

# St. Leonard's Magazine

I will tell  
of the decree  
of the Lord:

“You are my son;  
today I have  
begotten you”.

Psalm 2: 7



Advent 2024

## Beoley, Church Hill & Abbey Park

a church in the Redditch Holy Trinity Team Parish

**Websites:** [www.facebook.com/StLeonardsChurchBeoley/](http://www.facebook.com/StLeonardsChurchBeoley/)

[www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18703/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/18703/) [www.holytrinityredditch.org.uk](http://www.holytrinityredditch.org.uk)

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## A message from the Editor

As we reach the end of the year this would normally be the time of year where I share the dates for future editions of the magazine. However this will be the final edition of the magazine that I will be compiling having decided at the start of 2024 that it was the right time for me to step back and pass the baton onto someone else.

What that looks like is still being decided, and the conversation is being had to decide what the future magazine will look like.

Over the past six years I have had the pleasure of putting the magazine together, and particularly growing the digital version of the magazine. Despite the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic we were able to carry on – even if it was difficult putting together a magazine when most activities just stopped!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have played a vital role in allowing me to put the magazine together. In particular, thank you to all the people who have contributed articles – without your support the magazine simply would not exist. In particular I would like to thank Revd Gail for her support and providing most of the content for recent editions.

I cannot finish without thanking Rosalind Couchman, for her dedication and support in proof reading every single edition. Her knowledge of the English language and eye for detail are really something to behold!

## The Vicar writes



Dear Friends,

As the world outside seems to hurry ever faster toward Christmas, I'd like to invite you into the beauty of Advent, a season where we're called to wait, reflect, and make room for something deeper. Advent is a time of anticipation, a journey that prepares us to hear again the story of God becoming one of us—a story of light entering a dark world and of love made real in our lives. Advent reminds us that waiting can be a powerful gift for our souls and well-being, not just an in-between time, but a season of meaning and transformation in itself.

In a world where everything seems immediate, from instant messages to overnight deliveries, Advent teaches us a different rhythm. The waiting of Advent isn't empty or passive; it's purposeful, a time to slow down and listen more deeply. What might we notice about ourselves and the world if we paused, even briefly, to reflect on what really matters? In our Advent waiting, we have the chance to discover a sense of peace and hope that often eludes us in the rush of daily life.

Advent also speaks to us about patience and trust. Much like the people who waited for the coming of Jesus in times past, we, too, are waiting for signs of peace and healing in our world today. In this waiting, we acknowledge both the reality of our longings and the promise of new beginnings. It's a reminder that God is with us, sharing in our struggles and our hopes, and guiding us toward love and compassion.

As you turn the pages of this edition of The St Leonard's Magazine, you'll find information about the Christmas services and celebrations that await. But I hope you'll also find space to reflect on Advent, to hold the waiting with a sense of wonder, and to journey together towards a deeper experience of God's presence in our lives. Let us take this season to prepare our hearts, to listen for the story of the incarnation, and to welcome the hope that shines into our world.

With every blessing for this season of waiting,

*Revd. Gail*

## **A Christmas Message for the Community**

Each year, as Christmas approaches, we start seeing the familiar Christmas adverts that bring warmth and stories of connection. This season, one advert stands out—showing a simple but powerful story of someone reaching out to a neighbour. It's about one act of kindness that lifts the spirits of two people. Whether it's a grand gesture or a simple bag of groceries, these adverts remind us of what Christmas is really about: sharing love and kindness.

Here at St Leonard's, we're embracing that spirit of kindness through our "Love Christmas" initiative. We'll be reaching out to our neighbours with Bags of Kindness, little gifts that bring warmth and hope, so everyone can experience some of the joy and hope Christmas promises. For many, Christmas is a time of family gatherings, meals, and celebration—but it can also highlight loneliness for those who find themselves on their own. That's why our friends at St Laurence are hosting a free Christmas Day Community Lunch, creating a space for those who would otherwise be spending the day alone. Do share details of this with anyone you think would appreciate some company on Christmas Day.

Christmas, at its heart, is about presence. It's about coming together, showing care, and being present with one another. In the Christian tradition, this theme of presence speaks to the heart of the Christmas story. Christians believe that in Jesus, God came into the world to share life with us in the most real way possible—to experience our joys, our struggles, and our stories. This is what's meant by "Emmanuel," or "God with us."

That first Christmas also brought an open invitation. All kinds of people gathered at the stable to visit the baby Jesus. Shepherds arrived, carrying little but their wonder and awe. Later, wise travellers from distant lands came with gifts, each visitor bringing something unique to share. It's a beautiful reminder that Christmas is for everyone, and there is always room at the table.

