we too are part of the process, carried along by time's tide but not helpless to make choices. Some of those choices may change us, or our families, or our neighbours during the coming year. Some may eventually change the world.

In God's purpose, there is no reason at all why 2012 has to be like 2011. Let the old year go, with all its memories, joys and hurts. And turn to the new one with faith and prayer and - yes - hope. For myself, definitely no freezing fountains, excess alcohol or lumps of coal. But even this Grumpy Old Man will raise a glass, say a prayer, and watch the clock tick past midnight into a brave new year.

Keeper of the Spring

An old man who lived near an Austrian village high in the Alps was hired by his village council to clear away the debris from the pools of water high up in the mountain crevices. These pools fed the spring that flowed through the town. So with faithful regularity, year after year, the old man patrolled the pool, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt.

In time the village became a popular attraction. Swans and ducks floated along the sparkling spring, the mill wheels of various businesses turned day and night, farms were irrigated, and the view of the spring from restaurants was picturesque beyond description.

Then one evening the town council met to review the budget. Someone queried the salary paid to the obscure keeper of the spring. Others joined in: "He is a waste of money. Drop him." And so they did.

For several weeks, nothing changed. Then in early autumn, the trees shed their leaves. Small branches snapped off and fell into the pools. Down in the village, they soon noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the water. Soon a slimy film covered sections of the stream. The mill wheels got entangled with twigs. Soon the stench of rotting vegetation in the water drove away the swans and ducks and the tourists.

In a panic, the village council met. Quickly they set off to visit the old man, and pleaded with him to keep the spring clean again. Within a few weeks, the village's 'river of life' began to clear up. The water ran pure and clear, the birds returned, the mill wheels turned, and even the tourists came back.

Are there leaves of anger, twigs of resentment, or a silt of unforgiveness clogging your spring of living water? Just as little by little the stream became contaminated by debris, so our spirits can become obstructed by the 'small sins' of daily life. Let's allow our Keeper of the Spring to do his job in renewing and cleansing us, so that we can 'run free' and bring blessing to others.

Burns Night Celebration Dinner

A repeat of this year's successful evening.

Come and join us in the Knoyle Hall on

Saturday 14 January

for our Burn's Night

A 3-course (sit down) Scottish-themed meal, a tot of whisky and some Scottish Country dancing afterwards to a live band

All for just £12.00 (£5.00) for children under 16).

Only 60 tickets available

The dying minister

An old minister lay dying. He sent an urgent message for his accountant and his solicitor to come to the hospital. When they arrived, they were ushered up to his room. As they entered the room, the minister held out his hands and motioned for them to sit on each side of the bed. The minister grasped their hands, sighed contentedly, smiled, and stared at the ceiling.

For a time, no one said anything. Both the accountant and the solicitor were touched and flattered that the old man would ask them to be with him during his final moments. They were also puzzled because the minister had never given any indication that he particularly liked either one of them. Finally, the solicitor asked, "Why did you ask the two of us to come here?" The old minister mustered all his strength, and then said weakly, "Jesus died between two thieves, and that's how I want to go."

Friend-James Limited

Chartered Accountants

Registered Auditors
Chartered Accountants
Independent Financial Advisors

169 Preston Road
Brighton
BN1 6AG
Phone: (01273) 562563
Fax: (01273) 505567
email: enquires@friend-james.co.uk
web: www.friend-james.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the Financial Services Authority

KNOYLE HALL FOR HIRE - Knoyle Road, Brighton. Large Hall available for wedding receptions, parties etc. good stage and kitchen facilities. Long term hire for regular meetings, badminton etc. Small room also available.

Enquiries to the booking line (01273) 550077 or E-mail knoylehall@yahoo.co.uk

THE PRESTON & OLD PATCHAM SOCIETY - Do you live in the area bounded by Peacock Lane, Ditchling Road, Dyke Road and Preston Circus, or around the Patcham Village Conservation Area? Are you concerned about your environment? Why not join the Preston & Old Patcham Society, annual subscription £5.00. We check planning applications weekly. Membership forms from

Hon. Sec. Mrs S. Montford, 10 Clermont Road, Brighton; www.prestonandpatcham.org.uk

*Building in
Brighton
since 1876*



**Alfred Cox & Sons
(Brighton) Ltd**

*General building work,
redecorations, repair
and maintenance
work undertaken*

28A Brigden Street
Brighton
BN1 5DP
Tel: 552762
Fax: 552012



*Ginger Lily
Floral Designs*

Exciting florist in the area offering flowers for:

Funeral tributes • Weddings • Special occasions • Modern and traditional designs

Can deliver locally plus national and international. Also balloons, handmade greeting cards and a wide selection of plants.