As we celebrate this season, whether through a Bag of Kindness or a shared meal, may we remember the gift of presence and be that gift for one another. May your Christmas be filled with the hope, joy, and connection that this season offers to us all.

**Revd Gail**

# Love Christmas 2024

For the last 3 years St. Leonard's has taken part in the national Love Christmas campaign which brings together thousands of churches and other partners from over 30 different denominations across the UK under the banner of Love Your Neighbour.

Working with local schools and YMCA Worcestershire, together with the support of Morrisons supermarket and local councillors, the team delivers 'Bags of Kindness' containing festive goodies and greetings from school children to families and individuals living in Beoley, Church Hill and Abbey Park.

For many, Christmas is a time to be with family and friends, a time for peace and love. But for some, Christmas is a time of struggle, anxiety, fear and loneliness. By giving a Bag of Kindness we aim to shine into their lives a little bit of the hope and joy that Christmas promises.

Last year the team delivered 137 Bags of Kindness and in this our 4<sup>th</sup> year, the target is 200 Bags.

In church this year we have provided pink giving envelopes for people to donate to Love Christmas via the collection plate at services. Also, there is a dedicated giving webpage for card donations at <https://givealittle.co/c/7Ut3jZdlcWHK3ux4kaqize>. Scanning this QR code will take you to the webpage:



**The Love Christmas Team**



## 1st Sunday of every month

A relaxed, informal space hearing a bible story, songs and activities, including a craft and conversation. Whether you have never been to church before or attend regularly, Church@4 is for you!

**Come and eat with us, a meal and cake for after's, followed by an option to create something or take part a physical activity. Or if you prefer you can join in the conversation with our chatty questions!**

All are welcome - there is no charge for anything  
Church@4 is St Leonard's Church monthly gathering on Church Hill.  
Join us at Willow Trees Community Centre,  
B98 9JL at 4pm



# The Challenges of Christmas

Christmas is a great time of year, but it's not without its challenges! After one family had put up 250,000 Christmas lights outside, they didn't dare boil a kettle for fear of blowing the system!

## The challenge of over-indulging

We all remember the episode of the Vicar of Dibley, where she had to consume four Christmas dinners! Christmas is a time when we usually eat and drink far too much, the average person gaining six pounds in weight. But Christmas is not simply about gaining weight, but losing what weighs us down. 'Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.' (1 Peter 5:7). Whatever your concerns or worries this Christmas, bring them to God.

## The challenge of overspending

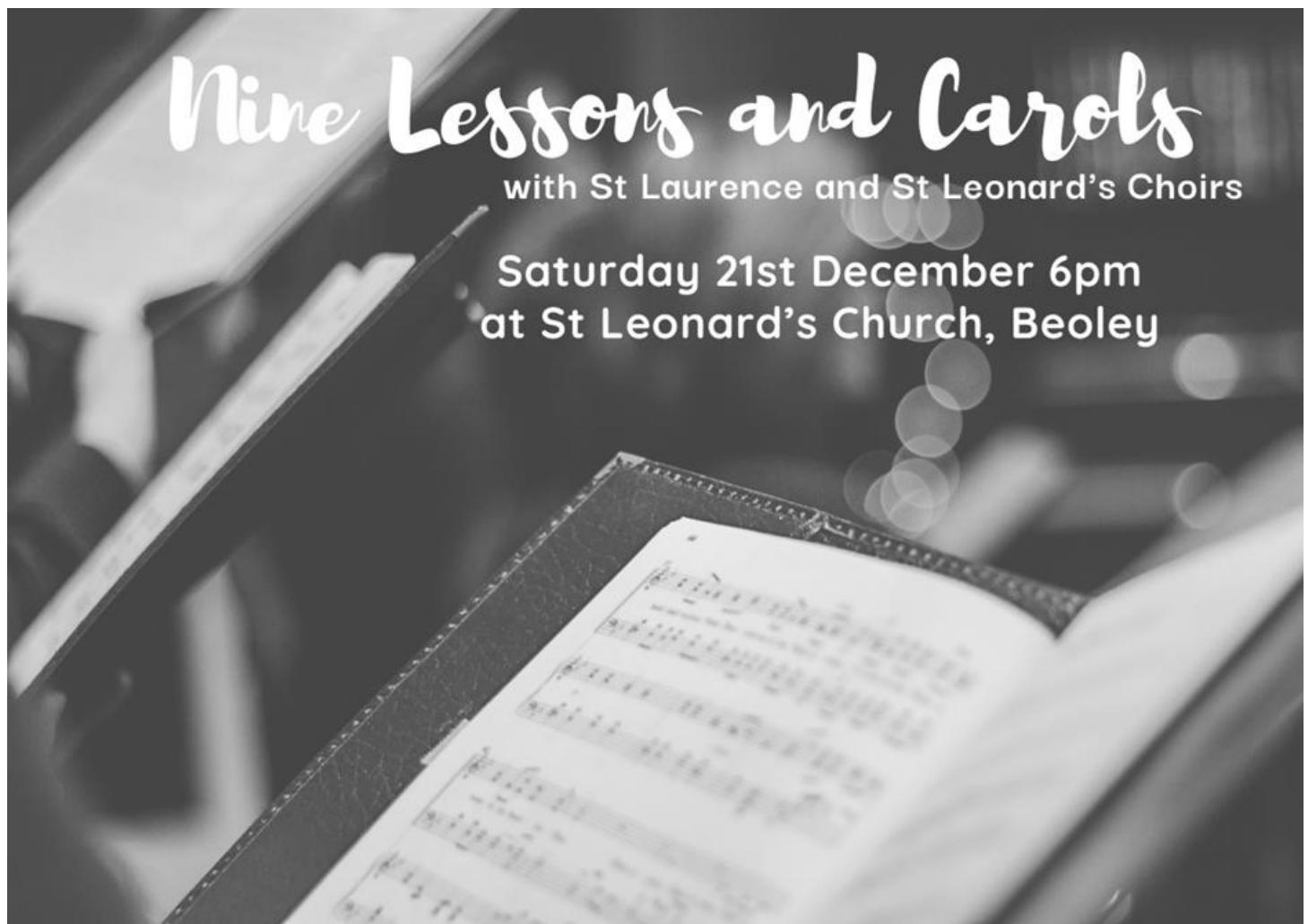
In the rush to buy Christmas cards, a woman bought a pack of 50 identical cards. Without reading the verse, she hastily signed and sent them off, but for one. A few days later she read the message: 'This card is just to say a little gift is on the way.' Christmas is not about getting into debt, but God getting us out of debt. He spent exactly what was needed on the first Christmas night: 'You are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.' (Matthew 1:21).

## The challenge is over too quickly

Christmas doesn't last very long, yet the effect of the first Christmas is long-lasting. 'For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal

life.' (John 3:16). Jesus has come to bring us life in all its fullness, both for now and all eternity.

How do we face the challenges of Christmas? 'Yet what I can, I give Him – give my heart'.



# Christmas at St Leonard's

## Christmas Market and Festival

Saturday 7th December, 11am - 3pm

## Toy Service

Sunday 8th December, 9.15am & 11.15am

## Church@4 Christingle

Sunday 15th December, 4pm

*Gathering in the YMCA Willow Trees Community Centre, Church Hill*

## Nine Lessons and Carol

Saturday 21st December, 6pm

## Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday 24th December

## Come and join in Nativity

6pm

## First Communion of Christmas

11.30pm

## Christmas Day

Carols and Communion

9am



May this season bring love, peace and joy to all!

# Remembering the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004

Twenty years ago, on 26th December 2004, the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (also called the Boxing Day Tsunami) took place. A massive undersea earthquake near Sumatra caused a devastating tsunami that swamped coastal areas in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand and East Africa. It was one of the deadliest natural disasters in recorded history, killing more than 230,000 people in 14 countries.

Waves generated by the earthquake and travelling at up to 500mph were believed to have been up to 50ft high in places, and the cost in lives and damage was so extensive because detection and warning systems were relatively primitive, as this was not a prime area for such events. Scientific monitoring and warning plans, led by Australia, have since been considerably improved, but the unpredictability of tsunamis remains a major problem.

The massive surges of water in 2004 swept away buildings and people, and some effects were felt as far away as Somalia on the east coast of Africa, nearly 2,800 miles (and seven hours for the waves) west of the epicentre. Nearer coastlines were hit in as little as 15 minutes.

Aftershocks continued to shake the region daily for up to four months after the original earthquake. The raising of the seafloor reduced the capacity of the Indian Ocean, resulting in a permanent rise in sea level globally by an estimated 0.1 mm.

Since 1900, only two earthquakes have been recorded with a greater magnitude than the Sumatra Boxing Day event. One was in 1960 at Valdivia, Chile (magnitude 9.5) and the other in 1964 in Prince William Sound, Alaska (9.2). Both spawned tsunamis in the Pacific, but the

death toll (1655 and 131) was sharply less, because of much lower population density where they came ashore.

# Christmas Without the Tinsel

Do you struggle with  
Winter, the busyness and  
false jollity of the  
Christmas season?

This service will be a  
quiet and reflective  
space to spend time  
with God.