Ginger Lily Florists
93 Preston Drive, Brighton. BN1 6LD

Tel: 01273 504904
Email: info@gingerlilyfloristsltd.co.uk

gingerlilyfloristsltd.co.uk

6 January - Epiphany

On 6 January we celebrate Epiphany - the visit of the wise men to the baby Jesus. But who were these wise men? No one knows for sure. Matthew calls them 'Magi', and that was the name of an ancient caste of a priestly kind from Persia. It wasn't until the third century that they were they called kings - by a church father, Tertullian. Another church father, Origin, assumed there were three - to correspond with the gifts given.

Later Christian interpretation came to understand gold as a symbol of wisdom and wealth, incense as a symbol of worship and sacrifice, and myrrh as a symbol of healing - and even embalming. Certainly Jesus challenged and set aright the way in which the world handled all three of these things. Since the eighth century, the magi have had the names Balthasar, Caspar and Melchior.

All these names are very confusing to children, and they innocently interpret what they hear. It brings to mind hearing a very young king in a nativity play, laying his gift at the feet of Jesus and saying, "Frank sent this."

25 January - The Conversion of St Paul

January is a month of the beginning of great things! As well as the naming of the Son of God, we celebrate the conversion of the greatest ever apostle of the Christian faith. Many books have been written on Paul, and here is the briefest of introductions.

He was a Jew, born as 'Saul' at Tarsus, and brought up by the rabbi Gamaliel as a Pharisee. A devout, fanatical Jew, Saul persecuted the Christians, and watched with satisfaction the first Christian martyrdom, the stoning of Stephen. Then on his way to Damascus Saul had a vision of Christ that stopped him, literally, in his tracks. He realised that this Jesus whom he was persecuting was in fact the Messiah for whom he had longed.

Saul changed overnight. He took a new name, Paul, and became an evangelist for the cause of Christ. He became a leader in the early Church, and his special calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. He wrote many epistles to the young churches he founded - and thus, inadvertently, wrote a great part of the New Testament.

Life as the greatest apostle was hardly full of perks: he was stoned, beaten, mobbed, homeless, hated, imprisoned, and finally martyred. Tradition has it that he was beheaded in Rome during the persecution of Nero in AD 64, and buried where the basilica of St Paul 'outside the walls' now stands. His mighty faith in Christ has kindled similar belief in many millions of people down the centuries.

Making a good journey of it

At the start of the New Year a man was going on a journey to a distant country. He spent hours looking at maps, wanting the most scenic route. Should he go by plane, train or car? He spent days looking into the comfort of the seats provided, the leg-room, the restaurants he would be able to use, the entertainment on offer, and especially important to him, would the other passengers be good enough company?

In every way the man made sure that his journey would be perfect: a scenic route by good transport in total luxury, with great entertainment, superb food, accompanied by people he was happy to be seen with.

The trip itself would take two weeks at most – even by car. It was a one-way journey: the man would spend the rest of his life in the distant country.

Yet in all his preparations, the man concentrated solely on the trip itself. He never took thought of what he would do when he arrived. What about Passport Control in the distant country? Would he even be allowed in without a visa? Would he be suitable for life there?

Our life can be a bit like that. As we hurtle through the years, we can spend all our time trying to get an 'upgrade' on our careers, our homes, our cars, our social opportunities. We may indeed make our journey a fantastic trip – but what happens when we arrive? Are we ready for what comes after?