**Come as you are  
without  
expectations  
of how to  
“be”**

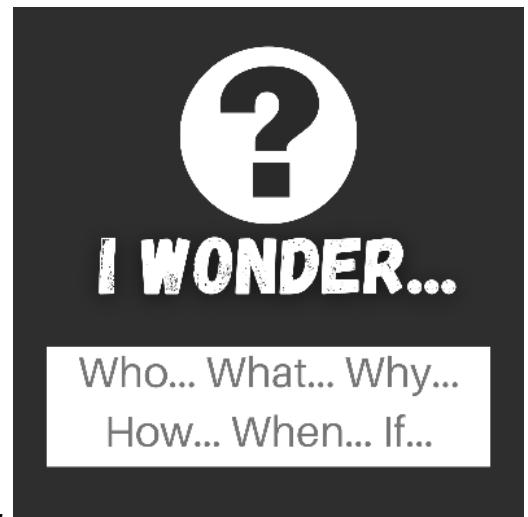
**Sunday 15th December at 6pm  
St Laurence Church, Alvechurch**

# Memorial Tree

ST LEONARD'S CHURCH

DURING DECEMBER

DURING DECEMBER THERE WILL BE A MEMORIAL  
TREE IN ST LEONARD'S CHURCHYARD. ALL ARE  
INVITED TO COME AND HANG A BAUBLE ON THE  
TREE IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE. BRING YOUR  
OWN BAUBLE OR USE ONE SUPPLIED IN THE  
BASKET IN THE CHURCH PORCH



## ‘Being With’ Course

We all have questions about life:

*I wonder who I will fall in love with?*

*I wonder what to do about my energy bill.*

*I wonder where my / when my food will be ready?*

*I wonder why my family and I always argue.*

*I wonder if I will ever be happy.*

If you wonder and ask questions, then the “Being With” course is for you! The course is about relationships with each other and how God wants to be in relationship with us. We start from the view that God is in our lives in beauty, truth, and goodness. We think you know a lot about those things already! You do not have to believe anything but just have a desire to talk and relate to others.

The ‘Being With’ Course is about sharing stories about our lives and hearing the stories of others. These stories are the small things that mean a lot to us and they can also be the most challenging and life-changing moments of our lives.

There’s a space for every person’s life and story. The only thing you are asked to do is be prepared to listen to others’ stories and maybe share your own.

Sessions begin on the following dates for 5 weeks:

**Monday 13th January, 7pm**

***with Revd Gail at The Ark, Alvechurch***

**Wednesday 15th January, 7pm**

***with Revd Martin on Zoom***

‘Being with’ is a ten-week course that we are holding over two five week blocks, the first beginning in January and the second in the spring.

**For more information contact**

**For the Monday session**, contact Revd Gail:

revdgail@icloud.com / 07867 853813 or just show up.

**For the Wednesday session**, contact Revd Martin for Zoom detail

allnix@btinternet.com / 07788 872738

For more information about the ‘Being With’ course see - <https://being-with.org/>

## Toy Service

at St Leonard's Church

Sunday 8th December at our 9:15am and 11:15am worship

Our annual Toy Service where we offering of brand new toys to support the Mothers' Union Prisons Projects.

A present will be given to each child who visits the prison over the Christmas period.



# The Advent Wreath: A Season of Light and Hope

As the days grow shorter and winter deepens, many people look forward to December as a time of light and celebration. In the Christian tradition, we have something called the Advent wreath, a circular arrangement of candles that helps us countdown to Christmas. Each candle brings us closer to the celebration of the birth of Jesus, often symbolizing values and people important to the Christmas story.

Here's a guide to what each part of the Advent wreath represents.

## What Is the Advent Wreath?

The Advent wreath is a circle made of evergreen branches, symbolizing the everlasting life we believe God offers. Traditionally, four candles are placed around the circle, with a fifth candle in the centre. Each of the outer candles represents one of the four weeks leading up to Christmas. As we light a new candle each week, we focus on a different theme, bringing light into the darkness and reflecting on values that can help us live in kindness and faithfulness.

## The Colours of the Advent Candles

Advent wreaths often have candles in three colours: purple, pink, and white. Each colour has its own meaning:

**Purple:** Used on the first, second, and fourth weeks of Advent, purple symbolizes waiting, reflection, and preparation. It's a reminder to pause and make space for hope.

**Pink:** Lit on the third week, the pink candle represents joy, reminding us to celebrate even in times of waiting.

White: The central candle, often called the Christ candle, is white, symbolising purity, peace, and the coming of light into the world through Jesus.

### **What Each Week Represents**

Each candle has a special theme and a figure from the Bible to reflect on. These themes and figures remind us of the Christmas story and help us prepare our hearts to receive it:

#### **First Week: Hope and the Patriarchs and Matriarchs**

In the first week, we light a purple candle to represent hope. We reflect on the stories of people like Sarah, Abraham, and their descendants, who trusted in God's promise even when it seemed impossible. Their faith reminds us to keep hoping, even when we face challenges.