Jesus said: "I am the resurrection and the life: he who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die." John 11:25-26

Absent Friends

Rosemary Baigent, Joan Walton, and Norma and Mac McBride send their Christmas and New Year Greetings to all who remember them. Please note Norma and Mac's change of address:-

Mr. and Mrs. M McBride
Berry Pomeroy Residential Home
26/28 Compton Street
Eastbourne
BN21 4EN

A message from Norma and Mac's daughter

Mum and Dad have settled very well into this residential home. They share a nice room overlooking the garden and are both well looked after by a kind and thoughtful team. Moving into the Berry has been good for them and Mum has certainly improved by having stimulation provided by the staff and the activities. Moira

Bristol and Bath

40 people boarded the coach outside the church on Friday afternoon, 2 December. After an uneventful journey we arrived at the 4-star hotel in Bristol.

The next morning our coach was outside the hotel, bright and early, and we were transported to Bath, a beautiful and fascinating city. We had all day to do as we wished. The city was packed. As well as visitors arriving to see the Christmas Markets, there was a rugby match scheduled for the same day! Many of us found different things to buy for Christmas presents. All it needed was to get them home.

A highlight of the day was a visit to Bath Abbey. On entering the door we were asked if we would like to attend a carol service. We promptly said yes, looking forward to a sit down. The abbey was packed. The enterprising vicar held a 25 minute carol service on the hour throughout the day. His short talk had just the right content for weary shoppers - he had us all laughing. We came away with the gift of a book telling the life of Jesus in a modern way.

The Sunday morning was our own, and many of us visited the SS Great Britain. The first ship to have engine power as well as sail. A masterpiece by Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

Our thanks go to Simon for all the organisation which went into providing us with a very successful and enjoyable weekend. The Editor

The Afternoon of Saturday 11 December

At the 'Amnestea' on this Saturday afternoon many members of the congregation turned up to help by bringing cakes, serving tea and talking to those who came and were not members of the church.

Many greetings cards were written, putting a simple message to a prisoner of conscience, a family whose relative has 'disappeared' or someone in danger for defending human rights. It is hoped that these messages of warmth, care and support will make a real difference to the receivers.

The cards can also make an impression on police officers, prison staff and political authorities – and that can help improve the way they treat the individuals at risk.

Thank you to all those who gave up their time to support 'Amnestea'.

Calendar for



Holy Communion is celebrated at 10.00 on Wednesdays

Sunday	1	8.00 9.45	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Ministry of Prayer for Healing
Friday	6	14.00	Friday Club
Sunday	8	8.00	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Young St John's
Friday	13	14.00	Friday Club
Saturday	14	18.45	Burn's Night Celebration
Sunday	15	8.00 9.45	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Young St John's
Friday	20	14.00	Friday Club
Sunday	22	8.00 9.45	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Young St John's
Friday	27	14.00	Friday Club

Sunday	29	8.00 9.45	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Young St John's
--------	----	--------------	--

February

Friday	3	14.00	Friday Club –
Sunday	5	8.00 9.45	Eucharist SUNG EUCHARIST Young St John's

Coffee is served following the 9.45 service on Sunday mornings
Cards for all occasions are on sale following the service every
 Sunday

Preston Coffee Pot is open every Wednesday from 10.45
 to 12 noon in the Church

Fairtrade Stall goods for sale after the 9.45 service every Sunday



The Brighton & Hove Music and Performing Arts Concert

In the church on 3 December 2011, The Brighton Junior and Youth Choirs performed their Christmas Concert, which was attended by Cllr Anne Meadows, the Mayor of Brighton and Hove, and Cllr Tony Meadows.

The Choirs were conducted by Éire Owen and Peter Walker and at the piano the accompanist was Liz Tunmer.

The Brighton Youth Orchestra, with the soloist Nathan Tinker at the piano, played the Rhapsody on a "Theme of Paganini" at the end of the first half of the Concert. This piece was followed by an encore, when the soloist delighted them with a rendition of "Misty" which was very enjoyable.

It was an evening of diverse music that evoked the right mood for the season. The second part of the concert was enjoyed for the different type of songs on different themes with a loose connection of Christmas.

The Brighton Youth Orchestra performed the 4th Movement of Symphony No 5 by Shostakovich which was very dramatic and enjoyed by the audience.

The concert ended with both choirs singing, and the orchestra playing "Sleigh Ride".

There was a large audience of about 250 people.

Nicholas Keene

With Epiphany in mind...

I was telling my three boys the story of the Nativity and how the Wise Men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh for the infant Jesus. Clearly giving it a lot of thought, my six-year-old observed, "Mum, a Wise Woman would have brought nappies."