#### **Second Week: Peace and the Prophets**

The second purple candle represents peace. We remember the prophets, people like Isaiah, who encouraged everyone to walk in God's ways and work towards a peaceful world. Their words inspire us to seek peace in our own lives and communities.

#### **Third Week: Joy and John the Baptist**

In the third week, we light the pink candle for joy. John the Baptist was a joyful messenger, announcing the coming of Jesus and encouraging people to turn toward the light. His story reminds us that even in times of uncertainty, joy can be found in hope and change.

#### **Fourth Week: Love and Mary, the Mother of Jesus**

The final purple candle stands for love. We remember Mary, who showed remarkable courage and love when she accepted her role in

God's plan. Her love inspires us to care deeply for others, just as she did for Jesus.

### **Christmas Day: Jesus, the Light of the World**

On Christmas Day, we light the white candle, often called the Christ candle. This candle represents Jesus, who Christians believe is the light of the world. In him, we see a vision of hope, peace, joy, and love all together, and we're reminded to share this light with others.

### **A Tradition of Meaning**

The Advent wreath is a simple tradition, but it carries deep meaning. It invites us to prepare our hearts and our lives for Christmas, focusing on values that make the world a better place. Lighting each candle week by week brings us together in hope, peace, joy, and love, until at last we celebrate the light that we believe shines in the darkness through Jesus. Whether you're familiar with these stories or hearing them for the first time, may the Advent wreath be a reminder of light, love, and the warmth of community this season.

# **Millions at breaking point as “shockingly low incomes” leave them hungry**

Chronically low incomes are devastating the lives of millions of people who don't have enough income to afford food, essential bills and a safe home to live in.

That's according to the latest report by UK debt advice charity, Christians Against Poverty (CAP).

CAP's YouGov polling, which accompanies the report, shows that 11.8 million (22%) of UK adults say they currently have a deficit budget, which is when a person's income doesn't cover the cost of the core essentials they need to live on.

CAP's clients, on average, are £273 a month short of what they need to be able to cover their basics such as food, energy bills and rent.

The report highlights that when CAP's debt coaches go into clients' homes, they find people living in cold properties and with empty fridges. Clients describe sitting in the dark with the lights off and curtains closed, often hiding in terror because they're afraid of bailiffs knocking at their door demanding money that they don't have.

The report reveals that almost half (47%) of CAP's clients have deficit budgets, even after an expert debt advisor has supported them to review their finances, and has worked through suggestions to maximise their income and cut out non-essentials.

Christians Against Poverty's Chief Executive Officer, Stewart McCulloch, said, “Our expert debt advisors, alongside local churches we partner with, are continuing to help thousands of people across the UK to become debt-free.

“But it’s frustrating for our team when they have the tools to help someone out of debt, but the person’s income is so shockingly low that even when the burden of debt is removed, they still can’t afford life’s essentials.

“11 million people living lives of hidden desperation is utterly unacceptable. We can’t afford the welfare and health costs of this tragedy.”

If you would like to help: <https://capuk.org>

## **Winter Solstice**

A Midwinter festival has been a part of life since pre-Christian times. When the hours of daylight are fewest, the warmth of the sun weakest, and life itself seemingly at a standstill, our ancestors, the pagan peoples of Europe and Western Asia, kept festival by lighting bonfires and decorating their buildings with evergreens.

Perhaps they believed that the dying sun could be enheartened by fire, and the life of the buried seed assured by the presence of evergreen branches.

With the advent of Christianity, the Spring gods became identified with Christ, and the birthday of the sun with the birthday of the Light of the World.

The early church father Tertullian did not approve of Christmas decorations. “Let those who have no light in themselves light candles!... You are the light of the world, you are the tree ever green....” But by the time of St Gregory and St Augustine, four centuries later, this had changed. Pope Gregory instructed Augustine not to worry about harmless outward customs, as long as the right God be worshipped

through them. And so many Anglo-Saxon customs were never discarded, but simply endowed with a new significance.

By 1598 one John Stow of London wrote how: 'Against the feast of Christmas, every man's house, as also their parish churches, were decked with holme, ivie, bayes, and whatsoever the season of the yeare afforded to be greene.'

## **The story of the Christingle**

The word 'Christingle' actually means 'Christ Light', and celebrates the light of Jesus coming into the world. Stories of how the Christingle began look back to the Moravian Church, which is found in the Czech Republic. The Moravians have held Christingle services for more than 200 years, and according to them, this is how the first Christingle might have been made:

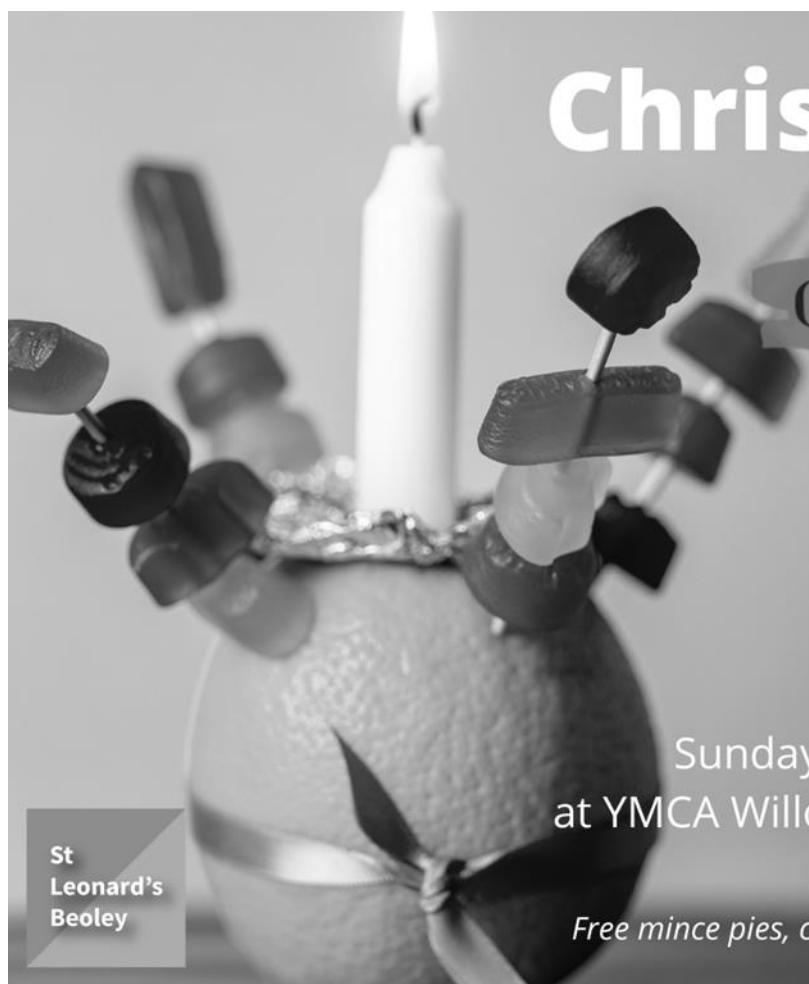
Many years ago the children in a village were asked to bring a Christmas gift to put beside the crib in the church. One family was very poor, and had no money for gifts, but the three children were still determined to take something. The only nice thing they had was an orange, so they decided to give the Christ-child that.

But then they discovered the top was going green, so the eldest cut it out, and put a candle in the hole. To add some colour, one of the girls took a red ribbon from her hair and tied it around the middle of the orange. It was hard to make the ribbon stay still, so they fastened it in place with toothpicks. The toothpicks looked a bit bare, so the youngest child added some raisins to them.

The children took their decorated orange lantern to the church for the Christmas Mass. The other children sneered at their meagre gift, but the priest seized upon it with joy. He held it up as an example of the true

understanding of the meaning of Christmas, for the following reasons: the orange is round, like the world; the candle gives us light in the dark, like the love of God; the red ribbon goes round the 'world', as a symbol of Christ's blood, given for everyone; the four sticks point in all directions, and symbolise that God is over all: North, South, East and West; and the fruit and nuts remind us of God's blessings.

The Children's Society first introduced the Christingle Service to The Church of England in 1968, and it has since become a popular event in the church calendar. This candlelit celebration is an ideal way to share the key messages of the Christian faith, while helping to raise vital funds to help vulnerable children across the country. Visit: [www.childrenssociety.org.uk](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk)



**Christingle**

church@4

St Leonard's@ChurchHill

Christingle is a joyful celebration to share the light of Jesus and spread a message of hope.

4pm on  
Sunday 15th December 2024  
at YMCA Willow Trees Community Centre

*Free mince pies, cookies and refreshments will be served.*

St  
Leonard's  
Beoley

# The history of Christmas

The Bible does not give a date for the birth of Jesus. In the third century it was suggested that Jesus was conceived at the Spring equinox, 25th March, popularising the belief that He was born nine months later on 25th December. John Chrysostom, the Archbishop of Constantinople, encouraged Christians worldwide to make Christmas a holy day in about 400.