What children have to say about angels

It's not easy to become an angel! First, you die. Then you go to Heaven, and then there's still the flight training to go through. And then you got to agree to wear those angel clothes. -Matthew, age 9

Angels work for God and watch over kids when God has to go do something else. - Mitchell, age 7

My guardian angel helps me with maths, but he's not much good for science. - Henry, age 8

Foot in mouth

The vet in a small town was also in charge of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Late one night the phone rang, and his wife answered. An agitated voice inquired, "Is your husband there?"

"Do you require his services as a neighbourhood watch, or as a vet?" she asked. "Both!" was the reply. "We can't get our dog's mouth open, and there's an intruder in it."

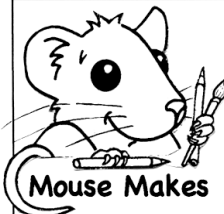
Winter travel

A government warning said that anyone travelling in icy conditions should take: shovel, blankets, sleeping bag, scarf, hat and gloves, 24 hours supply of food and drink, de-icer, rock salt, torch, spare batteries, road flares, reflective triangles, tow rope, a five gallon can of petrol, first aid kit, and jump leads. So ... I looked a complete idiot on the bus this morning!



"You'll be in deep trouble if the vicar finds out you're not deeply meditating, just playing with your new iPad!"

The NAMING of JESUS




Mouse Makes

Eight days after their baby was born, **Mary** and **Joseph** named him with the name the angel **Gabriel** had given them long before he had been born. It was a very special name for a very special baby... the name **JESUS** which means **GOD IS SAVIOUR**.


"You are to give him the name JESUS because he will save his people from their sins".

READ: Luke 2:21-38




As you read the bible look out for the meaning of people's names.

Jesus is:
The Christ
Matthew 16:16




The LIGHT
John 8:12



Bread of Life
John 6:35

The Good Shepherd
John 10:11




Lamb of God
John 1:29


JESUS

'God is Saviour'
Matthew 1:21

Jesus is:
Saviour
John 3:16-17




Son of God
Matthew 3:16-17



The Word
John 1:1-5


THE WAY
John 14:6

LORD
John 20:28



KING
Revelation 17:14

To make your bookmark:
Carefully cut around the outside, fold in half along the dotted line and glue together. Add a tassel to the bottom with a length of wool or ribbon. You can make it stronger by gluing onto card before folding.



Jan12

St. James the Least of All

The Rectory - On parish accounts, teapots and Labrador retrievers

My dear Nephew Darren

Your annual accounts – all 146 pages, bound in their plastic covers and laid out in faultless detail – are really most impressive. I was rather envious to note you have a clergy 'discretionary fund'; were I given such a thing, my cellar of claret would improve immeasurably – although that is perhaps the reason why I am not given one.

The size of your office expenses makes me wonder if you have a staff rivalling that of the European Community. I suppose that at least you are doing your bit for job creation. Our dear Miss Marigold, who spends two hours a week randomly filing pieces of paper, mistyping rotas and failing to re-order stationery, is only rewarded by being the first to find out who are booking marriages and having their babies baptised – and if they do not happen in that order, that will be another piece of information remembered for future use. All this is information beyond the price of jewels in village communities.

Our accounts have more by way of charm than they do of accuracy, generally consisting of one sheet of handwritten paper. There are only ever three copies for circulation, as that is the limit of Colonel Denster's carbon paper. It seems to be an unalterable tradition that they never balance, until we find the following year that the missing £20 was found months later under the teapot on the mantelpiece. One footnote to this was the occasion when the Colonel suspected an unaccountable £5 had been eaten by his Labrador. Our greatest expenses by far are categorised as 'miscellaneous', which is a catch-all for everything that our treasurer is unable to recall where it really went.

The thousands paid on church maintenance and diocesan fees are nodded through without comment – but if the money spent on Easter lilies or packets of tea for the Summer Fete increases by anything more than 50 pence, there will be much agonised debate and speculation about whether this is an indication of money laundering.

I see that your accounts were professionally audited. Fortunately, it does not matter too much about the accuracy of our own, as I have an arrangement with our auditor who lives in the village: if he refuses to sign them off, then I refuse to baptise his grand-children.

Your loving uncle,

Eustace