In the early Middle Ages, Christians celebrated a series of midwinter holy days. Epiphany (which recalls the visit to the infant Jesus of the wise men bearing gifts) was the climax of 12 days of Christmas, beginning on 25th December. The Emperor Charlemagne chose 25th December for his coronation in 800, and the prominence of Christmas Day rose. In England, William the Conqueror also chose 25th December for his coronation in 1066, and the date became a fixture both for religious observance and feasting.

Cooking a boar was a common feature of mediaeval Christmas feasts, and singing carols accompanied it. Writers of the time lament the fact that the true significance of Christmas was being lost because of partying. They condemn the rise of 'mistrule' – drunken dancing and promiscuity. The day was a public holiday, and traditions of bringing evergreen foliage into the house and the exchange of gifts (usually on Epiphany) date from this time.

In the 17th century the rise of new Protestant denominations led to a rejection of many celebrations that were associated with Catholic Christianity. Christmas was one of them. After the execution of Charles I, England's Puritan rulers made the celebration of Christmas illegal for 14 years. The restoration of Charles II ended the ban, but religious leaders continued to discourage excess, especially in Scotland. In

Western Europe (but not worldwide) the day for exchanging gifts changed from Epiphany (6th January) to Christmas Day.

By the 1820s, there was a sense that the significance of Christmas was declining. Charles Dickens was one of several writers who sought to restore it. His novel 'A Christmas Carol' was significant in reviving merriment during the festival. He emphasised charity and family reunions, alongside religious observance. Christmas trees, paper chains, cards and many well-known carols date from this time. So did the tradition of Boxing Day, on 26th December, when tradesmen who had given reliable service during the year would collect 'boxes' of money or gifts from their customers.

In Europe Santa Claus is the figure associated with the bringing of gifts. Santa Claus is a shortening of the name of Saint Nicholas, who was a Christian bishop in the fourth century in present-day Turkey. He was particularly noted for his care for children and for his generosity to the poor. By the Middle Ages his appearance, in red bishop's robes and a mitre, was adored in the Netherlands and familiar across Europe.

Father Christmas dates from 17th century England, where he was a secular figure of good cheer (more associated with drunkenness than gifts). The transformation of Santa Claus into today's Father Christmas started in New York in the 1880s, where his red robes and white beard became potent advertising symbols. In some countries (such as Latin America and Eastern Europe) the tradition attempts to combine the secular and religious elements by holding that Santa Claus makes children's presents and then gives them to the baby Jesus to distribute.

From: <https://christianity.org.uk/the-history-of-christmas/#.W9LmchNKhsM>

# Advent



**Would you like to join an advent group?**

**On Wednesday lunchtimes in Advent**

**(starting on 27th November in the tapestry room).**

**We'll be looking at the book "Be not afraid" by  
Rachel Mann together. For more imformation contact  
Revd Martin on 07788872738**



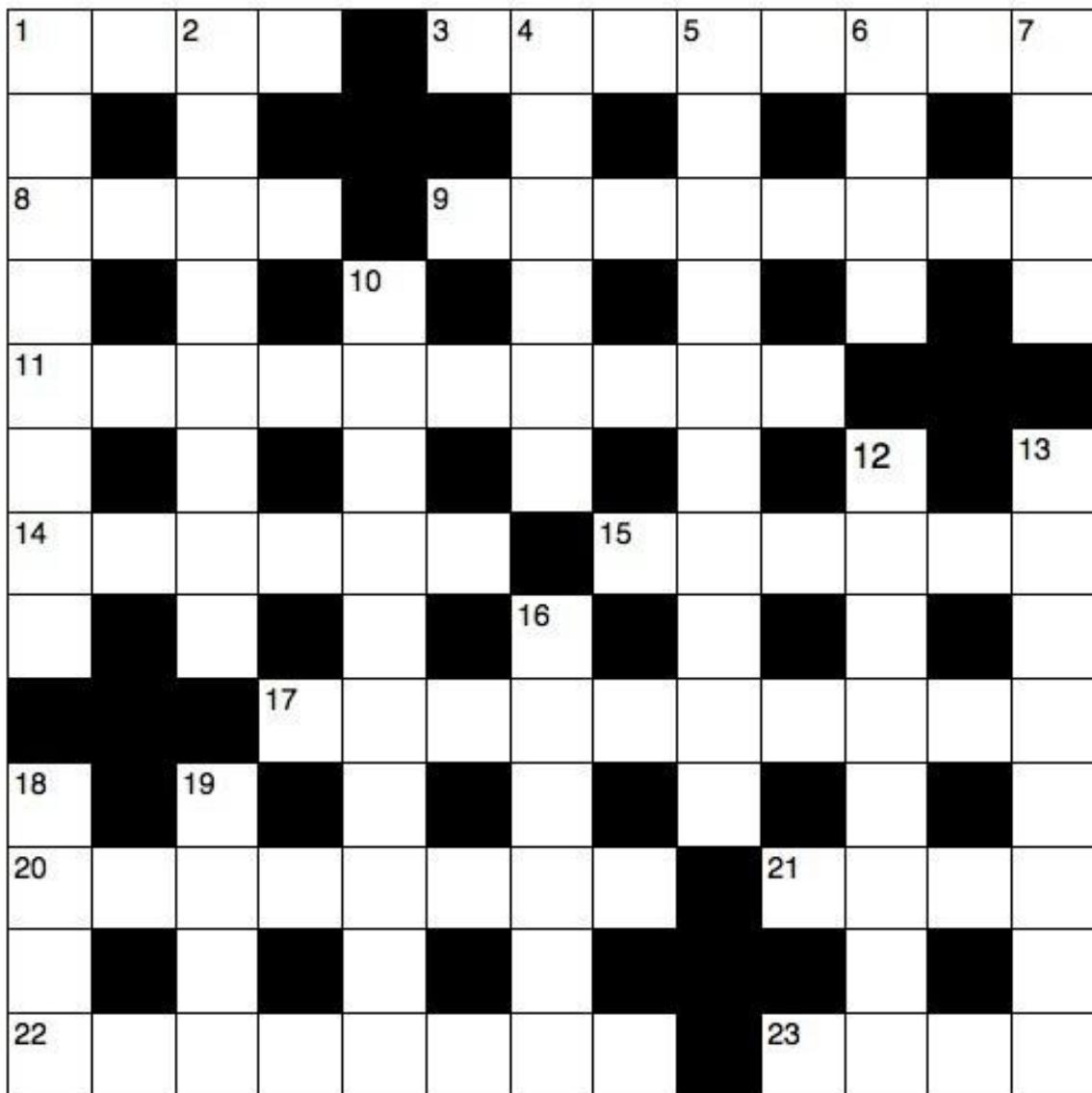
# The Shiny Bright **SPARKLING LIGHT** Nativity Play



Tuesday 24th December, 4pm  
St Leonard's Church



## December crossword challenge!



Across

- 1 'The blind receive sight, the — walk' (Luke 7:22) (4)
- 3 Got (Philippians 3:12) (8)
- 8 Leave out (Jeremiah 26:2) (4)
- 9 Castigated for using dishonest scales (Hosea 12:7) (8)
- 11 Weighty (1 John 5:3) (10)
- 14 'Now the serpent was more — than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made' (Genesis 3:1) (6)

15 'Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot — God' (Romans 8:8)

(6)

17 Because Israel lacked one of these, tools had to be sharpened by the Philistines (1 Samuel 13:19) (10)

20 In his vision of the two eagles and the vine, this is how Ezekiel described the latter (Ezekiel 17:8) (8)

21 Rite (anag.) (4)

22 Nine gigs (anag.) (8)

23 'The eye cannot say to the — , "I don't need you"' (1 Corinthians 12:21) (4)

Down

1 'Flee for your lives! Don't — — , and don't stop anywhere in the plain!' (Genesis 19:17) (4,4)

2 Principal thoroughfare (Numbers 20:19) (4,4)

4 'The tax collector... beat his — and said, "God have mercy on me, a sinner"' (Luke 18:13) (6)

5 'The zeal of the Lord Almighty will — this' (2 Kings 19:31) (10)

6 'The day of the Lord is — for all nations' (Obadiah 15) (4)

7 Specified day (Acts 21:26) (4)

10 Deadly epidemic (Deuteronomy 32:24) (10)

12 Roman Catholic church which has special ceremonial rights (8)

13 Tied up (2 Kings 7:10) (8)

16 In his speech to the Sanhedrin, Stephen described Moses as 'powerful in speech and — ' (Acts 7:22) (6)

18 'Although he did not remove the high places, — heart was fully committed to the Lord all his life' (1 Kings 15:14) (4)

19 Tribe (Deuteronomy 29:18) (4)



"I'm sorry Michael – even if you HAVE changed your ring-tone to 'Away In-A-Manger', it's still ALL mobiles OFF!"

## Crossword answers

ACROSS: 1, Lame. 3, Obtained. 8, Omit. 9, Merchant. 11, Burdensome. 14, Crafty. 15, Please. 17, Blacksmith. 20, Splendid. 21, Tier. 22, Singeing. 23, Hand.

DOWN: 1, Look back. 2, Main road. 4, Breast. 5, Accomplish. 6, Near. 7, Date. 10, Pestilence. 12, Basilica. 13, Tethered. 16, Action. 18, Asa's. 19, Clan.

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